Predator: Rape, Madness, And Injustice In Seattle by Jack Olsen

Gripping

With careful reporting that sticks close to the facts, Jack Olsen tells stories that seem straight out of crime fiction, and yet are all the more compelling for being true. This book focuses on three men—a criminal who preyed on women, a carefree partygoer who was wrongly convicted of the predator's crimes, and a reporter for the Seattle Times who won a Pulitzer Prize for tracking down the truth. It's supposed to be a rare event in the U.S. judicial system that someone this innocent gets screwed this badly. Even if it only happened to one person every decade, it would still be a horrible thing. And the smiling rapist, described as having a sweet Jesus-like countenance, knowingly allowed that to happen. Olsen not only delivers a real page-turner, but he ties up all the loose ends before the book's memorable and satisfying finale.

My Personal Review:
I am a fan of thrillers and suspense books. Books such as this go far in proving that real life events can be far more terrifying than anything we read in fiction. Any fan of real life crime, criminal psychology or books about our criminal/judicial system really need to read this book. There are two aspects to this story...more if you want to start considering the many rape victims left in Mac Smith's wake. The first aspect is Mac Smith himself. The story goes very far in explaining how personalities such as Mac Smith's are formed. Jack Olsen portrays Mac as a well-rounded individual, even a likeable person. Yet, Mac is truly twisted and sick. Extremely manipulative. It is frightening to know that this person could be out on the streets in another 4 years...Then there is the story of Steve Titus. This is, perhaps, the most frightening part of the whole story. It really makes you wonder how often innocent people are convicted of another's crimes. This man suffered for 8 months...through his arrest which he jokingly thought was all a mistake, a trial, a conviction, and finally numerous postponements of his sentencing before his innocence was finally proven with the assistance of a news reporter. His life was destroyed...he lost his job and eventually the woman he loved. This book is a truly compelling read. I read it in one day of nonstop reading. After reading this book, the next time you hear someone in jail profess their innocence, you will hesitate before you sneer and say, "Yeah...that's what they all say..."

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