It was the 1950s, a time of calm, a time when all things were new and everything seemed possible. A few years before, a noble war had been won, and now life had returned to normal.

For one little boy, however, life had become anything but normal.

To all appearances, he and his family lived an almost idyllic life. The father was a respected professor, the mother a witty and elegant lady, someone everyone loved. They were parents to three bright, smiling children: two
boys and a girl. They lived on a sunny street in a small college town nestled neatly in a leafy valley. They gave parties, hosted picnics, went to church—just like their neighbors. To all appearances, their life seemed ideal. But it was, in fact, all appearances.

Lineage, tradition, making the right impression—these were matters of great importance, especially to the mother. But behind the facade this family had created lurked secrets so dark, so painful for this one little boy, that his life would never be the same.

It is through the eyes of that boy—a grown man now, revisiting that time—that we see this seemingly serene world and watch as it slowly comes completely and irrevocably undone.

Beautifully written, often humorous, sometimes sweet, ultimately shocking, this is a sons story of looking back with both love and anger at the parents who gave him life and then robbed him of it, who created his world and then destroyed it.

As author Lee Smith, who knew this world and this family, observed, Alcohol may be the real villain in this pain-permeated, exquisitely written memoir of childhood—but it is also filled with absolutely dead-on social commentary of this very particular time and place. A brave, haunting, riveting book.

**Personal Review: The End of the World as We Know It: Scenes from a Life by Robert Goolrick**

A review in the form of a mini-memoir: Killing time in an airport newsstand recently, I saw a novel "by Robert Goolrick." Not a common name; I looked for a picture and said, "Yes, that's Robbie Goolrick all right." When I got home, I looked on Amazon and read about this book. I bought it the next day, but it was six weeks before I could bring myself to open it.

As a college senior in Lexington I had more to do than most with the "townies," because theater was what I did, and my all-male school relied on locals to play the women's parts. Thus I got to know the three brilliant Goolrick kids: Chester B. Jr., always called just "B"; Robbie who wrote this book; and their preternaturally-mature-for-her-age little sister Lindlay. I don't think I was in their home, and met their parents, more than once; but for a middle-class California kid bowled over by the quirky sophistication of the Southern gentry, once was enough.
And then, 40 years later, to read this book and find out what was behind this glittering surface . . . I can't imagine anyone reading this book and not being shaken to the core, but I can't find the words for its impact on me.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
The End of the World as We Know It: Scenes from a Life by Robert Goolrick 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!