On March 14, 2012, more than three million people read Greg Smiths bombshell Op-Ed in the New York Times titled Why I Am Leaving Goldman Sachs. The column immediately went viral, became a worldwide trending topic on Twitter, and drew passionate responses from former Fed chairman Paul Volcker, legendary General Electric CEO Jack Welch, and New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg. Mostly, though, it hit a nerve among the general public who question the role of Wall Street in society -- and the callous take-the-money-and-run mentality that brought the world economy to its knees a few short years ago. Smith now picks up where his Op-Ed left off.

His story begins in the summer of 2000, when an idealistic 21-year-old arrives as an intern at Goldman Sachs and learns about the firms Business Principle 1: Our clients interests always come first. This remains Smiths mantra as he rises from intern to analyst to sales trader, with clients controlling assets of more than a trillion dollars.

From the shenanigans of his summer internship during the technology bubble to Las Vegas hot tubs and the excesses of the real estate boom; from the career lifeline he received from an NFL Hall of Famer during the bear market to the day Warren Buffett came to save Goldman Sachs from extinction-Smith will take the reader on his personal journey through the firm, and bring us inside the worlds most powerful bank.
Smith describes in page-turning detail how the most storied investment bank on Wall Street went from taking iconic companies like Ford, Sears, and Microsoft public to becoming a vampire squid that referred to its clients as muppets and paid the government a record half-billion dollars to settle SEC charges. He shows the evolution of Wall Street into an industry riddled with conflicts of interest and a profit-at-all-costs mentality: a perfectly rigged game at the expense of the economy and the society at large.

After conversations with nine Goldman Sachs partners over a twelve-month period proved fruitless, Smith came to believe that the only way the system would ever change was for an insider to finally speak out publicly. He walked away from his career and took matters into his own hands. This is his story.

Features:

* Used Book in Good Condition

My Personal Review:
I'll start with I love an accent and had zero trouble listening to this book. I'm always happier when a writer can narrate their own book, because it brings authenticity. I also appreciate when a writer is in over their head and calls in a pro. Not the case, Greg Smith can read his own book.

I really enjoyed this book initially. South African boy does good, wins scholarship to Stanford, procures Wall Street Internship and amazing career ensues. Greg gave enough insight and definition to his (complicated) work, so a novice could follow along and not get bored or overwhelmed with jargon. I felt like I learned things and even found myself making the hand gestures to buy and sell, like I was standing on the floor (people driving by just thought I was nuts).

My problem is Greg comes across as a lily-white, do-gooder surrounded by blood-sucking heathens. It just doesn't feel genuine when you elevate yourself at the expense of others. He was the only good guy in a sea of scum... right (said sarcastically). He writes openly about his peers weaknesses, his superiors faults and personality quirks even about hanging out with strippers in a hot tub in Vegas with his GS brethren (whatever happened to what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas?). He burnt people to write this book all the while he is portraying himself as saint. He totally covered his own a and made a premeditated exit from GS,
while simultaneously ripping the rug out from the company that took VERY good care of him for 10 years. It feels kind of gross and disingenuous. I ended up not liking this guy.

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