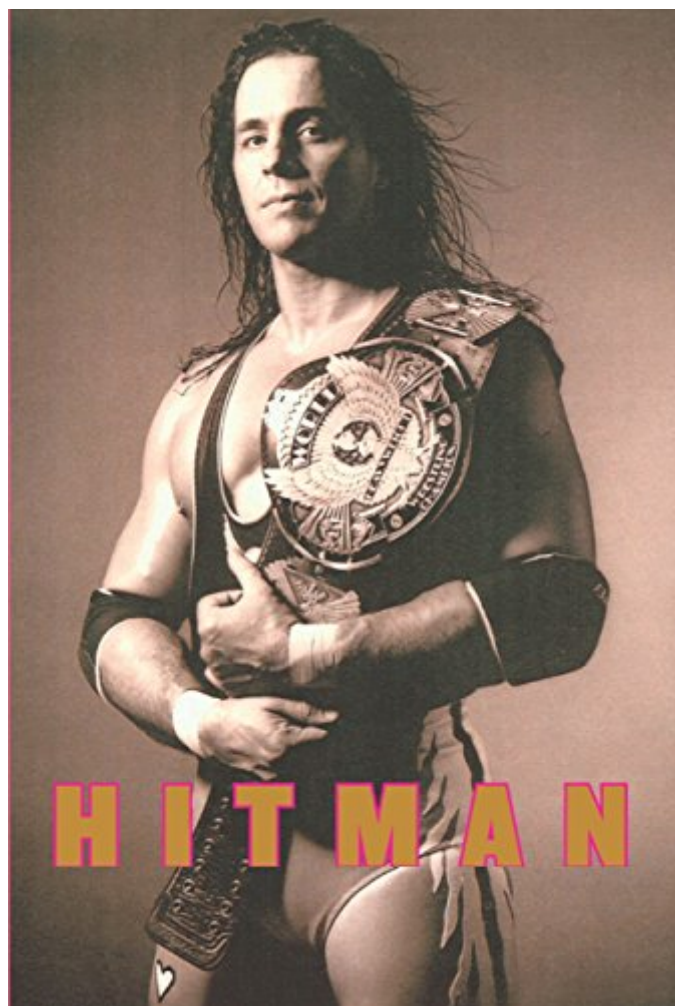


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Hitman: My Real Life In The Cartoon World Of Wrestling



Synopsis

Written without collaborators and based on decades of tape recordings he made throughout his career, HITMAN is Bret Hart's brutally honest, perceptive and startling account of his life in and out of the ring that proves once and for all that great things come in pink tights.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Growing up as a wrestling fan, Bret Hart was one of my heroes. While the size of the book initially made it seem like an intimidating read, it was an easy read. It is not difficult for me to get bored with a book, but I was thoroughly engaged. You don't have to be a fan of the 'Hitman' to appreciate the book. So any WWE fan would find this to be a worthy read. Even reading through his childhood years (which can be a drag in my experience) Bret told a great story. I would highly recommend.

I'm not even sure where to start on this one. Despite the book being over 500 pages, I was able to finish it just a few days reading between work days, on airplanes and sitting at home in bed, while my beautiful wife Jess read her own book. I'll start by saying

that Bret Hart was my overwhelming favorite wrestler, when I was a child/teen deeply engaged in following professional wrestling/sports entertainment. Although money was not always plentiful for us growing up in the country, I talked my mom into purchasing Wrestle Mania X on pay per view, just so I could see Bret's epic day of losing to his brother Owen, in a classic match, and then winning his second reign as WWF Champion to close the show against the mammoth Yokozuna. It was the single greatest wrestling show I had ever seen up to that point, surpassing Wrestle Mania VIII, where Bret's win over Rowdy Roddy Piper made me a fan for life. The Hitman was cool. He was strong. He was a hero on the screen and at that age, I believed he was a hero off of the screen. I'm not sure who said it, but I know there's a saying that you should never meet your heroes. Although reading his autobiography is not technically meeting him, it does open the window into his inner thoughts and showcase his life in a manner I would have never seen watching weekly wrestling programs. This story was in some ways a bitter sweet adventure for me as a huge fan of the Hitman character. I suppose I shouldn't correlate Bret Hart the man with Bret "Hitman" Hart the wrestling character, but unlike normal television shows and movies, where our favorite actors are seen in numerous and very different roles throughout the span of their careers, wrestlers, especially the successful ones, typically portray one gimmick for many years and typically hide their actual lives and personalities from the screen. This is not as true as it used to be, but in the 90's, kayfabe, or pretending wrestling was real, even outside of the shows, was widely practiced by everyone in the industry. With such elaborate effort given to maintaining the reality of wrestling storylines, many of us fans simply accepted the characters on screen to be actual people. This book shatters any notion I ever had of Bret "Hitman" Hart being deserving of a hero's treatment. I suppose, when you break it down, one should probably not have a hero, as everyone is going to eventually let you down in the end in some way or another. It's best to accept that nearly everyone has good and bad in them and that we as individuals are no different. We have our good traits and our bad traits. Onto the book! First of all, whomever made the decision to publish this book as it was eventually published should be labeled as incompetent. Even ignoring the typos that litter at least the Kindle edition, the book comes off like a massive ego trip written by a paranoid and delusional old man. At what point did the editors and others reviewing this book not protest to Bret to change the tone of nearly the entire book? I would hope that if I ever attempted to publish such a one-sided rant about my life that someone would have the decency to fight me on it until cooler heads prevailed. Throughout the entire 500 plus pages of this book, Bret paints a portrait

of himself as a heroic, never wrong but always misunderstood and mistreated savior of the numerous inept and timid people surrounding him throughout his entire life. There is not one time in the book, save for when he talks about his father, that Bret gives anyone 100% credit for their own accomplishments or takes 100% responsibility for his own misfortune. If Freud were alive, he could fill up a decade trying to map the enormous ego that is spilling off of every page of this book. Time after time, Bret's opponents in the ring only had good matches because Bret was there to guide them. Had he not been the genius he was, all of these people, from Dynamite Kid all the way to Ric Flair himself could not pull off decent matches. Time after time, any good angles (storylines) of Bret's career were his ideas and the promoter was smart enough to listen to his wise guidance. Every time he was in a less than stellar match or an angle that didn't make sense, it was the fault of the promoter or the guy he was wrestling. Reading this same tale over and over again through the account of his 23 year career made me realize just why it's so easy to go online and find hours, literally hours, of former wrestlers bashing what it was like to work with Bret Hart. He seemed to not understand that he was the very embodiment of everything he was complaining about with other wrestlers. He was way too caught up in the Hitman character, trying at every turn to protect and promote his own image. Even during a conversation with Vince McMahon, within a day or two of his youngest and favorite brother, Owen Hart, tragically dying in a gruesome accident during a wrestling show, Bret's focus was on not Owen, but asking Vince to let Bret have the rights to Hitman's video library so his character would not be erased. This is not from Vince's mouth, but from the pages of Bret's own autobiography. This is sad in two ways. One in how whoever edited this let Bret portray himself as such a self-centered egomaniac, and two in that Bret seemingly did not think this inappropriate at all. He only expressed anger about the conversation later on, when Vince stated he wasn't going to give Bret the video library. It baffles me that anyone close to Bret would allow him to publish this story and paint himself in such a light. The massive ego trip unfortunately did not stop with Bret's in ring career, but expanded to his place in the Hart family. To hear Bret tell it, he was the only intelligent sibling out of Stu and Helen Hart's twelve children. Everyone else was either untrustworthy, unintelligent, weak or nearly evil. Bret, according to Bret, was not only the savior of every single wrestler he ever worked with, but he was the saving grace of the entire Hart family. He painted his siblings and in laws of being jealous of Bret's success over and over again. I am sure that Bret's stories have some grounds of actual truth, but as long as

I've lived, I've never met someone so saintly in his own mind that I didn't find to be full of it. Bret's priority was and seems to still be Bret. Every match on the card had to in some way make his character look good, or else Bret thought it was wrong. Bret could not accept doing matches that he didn't think would be good for his story arc or his career. Somehow, the only way Bret could ever make anyone else look good, was to also make himself look good. Even when he agreed to lose matches, he made a point of saying the logic was wrong for his character. It crossed the line of annoying so many times throughout the book. None of the points above even start to dive into how spoke of his marriage and his affairs. From reading Bret's words, he would have you believe that his wife should have been happy he was cheating on her in nearly every city he ever wrestled, because it kept him from becoming a drug addict. I swear I couldn't make this stuff up, even if I wanted to tear Bret down. All of the above points can be found in the book at any time. Now, with all of what I said above, I do believe that Bret should be given some room for the benefit of the doubt here. That's not because I think he wasn't wrong, but because he didn't write this book until after a career ending concussion and life threatening stroke reduced his body and his mind to that of a paranoid and frail shell of his former self. It would not surprise me if Bret was diagnosed with something nearing PTSD. The book reads like the rants of someone that has lost their objective view of reality. Sad as this sounds, it would be sadder to think that this is how the man truly views himself and everyone around him. To save the image of Bret I carried since I was 9 years old, I'd rather chalk this story up to his mental damage than think he is the biggest jerk in the history of wrestling and almost in life. I still give the book a high rating, however, because I was such a huge fan of the Hitman my entire life. It was gloriously nostalgic to be taken back through the journey all over again from Bret's point of view, skewed now as it is. If I could give any message to Bret Hart, it would be this. Quit worrying about your character's legacy and focus on being a better person to everyone that help to make you the successful and international star that you are. The Hitman is permanently branded into the history of professional wrestling. No promoter, not even Vince McMahon himself can erase that. Stop making a life of bashing others, mend fences, and take some responsibility for the things that happened to you.

I've read a lot of books. Bret Hart's autobiography is by far the best written autobiography I've ever read. Ultimately it's all from his perspective so it's got his take on controversial topics in and out of the ring. The level of detail and honesty is amazing, as Hart's take on life is very observational, and

introspective. It takes you from his childhood through his career and after, with story after story, really giving the reader an understanding of Hart's entire life from his unique viewpoint. While reading this book, and the chronology of his life, I felt like I was there. It's really that good. I don't know if the Hitman has any other things to write about, but he'd be a great ghostwriter for others, as this book is a page turner if there ever was one. He could teach a class, especially on using details to advance a story. I think that non wrestling fans who give this book a chance will love it too, because it's a human interest story as much as anything, and he's had a heck of an interesting life.

Love love love this freaking book! It really let's you inside his life and gives you insight on what it's like on the road in wrestling. Loved it from start to finish! Although the ending made me tear up and shed a few tears because Bret Hart is easily the greatest professional wrestler who ever lived and his career did not end the right way. He had to live through losing his baby brother Owen, who I loved as well. He lost him in 1999, then he lost his mother in 2001, then Davey Boy Smith aka the British Bulldog, his brother in law and my third favorite wrestler of all time behind Bret Hart and Owen Hart, then he had to deal with his crazy family namely his two sisters Diana and Ellie, then sadly he had a stroke sometime after Goldberg gave him a concussion after botching in a match and stupid WCW kept asking Bret to fight again after he had his concussion. Then the worst thing happened after the stroke and concussion ended Bret's career, the man who made the legends and most specifically the man who made most of the legends in WWE possible Stu Hart died. This book is a great read especially for the price it's labeled. I recommend this to anybody who wants to know what the life of an amazing superstar is like. There will never be another Bret Hart, or anybody coming close to Bret Hart in my book! READ READ READ, you will not be disappointed I promise!

This is very likely the best wrestling autobiography out right now. I haven't been able to put it down since it arrived. Sure, there's a fair amount of Bret's ego in here, and the later part of the book is kind of dark, but that's just where he was in his life. Overall, Bret doesn't pull any punches and tells it like it is. The fact that he kept an audio diary from his early twenties throughout the rest of his career adds validity to the stories. Fascinating read. I'd highly recommend to any wrestling fan. If you're a Bret Hart mark, it's a no brainer.

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