



Cocaine's Son: A Memoir

Dave Itzkoff

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With sharp wit, self-deprecating humor, and penetrating honesty, *New York Times* journalist Dave Itzkoff turns a keen eye on his life with the mysterious, maddening, much-loved man of whom he writes, “for the first eight years of my life I seem to have believed he was the product of my imagination.”

Itzkoff’s father was the man who lumbered home at night and spent hours murmuring to his small son about his dreams and hopes for the boy’s future, and the fears and failures of his own past. He was the hard-nosed New York fur merchant with an unexpectedly emotional soul; a purveyor of well-worn anecdotes and bittersweet life lessons; a trusted ally in childhood revolts against motherly discipline and Hebrew school drudgery; a friend, advisor, and confidant. He was also a junkie. In **Cocaine’s Son**, Itzkoff chronicles his coming of age in the disjointed shadow of his father’s double life—struggling to reconcile his love for the garrulous protector and provider, and his loathing for the pitiful addict.

Through his adolescent and teen years Itzkoff is haunted by the spectacle of his father’s drug-fueled depressions and disappearances. In college, Itzkoff plunges into his own seemingly fated bout with substance abuse. And later, an emotional therapy session ends in the intense certainty that he will never overcome the same demons that have driven the older man. But when his father finally gets clean, a long “morning after” begins for them both. And on a road trip across the country and back into memory, in search of clues and revelations, together they discover that there may be more binding them than ever separated them.

Unsparing and heartbreaking, mordantly funny and powerfully felt, **Cocaine’s Son** clears a place for Dave Itzkoff in the forefront of contemporary memoirists.

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