



Land of the Lost Souls: My Life on the Streets

By Cadillac Man

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For the past 16 years, Cadillac Man (so named because he was once hit by an El Dorado and thereafter bore an imprint of its hood ornament) has lived on the streets of New York City. Over those years, he has recorded the facts of his daily life - the harsh realities of surviving on the street, the often tragic encounters with the non-homeless world, the deep bonds with his fellow homeless, and the surprisingly varied realities of life on the outside - writing hundreds of thousands of words in a series of spiral bound notebooks. "My Life in the Streets" distills those journals into a memoir of homeless life that is peopled with indelible characters and packed with gripping stories. In a gritty, poignant, and funny voice, Cadillac narrates his descent into homelessness, the travails and unexpected freedoms of his life, and the story of his love affair with a young runaway, whom he eventually (and tragically) reunites with her family. The United States has 700,000 homeless people; ultimately, Cadillac's story is their story.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Writer, veteran and native Manhattanite Cadillac Man exposes the hidden world of the homeless in this riveting collection of stories from his sixteen years on the streets of New York City. Following the heartbreaking deterioration of his marriage, Cadillac finds himself wandering New York with no destination, comforted by the memories of his young daughter and haunted by his failures. With an uncanny sense of humor and invention, Cadillac uses everyday objects most take for granted (soda cans, discarded beach chairs, toy wagons) to build a life for himself, literally, from the ground up. Cadillac guides readers through streets most people don't (or choose not to) see, introducing the outcasts he comes to value most: singers, teen runaways, pimps, prostitutes and a few unlikely angels. Excruciating details of fist-fights and romantic escapades leave little to the imagination, rendering Cadillac's world intimate, scary and touching; it becomes clear that his survival and sanity depend not only on crafty methods of making money, but also on journaling (excerpts from which have appeared in *Esquire* magazine). A surprising find, Cadillac lets readers in on a rarely seen community, revealing the compassionate hearts that beat even in the most despairing circumstances.

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From [Booklist](#)

The army veteran known as Cadillac Man began living on the streets of New York in 1994 and has been there ever since. His memoir is vulgar, sexually explicit (occasionally), and written in a style that ranges from polished to awkward. It is also, from first page to last, tragic, comic, dramatic, and emotionally charged. Cadillac Man describes his life on the streets in precise detail: how to survive, how to eat, how to keep clean and warm. His world is frequently bleak, naturally, but the bleakness is punctuated by moments of surprising humor and joy and by encounters with an assortment of strange and wonderfully interesting people, some of whom feel like they've stepped off the pages of the Great American Novel. In fact, the book feels, from time to time, as though it could be a novel, prompting the reader to wonder if Cadillac Man is engaging in a bit of "creative autobiography." On the other hand, who's to say everything didn't happen just the way he says it did? Either way, the book is a vivid portrait of the life of a street person. --David Pitt

About the Author

Born in the Hell's Kitchen area of Manhattan, **Cadillac Man** has lived on the streets in four of New York City's five boroughs. His writing has also appeared in the *New York Times* and *Esquire* magazine.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Chris Hernandez:

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