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Playing With Fire



Synopsis

In *Playing With Fire*, Theo Fleury takes us behind the bench during his glorious days as an NHL player, and talks about growing up devastatingly poor and in chaos at home. Dark personal issues began to surface, and drinking, drugs, gambling, and girls ultimately derailed a career that had him destined for the Hall of Fame. Fleury shares all in this raw, captivating, and honest look at the previously untold story of one of the game's greatest heroes.

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Customer Reviews

Like one of the ghostly masks invented by the goalie Jacques Plante, the face of Theo Fleury, star forward and Stanley Cup winner of the Calgary Flames, floats on the front cover of his stunning and moving autobiography full of scars, shadows, and dust. Unlike Jacques, the 5'6", 150-pound right wing faced more than pucks flung by 230-pound demons. In this superb piece of hockey writing, Theo Fleury, with this co-author Kirstie McLellan Day, reveals to the world the dreams, suffering, and glories of his life. I loved this book - reading it three times for its insights into the wild and raunchy world of hockey, its reflections on the life broken by abuse and addiction, and for the sheer rhythm of its "thrill of victory and agony of defeat." Theo came from Cree-Quebecoise (Mā̃tis) stock

and grew up in the Canadian bush town of Russell, Manitoba. His first gear bag was an old pillowcase and he did not own a new pair of skates until he was a teenager. Yet, from the age of 5 he dreamt every day of playing in The Show, the National Hockey League. Fleury, however, was also born under a dark star. Theo's dad, a hockey player injured in his prime, had turned to alcohol and his mom found consolation in Valium and distraction in the doomsday dreams of the Jehovah's Witnesses. When a prominent coach, Graham James, who would later win a "Mr. Hockey" trophy from the Canadian junior leagues, took interest in him at the age of 13, young Theo thought that his dream of making the NHL would come true. Unfortunately, Theo would have to pay a price that no child should ever have to pay. For three long years his coach molested him. Theo knew well that if he dared speak a word, his future would be forfeited, and worse, he and not James, would be blamed.

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