



Gomorra: A Personal Journey into the Violent International Empire of Naples' Organized Crime System

By Roberto Saviano

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Gomorra: A Personal Journey into the Violent International Empire of Naples' Organized Crime System By Roberto Saviano

A groundbreaking major bestseller in Italy, *Gomorra* is Roberto Saviano's gripping nonfiction account of the decline of Naples under the rule of the Camorra, an organized crime network with a large international reach and stakes in construction, high fashion, illicit drugs, and toxic-waste disposal. Known by insiders as "the System," the Camorra affects cities and villages along the Neapolitan coast, and is the deciding factor in why Campania, for instance, has the highest murder rate in all of Europe and why cancer levels there have skyrocketed in recent years.

Saviano tells of huge cargoes of Chinese goods that are shipped to Naples and then quickly distributed unchecked across Europe. He investigates the Camorra's control of thousands of Chinese factories contracted to manufacture fashion goods, legally and illegally, for distribution around the world, and relates the chilling details of how the abusive handling of toxic waste is causing devastating pollution not only for Naples but also China and Somalia. In pursuit of his subject, Saviano worked as an assistant at a Chinese textile manufacturer, a waiter at a Camorra wedding, and on a construction site. A native of the region, he recalls seeing his first murder at the age of fourteen, and how his own father, a doctor, suffered a brutal beating for trying to aid an eighteen-year-old victim who had been left for dead in the street.

Gomorra is a bold and important work of investigative writing that holds global significance, one heroic young man's impassioned story of a place under the rule of a murderous organization.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Saviano's landmark exposé of the demoralizing effects of organized crime in his homebase of Naples, Italy, is an incredible tale that loses its power in this long-winded reading by veteran Kramer. Droning on in a matter-of-fact tone, Kramer loses the author's personal approach and fails to bring life to the touching memoir. Uninspired and indifferent, Kramer often sounds tired, struggling to keep himself interested, much less the listener. With slurred, often muffled narration, Kramer makes no attempt to engage his audience, a shame considering the rather fervent account that Saviano manages to recreate given his relationship with a deadly organized crime outfit and extensive research into the topic. Listening to Kramer over nine discs becomes a monotonous task rather than the entrancing experience that it should be. An utterly disappointing reading that fails to capture the gusto of Saviano's work. Simultaneous release with the FSG hardcover (Reviews, Aug. 13).

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Saviano, an investigative journalist, uses the port city of Naples as an entry point into the nefarious dealings of the Italian crime network, the Camorra, which has a stranglehold on the global economy through its control of the international clothing market, art collecting, drug dealing, construction trades, and toxic waste disposal. Naples is the epicenter for the criminal cartel since, as Saviano says, "Everything that exists passes through here." At a time when Chinese exports of pet food and seafood have become suspect, Saviano provides a revealing examination of the ways in which black-market profit mongering and lack of regulations ruin workers' lives and endanger us all. This investigation, published in Italy in 2006, became a best-seller and won the Viareggio Literary Prize. It's a stunner of a book, as accessible to American audiences, through its searing style and timely investigation, as it is to Italians. Perhaps most importantly, Saviano's accusations are utterly convincing because of his undercover investigations: in the best Upton Sinclair tradition, he worked at a Chinese textile factory in Naples, at a construction site, even as a waiter at a Camorra family wedding. Throughout, he relies on the significant detail to carry his outrage: scores of frozen Chinese bodies spilling out onto a dock; the sight of a Chinese factory worker at the bottom of a well, beaten and stabbed to death after refusing sex with her boss. Through his firsthand observation and interviews, he lays bare the abuses fed by this well-oiled and well-hidden criminal system. Devastating. Fletcher, Connie

Review

"A perfectly realized, morally compelling journey through the brutal world of contemporary Italian mob life.... A stunning achievement, this is a must-read." ---Publishers Weekly Starred Review

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