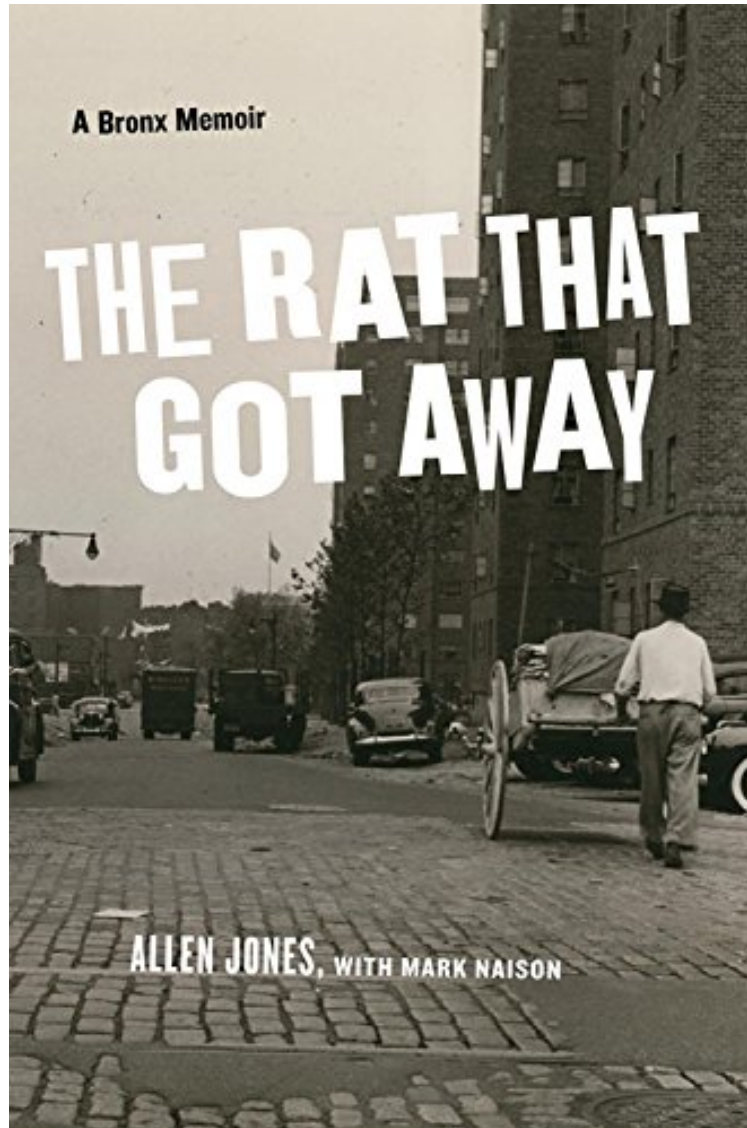


(Download free ebook) The Rat That Got Away: A Bronx Memoir

The Rat That Got Away: A Bronx Memoir

Allen Jones

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Allen Jones : The Rat That Got Away: A Bronx Memoir before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rat That Got Away: A Bronx Memoir:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Patterson Project Escapee By S. Smith I just finished reading "The Rat That Got Away" by Allen Jones and his life story is so compelling, you feel you are right on the streets of the Bronx with him. I do not know how I came across his book. I just finished my book last year, "My Life At The World Trade Center" and I guess I was on google and came across Patterson Projects where I once lived and saw the cover of Mr. Jones' book. A picture of the Patterson Projects in the 1950s or earlier. I immediately found it on and purchased it.

Tears rolled down my eyes when he described the court scene where his mother cried out, "Please Lord, don't take my son away." I cannot tell you how much I related to that scenario on many levels. The socio-economic situations were and still is in some cases, exactly as Mr. Jones describes it in his book. Climbing out of poverty and into a better life is no small feat, not by any stretch of the imagination. What he did right, and what I wished I had the opportunity to do for my sons, was move away from everything! So many souls of the projects never been out of their environment, never seen the world. All they know is the Bronx, Brooklyn or Harlem. But, Mr. Jones was definitely the Rat That Got Away, and proved there is life after the street life. Every young person should read this book. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Book Not To Be Missed By Lawrence Mayer This book was my best birthday present from my husband Larry! Out of the Bronx comes many remarkable people, some already famous like our newest Supreme Court Justice, a Hispanic woman, Sonia Sotomayor and some, relatively unknown, but deserving of fame, an African-American like Allen Jones. Mr. Jones' memoir, THE RAT THAT GOT AWAY, pulls no punches; he reveals frankly, graphically and often brutally, that he almost didn't get away, that the excitement and temptations of the mean Bronx streets in the 1950's and 1960's, almost cost him his life! In this extraordinary captivating, well-written page turner-book, Allen describes growing up in the projects both when the projects were filled with working class families of diverse backgrounds and later, when they deteriorated and the drug culture took over. Although he came from a loving 2-parent home, the lure of the street life, the buying selling and using drugs, gang fights, robberies at knifepoint, not going to school, early intro to sex, all these things hooked him. It was not until spending 4 months at Rikers Island and learning of his best friend Greg's shooting death, that the allure of the streets started to fade and he got a second chance. With intervention by caring people, he is sent to a private school in Massachusetts and becomes an honor student-in a mostly all white school. (As a teacher, I especially loved this part of the book!) Allen's basketball skills earn him a scholarship to a Southern college and from there, he goes on to play basketball professionally in Europe, wins fame and fortune, and eventually becomes a respected banker in Luxembourg, where he still lives, 30 years later. There is so much to learn and admire about how Allen turned his life around, overcame enormous obstacles and wound up not only as a successful business man, but even more important, became a wonderful caring father and human being. Young people reading this book will learn from Allen's mistakes and missteps and triumphs. I can visualize the movie made from this book now-starring, of course, Denzel Washington! My husband sure can pick inspiring books! Janet Mayer 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting story By Robert E. Frey The subject matter and life story are quite interesting, but the writing is rather elementary in style. I wish there was much less self-praise in the success part of Allan's story. I recommend it with some reservations, based on the "overcoming great obstacles" way in which he got free of the negativity into which he was born.

The Rat That Got Away is an inspiring story of one man's odyssey from the streets of the Bronx to a life as a professional athlete and banker in Europe, but it also provides a unique vantage point on the history of the Bronx and sheds new light on a neglected period in American urban history. Allen Jones grew up in a public housing project in the South Bronx at a time in the 1950s when that neighborhood was a place of optimism and hope for upwardly mobile Black and Latino families. Brought up in a two-parent household, with many neighborhood mentors, Jones led an almost charmed life as a budding basketball star until his teen years, when his once peaceful neighborhood was torn by job losses, white flight, and a crippling drug epidemic. Drawn into the heroin trade, first as a user, then as a dealer, Jones spent four months on Rikers Island, where he experienced a crisis of conscience and a determination to turn his life around. Sent to a New England prep school upon his release, Jones used his basketball skills and street smarts to forge a life outside the Bronx, first as a college athlete in the South, then as a professional basketball player, radio personality, and banker in Europe. A brilliant storyteller with a gift for dialogue, Jones brings Bronx streets and housing projects to life as places of possibility as well as tragedy, where racism and economic hardship never completely suppressed the resilient spirit of its residents. A book that will change the way people view the South Bronx.

It is rare to find a book that creates as much excitement among teenagers as The Rat That Got Away did at Harlem RBI. After the authors spoke with the young people in our program, every student suddenly wanted a copy of their own. The book not only talks about the real life conditions that many inner city youngsters face, it teaches them how to use their "street smarts" to achieve success. The book is an invaluable resource and gift to anyone working with at-risk youth. (Richard A. Berlin Executive Director Harlem RBI) Few could have imagined the path the troubled youth would travel. Leaving behind a life of drugs and crime, Allen Jones became an international banker. (Roanoke College Magazine) The memoir paints an earthy picture of the neighborhood in the 1950s, when the projects were home to working-class black and Latino families who pushed their children to excel, through the 1970s. (The New York Times) Reading this book to my 4th grade all boys class was risky, however the learning experiences and the dialogue we had with Allen and Mark hit a chord in these urban exposed children. (Michael Napolitano P.S. 140) Jones pursued two successful careers in Europe: professional basketball player and banker. If you met him, you might not guess he spent his teen years as a heroin dealer in New York. His memoir, written with Naison (history African American

studies, Fordham Univ.) focuses on his experiences growing up in a Bronx public housing project, playing serious basketball, ignoring school, dealing and doing drugs, and eventually lucking into a series of experiences that led to a professional basketball career in Europe. Jones credits his success to his supportive family, coaches, and neighborhood elders, but ultimately his is a tale of luck. The young Jones makes rash decisions, avoids his responsibilities, lies, and steals but also encounters many unlikely second chances. In another writer's hands, this blessed triumph-over-adversity story line might be trite and irritating, but Jones draws readers in with his direct, conversational style, and the tale is gripping even though readers know it will end well. VERDICT Recommended for memoir lovers and anyone interested in a first-person perspective on 1960s-era urban adolescence. (Library Journal)A chronicle of Jones' life, from his youth in a Bronx housing development to a career as a professional basketball player in Europe. (Columbia College Today)This is a story that can be appreciated by all walks of life, on and off the court, in and out of the streets, novice and expert of the social norms of the ghetto, as its message rings true for all of humanity. (Pamela Lewis Bronx Historical Society Journal)The engrossing story of one Bronx housing project is told through the eyes of Allen Jones, who endured and participated in its grim transformation over the course of a turbulent decade. (City Limits Weekly)About the AuthorAllen Jones, born in the Bronx, is a manager for foreign currency exchange at Dexia Banque Internationale at Luxembourg.