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I Am Jackie Chan: My Life In Action



Synopsis

"I am standing in the sky on the roof of a glass and steel office tower in Rotterdam, Holland. There are twenty-one floors of air between me and the concrete pavement below. I am about to do what I do best. I am about to jump."If you're a fan of action-adventure movies--with the accent on action--then you no doubt love watching Jackie Chan risk his life to create sensational cinema. As one of the biggest stars to burst into U.S. theaters, Jackie has put America's hottest heroes to shame, wowing audiences with the breathless, death-defying stunts that are the highlight of such movies as Rumble in the Bronx, Supercop, Operation: Condor, and his newest blockbuster Rush Hour. But who really is this boyishly handsome, lightning-fast Charlie Chaplin of martial arts movie-making? And what possessed him to make a career out of putting his life on the line to keep us on the edge of our seats?"I remember a frightened seven-year-old walking into the dim and musty halls of the China Drama Academy, clutching his father's hand. Inside, he sees paradise--young boys and girls leaping and tumbling and flashing the steel of ancient weapons. 'How long do you want to stay here, Jackie?' 'Forever!' answered the boy, his eyes bright and wide. And he let go of his father's hand to clutch at the Master's hem. . . ."In I Am Jackie Chan, Chan tells the fascinating, harrowing, ultimately triumphant story of his life: How the rebellious son of refugees in tumultuous 1950s Hong Kong became the disciplined disciple of a Chinese Opera Master. How the "paradise" that young Jackie so eagerly embraced proved to be, in reality, a ruthlessly competitive place whose fierce master wielded the legal authority to train his students even to death. How the dying art of Chinese opera led Jackie to the movie business--and how he made the leap from stuntman to superstar. How he broke into the Hollywood big time by breaking almost every bone in his body.Finally, after years of plunging off skyscrapers and living to tell the tale, Jackie Chan proves--with this witty, poignant, and often astonishing memoir--that it's always been a tale well worth telling.Jackie has written this book with Jeff Yang, the founder of A Magazine and the author of Eastern Standard: A Guide To Asian Influence in American Culture.

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Customer Reviews

For many Americans, Jackie Chan made his screen debut in the late 1990s with such hits as *Rumble in the Bronx* or *Rush Hour*. But a privileged few have been enjoying his movies for more than two decades, from the cheap, non-stop-kung-fu flicks he first starred in to his more recent and more expensive cop movies and period pieces.*I Am Jackie Chan* is the story of the making of these movies and of the man who made them possible: a first-hand, first-person account of Jackie Chan's eventful life, from his training at a Peking Opera school, where we discover the overweight bully who was to become "big brother" Samo Hung, to his second and hugely successful attempt to conquer the American public. The book unravels the rather bumpy ride to stardom of this atypical martial artist who always preferred being beaten up by the bad guys to the other way around, who repeatedly risked his life to perform the most incredible stunts ever filmed (Jackie stop! We don't want to lose you!) and whose happy-go-lucky persona finally eclipsed that of Bruce Lee himself. I really loved this success-story, set in a world whose death warrant was signed in 1997 when the Communists took control of Hong Kong. Jackie has seen it all, from the Shaw Brothers to Golden Harvest; from the greatest of all Hong Kong directors, King Hu, to that smug, overbearing, cigar-smoking individual with a penchant for "bathroom humor and clumsy slapstick"- Lo Wei; from the evil Triads to the elitist clique of the movie stuntmen, who lived in the present because their future didn't even have a wire to hang on to.

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