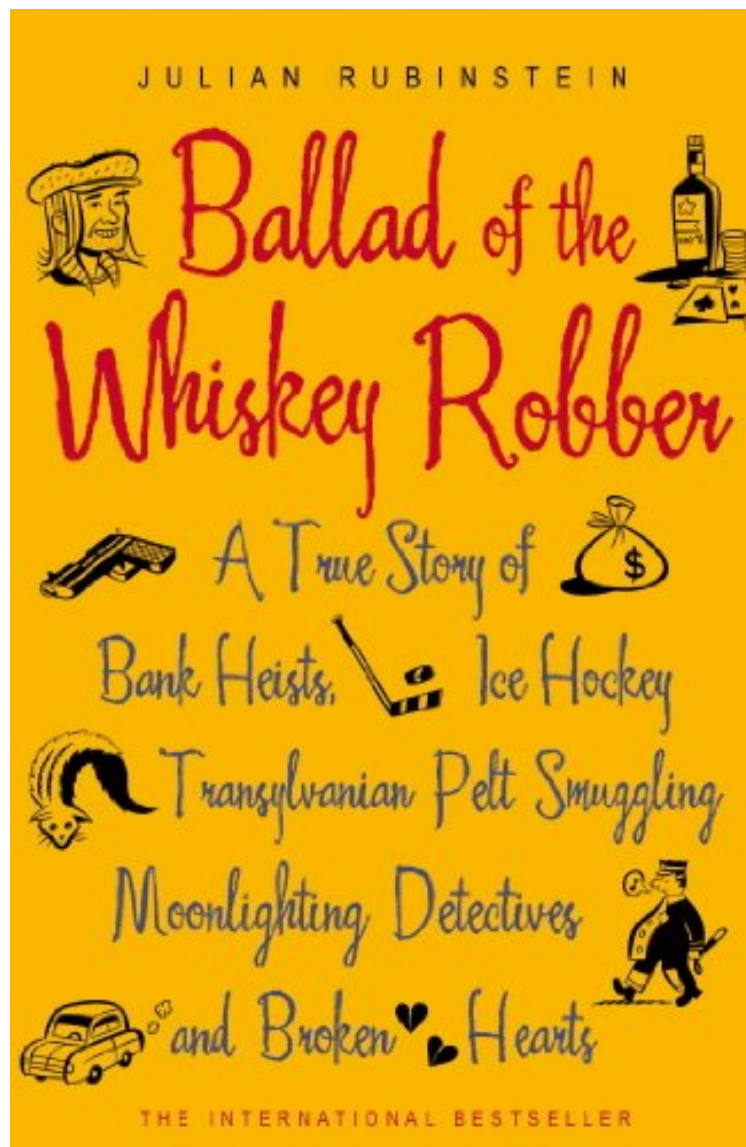


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Ballad of the Whiskey Robber: A True Story of Bank Heists, Ice Hockey, Transylvanian Pelt Smuggling, Moonlighting Detectives, and Broken Hearts (English Edition)

Von *Julian Rubinstein*

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Von **Julian Rubinstein** : **Ballad of the Whiskey Robber: A True Story of Bank Heists, Ice Hockey, Transylvanian Pelt Smuggling, Moonlighting Detectives, and Broken Hearts (English Edition)** before

purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Ballad of the Whiskey Robber: A True Story of Bank Heists, Ice Hockey, Transylvanian Pelt Smuggling, Moonlighting Detectives, and Broken Hearts* (English Edition):

Kurzbeschreibung What do you get when you add together a bottle of whiskey, a bad gambler, a flea-market wig, a plastic gun and a Hungarian bank? \$5,900. And what do you get twenty-nine of these robberies later? The legend of the Whiskey Robber. When the Eastern bloc thawed, some extraordinary stories were revealed. But none is as entertaining as this. Attila Ambrus escaped late-eighties Romania for Hungary - but soon found that living on his wits wasn't getting him very far. Becoming goalie for a third-division ice hockey team brought no fortune and little glory, and his procession of moneymaking ruses fared little better - until he discovered robbery. With a supporting cast of car-wash owners, exotic dancers, drunk army generals and cocaine-snorting Hungarian rappers, Julian Rubinstein's tale is a spectacular debut, immortalizing the most charming outlaw since the Sundance Kid. From Booklist It was in October 1988 that 21-year-old Transylvanian Attila Ambrus found himself on the streets of Budapest with nothing but a glint of cleverness, which quickly landed him a position as third-string goalie for Hungary's best hockey team. However, failing to supplement his nonpaying job with janitorial work, or sales of Parker pens and illegal pelts, Ambrus began a series of 29 armed robberies that lasted seven years and captured the imagination of ordinary Hungarians. The robberies were distinguished by their outrageous success, of course, but also by Ambrus' "fortification" of choice (hence the moniker Whiskey Robber). Rubenstein offers a well-detailed narrative of Ambrus' robbery spree and the efforts of earnest but underfinanced policeman Lajos Varju to catch him. Readers may agree with the author's implication that Ambrus' journey was quixotic, or they may look at these desperate acts and the sad conditions in Hungary that spawned them and say it was all just a crime. Alan Moores Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Pressestimmen "Rubinstein has found a story of the sort that would make even the most dry-mouthed journalist slobber. Sometimes sad, often hilarious and always absurd, Ambrus's tale microcosmically condenses the politico-historic oddities of his place and era into one entertaining and tidy narrative... With a keen eye for the ridiculous, fearlessly high-speed prose and an extraordinary wealth of reported detail, Rubinstein conducts the affair like an unusually thoughtful carnival barker." *New York Times Book (Editors' Choice)* "Outrageously entertaining... An essential absurdism is never far from the surface... A rip-roaring cops and robbers saga with a Mitteleuropean heart." *San Francisco Chronicle* "The antagonistic protagonist of Julian Rubinstein's picaresque romp is a real person who defies belief... Rubinstein rides the momentum in appropriately riotous fashion, but he wisely never lets his vivid style overshadow a tale that burns up the pages on its own momentum. Nor does he succumb to sentimentality when exploring the tale's pathos-and believe it or not, there's as much of that as there is burlesque. A memorable tragicomedy." *Boston Globe* "Julian Rubinstein's richly enjoyable true-crime saga... Mr. Rubinstein narrates all these farcical goings-on with a sad affection peeking through, even for the dumbest and most corrupt characters. But primarily he maintains that marvelously sardonic Eastern European resignation, that ironic tone of voice that always seems to shrug and say, 'So what did you expect?'" *Dallas Morning News* "Sometimes a book comes along that taxes even our best summarizing skills, but since we can't just really order you to read it (or can we?), let's just say that Julian Rubinstein's *Ballad of the Whiskey Robber*, the totally bizarre true story of ice hockey-playing bank robber (and pelt smuggler, grave-digger, the list goes on) Attila Ambrus is one of the quirkiest and most riveting narratives. Here, the bad guys are the gentleman, the good guys are the bumlbers, and nothing is quite what it seems, but that won't keep you from laughing out loud every couple of pages. Weirdness has never been quite so winning." *Elle* "Rubinstein has a knack for vividly portraying his stranger-than-fiction characters... By turns hilarious and incredible, this stuff just can't be made up." *Maxim* (5 out of 5 stars) "A wonderful read. Rubinstein's account of the Whiskey Robber seems straight out of Hollywood and indeed it's ideal for the big screen." *Sports Illustrated* "A beautifully crafted tale... In Rubinstein's deft hands, Attila becomes a great tragicomic character... Unlike many books today that run out of energy after the first several chapters, Rubinstein keeps up the high energy, madcap comedy throughout the book." *Denver Post* "This story of a bank robber who captured a nation's sympathy in post-Communist Hungary is a rollicking tale told with glee and flair.... Rubinstein has a knack for telling a good story, and he captures well both Ambrus's appeal and the atmosphere of the first few years of capitalism in Hungary... This Jesse James-like tale has the chance to be a sleeper that transcends nonfiction categories." *Publishers Weekly* (starred review) "Never was there a more entertaining case history of the fall of communism... Wholly enjoyable." *Kirkus* "Its hard to imagine what journalist Julian Rubinstein thought when he stumbled across the twisted tale of Attila Ambrus, but his fascination finds riveting realization in *Ballad of the Whiskey Robber*, a nonfiction account of a story that must be read to be believed... Rubinstein surveys the whole tale in grand storytelling fashion, following the action and the chase in entertaining detail. *Ballad of the Whiskey Robber* is more than just an impressive yarn, though: Set against a rich backdrop of hope and despair, the

book is a heartrending study of a character whose bungling tells the story of a world much bigger than his own."The Onion, AV Club