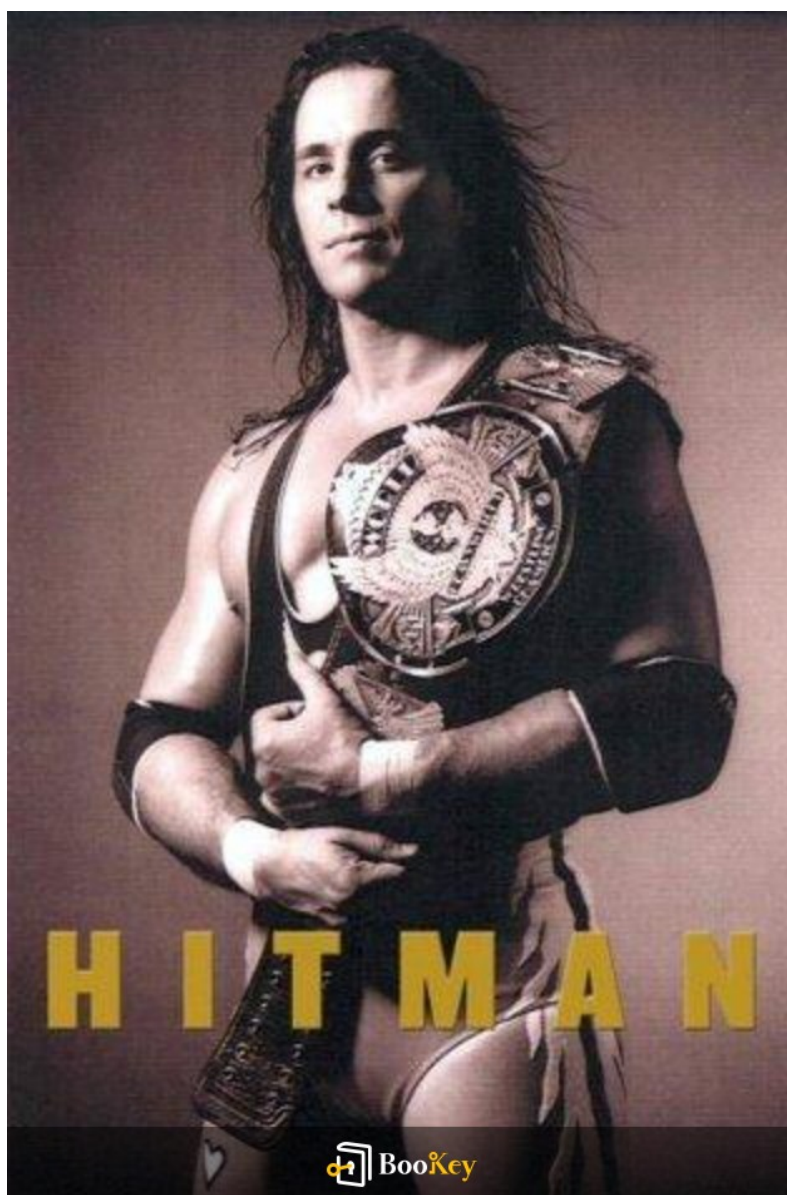


Hitman PDF

Bret Hart



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About the book

"Hitman," by Bret Hart, offers a raw and unfiltered glimpse into the true nature of professional wrestling. With each page, Hart shares his personal journey, starting from the modest beginnings in Calgary's notorious Hart family dungeon and culminating in his rise to global fame. This memoir is more than just a chronicle of wrestling matches; it's a deep dive into the intense emotions and fierce ambitions that characterize the sport both on and off the mat.

Hart's storytelling delves into the heartbreaking and often brutal realities of a life dedicated to wrestling—a life filled with betrayals, victories, and sacrifices made in the pursuit of success. Readers will find themselves on a captivating rollercoaster ride, experiencing the sweat, struggle, and sheer willpower that goes into his craft.

"Hitman" invites wrestling fans and newcomers alike to lace up their boots and step into Hart's storied legacy, revealing the powerful tales behind the persona of "The Hitman." Prepare for an eye-opening exploration of the high stakes and poignant revelations that come with living a life under the spotlight of this beloved yet brutal world.

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About the author

Profile: Bret Hart

- Full Name: Bret Hart
- Date of Birth: July 2, 1957
- Nationality: Canadian
- Profession: Professional Wrestler, Author, Media Personality

Background:

Bret Hart hails from the legendary Hart family, known for their significant contributions to the wrestling industry. As a second-generation wrestler, he built his reputation in the World Wrestling Federation (WWF), now known as WWE.

Ring Persona:

- Nickname: "The Hitman"
- Fighting Style: Renowned for technical skill and intricate storytelling within matches. Hart's performances captivated audiences with their dynamic athleticism and careful execution.

Achievements:

Bret Hart is celebrated not only as a wrestling icon but also as a successful author. His autobiography, *Hitman*, offers a candid perspective on his life,

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revealing the struggles and successes he encountered throughout his career and personal life.

Legacy:

Hart's influence extends beyond the ring, as he remains a respected figure in the world of wrestling and entertainment, continuing to inspire fans and aspiring wrestlers alike.

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Hitman Summary

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Hitman Summary Chapter List

1. A Journey Through the Life and Times of Bret Hart
2. The Rise of the Hart Family Wrestling Dynasty
3. Conflicts, Rivalries, and the Battle for Respect
4. Behind the Curtain: The Truth About the Wrestling Business
5. Legacy and Reflection: Bret Hart's Impact on Wrestling

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1. A Journey Through the Life and Times of Bret Hart

The life of Bret Hart is intrinsically linked to the world of professional wrestling, a sport he not only revered but also dramatically shaped. Born on July 2, 1957, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, Bret was the second of four children in the Hart family, which would later be recognized as one of wrestling's most iconic dynasties. His father, Stu Hart, was a legendary wrestler and promoter, founder of the Stampede Wrestling promotion that nurtured many wrestling talents. The Hart brothers, including Owen, Bruce, Keith, and the infamous Teddy, as well as their sisters, turned the family home into a wrestling school, paving the way for a brand of wrestling that blended athleticism with storytelling.

Bret's journey to stardom took off in the 1970s, when he joined Stampede Wrestling as a young man of 16. He started as a referee, but quickly transitioned into a wrestling role, honing his craft under the watchful eye of his father's tutelage. Recognizing the importance of creating an engaging persona, Bret adopted the nickname "The Hitman" and began to carve out a unique style that emphasized technical prowess and psychological storytelling, setting him apart in an era dominated by larger-than-life characters.

As the 1980s rolled in, Bret transitioned to the World Wrestling Federation

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(WWF), where he sought to establish himself in a more prominent wrestling landscape. Teaming with his brother-in-law, Jim Neidhart, they formed the dynamic tag team known as The Hart Foundation. They captivated audiences with their wrestling skills, charisma, and a strong heel persona that had fans booing and cheering in equal measure. Their success propelled them into the spotlight and laid the groundwork for Bret's later elevation to a singles competitor.

Bret's rise in WWF coincided with the dramatic transformation of wrestling itself. Wrestling was moving from regional territories to a more national and global stage, and iconic figures such as Hulk Hogan were defining the industry. However, during this period of change, Bret distinguished himself with a relentless work ethic, technical skill, and an intense dedication to storytelling in the ring. By the early 1990s, he attained superstardom, becoming a WWE Champion—the first Canadian to do so—and known for his legendary matches against the likes of Shawn Michaels, Ric Flair, and The Undertaker.

Yet with fame came immense pressure. Bret faced numerous challenges within the wrestling business, including conflicts with both management and peers who increasingly found the need to outdo one another in a cutthroat environment. His famously tense rivalry with Shawn Michaels, rooted in both in-ring competition and personal conflict, became a defining narrative

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of the wrestling era. Both men were regarded as the best of their time—Michaels' flair contrasting with Hart's technical style—creating an enduring conflict that drew fans and contributed heavily to the storytelling philosophy of professional wrestling.

Throughout his career, Bret Hart also grappled with issues behind the scenes of the wrestling business. He candidly discusses the industry's often brutal realities, including the toll it takes on personal relationships, the balancing act of family life, and the intensity of performing under scrutiny. His involvement in the infamous Montreal Screwjob in 1997 is perhaps one of the most controversial moments in wrestling history, leading to feelings of betrayal and a subsequent shift in how the wrestling industry operated.

As Bret Hart navigated through the glories and tribulations of his wrestling journey, his contributions to the sport became clear. His emphasis on in-ring storytelling, respect for opponents, and dedication to craft laid a foundation that future generations of wrestlers would build upon. He not only influenced the likes of future wrestlers, including Daniel Bryan and CM Punk, but also left an indelible mark on the perception of wrestlers as athletes deserving of respect.

Today, as a revered figure in wrestling, Bret Hart's career encapsulates a journey filled with extraordinary accomplishments, heartbreaking

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challenges, and the relentless pursuit of excellence. His life story is one of resilience, talent, and undeniable impact, honoring a legacy that still resonates within the world of professional wrestling.

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2. The Rise of the Hart Family Wrestling Dynasty

The journey of the Hart family within the world of professional wrestling is a tale steeped in tradition, ambition, and determination. Bret Hart, the author of "Hitman," chronicles in vivid detail how his family rose from humble beginnings to become a cornerstone of the wrestling industry. The Hart family's roots in wrestling can be traced back to the 1950s when Stu Hart, Bret's father, began running a wrestling promotion in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. As a former amateur wrestler and a pioneer in the wrestling world, Stu laid the foundations of what would become the Hart Family Wrestling Dynasty.

Stu's promotion, Stampede Wrestling, not only showcased wrestling talent but also served as a training ground for many aspiring wrestlers, including his own children. The Hart House, located in the backyard of the family home, became a legendary training spot where Bret and his siblings were introduced to the world of grappling. The infamous "Dungeon," as it was called, was a harsh training environment that sculpted the formidable physique and wrestling skills of those who trained therein. Through grueling workouts and rigorous drills, the Hart siblings were molded into top-tier wrestlers, a testament to what hard work and family legacy could achieve.

The rise of the Hart family in wrestling was not just about physical prowess;



it was also about the business acumen instilled in them by Stu Hart. The family understood the importance of storytelling in wrestling and how to captivate audiences. The Hart brothers—Bret, Owen, Bruce, and Keith—were not just wrestlers; they were characters who brought their family saga into the ring, earning them the admiration and respect of fans. This relationship with the audience was further enhanced by Bret's natural charisma and exceptional in-ring skills. His innovative style and technical prowess quickly elevated him within the ranks of professional wrestling.

Throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the Hart family's prominence grew as they established themselves in various wrestling territories across North America. By the time Bret reached the WWF in the early 90s, the Hart family name was already respected and recognized. Bret became known as "The Hitman," a gimmick that capitalized on his wrestling heritage while also introducing a unique persona—a combination of villainy and integrity that resonated with fans. His evolution from a supporting character as part of the Hart Foundation to a main event superstar illustrates the success of the Hart family dynasty.

One of the defining moments in the Hart family's wrestling legacy was when Bret became the first Canadian to be crowned World Wrestling Federation Champion. This achievement was more than just a personal victory; it symbolized the culmination of years of hard work from his father and the

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entire Hart family. With the title in hand, Bret Hart was poised to not only elevate his own career but also the reputation of Canadian wrestling on the global stage, highlighting the impact that the Hart family had on the industry.

The rise of the Hart Family Wrestling Dynasty showcases not only the evolution of wrestling as a sport but also the importance of dedication and family support in achieving success. The principles that Stu Hart instilled in his children continue to resonate within the wrestling world today, showcasing the enduring legacy of the Hart family. As Bret Hart reflects on his family's journey, he reinforces the notion that their success was not merely a product of wrestling talent but a deep-rooted passion for the business, coupled with an unwavering commitment to family values.

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3. Conflicts, Rivalries, and the Battle for Respect

In "Hitman," Bret Hart provides a deeply personal perspective on the intense rivalries and conflicts that shaped not only his wrestling career but also the broader landscape of professional wrestling during the late 20th century. Hart sets the stage for this narrative by detailing his emergence from the Hart wrestling dynasty, emphasizing the expectations and pressures that came with his family's name.

The Hart family, regarded as one of the most prominent families in wrestling, produced several notable stars. Bret had to navigate the legacy of his father, Stu Hart, and siblings, which often placed enormous burdens on him to prove his worthiness. This struggle for respect was a recurring theme throughout his career, especially as he rose through the ranks of both the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) and World Championship Wrestling (WCW).

One of the most significant rivalries documented in "Hitman" is that between Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels. This conflict was emblematic of not just a personal feud but also a clash of ideologies within wrestling. Bret Hart emphasized the importance of in-ring storytelling and technical proficiency, while Shawn Michaels mirrored the more flamboyant, entertaining styles that were becoming popular at the time. This cultural clash manifested



vividly during their infamous programs, leading to deeply personal and heated confrontations both inside and outside the ring.

The rivalry reached its zenith during the late 1990s, particularly culminating in the events of the Montreal Screwjob in 1997—a moment that not only marked a significant turning point in Bret’s career but also transformed the wrestling industry. The screwjob involved Bret being double-crossed by Vince McMahon, losing his WWF Championship title to Shawn Michaels without his consent. This betrayal highlighted the cutthroat nature of the wrestling industry, blurring the lines between scripted performances and genuine hostilities. It led to a profound sense of distrust and retribution that reverberated throughout Bret’s life, complicating his relationship with the promotion and its leaders long after he departed.

Furthermore, Bret’s conflicts extended beyond individual rivalries; they also included broader struggles for respect within the wrestling business. As the WWF shifted towards more entertainment-focused storylines and larger-than-life characters, Bret found himself pitted against a system that increasingly overlooked his technical skills in favor of shock value and spectacle. This tension manifested in various ways, from heated negotiations over contracts and creative direction to frustrations over being undervalued compared to his peers, many of whom he felt were less deserving.

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The challenge for Bret Hart was not only to maintain his identity as "The Hitman" but also to demand the respect he felt entitled to as a performer. He became a voice for wrestlers who valued tradition and technical wrestling, wanting to carve out a space for their contributions in a climate that seemed to favor athleticism tied with celebrity allure. His battles with promoters, executives, and even fellow wrestlers for acknowledgment and fair treatment ultimately became part of his legacy, cementing him as an influential figure in wrestling who stood his ground against the industry's ever-growing promotional machine.

Throughout "Hitman," Hart reflects on these conflicts with a blend of pride and regret, providing insight into the sacrifices made and the principles upheld. His journey documents a fierce battle for respect—not just on a personal level but also as a broader commentary on the evolution of professional wrestling, punctuating the importance of legacy, honor, and the relentless quest for recognition in a world that often prioritized the spectacle over substance.

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4. Behind the Curtain: The Truth About the Wrestling Business

Bret Hart's account of his life in professional wrestling provides readers with a behind-the-scenes look at what the business truly encompasses, beyond the glitz and glamour portrayed on television screens. Wrestling might seem like a simple combination of athleticism and entertainment to the casual viewer, but Hart delves into the complexities of the industry, revealing both the artistry and the harsh realities of being a wrestler.

One of the most significant themes in this section of the book is the concept of 'working the crowd.' Hart explains that while wrestling matches are scripted, the ability to engage the audience in a compelling narrative is vital. Wrestlers train not only to execute moves but to master the timing and psychology that can turn a simple match into a captivating story. An example Hart shares is his legendary feud with Shawn Michaels, which not only involved physical confrontation but also psychological warfare that drew fans into the narrative. Their rivalry was based on real-life tensions, which intensified the drama, making their matches feel authentic and stakes feel high. Hart emphasizes that this engagement forms the core of what makes wrestling appealing, making fans care about the characters involved as if they were part of an epic saga.

Hart also exposes the darker side of the profession, including the physical



toll it takes on the athletes. The relentless travel schedule, combined with the demanding performance requirements, often leads to injuries, mental health struggles, and a ruthless environment where vulnerability can be exploited. He recounts his own experiences with injuries, such as when he was forced to wrestle despite being in pain, a situation not uncommon among his peers. This relentless culture, where economic pressures can override concern for well-being, paints a sobering picture of a world that values ticket sales and ratings over the health of its performers.

For Hart, the loyalty and camaraderie among wrestlers act as a double-edged sword. Although many wrestlers form strong bonds, this often leads to complex dynamics backstage, where rivalries can flare up outside the ring and affect professional relationships. The infamous Montreal Screwjob—a notorious incident involving Hart, Vince McMahon, and Shawn Michaels—serves as a pivotal example of how trust can be manipulated in a cutthroat environment. Here, Hart was betrayed on the biggest stage of his career, igniting debates about ethics and respect in wrestling, which ultimately prompted Hart to reflect on the deeper implications of loyalty and betrayal within the wrestling fraternity.

Additionally, Hart discusses the shifting landscape of the wrestling business, noting how it has evolved over the years with changes in audience preferences, television rights, and the emergence of alternative promotions,

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such as WWE and All Elite Wrestling (AEW). He highlights how the business's prioritization shifted from focusing solely on wrestling to emphasizing entertainment, creating a product that sometimes fell outside traditional wrestling narratives. Innovations like pay-per-view events and reality show elements have transformed how wrestling is consumed and monetized.

Further, Hart critiques the growing power of corporations and how this has deeply influenced wrestling's artistic integrity. The pressure to cater to a broader audience leads to compromises that may sometimes undermine the storytelling that originally captivated fans. By pointing to examples where corporate interests superseded creative storytelling, he urges readers to consider how the wrestling business can sometimes lose sight of its roots in favor of market strategies.

In summary, this chapter stands out for its blend of personal anecdotes and broader commentary on the wrestling industry. Hart doesn't just recount his experiences; he provides an exploration of the wrestling world that reveals the intricate interplay between performance, physicality, and psychological strategy. The truths he shares extend beyond wrestling, shedding light on broader themes of loyalty, art versus business, and the toll of fame and performance on the human body and psyche. In providing a candid, unfiltered look at the realities that lie 'behind the curtain', Hart enriches the

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reader's understanding of professional wrestling as both an art form and a complex, often brutal industry.

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5. Legacy and Reflection: Bret Hart's Impact on Wrestling

Bret Hart is undeniably one of the most influential figures in the history of professional wrestling. His contributions to the industry extend far beyond the ring; they encompass an entire philosophy regarding how wrestling is perceived and performed. Known as 'The Hitman,' Bret Hart revolutionized wrestling with his exceptional in-ring abilities, storytelling, and dedication to the craft, which helped elevate the standards of professional wrestling.

One of Hart's most significant impacts was his insistence on the importance of technical wrestling and storytelling. At a time when larger-than-life personalities and high-flying maneuvers were gaining popularity, Hart maintained that the essence of wrestling lay in the ability to tell a compelling story through seamlessly executed matches. His technical prowess was unrivaled; he was known for his meticulous attention to detail, which lent authenticity to his matches and made him a beloved figure among fans who appreciated the art of wrestling. Hart's philosophy of wrestling as a form of storytelling can be observed in his iconic feuds, particularly with the likes of Shawn Michaels, Stone Cold Steve Austin, and The Undertaker. Each rivalry was steeped in emotional stakes and showcased the depth of character that Hart embodied.

Moreover, Bret Hart's tenure in the WWE during the 1990s marked a

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transformative period in the wrestling landscape. He was at the forefront of the so-called 'Attitude Era,' a time when wrestling began to shift toward a more adult-oriented audience. Hart's battles were not merely scripted bouts but were narratives that reflected real-life tensions, giving fans a reason to invest emotionally in the outcomes. This shift in storytelling aligned closely with societal changes, as fans began to appreciate complex characters over simple face-heel dichotomies. His match against Austin at WrestleMania 13, in particular, is frequently cited as a pivotal moment. It blended narrative and wrestling in a way that captivated audiences and helped redefine the norms of professional wrestling.

Another notable aspect of Hart's legacy is his fierce commitment to professionalism and respect for the sport. Through the tumultuous years surrounding the infamous Montreal Screwjob, Hart maintained his integrity and kept wrestling's legitimacy in mind. He fought for the rights of performers before and after the incident, adding weight to discussions about contract negotiations and performers' rights in an industry known for its unpredictable nature. This ethos has resonated with countless wrestlers who followed in his footsteps, influencing how they navigate their careers.

In retrospect, Bret Hart's influence on future generations of wrestlers is unmistakable. Many performers cite him as a primary inspiration, highlighting Hart's technical skill and dedication to storytelling. Wrestlers

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like Daniel Bryan and Seth Rollins have openly expressed their admiration for Hart's style and ability to connect with audiences on both emotional and technical levels. Hart's influence can also be seen in the revival of technical wrestling, where many contemporary talents regard him as a guiding luminary. This has contributed to a renewed appreciation for in-ring psychology, match pacing, and the art of selling, elements that Hart mastered throughout his career.

Additionally, Bret Hart's body of work continues to be analyzed and celebrated in wrestling circles. Documentaries, tribute shows, and podcasts featuring discussions about his matches ensure that newcomers and veterans alike recognize his contribution to the sport. The matches he produced, including his bouts against Mr. Perfect, Ric Flair, and his brother Owen Hart, are often held up as benchmarks for modern wrestlers to aspire to.

Finally, in view of his complex legacy, Hart has embraced his role as a veteran and mentor. He often shares his experiences and advice with the younger generation, reinforcing the importance of hard work, respect for the business, and the art of wrestling itself. Bret Hart's impact transcends the ring; he embodies a philosophy that prioritizes passion, discipline, and storytelling in wrestling, ensuring that his legacy continues to influence the industry long after he hung up his boots.

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