Never Love a Stranger

Harold Robbins

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"Robbins's books are packed with action, sustained by strong narrative drive, and are given vitality by his own colorful life." —*The Wall Street Journal*

Based on a $100 bet with his boss that he couldn't write a novel, Harold Robbins penned his first book, *Never Love a Stranger*. Not only did Robbins win the bet, the novel became a best-seller, was adapted into the classic noir gangster film of the same name starring John Barrymore and Steve McQueen, and launched the career of one of the world's best-selling authors of all time.

Never Love a Stranger, still considered one of Robbins' most powerful books, tells the story of Francis "Frankie" Kane, an orphan growing up in the dirty world of New York's Hell's Kitchen. After being kicked out of a Catholic orphanage when it is discovered that he is of Jewish descent, a confused and deeply distraught Frankie turns to a life of crime, the only life he knows, and he's good at it. Frankie quickly makes a name for himself and becomes one of New York's most dangerous men, ruling the city with an iron fist and indulging in his passion for sex, power and the best things life has to offer—regardless of whether they're for sale. But Frankie's childhood friend, Jerry, grows to become an ambitious, tough-as-nails district attorney—determined to bring Frankie down.

In Robbins' writing debut, he takes an unflinching look at the menacing New York of a bygone era when the syndicate ruled without mercy—and the world was introduced to a writer who would influence pop culture worldwide for decades to come.

More than 25 *New York Times* best-sellers later—many, like his most famous novel, *The Carpetbaggers*, reaching the #1 spot—and with over 750 million copies sold to date, Robbins became one of the most successful authors of all time. This is the novel that started it all—giving the world its first taste of Robbins' world of sex, corruption, and intrigue.

About the Author

Harold Robbins (1916–1997) is one of the best-selling American fiction writers of all time, ranking 5th on the World's Best-Selling Fiction Author List just behind William Shakespeare and Agatha Christie. He wrote over 25 best-selling novels, sold more than 750 million copies in 42 languages and spent over 300 weeks combined on *The New York Times* best sellers list. His books were adapted into 13 commercially successful films and also television series that garnered numerous Oscar®, Golden Globe® and Primetime Emmy® nominations starring Steve McQueen, Elvis Presley, Laurence Olivier, Bette Davis, Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones and more.

The self-proclaimed "world's best writer in plain English," Robbins wrote novels that resonated with audiences due to their graphic depictions of sex, violence, power and drugs, and the multilayered complexities of his characters, as evidenced by his best-selling novels *Never Love a Stranger*, *The Carpetbaggers*, *Where Love Has Gone*, and *The Adventurers*. He once said in an interview: "People make their own choices every day about what they are willing to do. We don't have the right to judge them or label

them. At least walk in their shoes before you do."

Robbins' personal life was as fascinating to the public as his novels. An enthusiastic participant in the social and sexual revolution of the 1960s, Robbins cultivated a "playboy" image and maintained friendships with stars including Frank Sinatra, Clint Eastwood, Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis, Jr., Dino De Laurentiis, Robert Evans, Ringo Starr, Barbara Eden, Lena Horne and Quincy Jones, and was one of the first novelists to be prominently featured in gossip magazines, earning him the title of "The World's First Rock Star Author."

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