

Which Lie Did I Tell?: More Adventures in the Screen Trade

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William Goldman's *Adventures in the Screen Trade* was a classic for moviephiles, revealing all the secrets behind the business of the big screen. Now, screenwriter extraordinaire Goldman returns to give us the latest lowdown on Hollywood moviemaking. He dishes the dirt, adventure by adventure, from his most recent films -- the successes and the failures -- with inside anecdotes from such star-studded sets as *The Princess Bride*, *Misery*, and *Absolute Power*. We find out what it's like to work with Mel Gibson, Michael Douglas, Richard Donner, Rob Reiner, Clint Eastwood, and all the rest of Hollywood's major power players. But this is much more than just a tourist's guide to the backlot. Goldman conducts a virtual writer's clinic: he tells us exactly what works on film and why, dissecting classic moments in great screenplays ranging from the crop-dusting scene in *North by Northwest* to the zipper scene in *There's Something about Mary*. He gives us insider tips on everything from good storytelling to effective pitch-making, and he shows us where his ideas come from and what he does with them when they get there. Finally, he brings together some of today's top screenwriters to analyze, doctor, or destroy a screenplay he created just for this book.

Enlightening as well as entertaining, *Which Lie Did I Tell?* is certain to follow its predecessor as the definitive guide to the real workings behind the glitzy facade of contemporary Hollywood.

"Bill Goldman has proven, once again, that he is the most observant, knowledgeable and intuitive screenwriter in the business today."

-- Joe Roth, Producer and former Chairman, Walt Disney Studios

"Almost as great as an evening with the irrepressible, brilliant, sometimes infuriating, always original -- one and only Bill."

-- Joel Schumacher, Director

Something odd, if predictable, became of screenwriter William Goldman after he wrote the touchstone tell-all book on filmmaking, *Adventures in the Screen Trade* (1983), he became a Hollywood leper. Goldman opens his long-awaited sequel by writing about his years of exile before he found himself--again--as a valuable writer in Hollywood.

Fans of the two-time Oscar-winning writer (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *All the President's Men*) have anxiously waited for this follow-up since his career serpented into a variety of big hits and critical bombs in the '80s and '90s. Here Goldman scoops on *The Princess Bride* (his own favorite), *Misery*, *Maverick*, *Absolute Power*, and others. Goldman's conversational style makes him easy to read for the film novice but meaty enough for the detail-oriented pro. His tendency to ramble into other subjects may be maddening (he suddenly switches from being on set with Eastwood to anecdotes about Newman and Garbo), but we can excuse him because of one fact alone: he is so darn entertaining.

Like most sequels, *Which Lie* follows the structure of the original. Both Goldman books have three parts: stories about his movies, a deconstruction of Hollywood (here the focus is on great movie scenes), and a workshop for screenwriters. (The paperback version of the first book also comes with his full-length screenplay of *Butch*; his collected works are also worth checking out). This final segment is another gift--a toolbox--for the aspiring screenwriter. Goldman takes newspaper clippings and other ideas and asks the reader to diagnose their cinematic possibilities. Goldman also gives us a new screenplay he's written (*The Big A*), which is analyzed--with brutal honesty--by other top writers. With its juicy facts and valuable sidebars on what makes good screenwriting, this is another entertaining

must-read from the man who coined what has to be the most-quoted adage about movie-business success: "Nobody knows anything." --Doug Thomas

"Two-time Oscar-winning screenwriter Goldman follows up his irreverent, gossipy and indispensable screenwriting bible, *Adventures in the Screen Trade* (1983), with this equally wise, tart and very funny account of the filmmaking process...Wildly opinionated but astute, Goldman is a 35-year industry veteran with lots of tales and a knack for spinning them...Movie buffs of all stripes, even those with no interest in writing for the screen, will enjoy this sublimely entertaining adventure."

-- Publishers Weekly (starred)

"Which Lie Did I Tell? is funny, tough, honest, true and also beautifully written. It is as personal as a long and delightful letter from the smartest friend you ever had."

-- Robert Benton, two-time Academy Award-winning screenwriter

"Bill Goldman has done it again with his highly entertaining and self-deprecating humor. He's one of the best writers I've ever had the pleasure of working with. He takes Hollywood apart -- which, in this case, is a very good thing."

-- Clint Eastwood

"Almost as great as an evening with the irrepressible, brilliant, sometimes infuriating, always original -- one and only Bill."

-- Joel Schumacher, Director

"Funny, insightful, and brutally honest ... Bill Goldman once again takes us inside the motion picture industry in an intensely personal way. So what if he'll never work in this town again."

-- Alan F. Horn, President and COO, Warner Bros.

"This is entertaining -- even by Goldman's usual standards. Just about the most fun you can have reading."

-- John Cleese

"If you are thinking of going to film school, don't. Read *Which Lie Did I Tell?* instead. It will save you a great deal of money and tell you more about the realities of the picture business than any academic course of study. Mr. Goldman has won two Oscars and the Writers Guild Lifetime Achievement Award. He wears his credits like wound stripes, and if there is anything he does not know about the movies, it is not worth knowing. He has a New York bias that I do not buy into (I like Los Angeles), but beyond that, he is entertaining and, more importantly, right."

-- John Gregory Dunne

"People in the industry love to quote Bill Goldman's line that 'nobody knows anything,' but in fact, Goldman knows a great deal about storytelling and filmmaking and he superbly sets forth this wisdom in his latest book."

-- Peter Bart, Editor-in-Chief, Variety

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-- Joe Roth, Former Chairman, Walt Disney Studios

"If you ever wanted to understand the power of the written word, William Goldman's Which Lie Did I Tell? tells all brilliantly."

-- Peter Guber, Chairman, Mandalay Entertainment

Other Books

The Movie Business Book, Third Edition, Drawing from a variety of experts in an industry that has seen major technological advances since the second edition, The Movie Business Book, Third Edition, offers the most comprehensive, authoritative overview of this fascinating, global business. A must-read for industry newcomers, film students and movie buffs, this new edition features key movers and shakers, such as Tom Rothman, chairman of Fox Filmed Entertainment; Michael Grillo, head of Feature Film Production at DreamWorks SKG; Sydney Pollack; Mel Brooks; and many others. A definitive sourcebook, it covers nuts-and-bolts details about financing, revenue streams, marketing, DVDs, globalization, the Internet and new technologies. All of this -- and more -- is detailed in this new edition of the classic Movie Business Book.

❓ ❓ ❓ ❓ ❓ . If an original screenplay is commissioned by a producer, or written on spec by a writer and then purchased by a producer, there may be an effort to make a book deal before a financier-distributor gets involved."