

## The Book of Irwin Gould: (IDG)

**Irwin Gould**

ReadersMagnet

(84pp)

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*The Book of Irwin Gould is a swift actor's memoir that espouses values of resilience, determination, and faith in oneself.*

About remaining resilient through rejection and hardships, Irwin Gould's memoir *The Book of Irwin Gould* moves from his Caribbean upbringing to his appearance in major blockbusters, including *Bad Boys II*.

Brief and straightforward, the memoir discusses the values instilled in Gould from a young age, thanks to close family relationships and a sense of God. His love of his family tethered him through tragedies, including Hurricane Hugo in 1989. He also lived with his grandmother in New York until her death, after which the book shifts to cover Gould's experiences with modeling and acting. His family members are all but dropped from the book's second section, which is instead devoted to quick behind-the-scenes sequences on the process, from auditions to shooting; there are notes on how actors are expected to behave around their more famous counterparts. Gould is candid about rejections but also details landing minor roles, taking every opportunity available, and always remaining grateful.

Individual chapters are no more than a handful of pages long—mere snapshots that avoid lingering on their emotional stakes. Gould recalls his family being trapped in their house during a hurricane, but just two pages are allotted to these circumstances, plus an aftermath chapter that is less than a full page long. And Gould's grandmother's death, despite its monumental significance in Gould's life, is covered in the span of four pages—the longest chapter in the book. Generic, repetitive, and nonspecific phrases dilute the book further, as with "Never count yourself out," "Nothing comes easy that is worth having," and "There are many sacrifices you must make and challenges you will face." The transitions between scenes are rapid-fire as well.

In the end, the book's two sections are too dissonant to hold attention. Gould's inner life is neglected in the book's second half, placing it at odds with the more intimate first section covering the dynamics of Gould's family and their values. Family topics do not reemerge until the book's end, which mentions Gould's three sons in passing: they are credited with supporting him, though family issues are not elaborated on otherwise. Further, there are punctuation errors throughout, and the book's formatting is inconsistent.

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NATALIE WOLLENZIEN (January 24, 2024)

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