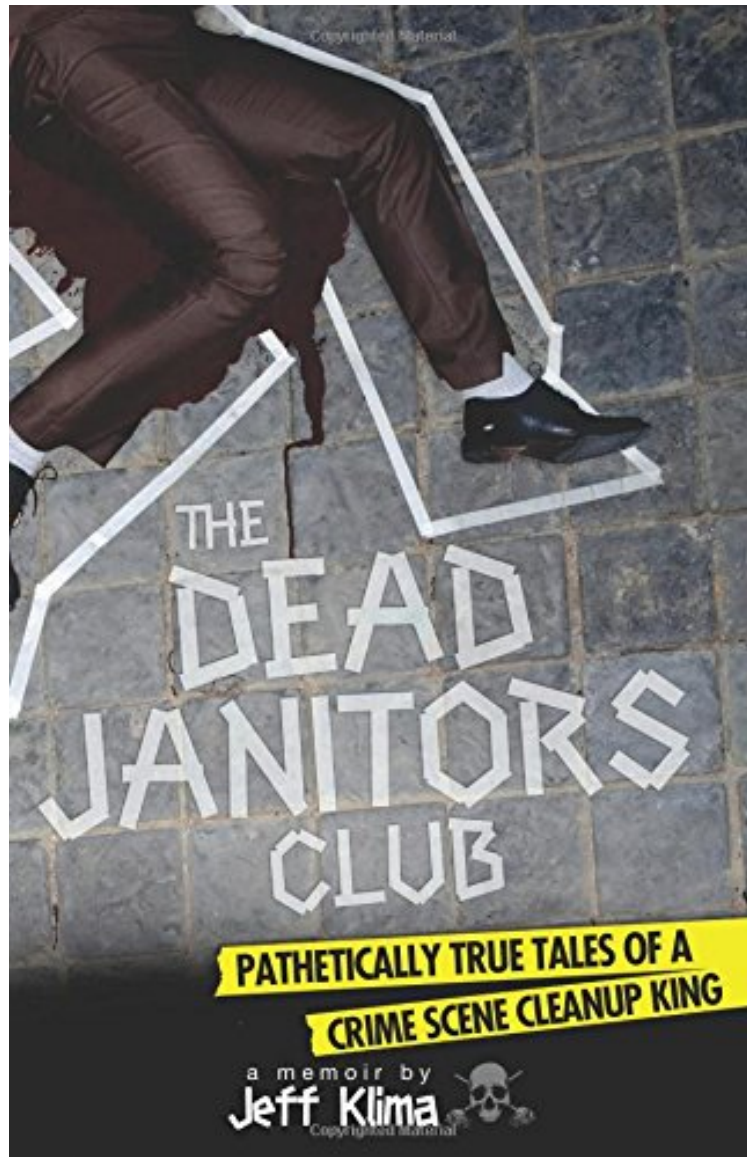


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The Dead Janitors Club: Pathetically True Tales of a Crime Scene Cleanup King

Jeff Klima

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Jeff Klima : The Dead Janitors Club: Pathetically True Tales of a Crime Scene Cleanup King before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dead Janitors Club: Pathetically True Tales of a Crime Scene Cleanup King:

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book, until I read, "Another man, also ethnic (and more money off the bill), joins us. I don't remember his name, so we'll call him Osama." Gore I can handle, but I can't stomach racism in my entertainment. It just isn't funny. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Get Prepared to Cringe! By Lisa Espich Reading "The Dead Janitors Club" I was reminded of the movie Sunshine Cleaning, but this was a lot more twisted and shocking! I had to cringe my way through some spots in the book, but that just made it more fun to read. Klima's raw, honest writing and dry sense of humor made this memoir unique. I can't say I've read anything else like it and I found it quite entertaining. Prepare yourself -- this one's not for the wimpy! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I love this book By Customer This book is hilarious and interesting at the same time. Jeff (he makes you feel like you know him personally) is very candid about his ups and downs with the business and his personal life. He delivers raw descriptions of what the profession is all about, and I find that fascinating. Many of his descriptions made me laugh out loud (see: exploding airplane full of chili or "you made the mistake of thinking you'd be on top."). I wouldn't want to do the job, but it sure was great reading about it.

It had been well over a month since I had seen or heard from Dirk, and it was showing in my bank account...I was tempted to start searching for another job. I still had faith, though, that somehow, someday, I was meant for this line of work... "Hello?" I mumbled, not recognizing the number on the caller ID. "Jeff, it's Dirk," said the voice. I waited curiously, wondering who the hell Dirk was. "We've got one," he eventually said when I failed to answer. We had never bothered to get together for any sort of training, and now, it was too late. After toiling for minimum wage for years, Jeff Klima got an unexpected offer: to head up a brand new crime scene cleanup company in Orange County. The upside? A chance to make incredible money in a field with no competition. The downside? Everything else about the job. The Dead Janitors Club is an engrossing, hilarious, and morbidly fascinating memoir of life and death, from someone whose life is death. From his first job—where a piece of brain fell off the ceiling and landed in his eye—to having to clean up one of his former neighbors, The Dead Janitors Club is more than just a retelling of crime scenes and what it takes to clean them up. It is a memoir about struggling to survive college, love, life, and keeping one's sanity when one never knows if, the next time the phone rings, you must delve into the darker side of life and death.

The Dead Janitors Club is an engrossing, hilarious, and morbidly fascinating memoir of life and death from someone whose life is all about death. Klima brings the hidden world of crime scene cleanup to life. About the Author Jeff Klima is the cofounder of Orange County Crime Scene Cleaners. In addition to collaborating with New York Times bestselling science-fiction author Steve Alten on The Minimum Wage, he has sold a screenplay, A Line in the Sand about the Iraq war to Cornerstone Pictures, which is currently in pre-production rewrites. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. From Chapter 1 I walk into the lobby of a shockingly splendid hotel, and the wheel on the cash register in my mind is clicking audibly upward. I anticipate leaving this place a few thousand dollars richer than when I walked in. So many factors are at play here; I am chomping at the bit, trying to discern them all. French doors gilded with a gold overlay breeze open effortlessly before me, working off unseen sensors and a pneumatic arm. Caucasian employees stare pleasantly at me from behind the counter. From a financial standpoint, this is a good thing. White people are terrified of death. An overabundance of detachment and safety in our culture has resulted in "whitey" becoming a benign collective of soft-shelled whiners, people who understand pain only in terms of there not being three-ply toilet paper on sale at the supermarket closest to their condo. Ethnic folks are confronted by death more frequently than white people, and that numbed acceptance of it can mean a lot less money for a guy in my line of work. I stroll around a polite setup of stain-free and richly upholstered dark couches arranged around a coffee table holding stacks of newspapers from various regions of the world. The smell of breakfast fills the lobby. Whether it's pumped in or they have a café tucked somewhere, it still means that they give a damn about their multisensory first impression, and that is good news for me. I set my clipboard on the counter and straighten my black polo shirt so that the biohazard symbol is smartly on display. "Hello, sir. How can I help you?" the attractive, brunette counter girl asks. The orange script practically glows off my chest, screaming out what I do, but her eyes never waver from mine, not once. She's been trained well. "I'm looking for Gary," I say. "Right away, sir." She picks up her walkie-talkie, blocking out her mouth, but I can discern the same clipped and effortlessly polite tone with which she addressed me. I feel good...important...larger than life, and regret not parking beneath the valet awning, right in the middle of the lane, my car torqued at a hard angle to create an impasse, letting everyone know the Crime Scene Cleaner is here. It is the sort of dick move that I typically do these days—carefree, powerful me. What stopped me on this occasion was that my car had the misfortune to be parked the previous night under some sort of avian toilet. A ridiculous amount of white bird shit, speckled with the green remnants of devoured insects, gave my red car a rather polka-dotted appearance. I pick up my clipboard and step over to the coffee table to scan headlines from the news of the world, hopeful that the Orange County Register will scream about mass death and murder in its banner headline. But probably not, because I would have already known about it. Gary appears from behind me, looking dapper but terribly ethnic, which yanks several thousand dollars off what I was hoping to make the price tag. I curse silently behind a confident and winning smile. "Hi, Jeff Klima from Orange County Crime Scene Cleaners," I say, extending my hand and speaking first to inform

him that I am the alpha male. "Hi," he says, a bit puzzled, and I suddenly hope I am in the right place. He introduces himself and looks around ashamed, as if I were a homeless urchin who had obstinately wandered into the ornate lobby and began snacking on the odds and ends in a trash receptacle. "I understand you have some sort of scene..." I query further, losing some of my swagger, and I can't help but note how two years on the job suddenly doesn't feel like that much experience at all. Shit, I might as well have acne and a pubescent hard-on, considering the detectable quiver in my voice. It shocks me how quickly my overwhelming shyness can come roaring back to capsize my confidence. He politely shushes me with one raised hand, vibrating softly, panicked. I understand completely but say, "A suicide, maybe?" a bit loudly, as if I didn't, comfortably reestablishing my authority. The same trembling hand waves me out of the lobby and away from the guests checking in, who can undeniably read my shirt. We step out into the courtyard, a lush open-air affair, where hotel workers are scrambling to set up for some speaking engagement to take place a little later in the day. None of them make eye contact with me; they've been well trained. We wait in silence for a short eternity, though I'm eager to persist, having had to wake up well before noon to ready myself for this gig. Another man, also ethnic (and more money off the bill), joins us. I don't remember his name, so we'll call him Osama. He is better dressed than Gary, and I clue in to his seniority when Gary quickly moves aside, his eyes slightly downcast. I introduce myself to this man as well, comfortably meeting his gaze through his executive eyeglasses. This guy may be a fearsome boss to the minimum-wage herd working here, but to me he's just another jerk who needs my skills. It further empowers me. Osama shepherds Gary and myself quickly along manicured stone pathways past doors with placards that refer to the rooms beyond the doors as "suites." This is usually good news for me. This place, in its self-congratulatory way, considers itself a "nicer" establishment. I bet I can get some good money out of them after all. The elevator is farther away from the lobby than I would like, though, which is a glaring indication that this is an older hotel with fresh polish-not a good sign. It was built when places put less consideration into guest needs, and more into overall aesthetics and intent. Old hotel casinos do this, making guests walk through the main casino floor en route to their rooms, hoping the whirling lights and cheerful pings of jackpots being wheedled out will entice the guests into making a long detour at their expense. Stepping into the elevator further confirms my suspicions. The elevator, with its glass paneling staring out into the courtyard, has threadbare and nappy carpeting that would be completely verboten anywhere near the entrance or lobby. The elevator buttons, once a trickle of elite white circles, have faded to a stale version of their past glory. The elevator buttons run from top to bottom, though, with the higher floors listed at the top, convincing me that the hotel started off as a glitzy, hip place some time ago. We head for the third floor, the elevator doors closing around us like a tomb. I tap "Another One Bites the Dust" on my clipboard with my fingers as the elevator chugs upward, its pneumatic lift struggling far more than its brothers operating the front doors. Nobody speaks and nobody looks at each other, which is fine with me. The elevator halts with a lurch, and the doors swing open to reveal a maid's cart jutting obstinately across the pathway, completely oblivious to would-be passersby. The fat cats share a collective acknowledgment over this, and I develop the melancholy opinion that this year some woman's kids aren't going to have much of a...however you say "Christmas" in Spanish. The doors here, each similarly designated as suites, belie the fact that this hotel has no real suites, only standard rooms. It's one of those places that refer to every room as a "suite." This hotel lures guests in, rather like insects to a bug zapper, by using an alluring lobby complete with an English-speaking counter staff to make tourists feel comfortable-like they are going to have a high-dollar hotel experience. Once guests check in and take the walk to their "suite," however, they realize they've gotten the bum's rush, and similarly, so have I. This job practically feels now like I will be doing it for free.