



Ten on Sunday: The Secret Life of Men

Alan Eisenstock

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A moving, lyrical, eye-opening look at the true nature of intimacy among men.

The L.A. riots had an indelible effect upon the city of Los Angeles, upon the wider debate in this country about race, and especially -- in the pages of this wonderful memoir -- on ten weekend basketball players. After the riots, and once he'd fled his mid-city home for the relative safety of suburban Santa Monica, Alan Eisenstock at last found himself with a driveway that was big enough for a weekly basketball game. For years he'd yearned for this; now all that stood between him and the zone defense was the fruits of the carob tree that fell on the driveway and threatened to ruin the game. Once the surface was clear, however, Sundays were given over to a raucous, competitive, and hilarious series of ball games. But what began as a recreation soon became a chance to shatter the Boy Code once and for all.

So here they are: doctors, lawyers, writers, construction guys -- some single, some married -- all, however, committed to the game they're playing, and to the deepening of friendships the time together engenders. Along the way there's a fight and a falling-out; the tragic death of one of the guys' wives; a trip to Mexico that's right out of a buddy movie, except that these early-middle-aged men end up in bed by 9:30 P.M.; a laugh-out-loud karaoke session that has to be read to be believed; and more bagels than any book should ever be able to bear.

Holding it all together is Alan Eisenstock himself. His own personal journey from unhappy, stressed-out screenwriter to full-fledged, fulfilled book writer is the story of a man risking his financial and emotional life in order to follow his heart. And what begins as a weekly ritual of game-playing becomes, over five years, a meaningful exchange on marital issues, money worries, and the onset of various midlife crises. The result is a lovely, whimsical, and hilarious book about guys and what they talk about when their better halves are not around.

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