



# The Zeroes: My Misadventures in the Decade Wall Street Went Insane

*Randall Lane*

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What *Liar's Poker* was to the 1980s, *The Zeroes* is to the first decade of the new century: an insider's memoir of a gilded era when Wall Street went insane-and took the rest of us down with it.

Randall Lane never set out to become a Wall Street power broker. But during the decade he calls the Zeroes, he started a small magazine company that put him near the white-hot center of the biggest boom in history. Almost by accident, a man who drove a beat-up Subaru and lived in a rented walk-up became the go-to guy for big shots with nine-figure incomes.

Lane's saga began with a simple idea: a glossy magazine exclusively for and about traders, which would treat them like rock stars and entice them to splurge on luxury goods. *Trader Monthly* was an instant hit around the world. Wall Streeters loved the spotlight, and advertisers like Gulfstream, Maybach, and Bulgari loved the marketing opportunity.

To accelerate the buzz, Lane's staff threw parties featuring celebrities, premium steaks, cigars, and top-shelf vodka. Nothing was too expensive or too outrageous. Private jets in Napa Valley. Casino nights in London. And \$1,000-a-seat boxing matches in New York, where traders from Goldman Sachs and Bear Stearns pounded each other in front of tuxedoed throngs.

Before long, Wall Street's rich and powerful trusted Lane as a fellow insider-the guy who could turn an anonymous trader into a cover model and media darling. And the rest of the world sought him out as a way to tap into Wall Street's riches. As he emptied his bank account to help keep his little company afloat, he became a nexus for the absurd. Traders who turned 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina into multimillion-dollar windfalls. John McCain closing out the craps tables during an all-night gambling binge. Pop artist Peter Max hustling hundreds of thousands of dollars by selling traders paint-by-numbers portraits. Al Gore, John Travolta, Moby. Corrupt Caribbean rulers, the mobsters from *Goodfellas*, the pope. And a retired baseball star turned market guru named Lenny Dykstra, whose rise and fall was a great metaphor for the decade. All played roles in Lane's increasingly surreal world.

When the crash of 2008 hit, Lane's company and life savings were destroyed along with the high-flying traders and dealmakers his magazines exalted. But Lane walked away with something more lasting: an incredible true story, told by a skilled writer and reporter who sat squarely in the middle of one of the critical periods in modern financial and cultural history. People will turn to *The Zeroes* for many years to come, to find out what the era was *really* like.

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