

Basketball Junkie

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i was dead for thirty seconds that s what the cop in fall river told me when the emts found me there was a needle in my arm and a packet of heroin in the front seat at basketball crazy durfee high school in fall river massachusetts junior guard chris herren carried his family s and the city s dreams on his skinny frame his grandfather father and older brother had created their own sports legends in a declining city he was the last best hope for a career beyond the shuttered mills and factories herren was heavily recruited by major universities chosen as a mcdonald s all american featured in a sports illustrated cover story and at just seventeen years old became the central figure in fall river dreams an acclaimed book about the 1994 durfee team s quest for the state championship leaving fall river for college herren starred on jerry tarkanian s fresno state bulldogs team of talented misfits which included future nba players as well as future convicted felons his gritty tattooed hip hop persona drew the ire of rival fans and more national attention rolling stone profiled him 60 minutes interviewed him and the denver nuggets drafted him when the boston celtics acquired his contract he lived the dream of every massachusetts kid but off the court herren was secretly crumbling as his alcohol and drug use escalated and his life spiraled out of control twenty years later chris herren was married to his high school sweetheart the father of three young children and a heroin junkie his basketball career was over consumed by addictions he had no job no skills and was a sadly familiar figure to those in fall river who remembered him as a boy now prowling the streets he once ruled looking for a fix one day for a time he cannot remember he would die in his own words chris herren tells how he nearly lost everything and everyone he loved and how he found a way back to life powerful honest and dramatic basketball junkie is a remarkable memoir harrowing in its descent and heartening in its return

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