



Flim-Flam Man: A True Family History

Jennifer Vogel

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One frosty winter morning, Jennifer Vogel opened the newspaper and read that her father had gone on the run. John Vogel, fifty-two, had been arrested for single-handedly counter-feiting nearly \$20 million in U.S. currency -- the fourth-largest sum ever seized by federal agents -- and then released pending trial. Though Jennifer hadn't spoken to her father in more than four years, the police suspected he might turn up at her Minneapolis apartment. She examined the shadows outside her building, thought she spotted him at the grocery store and the bus stop. He had simply vanished.

Framed around the six months her father eluded authorities, Jennifer's memoir documents the police chase -- stakeouts, lie detector tests, even a segment on *Unsolved Mysteries* -- and vividly chronicles her tumultuous childhood while examining her father's legacy. A lifelong criminal who robbed banks, burned down buildings, scammed investors, and even plotted murder, John Vogel was also a hapless dreamer who wrote a novel, baked lemon meringue pies, and took his ten-year-old daughter to see *Rocky* in an empty theater on Christmas Eve. When it came time to pass his counterfeit bills, he spent them at Wal-Mart for political reasons.

Culling from memories, photo albums, public documents, and interviews with the handful of people who knew the real John Vogel, Jennifer has created an intensely moving psychological portrait of a charismatic, larger-than-life figure -- a father who loved her and whom, in spite of everything, she loved back.

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