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Bangkok Hard Time: The Surreal True Story of How a Western Teenager Came of Age in 1960s Bangkok, Turned International Drug Smuggler and Walked the Prison Yards of Thailand's Notorious Bangkok Hilton

By Jon Cole



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It is 1967 Bangkok, the Summer of Love, and for teenager Jon Cole, son of a US Green Beret colonel serving in the Vietnam War, life as a young Westerner in the City of Angels is sweeter than mangoes on sticky rice with coconut milk ... until he is introduced to the infamous House of Lek. Drawn to the underbelly of Bangkok, the International School Bangkok pupil soon discovers ganja, opium and the two-dollar bordellos. What follows is a surreal but true story of one Westerner's relationship with Thailand spanning four decades. A drug habit picked up at the House of Lek with schoolmates and GIs on R&R from Vietnam leads to a lucrative career as a drug smuggler, a nasty smack habit and, ultimately, a long stretch inside Bangkok's notorious prison, the "Bangkok Hilton". At the heart of Jon's account of his misspent youth in Thailand and his subsequent life inside Klong Prem prison is a Thai-Style acceptance of the consequences of his own karma and a desire to expose the fallacy that Westerners are mistreated in Thai prisons.



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Editorial Review

From the Author

I had to wait for various statutes of limitation to run out until I could release publication.

All events and characters are real. The dialogue is of course not word for word, but basically is close to what was likely said. Most tales of gratuitous sex and mindless violence, that indeed transpired, was not included since graphic details made it read like pulp fiction and lent little to the intended message.

The Thai language version of the book is soon to be released.

The movie rights have been optioned to Irene Miracle of "Midnight Express" fame. Filming in Thailand begins.

About the Author

Born in 1950 in Little Rock, Arkansas, as the eldest son of a US Army officer, the author was raised on three continents from Europe to Asia and over half a dozen American US military posts in between. A high school graduate of The International School Bangkok '68.

An award-winning jewelry designer now retired and living in the foothills of Arkansas' Ozark Mountains, this is his first publication, which was written specifically as an amends-making exercise and as a tribute to the people of Thailand

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From reader reviews:

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