



An Officer and a Junkie: From West Point to the Point of No Return

Michael Winder

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Michael Winder longed to be a part of America's elite—to stand in The Long Gray Line as an officer in the United States Army. His quest for academic, athletic, and leadership excellence began as a cadet at the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point. But before the end of his sophomore year, Winder buckled under pressure, and in search of an escape, he turned to alcohol and recreational drugs—eventually plummeting into debilitating and self-destructive abuse. Despite his inability to function without hourly doses of narcotics and alcohol chasers, Winder managed to graduate from West Point and earned a commission as an officer in the U.S. Army. *An Officer and a Junkie* is Winder's documented cautionary tale of his battle with substance abuse and dependency. With episodic, straightforward narrative, he pulls no punches in his confessions of what he did (and did not do) both inside and outside military walls, revealing his innermost delusions and most shameful acts. Once the years of self-neglect finally began taking their toll, the consequences were disastrous; Winder came to believe he was the reincarnation of Mexican impressionist painter Frida Kahlo and ultimately Jesus Christ.

When Winder finally does give up drugs and embraces sobriety, he receives what his doctors assure him is a lifelong sentence of antipsychotic and mood-stabilizing medication. But his fine intellect remains, as does his brutal honesty and his riveting and unforgettable account of his descent into madness.

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