



Crass Struggle: Greed, Glitz, and Gluttony in a Wanna-Have World

R.T. Naylor

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"From class struggle to crass struggle; that is the defining feature of the times. And the genius of today's political economy has been to convert what used to be a potential life-and-death conflict between haves and have-nots into a minor disagreement between have-lots and wanna-have-mores." Why do those who are extremely well off spend their money in socially and environmentally damaging ways? How do crooks, con artists, and counterfeiters function in the hypercharged markets catering to the whims and fancies of the very rich? And why do so many of the less fortunate insist on slavishly emulating the über rich, spending way beyond what their limited means allow? A critique of the lifestyles of today's ultra rich bolstered by old-fashioned muckraking, *Crass Struggle* provides a sharp, original, and often humorous commentary on "the bad side of the good life, the underbelly of the potbelly." Taking the reader inside today's luxury trades, R.T. Naylor visits gold mines spewing arsenic and diamond fields spreading human misery, knocks on the doors of purveyors of luxury seafood as the oceans empty, samples wares of merchants offering top-vintage wines (or at least top-vintage labels), calls on companies running trophy-hunting expeditions and dealers in exotic pets high on endangered lists, and much more. What stands out is that so many high-priced items glitter on the outside, but have more than a spot of rot at the core. Through a series of outrageous but all too true stories, *Crass Struggle* reveals the appalling consequences of consumerism run amok and its links to repetitive financial swindles and the alarming degradation of the biophysical environment.

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