

A Note About the Author

Author Michael Finkel is widely recognized for his outstanding contributions to nonfiction writing, with his work delving deep into human nature, survival, and morality. He is perhaps best known for his bestselling books *The Stranger in the Woods* and *True Story: Murder, Memoir, Mea Culpa*, the latter of which was adapted into a major motion picture in 2015. These works, along with his extensive contributions to leading publications, solidify Finkel as a master of both investigative journalism and narrative nonfiction. *True Story* explores the haunting tale of a convicted murderer and the journalist who became entangled in his life, a gripping exploration of deception, guilt, and the human psyche. The film adaptation, starring Jonah Hill and James Franco, brought further attention to Finkel's ability to bring complex, real-life stories to the screen, further cementing his place in contemporary nonfiction literature.

In addition to his published books, Finkel has written for some of the most prestigious magazines and journals in the world, including *National Geographic*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Vanity Fair*, *Rolling Stone*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, and *The Atlantic*. These diverse contributions highlight Finkel's ability to tackle a wide range of topics, from survival stories in remote environments to in-depth investigations of complex human behaviors. His journalistic pieces often blend thorough research with compelling storytelling, resulting in articles that engage readers while providing rich insights into social and psychological issues. By crafting narratives that connect emotionally with his audience, Finkel has proven himself as an influential voice in nonfiction writing, continuing to shape discussions in both the literary and journalistic communities.

In *The Stranger in the Woods*, Finkel tells the remarkable story of Christopher Knight, a man who spent 27 years living in isolation in the forests of Maine. This investigation into Knight's life is more than just an exploration of a hermit's existence—it is a profound reflection on the human need for solitude, the psychological toll of isolation,

and the boundaries between individual freedom and societal expectations. Finkel's approach to storytelling is methodical yet empathetic, allowing readers to understand Knight's decision to abandon civilization while simultaneously grappling with the complexities of his reentry into society. The book challenges readers to consider the tension between personal autonomy and the demands of the modern world, a theme that resonates universally in our increasingly interconnected society.

Another standout piece of Finkel's work is *True Story*, where he examines the story of Christian Longo, a man convicted of murdering his wife and children, who later assumed the identity of Finkel himself. The book is not just a recounting of a tragic crime; it is a meditation on the nature of truth, identity, and the moral ambiguities that shape our understanding of justice. Through his deep dives into the psyches of his subjects, Finkel unveils the often unsettling truths of human behavior, compelling readers to confront difficult questions about morality and the impact of our choices on others. By intertwining personal reflection with the investigation of crime, Finkel crafts a narrative that is as thought-provoking as it is emotionally gripping.

Finkel's ability to uncover the hidden layers of human experience is one of the defining aspects of his writing. Whether writing about the depths of personal despair or the search for redemption, his works explore the emotional and psychological complexities of the individuals he profiles. His writing goes beyond simply documenting events; it brings forth the inner workings of the human mind and the moral dilemmas faced by those on the margins of society. Through this, Finkel not only entertains but also challenges his readers to reflect on their own lives and consider the deeper questions of identity, choice, and consequence.

Currently residing in northern Utah with his family, Finkel continues his work as an author and journalist, researching and writing on topics that push the boundaries of narrative nonfiction. His ongoing projects promise to explore new realms of human experience, always with the aim of uncovering untold stories and offering fresh perspectives on complex issues. Finkel's commitment to exploring the depths of human behavior and his skill in conveying these discoveries in an accessible and

compelling manner ensures that his future works will continue to be both relevant and impactful. Through his diverse body of work, Finkel remains one of the leading voices in nonfiction writing, whose books and articles are as enlightening as they are engaging.

