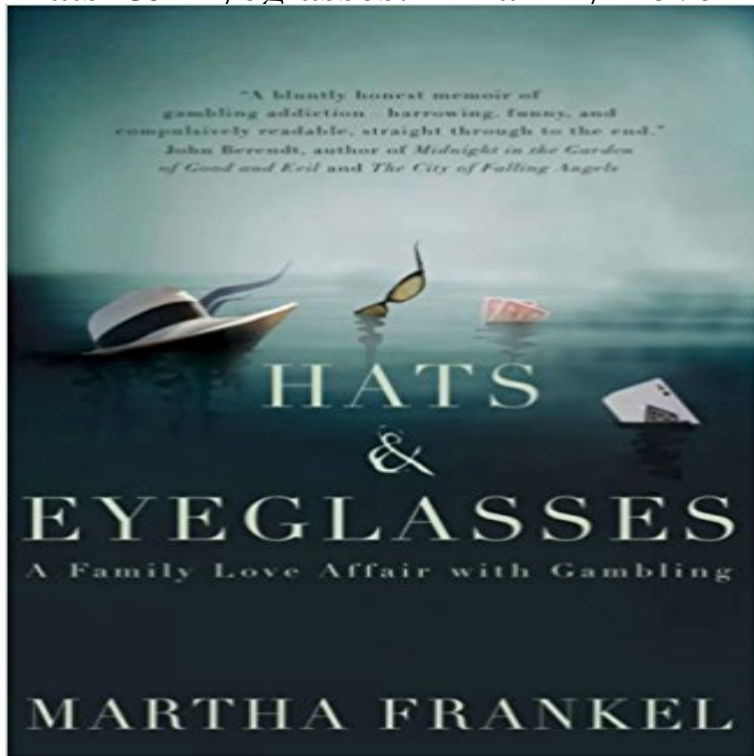


Hats & Eyeglasses: A Family Love Affair with Gambling



A gloriously written memoir of growing up in a family of hard-core gamblers—Martha Frankel thought the gambling gene had passed her by, until she found herself addicted to online poker and knee-deep in debt. Most weekends when Martha Frankel was a kid, her mother had a mah-jongg game going in the kitchen with her girlfriends while their husbands were in the living room playing poker. Once Frankel reached adulthood, however, while her cousins were making their way in the world as bookies and drug dealers, gambling didn't much factor into her life. In the tradition of *Five-Finger Discount* by Helene Stapinski and *Dry* by Augusten Burroughs, *Hats & Eyeglasses* traces Frankel's love affair with poker. It was a passion that bit her in her mid-forties and remained harmless enough when she stuck to real cards. But everything changed one evening in 1998 in Atlantic City, when Frankel overheard one dealer bemoan the fact that his tips that evening were going to be small what with the meager crowd assembled. Another dealer mentioned that everyone must be playing online—Why leave the house when you can play in your pajamas? the dealer said. Why indeed? thought Frankel, who couldn't wait to get back to her computer. The next morning she took a deep breath, typed in her credit card number, and entered the world of online gambling. It was the beginning of what one of her uncles called hats and eyeglasses, a term used to describe those times when you're losing so bad you're drowning (so all one can see is the poker player's hat and eyeglasses floating on the surface of the water). By turns hilarious and heartbreaking, *Hats & Eyeglasses* is a tale of passion, addiction—and those times in life when we almost lose our shirt.

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