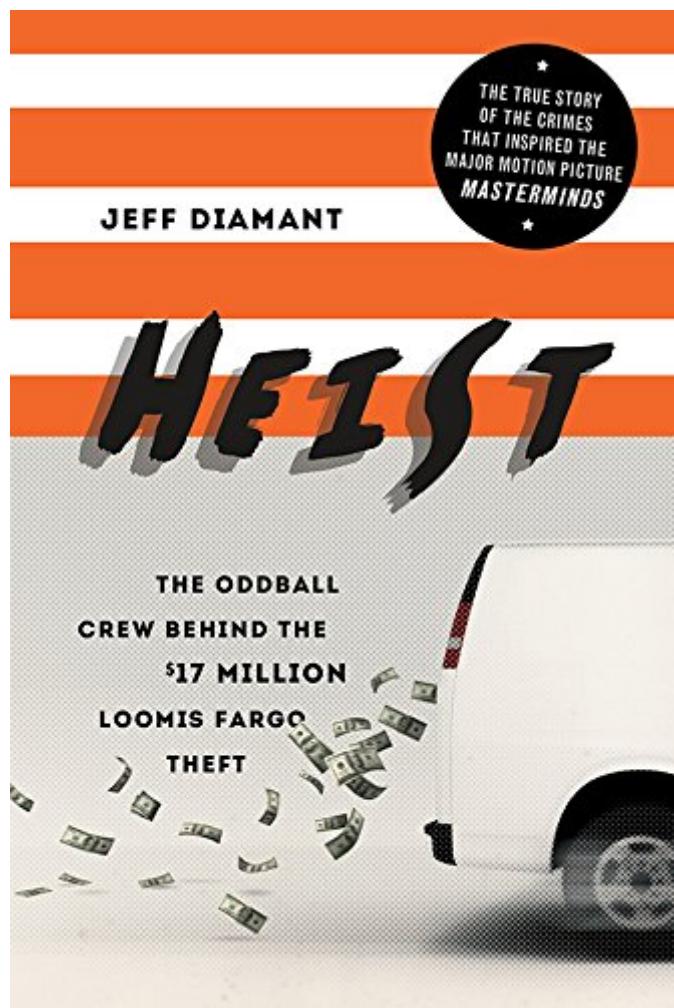


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# Heist: The Oddball Crew Behind The \$17 Million Loomis Fargo Theft



## **Synopsis**

The inspiration behind the major motion picture *Masterminds* starring Zach Galifianakis, Owen Wilson, Kristen Wiig, and Jason Sudeikis! The bizarre true story of the criminals behind the second-largest bank heist in American history. One night in a small North Carolina town, a down-on-his-luck guard at Loomis Fargo manages to steal \$17 million-literally more than one ton of cash. Despite being caught on camera wheeling the money from the vault to the getaway van, David Ghantt makes off to Mexico before the FBI can blink. There's just one hitch: Ghantt has entrusted the money to an oddball crew of accomplices who had wooed him into committing this massive theft in the first place-and who, he soon learns, are trying to take him out. Now one of the most wanted men in America with the FBI hot on his heels, Ghantt must figure out how to get his money, get away from a hit man, and get even. In this outrageously entertaining book, Jeff Diamant, the Charlotte Observer's lead reporter on the case, offers the definitive inside account of this astonishing true story that has captivated American audiences on the news and now on the big screen in the major motion picture, *Masterminds*.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

This details one of the huge heists of cash from the Loomis company. The man who actually stole \$17 million didn't use much judgment in trusting strangers with the loot, and the accomplices weren't much smarter. Something the author doesn't go into, but I wish he had, is the stupidity of the Loomis company, victim of two similar huge thefts of cash within a year. Why would an armored car/cash transport company trust a single low-paid employee with access to the vault holding \$17 million, with only a new trainee there with him, whom he sent home early? Why was he allowed such access with no supervision or other employees there? In addition to access to the vault (which he emptied), he also had access to the only two existing sets of keys to the vault (which he stole), access and keys to several Loomis armored cars (used to transport the cash), and access to the security system's video tapes (two of which he took with him)! Talk about leaving the store unattended. I'd guess some heads at the top executive level of Loomis surely rolled after this second huge theft. Loomis seems as dumb as the gang of thieves.

I recently saw the movie and thought it was pretty hilarious. It contained most of the facts, but was focused more on being an over the top farce than a serious telling of the story. The movie made fun of the principals and more or less portrayed them as idiots. The book tells the story without the comedic additions. It is well written, fast paced and was obviously well researched. Make no mistake, none of the characters involved were geniuses and their portrayal in the movie is not completely unfair. They were small time crooks; simple, and often very naive, folks who got in way over their heads. I think the book does a good job of telling the facts and treats everyone fairly. Ultimately, the whole caper was a tragedy in that our protagonists were laid low by their own character flaws which were mainly, greed, naÃƒÂfÃ¢, arrogance and just plain old stupidity. Did I leave out lust? That may have been the lynchpin. Overall it was a good read and I consumed it in a couple of days. In closing, upon reading the epilogue in which the author explains that even without the rampant stupidity, the principals would have likely gotten caught, I couldn't help but think that a smarter, smaller, quieter and more self controlled group might have pulled it off. On the other hand, I guess those types of people are not generally willing to engage in criminal enterprise and usually have earned a more fruitful existence. The story is a real life Fargo; a reality black comedy that was ultimately sad.

This story reads as well: if not better; than many comedy-fiction books I have read! You have a "hero" who cannot be admired.[at times you almost feel sorry for him]. A "victim" who may be

resented; even reviled. A "female lead" who really does not do much other than instigate the "Heist". A "mastermind" as "dumb as a bag of rocks". At this point I have not finished the book, but am looking forward to doing so soon. Thus far; I have found "HEIST" to be a very well told and very entertaining story.

I read this book after watching the movie "Masterminds" and this book is MUCH better than the movie. I don't know why they changed so much for the movie when the actual story is just as crazy or crazier. The only thing the movie got right is that a Loomis truck got robbed. Other than that, there is no resemblance. Read the book and forget the movie ever existed.

A truly fascinating story of missteps, hubris and plain stupidity in one of the biggest heists in American history. Jeff Diamant makes the characters come alive, and can even drum up the occasional pang of sympathy for a couple of the people involved. A Hollywood scriptwriter couldn't have dreamed up a scenario this bizarre. A great read!

The book is very enjoyable. I didn't give it five stars because I was looking for photos of the gang, particularly the Kelly Campbell, the vixen who convinced David Ghantt to steal \$17 million, promising to flee to Mexico with him, and live happily ever after.

A fun read and fascinating mostly because of the utter stupidity of the protagonists! It's easy to understand why the FBI didn't investigate these folks sooner as they rightly assumed they were too dumb to pull off one of the biggest heists in US history.

How a group of really compromised people could actually pull off the theft if 17 Million is incredible. The chase to find them and lock up the case was as fascinating as the crime itself. A jolly good read.

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