

READS

Lowlifes in Pinstripes

A NEW FICTION COLLECTION EXAMINES THE SEAMY SIDE OF THE STREET

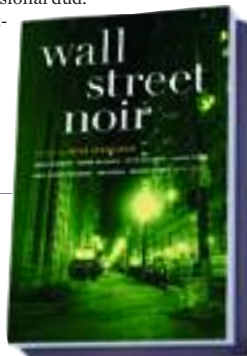
IT'S HARDLY NEWS that Wall Street heavies can be every bit as corrupt, venal and merciless as any common criminal. Yet even the most cynical trader will likely blanch when confronted with the rogues' gallery of scalawags on display in the new short-fiction collection *Wall Street Noir*.

The latest entry in boutique publisher Akashic Books' location-specific crime series (previous titles include *Chicago Noir*, *New Orleans Noir* and, er, *Twin Cities Noir*), *Wall Street Noir* — edited by crime-fiction notable Peter Spiegelman — offers up an agglomeration of demented money men sure to make your own dodgy comrades look like earnest, milk-drinking church folk.

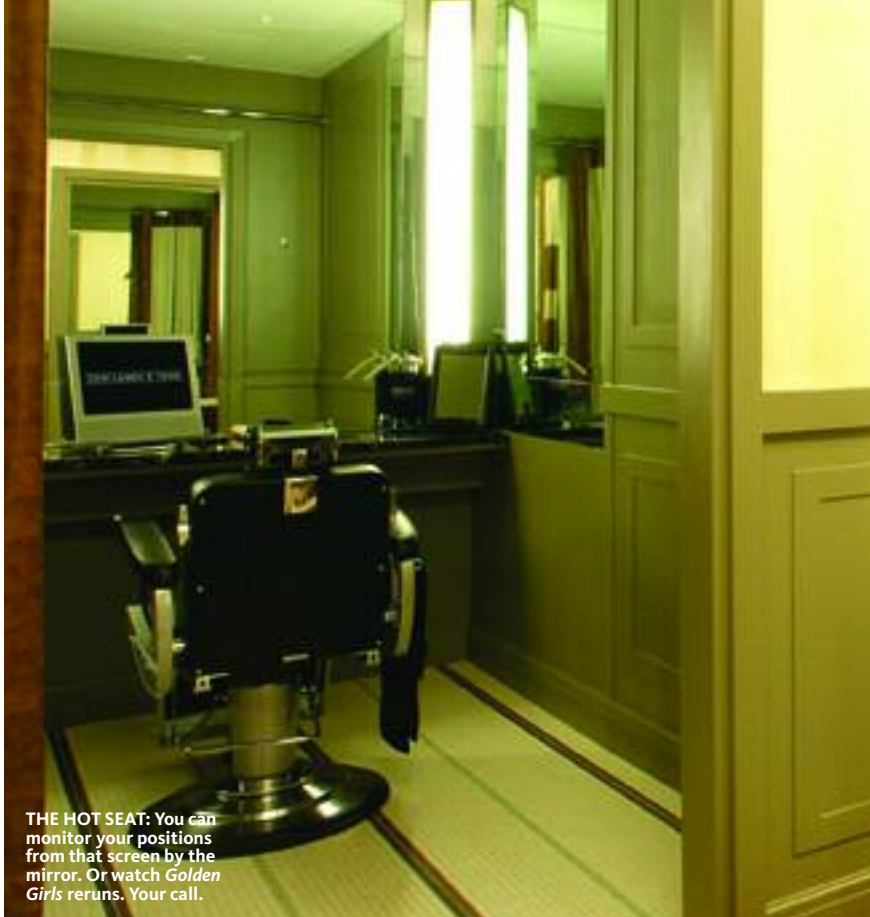
These 17 mostly A-list tales of trading chicanery and depredation (sample title: "The Day Trader in the Trunk of Cleto's Car") span the globe from Thailand to Honduras to lower Manhattan; the "Wall Street" of the title serves mainly as a metaphor for the decentralized, million-tentacled modern finance industry. Standouts include Stephen Rhodes's kickoff vignette, "At the Top of His Game," in which backstabbing traders make life miserable for their colleagues; "A Terrorizing Demonstration," a blistering tale from *Wall Street Journal* music critic Jim Fusilli; and "A Trader's Lot," a potboiler from the pen of commodities-futures trader Twist Phelan.

One of the only sour notes is sounded by, of all people, disgraced ex-analyst Henry Blodget, whose "Bonus Season" fails to deliver despite taking place in Shanghai, a seemingly rich setting for a collection of this ilk. Reading his leaden prose, it's all too easy to forget that Blodget was a journalist before he became a market shill. Still, as in any diversified portfolio, the big winners here make up for the occasional dud.

Blodget would doubtless rate *Wall Street Noir* a "strong buy" — and, with the glaring exception of his own limp contribution, he'd be right.



BOOK VALUE: Needless to say, it was a dark and stormy night.



THE HOT SEAT: You can monitor your positions from that screen by the mirror. Or watch *Golden Girls* reruns. Your call.

TONIC IDEAL

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Bonnefoy's empire is expanding rapidly: A new London outpost, just across from the Royal Exchange, opens this month, as does the first U.S. Gentlemen's Tonic, in Houston's Uptown Park — good news for narcissistic energy traders. Additional outlets are planned for New York, Las Vegas, Miami and Dubai, and Gentlemen's Tonic's signature product line hits stores in both the U.S. and U.K. in July.

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TRADER TICKER

18 NUMBER OF TITLES IN AKASHIC BOOKS' "NOIR" SERIES — UPCOMING LOCATIONS INCLUDE TORONTO AND LAGOS, NIGERIA

165 COST, IN POUNDS, OF THE "ULTIMATE PLAYBOY" AT GENTLEMEN'S TONIC — A 135-MINUTE TREATMENT INCLUDING CUT, SHAVE AND SWEDISH MASSAGE

