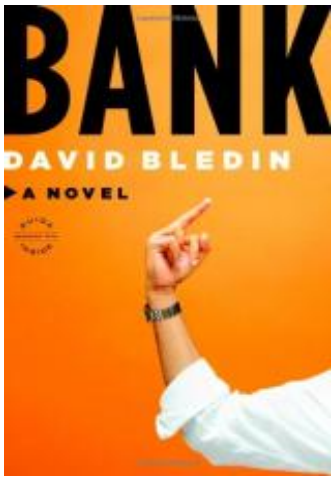
Bank: A Novel

by David Bledin



About the Book

Every July, a fresh crop of college graduates clad in spiffy new suits fills the offices of investment banking firms, each newly minted analyst longing for big money while sacrificing anything that resembles a normal life. In this enormously entertaining first novel, a lovable, stressed-out guy nicknamed Mumbles tells the story of how he and his cohorts not only struggle to survive corporate purgatory, but also find satisfying ways to strike back at the system.

Fueled by a constant flow of Starbucks coffee, Mumbles and his friends take on such tasks as secretly filming a despised colleague's boardroom romp with an assistant, creating footage they plan to broadcast at the company's holiday party. But true gratification comes only when they actually start standing up to the bank's evil minions, those who have no qualms about piling on a weekend's worth of work on a Friday afternoon.

With sharp comedy, episodes of inspired hijinks, and its glimpse into a world of fleeting elevator romances and not-so-infrequent nervous breakdowns, **Bank** is a touching and lively novel that is, at its heart, about figuring out what really matters in life.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss your childhood dreams and aspirations. The rest of the group should then discuss how your current career path ensures that these dreams will never, ever, be realized.

2. In **Bank**, Postal Boy has a nervous breakdown. Have you ever had a nervous breakdown? If so, were you put on medication? Distribute any antipsychotics you might have. Remember, sharing is caring.

3. At one point, Mumbles finds himself in the compromising position of having his fingers tangled in the panties of a colleague's wife. Have you ever had an affair with someone at work? Did you get an STD as a result? (This one works

best if there are couples in your reading group.)

4. As bad as things get, some folks always have it worse. Select the group member whose job is so awful that you would never consider it, not even if threatened with weird Chinese torture involving stalks of bamboo and live rats.

5. Let's face it: the longer you spend in a cube, the flabbier your ass gets. Identify the group members who have put on the most pounds since college and make them finish off the bowl of Cheetos while somebody tickles their belly rolls.

6. Mumbles feels physically inadequate when he compares himself to the Prodigal Son. Divide into groups of two and determine the superiority or inferiority of each other's body parts.

7. Investment banking is an industry in which importance is directly correlated with how much money one makes. Group members should write their salaries on strips of paper and toss them into a hat. The group should then try to match each salary with each participant. The person with the highest perceived salary must go on a beer run; the person with the lowest perceived salary should be left to grapple with his or her own inner shame.

Author Bio

David Bledin has cubicle-hopped in both investment banking and economic consulting. **Bank** is his first novel.

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