



Schmucks with Underwoods: Conversations with America's Classic Screenwriters

Max Wilk

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Schmucks with Underwoods: Conversations with America's Classic Screenwriters Max Wilk (Applause Books). "Where were you when the page was blank?!" a beleaguered screenwriter once asked a demanding director back in the golden age of movies. Max Wilk, an esteemed writer himself, admits "dignity for screenwriters is long overdue." That's why he has assembled this insightful homage to the men and women whose words created the foundation for our best and most-loved films. Here are face-to-face interviews with some of the historic giants of the industry, spanning the silent era to the 1960s, including Billy Wilder, Ernst Lubitsch, Sidney Buchman (*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*), Donald Ogden Stewart (*The Philadelphia Story*), R.C. Sherriff (*Goodbye Mr. Chips*), Albert and Frances Hackett (*It's a Wonderful Life*), Evan Hunter (*The Birds*), John Collier, Edmund Hartmann, Ben Hecht, Nunnally Johnson and many more. In addition, *Schmucks with Underwoods* (a derogatory label for screenwriters coined by none other than the irascible Jack Warner) includes quotes and commentary about many other towering figures of the day, including Raymond Chandler, Edward Chodorov, Preston Sturges, Howard Koch, Dorothy Parker, Herman Mankiewicz and Paddy Chayefsky. Always entertaining, this book offers invaluable insight into the craft of writing, a fascinating portrait of a lost era of Hollywood, with enough hilarious anecdotes and behind-the-scenes trivia to please even the most casual movie buff.

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