

## Out of the Rubble: From World War II Chaos to American Entrepreneur

**Alicia J. Winget**

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*Out of the Rubble is an affectionate biography that pays tribute to a man whose sense of responsibility allowed him to flourish in the face of great adversity.*

*Out of the Rubble* is Alicia J. Winget's biography of an Italian immigrant who survived war, death, and prejudice to find success as an American businessman.

Born in the small Italian village of San Vittore in 1941, Lino's early years were marked by the violence and chaos of World War II. He spent his childhood watching young men leave to seek greater opportunity in the Americas. His own family settled in Detroit, where Lino started out washing cars and selling shoes—any work he could find to support his mother and brothers. After years of hard work, he achieved his own version of the American dream: successful business ventures, a house of his own, and a loving family.

Drawing on Winget's interviews with Lino and his family, the book covers Lino's difficult yet loving childhood through to his young adulthood, as he was finding his footing in the US. The horrors of war exist in grim contrast to its intimate, everyday realities. Lino and his family got on with the business of living in the midst of uncertain, extraordinary times, and the book covers details such as the foods they ate and the hours of entertainment they derived from watching local card games to convey this ordinary persistence.

By comparison, the excitement of coming to America—a land of soda machines and fancy cars—is recalled in reflective terms: it was at first daunting and difficult for Lino to navigate. He required the generosity of strangers and relatives alike but also leaned into his own unending determination to make good and make it through new challenges. The book emphasizes the idea that in the midst of suffering and struggle, kindness still exists and can make a difference. It also juxtaposes Lino's successes in the US to the stark differences in the nation of his birth, seen on a return visit to Italy—and in the book's present-set peek at Lino's life at the time of the book's composition.

In the end, though, the project is somewhat limited by its personal scope—and by the fact that it includes some outdated terminology and a racial slur. It includes family photographs from Lino's infancy through his time in the army; some cover a more recent visit to Italy, where some of the landmarks that affected his childhood still stand.

An affectionate tribute to a man whose sense of responsibility allowed him to flourish in the face of great adversity, *Out of the Rubble* is a biography about an ordinary man who persevered in the face of loss and hardship.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (August 18, 2023)

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