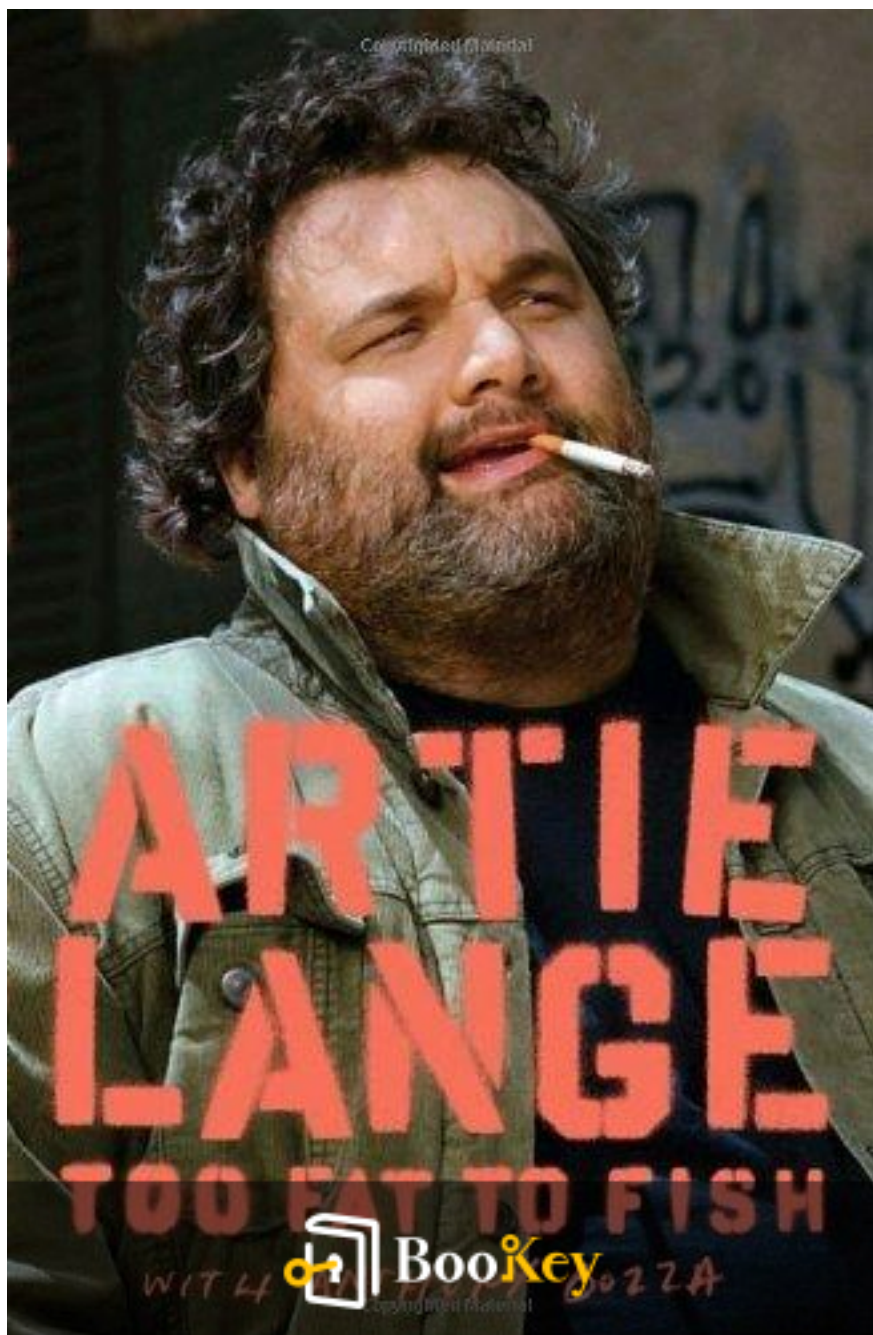


# Too Fat To Fish PDF (Limited Copy)

Artie Lange



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# **Too Fat To Fish Summary**

Unfiltered Tales of Laughter, Struggle, and Self-Destruction

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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## About the book

In "Too Fat to Fish," comedian and actor Artie Lange offers a candid and humorous account of his life, weaving together outrageous anecdotes that are both side-splitting and deeply revealing. The book opens with a foreword by the iconic Howard Stern, which sets the stage for Lange's narrative, illustrating the significance of his joining "The Howard Stern Show" in 2001. This pivotal moment not only propelled Lange's career forward but also transformed the dynamic of the show itself, as Lange's sharp wit and self-deprecating humor struck a chord with viewers.

As Lange recounts his upbringing in a tight-knit, working-class Italian family in Union, New Jersey, readers gain insight into his formative years. His passion for sports and comedy emerges as a consistent theme, driving him to pursue success in the entertainment industry. However, Lange's journey is not without turmoil; he grapples with personal struggles and a propensity for self-sabotage that complicates his path.

Throughout the book, Lange's exceptional storytelling captivates readers, drawing them into his world filled with unforgettable characters and moments. His raw insights into the highs and lows of his life, laced with humor, resonate significantly, making "Too Fat to Fish" a compelling read that illustrates the resilience of the human spirit amid life's challenges.

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## About the author

In "Too Fat to Fish," Arthur Steven Lange, Jr. candidly reflects on his tumultuous journey through life as a stand-up comedian and actor, detailing both his professional milestones and personal struggles. The memoir opens with Arthur's early years, illustrating his passion for comedy and performance that ignited during his childhood in New Jersey. He recounts formative experiences that shaped his comedic voice and style, highlighting the challenges he faced, including his battles with addiction and self-image.

As Arthur rises to prominence, he shares behind-the-scenes insights into his time on "The Howard Stern Show," where he succeeded comedian Jackie Martling and quickly became a fan favorite due to his unique blend of humor and vulnerability. His candid storytelling captures the chaotic energy of the show and the eccentric personalities that inhabited it. Additionally, his stint on the groundbreaking sketch comedy series "MADtv" further solidified his place in the entertainment industry, showcasing his versatility as both a performer and writer.

Throughout the memoir, Arthur interweaves poignant anecdotes that reveal the darker sides of fame and the heavy toll it can take on mental health. He discusses how his struggles with addiction impacted his career and relationships, shedding light on the often unseen battles faced by those in the spotlight. Arthur's humor serves as both a coping mechanism and a means of

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connection, resonating with readers who may have faced their own challenges.

As the narrative unfolds, Arthur's resilience becomes a central theme, illustrating his commitment to overcoming obstacles and finding redemption. The engaging blend of humor, honesty, and raw emotion offers readers a compelling portrait of a complex individual navigating the highs and lows of fame while striving for personal growth and fulfillment.

Overall, "Too Fat to Fish" is not just a memoir about a comedian's life; it's a universal tale of perseverance, self-discovery, and the transformative power of laughter amidst life's adversities.

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# Chapter 1 Summary: 1. The Natural 1

## Summary of Chapter 1 from "Too Fat to Fish" by Artie Lange

### Introduction

In this opening chapter, Artie Lange introduces readers to his life, characterized by a wild blend of humor and heartache. His narrative navigates a landscape of family dynamics, career challenges, and the deep-seated struggles against addiction, set against the backdrop of the entertainment industry.

### Foreword by Howard Stern

Howard Stern offers a heartfelt tribute to Artie, reflecting on the comedian's complex character shaped by both his comedic brilliance and his battles with substance abuse. Stern highlights Artie's memorable contributions to the Howard Stern Show, setting the stage for a deeper understanding of Artie's personal and professional struggles.

### The Natural

Artie opens with a colorful account of his birth occurring during his father's

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trial for counterfeiting. This pivotal moment helps illustrate his father's larger-than-life personality and profoundly affects Artie's formative years, laying the groundwork for a life filled with comedy and turmoil. The modest environment in which he grew up fosters his awareness of life's absurdities, which later becomes a cornerstone of his comedic voice.

## **Crawl Like a Man**

One of the chapter's nostalgic highlights comes from Artie's cherished memories of family vacations, particularly the deep-seated admiration his family held for the Four Seasons. This reverence for music plays a significant role in Artie's upbringing and ultimately channels his passion for comedy and storytelling, linking family bonds to the entertainment he aspires to create.

## **Mr. October**

Artie fondly reminisces about his close relationship with his father, particularly their shared love for baseball. A key moment in their bond is captured during the thrilling 1977 World Series Game 6, where Reggie Jackson's historic performance becomes a symbol of their connection and serves as a stand-out memory in Artie's childhood.

## **Union's Most Wanted**

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Transitioning into his teenage years, Artie shares a comical yet embarrassing encounter at a bank, marking his first misadventure with law enforcement. This incident, driven by a desire to impress his girlfriend, Sue, hints at the reckless behavior that would later become a hallmark of his tumultuous life.

### **Brazilian Deluxe**

Artie recounts a chaotic and surreal experience where he loses his virginity to a Brazilian hooker, reflecting the tumult of his life filled with comedy and substance abuse. This anecdote underscores the fleeting connections in his world amid the highs and lows of his performances, revealing deeper struggles with his personal choices.

### **Too Fat to Fish: My Days as a Longshoreman**

After his father's death, Artie takes on the role of a longshoreman, describing both the labor and the camaraderie experienced on the docks. This job marks a significant chapter in his life, accentuating the profound impact of his father's tragic accident and his burgeoning battles with addiction.

### **Driving Miss Wasted**

Artie's account of his decline deepens as he describes the harrowing events

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culminating in his arrest for public intoxication and cocaine possession. This moment vividly illustrates how addiction clouded his judgment and fractured important relationships, capturing the chaotic spiral of his life.

## **Coping with Addiction and Redemption**

Facing despair following a series of setbacks, Artie finally acknowledges his need for help. This pivotal realization leads him on a path toward recovery, shedding light on the selfless support from friends and coworkers that assists him in confronting his addiction.

## **Career and Breakthrough**

In a journey marked by obstacles, Artie perseveres and gains recognition in the entertainment world through his role on MADtv, despite the shadow of his addictions. He reflects on how his early life experiences and struggles have profoundly shaped his comedic career, often finding humor in his past misadventures.

## **Conclusion**

Artie's story unfolds as a testament to resilience, artfully weaving humor with the heartache of addiction, family ties, and the relentless pursuit of comedy. The phrase "Too Fat to Fish" emerges as a powerful emblem of his

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enduring struggles and victories, encapsulating the essence of his tumultuous yet compelling journey.

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## **Chapter 2 Summary: 2. Crawl Like a Man 7**

### **Chapter 2 Summary: A Journey Through Laughter and Loss**

In Chapter 2 of "Too Fat to Fish," Artie Lange delves into his formative years, intertwining humorous anecdotes with poignant reflections on family, loss, and the tumultuous path to adulthood and a career in comedy.

#### **Early Life and Family Background**

Artie's early life was marked by a striking coincidence: his birth occurred during his father's trial, a situation rooted in an uncharacteristic entanglement with counterfeit money. This unusual beginning set the stage for a childhood steeped in struggle yet balanced by love and laughter. Despite financial hardships, Artie's father became a significant pillar of support, nurturing Artie's innate sense of humor and fostering his aspirations.

#### **The Powerful Influence of His Father**

Artie's relationship with his father was profound, filled with shared interests such as baseball and animated exchanges that fostered a deep bond. He idolized his father and cherished the time they spent together, which shaped

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much of the joy and humor in his early life. However, this idyllic relationship faced a tragic turn when his father fell from a roof, resulting in paralysis and marking a dark period for the family. The stress culminated in the premature death of Artie's father, leaving a void in his life that would profoundly affect his mental health.

## **Navigating Addiction and the Comedy World**

In the wake of his father's death, Artie descended into a battle with depression that led to a reliance on alcohol and drugs as misguided coping mechanisms. This dark phase escalated to a suicide attempt, prompting a turning point in his life, as he entered rehab and embarked on a journey towards recovery. His return to stand-up comedy offered a mix of successes and challenges; notably, his role on MADtv placed him at the intersection of entertainment and the pressures of substance abuse that continued to loom over him.

## **A Comedic Turning Point**

The chapter poignantly explores the delicate balance comedians often navigate between humor and personal suffering. Artie reflects on how laughter served as an essential component of his healing journey, illustrating how comedy becomes a refuge amidst chaos. His evolution from a struggling youth to a determined comedic performer is replete with themes

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of resilience, loss, and self-discovery.

Overall, this chapter paints a rich tapestry of Artie's experiences, highlighting the intricacies of his familial relationships and the entertainment realm. It underscores the deep struggles with identity and addiction while showcasing the contrasting dynamics between his turbulent personal life and his ambitions as a comedian. As Artie continues to find his voice, he weaves humor into his narrative, offering a glimpse into the healing power of laughter amidst life's adversities.

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## Chapter 3 Summary: 3. Mr. October 21

In Chapter 3 of "Too Fat to Fish" by Artie Lange, the author weaves a compelling narrative that explores key moments in his life, underpinned by themes of addiction, family dynamics, and the pursuit of comedy.

**Foreword by Howard Stern** highlights Lange's complex personality, acknowledging his struggles with addiction and depression, which often overshadow his impressive comedic talent. Stern's introduction sets the stage for understanding the duality in Lange's life—where humor coexists with profound difficulties.

In **The Natural**, Lange begins by recounting his birth, which occurred during his father's trial for a counterfeit money scheme. This chaotic introduction to life serves as a metaphor for the challenges he would face later. Lange reflects on his father's influence, noting how his father's early release from prison shaped their family dynamics and contributed to his own comedic flair and personal struggles.

Moving to **Crawl Like a Man**, Lange reminisces about his formative years, detailing the Italian-American experience that colored his upbringing. He shares anecdotes illustrating family dynamics, influential figures, and the power of music in shaping his identity. These experiences not only influenced his path to comedy but also highlighted the cultural background

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that would forge his understanding of life and humor.

**Mr. October** centers around Lange's deep bond with his father through their shared love of baseball, particularly their excitement during Game 6 of the 1977 World Series, where Reggie Jackson became a legend by hitting three home runs. This shared passion enriched their relationship, but after a tragic accident that claimed his father's life, Lange felt a profound sense of loss and turmoil, altering the fabric of his existence.

In **Union's Most Wanted**, Lange transitions from working as a longshoreman to pursuing comedy. His reflections on the gritty yet vibrant life at the docks reveal the camaraderie among workers and the stark contrast between this life and his burgeoning career. As he navigates this change, he grapples with the internal challenges brought on by his father's death.

**Brazilian Deluxe** delves into Lange's awkward relationship with women, recounting the humorous yet humiliating experience of losing his virginity to a Brazilian hooker. This chapter explores the disparity between his comical early sexual encounters and the deeper connections he wishes to foster, emphasizing his struggle with intimacy and vulnerability.

In **Too Fat to Fish: My Days as a Longshoreman**, Lange paints a vivid picture of dock life. He reminisces about the camaraderie, the vibrant culture, and the simple pleasures of life at the docks, such as enjoying meals

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and playing cards. This nostalgia contrasts sharply with his chaotic pursuit of a comedy career, giving insight into the balance he seeks between two very different worlds.

Finally, **Driving Miss Wasted** reveals Lange's tumultuous journey during his tenure on MADtv, grappling with addiction while chasing his comedic ambitions. He narrates various troubling incidents marked by public drunkenness and substance abuse, ultimately leading to an intervention by concerned friends. This candid reflection on his self-destructive tendencies illustrates the fine line between his comedic success and personal chaos.

Overall, Artie Lange's account in this chapter combines humor and heartfelt vulnerability, mapping out his journey through personal tragedy, familial bond, and the relentless pursuit of laughter amidst adversity.

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# Chapter 4: 4. Union's Most Wanted 45

## Chapter 4 Summary

### Introduction

In Chapter 4 of "Too Fat to Fish," Artie Lange delves into the complex tapestry of his family dynamics and personal struggles, particularly shaped by his father's severe accident, which had a ripple effect on his life and career.

### Family Background

Lange opens the chapter by revisiting his childhood, recounting formative experiences, including a pivotal moment when his father found himself entangled with the law shortly after Lange's birth. This event marked the beginning of a tumultuous family legacy, where his father's trajectory shifted from a troubled youth to a committed provider following imprisonment. His father played a vital role in Lange's upbringing until he suffered a tragic accident in 1985, causing a deep fracture in their family narrative.

### The Aftermath of Loss

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The devastating fallout from his father's accident left Lange grappling with profound depression and escalating substance abuse issues. This downward spiral deepened after his father's death in 1990, a pivotal moment that catalyzed a series of unfulfilling jobs, including work as a longshoreman, as he sought to find his footing in life amidst overwhelming grief.

### **Comedy Career Attempts**

Amidst his personal chaos, Lange began to pursue a career in comedy. He reflects on his nascent stand-up experiences, his tenure on the sketch show "MADtv," and the array of challenges he faced while trying to establish himself in the industry. His narrative is marked by both breakthrough moments and setbacks stemming from his addiction, showcasing the tumultuous path of an aspiring comedian.

### **Struggle with Addiction**

Lange does not shy away from addressing the relentless struggle with addiction that shadowed his career. He articulates how his substance use was intertwined with his mental health, leading to a harrowing suicide attempt that forced him into a period of recovery. His candid reflections on these battles highlight a common plight among artists, navigating the delicate balance of creativity and personal demons.

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## MADtv and Redemption

The chapter ultimately converges on Lange's audition for "MADtv," marking a significant turning point. His narrative of persistence in the face of personal adversity serves as a testament to his resilience. This moment

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## **Chapter 5 Summary: 5. Brazilian Deluxe 63**

### **Chapter 5 Summary: Too Fat to Fish**

#### **Introduction to Howard Stern**

In this chapter, Howard Stern provides a foreword that sets the stage for understanding Artie Lange's complex character. Stern acknowledges Artie's comedic brilliance and deep-seated struggles with addiction, highlighting the often paradoxical nature of comedians who blend humor with personal pain. This introduction frames the narrative of Artie's life, establishing a connection between creativity and inner turmoil.

#### **Artie's Early Life and Family Background**

Artie Lange reflects on his formative years, beginning with the circumstances of his birth during his father's trial for a non-violent crime. His father, who transitioned from a life of petty crime to becoming a devoted antenna installer, serves as a significant influence in Artie's life. Through fond memories, Artie recounts the strong bond he shared with his father, whose death when Artie was 22 left him feeling adrift in both his career and personal life. This backdrop of family dynamics and loss lays the groundwork for Artie's future struggles.

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## **Struggling Career and Substance Abuse**

After losing his father, Artie's path takes a darker turn as he grapples with addiction. He recalls leaving a job as a longshoreman—a role that provided financial stability and camaraderie—only to descend into alcohol, drugs, and gambling. His anecdotes about the colorful personalities he met while working at the port offer a glimpse of the humor that once surrounded him, contrasting sharply with the chaos of his addiction, which ultimately leads to a suicide attempt and subsequent rehabilitation.

## **The Comedy Scene**

Artie's journey into comedy is marked by attending open mic nights and landing a role on MADtv. Although he experiences fleeting success, he struggles with mounting addiction issues, continuously battling the demons within. This chapter portrays Artie's resilience and the effort required to pursue sobriety, emphasizing the pivotal influence of friends and mentors who stood by him during incredibly dark times.

## **Relationships and Fame**

Lange shares a candid reflection on his relationships, notably an unforgettable encounter with a Brazilian sex worker named Mary. This

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initial experience not only highlights his youthful awkwardness with intimacy but also acts as a coping mechanism for his deeper feelings of love and vulnerability. As Artie navigates the complexities of fame, the chapter illustrates how newfound success complicates his existing struggles with drugs and self-doubt.

### **Conclusion: A Journey of Self-Discovery**

Ultimately, Chapter 5 encapsulates Artie Lange's evolution from a troubled youth to a comedian wrestling with the dichotomy of success and addiction. Through vivid storytelling, Artie's narrative is a testament to humor entwined with hardship—highlighting the ongoing journey of self-discovery, resilience, and hope amid the shadows of despair. This chapter lays a critical foundation for understanding the intricate balance between Artie's comedic talent and his personal battles throughout his life.

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# Chapter 6 Summary: 6. Too Fat to Fish: My Days as a Longshoreman 89

## Chapter 6 Summary: Too Fat to Fish: My Days as a Longshoreman

### Life Before Comedy

Artie Lange begins by recounting his challenging upbringing, shaped by his father's legal troubles and subsequent incarceration at the time of his birth. While his father's absence created financial instability, Lange was raised in a supportive environment that nurtured his burgeoning comedic talent. His father, despite his mistakes, instilled a sense of confidence in Artie, emphasizing the importance of laughter even amidst hardship.

### Transition to Longshoreman

Following his father's death, Artie's life took a downward spiral as he found himself unemployed and aimlessly wandering. A turning point came when a family friend, who worked at the Port of Newark, extended a lifeline—offering him a job as a longshoreman. This position not only provided financial stability but also immersed Artie in the vibrant lives of his co-workers, introducing him to a diverse group of characters who would inspire his comedic material.

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## **Experience at the Port**

At the Port, Artie's responsibilities included unloading cargo and operating heavy machinery. He forged strong friendships with fellow longshoremen like Goof and Tony D., whose camaraderie and shared experiences enriched his understanding of blue-collar life. Their humorous antics and lessons about resilience forged the foundation of his comedic style, offering insights into the everyday struggles and triumphs of working-class individuals.

## **Decision to Pursue Comedy**

After a transformative year, Artie felt a compelling urge to chase his dream of becoming a comedian. This decision was catalyzed by confronting the reality of his life's trajectory, highlighted by a poignant moment where his mother affectionately dubbed him "too fat to fish." This phrase evolved into a comedic mantra, embodying his battles with self-image and aspirations, and served as a reminder of the inherent challenges of pursuing his passion.

## **Struggles and the Path Forward**

As Artie pursued his comedy career, he encountered numerous obstacles, including drug addiction, alcoholism, and a near-fatal suicide attempt. Yet, the unwavering support from family and friends proved vital, guiding him

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through rehabilitation. These turbulent times ultimately led to his opportunity to join the cast of MADtv, marking a significant step forward in his career.

## **The Call to Action**

Artie's journey, filled with setbacks and self-reflection, underscores themes of resilience and the pursuit of dreams. Despite a tumultuous past marked by struggles, his story illuminates the power of determination and the impact of love and support from those around him. This chapter serves as a testament to the possibility of overcoming adversity to carve out a place in the entertainment world, reaffirming the belief that dreams are worth fighting for.

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## Chapter 7 Summary: 7. Driving Miss Wasted 123

### Chapter 7 Summary: The Struggles of Fame and Addiction

In this chapter, Artie Lange poignantly recounts his arduous journey through the turbulent waters of fame, addiction, and familial relationships, particularly focusing on the profound impact of his father's tragic accident that left him a quadriplegic. The weight of his father's condition plunges Artie into a deep depression, exacerbating the challenges he faces both personally and professionally.

As he navigates the highs and lows of his burgeoning career in comedy, highlighted by his breakthrough role on the sketch show \*MADtv\*, Artie initially revels in the success he has long sought. However, this achievement quickly spirals into chaos as he succumbs to substance abuse once again. The addiction not only undermines his career but also leads him to a dark place, culminating in a harrowing suicide attempt that lands him in rehab. This moment becomes a turning point, forcing him to confront the emotional fallout from his father's passing and his ongoing battle with depression.

Upon his return to comedy, Artie faces the daunting task of rebuilding his life and career, a process fraught with challenges stemming from his addiction. He shares vivid and sometimes surreal anecdotes, including an

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unforgettable night in jail that exemplifies the reckless decisions born from his struggles. Through humor, he tries to mask his deeper pains, illustrating the complicated interplay between comedy and despair.

Central to Lange's recovery are the unwavering support systems surrounding him, especially his mother and sister, who provide essential emotional stability during his darkest times. He expresses heartfelt gratitude for those who have helped him navigate through the storm, including his manager and the producers of \*MADtv\*, who believed in his potential for redemption.

Ultimately, Lange's story in this chapter is a powerful reminder of life's fragility, the enduring influence of family, and the formidable challenge of overcoming addiction. It underscores the resilience needed to pursue a fulfilling career amidst the backdrop of personal turmoil, serving as both a cautionary tale and a testament to the strength found in support and perseverance.

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## Chapter 8: 8. Pig in Shit 135

In Chapter 8, titled "**Struggles with Addiction and the Journey to Success,**"

Artie Lange candidly explores his downward spiral into drug and alcohol addiction, driven largely by the trauma of a family accident that deeply affected him. While his mother and sister exemplified resilience in the face of adversity, Artie's coping mechanism manifested in heavy drug use—especially cocaine—and alcohol consumption as he chased his dreams in comedy.

The vibrant, yet toxic atmosphere of stand-up comedy clubs exacerbated his substance abuse, immersing him in a culture rife with partying and drugs. Nevertheless, his comedic aspirations bore fruit when he secured a role on **MADtv**, a pivotal moment that brought him validation after years of struggle and hardship. As Lange moved to Los Angeles and began to enjoy financial success, he believed he could sustain this lavish lifestyle alongside his escalating addiction.

However, the pressures of working on a high-budget network show presented a stark contrast to his past experiences, highlighting the complexities of collaborating within an ensemble cast. One chaotic filming day, particularly memorable for its absurdity, involved a skit called "Babewatch," where Lange, dressed in pig makeup, faced both a challenging performance and his rampant substance use. This culminated in a notably

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embarrassing incident where he left the set to acquire cocaine, straining his relationships with his co-stars and amplifying the chaos surrounding his life.

This chapter poignantly illustrates the duality of Artie's journey—the glimmers of success overshadowed by the dark specter of addiction. Despite a brief period of reflection following a humiliating incident where he woke up covered in waste, Lange recognizes that his struggles with substance abuse would continue to haunt him throughout his tenure on **MADtv**. In this way, the chapter delves into the internal conflicts that define his path, revealing the dire implications of addiction even amidst the pursuit of his dreams.

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# **Chapter 9 Summary: 9. Wah! I'm Out of Cocaine!**

## **Wah!153**

### **Chapter 9 Summary: Too Fat to Fish: Artie Lange's Journey**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, we delve into Artie Lange's tumultuous life, marked by struggles with addiction, the profound influence of family, and his aspirations in comedy. His journey reflects a deep interplay between personal challenges and the triumphs of a career in entertainment.

#### **Father's Impact and Early Life**

Artie Lange's bond with his father was foundational, with his father providing unwavering support for Artie's comedic inclinations. However, a tragic accident resulting in his father's paralysis cast a long shadow over Artie's life, triggering a downward spiral into addiction. Despite the challenges, Artie retains a nuanced view of his father, encompassing both admiration and acknowledgment of his flaws, which illustrates the complex nature of familial loyalty amid personal crises.

#### **Struggles with Addiction**

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Artie opens up about his tumultuous relationship with substance abuse, which he turned to in the face of emotional turmoil. A pivotal moment came after a suicide attempt during a particularly difficult period at MADtv, leading him into rehab and mental health treatment. These painful experiences prompted a crucial self-reflection and commitment to recovery, providing a framework for him to piece together his life and career.

### **Transition to Comedy Success**

With renewed determination, Artie made a comeback at MADtv, where he faced the double challenge of maintaining sobriety in a high-pressure environment. His time on the show proved to be transformative, enabling him to exhibit his comedic talents and opening doors to other projects, notably the film *\*Dirty Work\**, which further solidified his standing in the industry.

### **The Role of Friends and Support Systems**

Artie emphasizes the critical role of friendships in his recovery and personal growth. He recounts several interventions from friends who were instrumental in steering him away from self-destructive behaviors, underscoring the importance of having a supportive network through dark times.

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## Reflections on Personal Identity

Amidst his journey, Artie reflects on how his experiences with addiction have shaped his identity as a comedian. While acknowledging the challenges posed by his struggles, he appreciates how these very trials have enriched his comedic material and perspective, providing authenticity to his craft in show business.

## Conclusion

As the chapter concludes, Artie recognizes the necessity of confronting his past while embracing the lessons learned along the way. The contrast between his painful history and hopeful future serves as a powerful narrative of resilience, highlighting the restorative influences of laughter, friendship, and personal growth.

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## **Chapter 10 Summary: 10. MAD Man Walking 169**

### **Chapter 10 Summary: Too Fat to Fish: Artie Lange's Journey Through Struggles and Redemption**

In this gripping chapter, Artie Lange chronicles his tumultuous journey through addiction, fame, and the complexities of his personal life as he navigates the comedy scene. He confronts his struggles while reflecting on key moments that shaped his identity, including his relationship with his father, experiences at MADtv, and his personal battles with mental health.

#### **Influence of Family**

Artie poignantly recalls the profound impact of his father's struggles, particularly after a tragic accident left him paralyzed. This loss profoundly affected Artie and brought feelings of guilt, complicating his pursuit of success in the entertainment industry. His mother's unwavering support during these challenging times highlights the strength of family bonds, providing a counterbalance to the turmoil he faced.

#### **Struggles with Addiction**

The chapter addresses Artie's escalating reliance on substances, especially

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cocaine, during his stint on MADtv. Initially viewing drug use as a part of the glamorous life of a comedian, he soon found these habits eroding his mental health and personal stability. A pivotal moment arises when Artie attempts to take his own life, leading to a stark realization of the need for change and prompting his entry into a psych ward for treatment.

## **Turning Points**

Following his lowest point, Artie's journey toward recovery begins.

Recognizing the urgency of his situation, he seeks help in rehab, motivated by the desire to reclaim control over his life and career. Surrounded by the emotional support of family and friends, Artie gradually works towards sobriety, learning to cope with the challenges that come with re-entering the demanding world of comedy.

## **Return to Comedy and Fame**

With renewed focus, Artie makes his return to MADtv, where he channels his experiences into creating memorable characters. Despite this resurgence, he still grapples with the pressures of fame and the lingering shadows of addiction, highlighting the constant struggle between his aspirations and personal demons.

## **Lessons Learned**

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Throughout this chapter, Artie emerges as a figure of resilience. He reflects on the significance of honesty and the vital role that support systems play in recovery. While acknowledging the destructive tendencies he possesses, he remains steadfast in his commitment to fight against them, illustrating his determination to forge a better path.

## **Conclusion**

Chapter 10 is a powerful narrative of resilience, intertwining Artie's experiences with family, addiction, and the challenges of comedy. It reflects on his transformation as a person and performer, revealing a sincere acknowledgment of past mistakes while emphasizing the importance of perseverance in the face of adversity. Through his story, Artie Lange offers a candid exploration of the human spirit's capacity for growth and redemption.

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## Chapter 11 Summary: 11. Baby Gorilla in the Mist 211

### Summary of Chapter 11 of "Too Fat to Fish" by Artie Lange: "Baby Gorilla in the Mist"

In Chapter 11, titled "Baby Gorilla in the Mist," Artie Lange offers a poignant exploration of his turbulent life, emphasizing his ongoing battle with addiction, the profound impact of his father's tragic death, and the evolution of his comedic career.

Artie's narrative begins with reflections on his chaotic early life, born during his father's trial, which set the stage for a tumultuous upbringing. The bond he shared with his father, who passed away when Artie was just twenty-two, deeply influenced his path, often driving him toward self-destructive behaviors such as heavy drinking, drug use, and gambling in the wake of this loss.

After his stint as a longshoreman, Artie successfully broke into comedy with a role on the sketch show \*MADtv.\* However, success brought its own set of challenges, reigniting his addiction issues and creating tension with colleagues. The pressures of the entertainment industry weighed heavily on him, culminating in a suicide attempt that landed him in rehab—a critical juncture in his life.

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Emerging from rehab, Artie confronted the sobering aftermath of his actions. Acknowledging his addiction as a persistent battle, he slowly learned to embrace help from those around him, including family, friends, and supportive colleagues like Quincy Jones and Norm MacDonald. Their encouragement proved vital to his recovery journey as he engaged in therapy to reclaim control over his life.

The chapter also recounts pivotal experiences, such as Artie's first romantic encounter with a Brazilian hooker, which not only marked the loss of his virginity but also deepened his understanding of intimacy and relationships, intertwined with his identity struggles and addiction issues.

Artie speaks candidly about the sense of shame associated with his addiction, which often clouded his judgment and led to reckless decisions. Through humorous anecdotes from his chaotic escapades, he reveals his talent for finding comedy even in disarray—an essential coping mechanism in his life.

Comedy, throughout this chapter, emerges as a double-edged sword for Artie. While it provides an escape and serves as his life's purpose, the demanding nature of stand-up performance can also exacerbate mental health struggles. Yet, it is this very art form that ultimately becomes his salvation, motivating him to rise above despair.

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In summary, "Baby Gorilla in the Mist" illustrates Artie's resilience in the face of significant adversity. It reflects on lighter moments amid a tumultuous existence while acknowledging the harsh realities of addiction. The chapter highlights the importance of friendships and support systems in recovery, reinforcing humor as a critical lifeline throughout his journey.

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# Chapter 12: 12. Heroin: It's Better for Your Liver!247

## Chapter 12 Summary: Too Fat to Fish by Artie Lange

In this chapter, Artie Lange candidly navigates the turbulent waters of addiction, personal turmoil, and his early career in comedy, providing readers with a profound understanding of how his past shaped his present.

### Early Life and Family Challenges

Artie's journey begins with a backdrop of difficult family dynamics. He recalls his birth amidst legal troubles faced by his father, a man whose life takes a tragic turn following an accident that leaves him paralyzed. This event profoundly alters the family's trajectory and plants the seeds of grief and hardship that Artie grapples with throughout his life.

### Struggles with Addiction

In the wake of his father's death, Artie spirals into drug and alcohol abuse as a misguided attempt to cope with his overwhelming grief. He shares harrowing experiences with substances like heroin and cocaine, illustrating how these addictions erode his relationships and personal life. As the cracks in his life widen, the consequences of his substance abuse begin to manifest,

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further alienating him from family and friends.

## **Career in Comedy**

Despite his struggles, Artie's comedic talent emerges, leading him to roles in shows like \*MADtv\*. His initial success starkly contrasts with his deteriorating mental health and substance use; he often finds himself precariously balancing his burgeoning career with his addiction. The pressure of the entertainment industry culminates in a suicide attempt, yet he is saved through the intervention of friends and colleagues who refuse to let him slip away.

## **Redemption and Return to Comedy**

Following a critical period in rehab, Artie commits to sobriety and strives to reclaim his place in the comedy world. The chapter highlights the complexities of navigating Hollywood, as he confronts residual addiction issues while aiming to rebuild his career. Support from fellow comedians, particularly Norm MacDonald and Bob Saget, proves invaluable, offering him the encouragement he needs to forge ahead.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, Artie reflects on his journey with a blend of humor and

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introspection, recognizing comedy as both a healing mechanism and a career. He underscores the significance of honesty and self-acceptance, acknowledging the responsibility he feels toward those who have stood by him during his darkest moments. Throughout the chapter, Lange's sharp wit and soulful reflections present an unflinching look at addiction's harsh realities, the complexities of family, and the resilience necessary to pursue one's dreams amid adversity.

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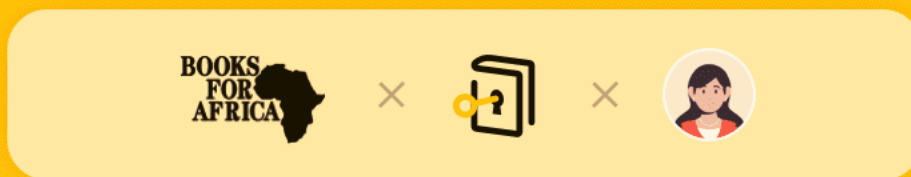




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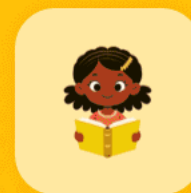
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# Chapter 13 Summary: 13. Greetings from Sunny Kandahar 271

### Chapter 13 Summary: "Operation Mirth"

## The Impact of War on Comedy

Artie Lange's journey begins with an introspective moment as he watches Jeff Ross's documentary "Patriot Act," which chronicles Ross's efforts to entertain troops stationed in Iraq. This viewing reignites Lange's desire to honor his grandfather, a World War II veteran, by contributing through the gift of comedy. He feels a deep connection to the military and a calling to uplift those serving far from home.

## Encounter with the USO

Determined to bring laughter to the troops, Lange reaches out to his agent to organize a USO tour. However, his troubled past with substance abuse raises concerns, leading to an initial rejection of his proposal when the USO conducts an online search of his history. Following his candid discussion on the Howard Stern Show about his desire to perform for the military, an outpouring of interest from soldiers prompts the USO to reconsider and eventually accept Lange's request.

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## **Building the Comedy Team**

Lange pulls together a team of established comedians, including Jimmy Florentine, Nick DePaolo, and Dave Attell, with Gary Dell'Abate slated to serve as the host. Their preparations include understanding and adhering to USO guidelines, which prohibit jokes on sensitive topics like politics and drug use, ensuring that their humor remains respectful and appropriate for their audience.

## **Trip to Afghanistan**

With a sense of purpose, the tour commences with a series of flights, landing in the challenging environment of Kandahar, Afghanistan. Lange paints a vivid picture of the harsh conditions, including the infamous “shit pond,” which taints the air with an unbearable odor. Despite the difficult circumstances, the comedians receive enthusiastic applause from the troops, showcasing the vital role of humor in their lives.

## **Morale Boosting Meetings**

Following each performance, Lange and his crew meet with the soldiers, building meaningful connections. One evening, during a mortar attack on the base, the military personnel demonstrate incredible bravery by safeguarding

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Lange and his team, a stark reminder of the real dangers faced by service members compared to the trivialities of a comedian's life.

### **Challenges and Successes**

As the tour progresses, Lange and his team encounter logistical hurdles, including return delays, and a poignant moment arises when Lange struggles emotionally due to being away from family during the Fourth of July. His friends rally to support him, steering him back to focus on the mission at hand.

### **The Journey's End and Reflections**

Upon returning to the United States, Lange is met with praise from the USO for the success of the tour. Reflecting on his experiences, he recognizes the importance of acknowledging and supporting returning soldiers, drawing a contrast to the treatment of veterans post-Vietnam. Grateful for the opportunity to bring joy through humor, Lange commits to continuing his advocacy for veterans, ensuring their sacrifices are honored.

In essence, Chapter 13 chronicles Lange's evolution from a comedian driven by personal legacy into a heartfelt supporter of the military, illustrating how laughter can serve as a powerful balm amidst the harsh realities of war.

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## Chapter 14 Summary: The Last Word 297

In Chapter 14 of "Too Fat to Fish," Artie Lange reflects on his impactful experience during the USO tour, where he felt a deep sense of pride and connection to his late grandfather, a war hero. This tour was particularly meaningful to Lange, as it allowed him to support U.S. troops and fulfill a long-held dream amid the chaos of his personal struggles, which have often included substance abuse issues.

Lange shifts focus to the plight of returning veterans, drawing from the historical neglect faced by Vietnam veterans. He emphasizes the vital importance of compassion and proactive support for veterans reintegrating into society, urging readers to take action and show appreciation for these individuals who have sacrificed for their country. This commentary serves as a reminder that history should guide present actions, and that personal outreach can make a significant difference.

Turning inward, Lange candidly acknowledges his ongoing battle with addiction, contrasting his experience with those of more fortunate celebrities like Robert Downey Jr., whose triumphant recovery story is not representative of all addicts. This acknowledgment of his struggles adds depth to his character and illustrates the complexities of addiction recovery.

Closing the chapter, Lange shares a blend of hope and realism. He

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encourages readers to share his book with friends, reinforcing the notion of connection and community support that he values. With heartfelt gratitude, he thanks his family, friends, and colleagues for their support throughout his writing journey, underscoring the importance of collaborative encouragement in overcoming personal challenges.

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