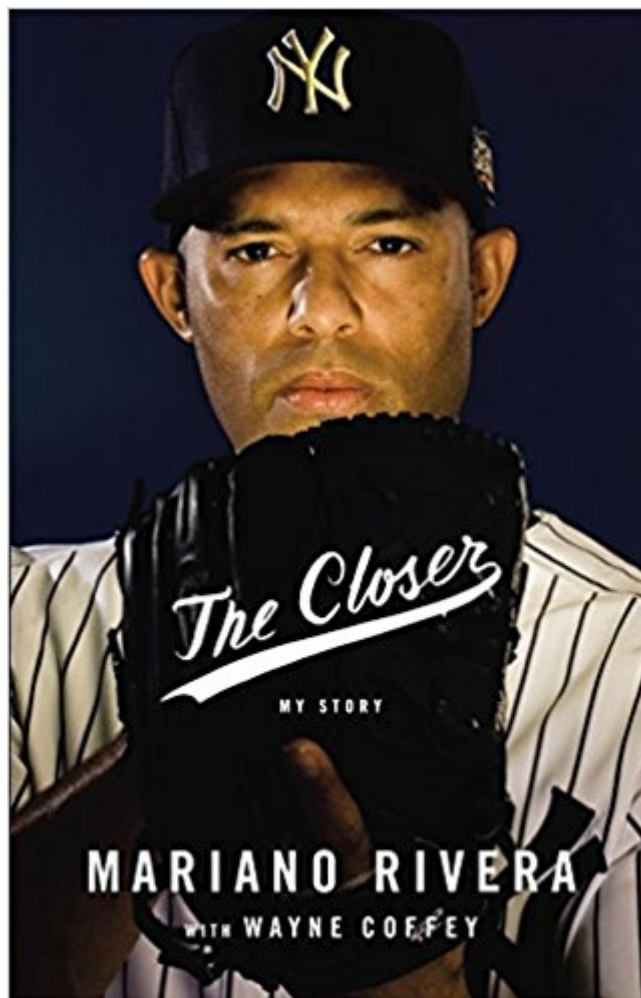


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The Closer



Synopsis

The greatest relief pitcher of all time shares his extraordinary story of survival, love, and baseball. Mariano Rivera, the man who intimidated thousands of batters merely by opening a bullpen door, began his incredible journey as the son of a poor Panamanian fisherman. When first scouted by the Yankees, he didn't even own his own glove. He thought he might make a good mechanic. When discovered, he had never flown in an airplane, had never heard of Babe Ruth, spoke no English, and couldn't imagine Tampa, the city where he was headed to begin a career that would become one of baseball's most iconic. What he did know: that he loved his family and his then girlfriend, Clara, that he could trust in the Lord to guide him, and that he could throw a baseball exactly where he wanted to, every time. With astonishing candor, Rivera tells the story of the championships, the bosses (including The Boss), the rivalries, and the struggles of being a Latino baseball player in the United States and of maintaining Christian values in professional athletics. The thirteen-time All-Star discusses his drive to win; the secrets behind his legendary composure; the story of how he discovered his cut fastball; the untold, pitch-by-pitch account of the ninth inning of Game 7 in the 2001 World Series; and why the lowest moment of his career became one of his greatest blessings. In *The Closer*, Rivera takes readers into the Yankee clubhouse, where his teammates are his brothers. But he also takes us on that jog from the bullpen to the mound, where the game -- or the season -- rests squarely on his shoulders. We come to understand the laserlike focus that is his hallmark, and how his faith and his family kept his feet firmly on the pitching rubber. Many of the tools he used so consistently and gracefully came from what was inside him for a very long time -- his deep passion for life; his enduring commitment to Clara, whom he met in kindergarten; and his innate sense for getting out of a jam. When Rivera retired, the whole world watched -- and cheered. In *The Closer*, we come to an even greater appreciation of a legend built from the ground up.

Customer Reviews

An "engaging memoir.... His tale transcends team loyalties. It even transcends baseball. It is the story of a humble man of deep faith doing great things under enormous pressure. 'I am an imperfect man on an imperfect journey,' he writes. And what a journey it's been." — Steven V. Roberts, *Washington Post* "A warmhearted, charmingly frank baseball memoir.... 'The Closer' describes such a devout, decent and admirable guy that 'Happy Father's Day' might as well be its subtitle." — Janet Maslin, *New York Times*

Mariano Rivera was a New York Yankee for nineteen seasons. He is Major League Baseball's all-time saves and ERA leader, a thirteen-time All-Star, and a five-time World Champion. He and his wife, Clara, have three sons and live in New York. Wayne Coffey is one of the country's most acclaimed sports journalists. A writer for the New York Daily News, he cowrote R. A. Dickey's bestselling *Wherever I Wind Up* and is the author of the New York Times bestseller *The Boys of Winter*, among other books. He lives in the Hudson Valley with his wife and children.

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