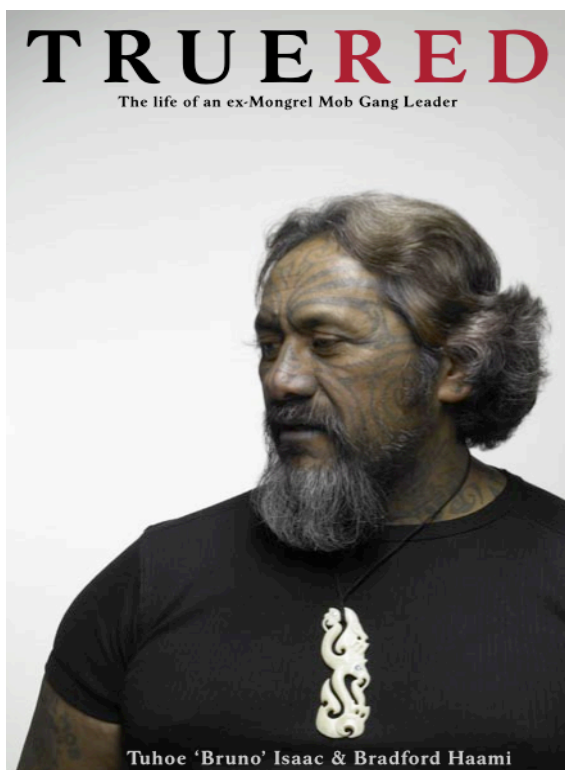


TRUE RED: The Life of an ex-Mongrel Mob Gang Leader.

By Tuhoe 'Bruno' Isaac with Bradford Haami



TRUE RED: The Life of an ex-Mongrel Mob Gang Leader is the essential biography of one man's fascinating journey from the realm of darkness into the world of light. This book explores the gang life of ex-Mongrel Mob Gang Leader Tuhoe 'Bruno' Isaac and what it *really* took for him to leave that environment and find a new life.

In the public's mind the Mongrel Mob have a notorious reputation as an unpredictable and dangerous gang, mostly Maori whose lives revolve around fear, violence, drugs, drinking, brawling, rape and murder. While ex-Mongrel

Mob Gang Leader Tuhoe 'Bruno' Isaac does not dispute this public image, from an insider's point of view however the Mongrel Mob gave him a total sense of belonging at a crucial time in his life. "Here I found true acceptance and comradeship amongst a common brotherhood; I was willing to die for them," he says, "The Mob became everything to me: it was my life and it was also to be my death."

Wearing the colour red, living by the 'law of lawlessness' and having the patch with the emblem of the mighty bulldog on your back was what Tuhoe called being *True Red*. "Because all levels of society hated us we created a new society of hatred symbolised by the bulldog. Its ferocious habits were engraved on our hearts," Tuhoe says, "If you weren't a mobster you weren't worth knowing." He lived this way for 17 years.

However, constantly living for the bash, beer, prison and the possibility of dying in a pool of blood eventually saw Tuhoe search for another way of doing life. Leaving the Mob was hard. Not only did he face the fierce judgemental prejudices of mainstream society, but with the awakening

of his conscience came the realisation of a past filled with inflicting pain on others besides himself, and of a life devoid of any sense of love or hope.

'Coming out of the Mongrel Mob gang was a hard ask. Sometimes I felt suffocated by the public's labels – a leopard never changes its spots, once a gang member always a gang member – those sentiments bound me to the curse of the 'dog'. How was I ever going to move myself out of deprivation and paint myself on to a new canvas? I lived a life of extremes and it was going to take another 'extreme' to replace it....' This led him down a path of confession, forgiveness and reconciliation.

True Red is a glimpse into the harsh reality of gang life in New Zealand society something seldom understood. It is also the true story of hope and redemption for the next generation who are constantly bombarded with the same darkness and lawlessness Tuhoe lived with for many years. His life is an example how one can rise out of the ashes of depravity. The book will be available from November on order as a 200 page paperback book including 12 pages of b/w and colour photographs.

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