

# Author and Black Mafia Widow Thelma Wright Chronicled on Biography Channel's Hit Gangster Series



Philadelphia – When former Black Mafia widow Thelma Wright released her book, “With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game,” co-penned with C. Alease, she divulged the tumultuous ups and downs of her life as a real life ‘mob wife.’ Now readers and television viewers alike will have the opportunity to see Wright tell her story on Tuesday night, June 25 at 10:00 p.m. EST, when the episode “Philly’s Gangster Queen: Thelma Wright” airs on the Biography Channel hit series, “Gangsters: America’s Most Evil.”

Thelma Wright was legendary as reputedly the most dangerously powerful Black woman in Philadelphia. As the wife of Jackie Wright, a top heroin dealer in the city, she was intricately connected with the Black Mafia, a gang that operated Philly’s drug trade throughout 1970 and into the 1980’s. Once widowed, and left as the young mother of a toddler son, she discreetly took over his business, running a bi-coastal drug empire, unbeknownst to family and friends around her.



Recognized by her distinguished, sparkling green eyes, Wright ruled the streets with incredible savvy and disarming charm. Yet, very few knew the real sadness and confusion in her heavy heart. While “With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game,” reveals Wright’s more intimate memories and angst as a woman torn between two worlds, “Gangsters: America’s Most Evil” is a documentary styled presentation connecting the details of her criminal

enterprise. During the show, Wright, alongside family, friends and law enforcement experts lend credence to her rule over a criminal enterprise normally dominated by men.

Wright's street reign was notorious. She grossed top dollars and lavishly lived the high life. Championship fights via private jets, European shopping sprees, customized Mercedes Benz cars, cruises to the Bahamas and even speed boating in Miami were mere footnotes in a lifestyle many envied. But everything that glitters is not gold and Wright is open and honest when revealing the dark side.

Wright's background sets her apart from the typical tales of abuse and abandonment. In fact, she is quick to acknowledge that it was the strength of good parenting and strong family ties that laid her solid foundation and saw her through her darkest days. The product of a middle working class Black family, she attended Catholic school, was a star athlete as a child and was well provided for. It was romance and love that entangled her with one of the Black underworld's most notorious gangs.

Today she is far removed from her former lifestyle and dedicated to keeping young women off the path she trekked. Her memoir is a source of motivation and encouragement and she spends her time touring and speaking before women's groups, non-profit organizations and at book signings. Wright has presented as the keynote speaker at the Riverside Correctional Facility, a female prison in Philadelphia, lectured for criminal justice classes at various Penn State College campuses, encouraged audiences at The FFAWN Mary J. Blige Center in Yonkers, New York, as well as made motivational appearances at several schools and communities throughout her city.

"Most are not fortunate enough to survive the wicked lure of the streets, but fast money and fast living is not a comparable trade off for jail or being murdered. I am blessed

beyond measure to have survived both and live to tell about it. My passion and fury now is to keep our young people, particularly women, away from the insanity, turmoil and desperation that awaits them when they take that route. Education not incarceration is the key. I can't say it enough times, and it might sound like a cliché but crime does not pay, only living a righteous life does."

For more information on "With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game," go to <http://www.TheLmaBWright.com>.

To see a promo for the Biography Channel's "Philly's Gangster Queen: Thelma Wright" on "Gangsters: America's Most Evil" go to <http://www.biography.com/tv/gangsters-america-s-most-evil/videos/phillys-gangster-queen-thelma-wright-preview-30970435510> .

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## **Black Mafia Widow, Thelma Wright, Shares Her Story with New Book Release, "With Eyes From Both Sides"**



Philadelphia – The words "queen pen" and "boss lady" can conjure up many images. One might think of an icy, cold-blooded gangstress who is heartless about the business at hand. Yet, the sparkling, green eyes belonging to Thelma Wright paint a different picture. Though rumored at one time to be the most powerful and dangerous Black woman in

Philadelphia, discreetly running a bi-coastal drug empire that her husband left behind, Wright's green eyes reflect a pensive view. Peering into them, we feel the love, the loss, the pain and the retribution of a mother, a wife now widowed and a yes, even a friend. Simply stated, Thelma Wright was married to the mob ... the Black Mafia to be exact. But nothing is ever that simple.



With her poignantly, introspective release of "With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game" as told to and written by C. Alease, the former boss lady invites us not only into her world, but into her mind, her heart and her soul. The woman, quietly heralded by some as the Black Griselda Blanco, minus the murder, was on the lead track of the notorious Black Mafia, a gang which ran Philly's drug trade throughout the '80's and into the '90's. Married to drug kingpin, Jackie Wright, one of the top heroin wholesalers in the city at that time, Wright was privy to a life that on the surface, most would envy.

Like Blanco, Wright was respected as a no nonsense woman who stayed on top of the product. At her peak, she was grossing top dollar and living the high life, attending championship fights via private jets, going on European shopping sprees and driving a fleet of customized Mercedes Benzs. She also enjoyed taking cruises to the Bahamas and speed boating in Miami.

"With Eyes From Both Sides" however, Wright takes us beneath the surface of the fast lane into the real. The product of a middle working class Black family, Wright attended Catholic school and was a star athlete as a child. Life was never difficult for her and she came from a stable and loving, two-parent home. Wright's story is not your typical tale of abuse or abandonment. In fact, it was the strength of good parenting and strong family ties that saw her through her darkest days.

So how did she end up entangled in one of the Black

underworld's most notorious gangs? It was the attraction for men who had achieved financial status and success that was the bait that lured her into the 'game.' Like most inner city communities in an era past, the fast life was the road many initially, well intended Black men traveled to acquire seemingly quick and easy riches.

Wright's novel is a ride down memory lane, as we flashback to the tone of those times. Nostalgia colors our remembrance of days long past, as she recalls childhood games on the schoolyard in her elementary years to her high school graduation, her first job and her first boyfriend even.

Through her vivid recollections, we gain recognition of the heart behind a woman who loved so hard that her eyes were blinded to the cold reality of truth. In a world cluttered with deceitful dealings, pain and continual loss, Wright closed her inner eyes and saw only a facade of what was real.

"There are really roads, highways to this life, with fast lanes and slow lanes and some with banked curves and circles around which we are driven. My story is a warning for women who think that the fast lane is the road less traveled, and therefore the best one to take. It is a cautionary tale for the inquisitive, middle of the road wanderers, who stumble at the fork, wondering what it might be like. But above all, it is a prayer for women all over the world who wish to know the truth of the matter," reveals Thelma Wright. "If you are in the 'game,' get out, because it will destroy you."

Thelma Wright's "With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game" is more than your cautionary urban fiction lore. It is the real life drama of a woman who played the game in full and survived to tell about it. But even more so, Thelma Wright is 'everywoman' who has ever loved someone, but had to learn to love herself first and foremost.

See what her eyes reveal at <http://www.TheImabWright.com> and

purchase "With Eyes From Both Sides – Living My Life In and Out of the Game" there or wherever good books are sold.

A book launch and signing party for Wright will be held Saturday, July 30 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Recess Lounge in Philadelphia. The Recess Lounge is located at 125 South Second Street.