



Fat City (New York Review Books Classics)

Leonard Gardner

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Fat City is a vivid novel of allegiance and defeat, of the potent promise of the good life and the desperation and drink that waylay those whom it eludes. Stockton, California, is the setting: the Lido Gym, the Hotel Coma, Main Street lunchrooms and dingy bars, days like long twilights in houses obscured by untrimmed shrubs and black walnut trees. When two men meet in the ring—the retired boxer Billy Tully and the newcomer Ernie Munger—their brief bout sets into motion their hidden fates, initiating young Munger into the company of men and luring Tully back into training. In a dispassionate and composed voice, Leonard Gardner narrates their swings of fortune, and the stubborn optimism of their manager, Ruben Luna, as he watches the most promising boys one by one succumb to some undefined weakness; still, "There was always someone who wanted to fight."



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