



Killing the Second Dog

Marek Hlasko, Lesley Chamberlain

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"Hlasko's story comes off the page at you like a pit bull."—*The Washington Post*

"His writing is taut and psychologically nuanced like that of the great dime-store novelist Georges Simenon, his novelistic world as profane as Isaac Babel's."—*Wall Street Journal*

"Spokesman for those who were angry and beat . . . turbulent, temperamental, and tortured."—*The New York Times*

"A must-read . . . piercing and compelling."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"A self-taught writer with an uncanny gift for narrative and dialogue."—Roman Polanski

"Marek Hlasko . . . lived through what he wrote and died of an overdose of solitude and not enough love."—Jerzy Kosinski, author of *The Painted Bird* and *Being There*

"A glittering black comedy ... that is equally entertaining and wrenching."
— *Publishers Weekly*

"The idol of Poland's young generation in 1956."
— Czeslaw Milosz, 1980 Nobel Prize in Literature

Robert and Jacob are down-and-out Polish con men living in Israel in the 1960s. They're planning to run a scam on an American widow visiting the country. Robert, who masterminds the scheme, and Jacob, who acts it out, are tough, desperate men, adrift in the nasty underworld of Tel Aviv. Robert arranges for Jacob to run into the woman, whose heart is open; the men are hoping her wallet is too. What follows is a story of love, deception, cruelty, and shame, as Jacob pretends to fall in love with her. It's not just Jacob who's performing a role; nearly all the characters are actors in an ugly story, complete with parts for murder and suicide. Marek Hlasko's writing combines brutal realism with smoky, hardboiled dialogue in a bleak world where violence is the norm and love is often only an act.

Marek Hlasko, known as the James Dean of Eastern Europe, was exiled from Communist Poland and spent his life wandering the globe. He died in 1969 of an overdose of alcohol and sleeping pills in Wiesbaden, Germany.

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