



Jew Boy: A Memoir

Alan Kaufman

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Alan Kaufman grew up in the Bronx, the son of a Jewish mother who had survived the Holocaust, her mind badly scarred by her trauma. Growing up under the shadow of his mother's demons, he struggles uncomprehendingly with his Jewish identity, vowing never to become a victim like his mother. In a great bid for freedom from her legacy, he hitchhikes across the U.S. only to summon the phantoms he had sought to escape. His flight, after taking him to a kibbutz in Israel and the Israeli army, returns him to the streets of New York, homeless and an alcoholic, until at last he finds redemption in poetry, the gift that is true to his being.

Kaufman's authentically American voice, with its headlong energy, joy, and sensitivity, calls to mind the best of Jack Kerouac and Henry Miller. "Jew Boy" touches on themes rarely explored in American writing — the pain, guilt, and confusion of American-born children of Holocaust survivors. But above all it burns with the universal humanity of a brilliant writer embracing the gift of life. "Jew Boy"'s fierce passion will leave no reader untouched.

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