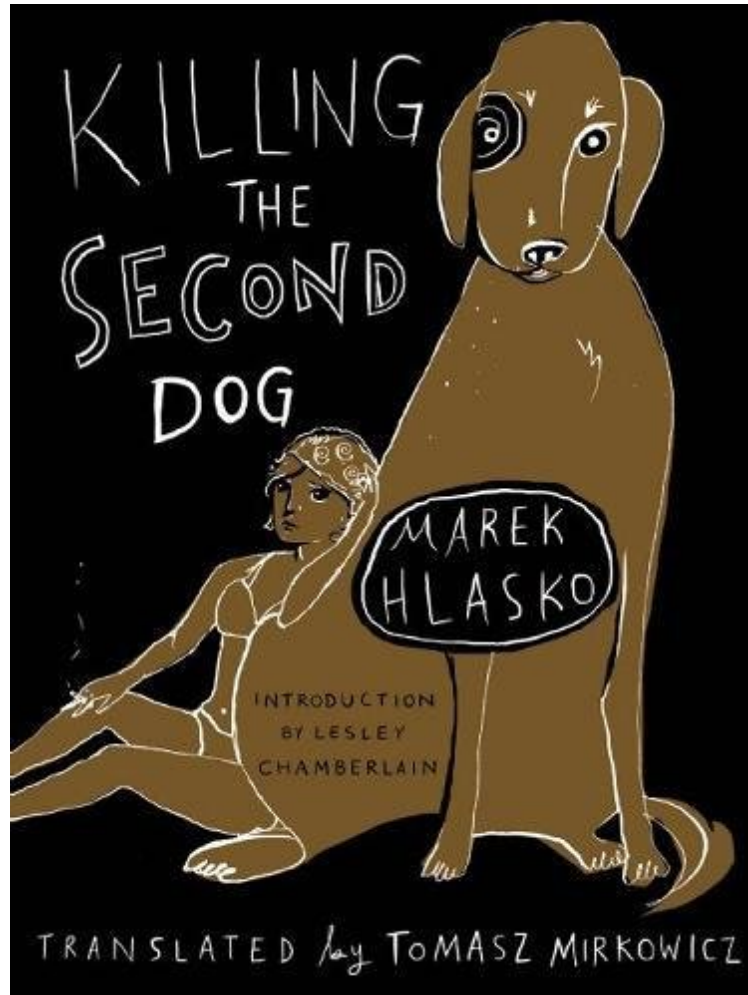


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Killing the Second Dog

Marek Hlasko

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Marek Hlasko : Killing the Second Dog before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Killing the Second Dog:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. WonderfulBy Brooklyn readerOne of those small canvases that is perfectly wrought. This book offers a plumb-line into the incurable condition of having lived through and seen the horrors of Nazi occupation close up. The narrator is a broken man with nothing left to live for or believe in, whose heart is broken clear through, who longs for love but knows it will do nothing, can do nothing, in a world in which brutality knows no bounds. The glib, comic tone is a perfect register for the utter despair that fills this book, a strange kind of ghoulish dance that keeps the reader riveted and turning the pages. It is a speedy ride in an old jalopy that has the horsepower of a race car and tears along the dusty, hot summer Israeli roads with combustible peril.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A book worth readingBy janet aronoffI chose this book because of reviews on

.The book is in translation but,the writing and style are very effective.This is an odd piece of writing,a distinctively noir view of the lives of all of the characters.Yet ,I was touched by everyone.One can't help recognizing the despair even of the dogs. .0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Slow moving story, few descriptive passages. I would not recommend this book to anyone.By Nancy CThis book was a required reading for our book club. I found the book uninteresting. Maybe 2 lines were interesting.

"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 LiteratureRobert 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.

From Publishers WeeklyA glittering black comedy constitutes the English-language debut of a celebrated Polish writer. Hlasko (1934-1969) perfectly balances dark humor with pathos in this short, swift novel about two Polish exiles in Israel who execute an elaborate scheme: with the subtle help of Robert, his "manager," the narrator, Jacob, woos vacationing American women. The suitor courts not with poetry or flowers, however, but with declarations of his own failure and refusals to enter a relationship ("I won't bring you luck. I'm a loser, you know. Nothing ever changes for men like me"). Robert, a Shakespeare devotee, coaches him: "Smile like someone who's forced to lend his sports car to his mother-in-law Do you see your motivation now?" But for all of the duo's clever plots and witty observations, they are not clowns; rather, they are tormented by history and memories of war, and by their own love of art as redemptive of the squalor they see around them. The weightiness of Hlasko's themes is counterpointed by minor characters who waver between the grotesque and the hilarious, such as the female target's horrid young son, resulting in a read that is equally entertaining and wrenching. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Hlasko's story comes off the page at you like a pit bull." --The Washington Post "Spokesman for those who were angry and beat ... turbulent, temperamental and tortured." --The New York Times "A must-read ... piercing and compelling." --Kirkus s "A self-taught writer with an uncanny gift for narrative and dialogue." --Roman PolanskiLanguage NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: Polish