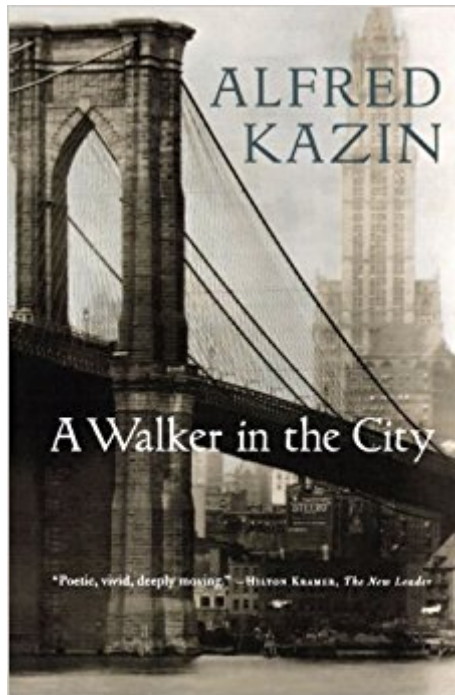




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A Walker In The City



Synopsis

Kazin's memorable description of his life as a young man as he makes the journey from Brooklyn to the American world that begins at the other end of the subway in Manhattan. A classic portrayal of the Jewish immigrant culture of the 1930s. Drawings by Marvin Bileck.

Book Information

Series: Harvest Book

Paperback: 192 pages

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Customer Reviews

One of the most respected literary critics this country has produced, Kazin made a significant contribution to the literature of the American immigrant with "Walker in the City." This demanding autobiography of his youth in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn vividly recreates the life of pre-Depression and Depression Jews for whom Manhattan, though just miles away, represented a faraway land filled with mystery and fear. It is the world outside of Brownsville that looms over the book and the spirit of its narrator. Kazin successfully captures the yearning for new experiences that filled his heart as he grew up in the streets. It was that yearning that led him to the public library and ultimately across the bridges and out of the Brooklyn borough. It was also that yearning that made him wonder about a world that was not filled with Jews. The mystery of the lands that lay beyond Brownsville's streets fills the book with a sense of tension. We can almost feel the young Kazin's heart burst as he begins to sense the vastness of the world. "Beyond! Beyond!" the narrator shouts, and prose turns into poetry in many passages of the book as he seeks to express the mixture of

fear and exhilaration stirring within him. One chapter, "The Kitchen," has been frequently anthologized, and rightfully so. It is a meditation on the room in which his mother spent much of her time working on the sewing she took in to make extra money. In the end, his mother's constant pounding on the foot treadle of the sewing machine comes to the author to represent the fire burning within her -- to achieve, to make a better life for her son, to survive in a strange new land where this exiled Jewish woman is once again a stranger.

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