

# **A Stone for Danny Fisher**

Harold Robbins

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"A Stone for Danny Fisher" is an early masterpiece by Harold Robbins, who went on to become one of the most popular and most financially successful writers of all time. The early part of this book seems to be almost autobiographical, as Harold Robbins himself grew up as a poor Jewish boy who first went to work at age 15 to support his family and then held numerous low level jobs until he found his true calling as a millionaire writer and movie producer. A Stone for Danny Fischer is now most famous for being made into a 1958 movie starring Elvis Presley. The movie is entitled "King Carole" and all critics agree that this is by far the greatest acting performance by Elvis. Elvis has to play a complex and conflicted character, quite unlike the typical Elvis movies where Elvis sings while a bevy of girls swoon over him. Few novelists know the seamy side of New York as well as Harold Robins - the terror of the streets, the ways to make a shady buck by playing along with gamblers and mobsters, the unbridled lusts and passions of slum life. But his new hero does not start at the bottom. Instead, Danny Fischer, born into a family of modest means and respectability is gradually driven downward into the world of crime racketeering and poverty. His bitterness, his loneliness over the loss of the house in Brooklyn that was given to him for his eighth birthday, and his feud with his harsh father pull him one way, his natural decency and love for a sweet Italian girl, Nellie Petito, pull him another. Danny might have been one of the boys caught in the recent basketball scandal, though actually he is a boxer – a sensational amateur and potential champ. Later he becomes deeply involved in war time black markets and then in vending-machine rackets. Here Mr. Robbins reveals a little-known side of underworld life. But the driving force behind Danny's actions always is his sustaining love for Nellie. In a story that is harsh and yet tender, realistic and yet compassionate, Robbins reveals what makes the Danny Fishers what they are.



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