

[DOWNLOAD] The Drinker

## The Drinker

*Hans Fallada*

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**Hans Fallada : The Drinker** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Drinker:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A descent into madness - happy face modicums need not apply  
By Charles Lewis  
I was almost prepared to stop reading about half-way through. I'm not a person who revels in happy faces and sunsets but The Drinker is a very grim story. Then for some reason I could not stop reading. I've read about six of Fallada's books and love them all. But this one is very different. It's almost claustrophobic in its concentration on one character - a real departure from his other novels. But for me, reading this as a Catholic it made me realize that the story's protagonist, a man who is falling into utter madness, that autonomy, as opposed to solidarity, can be such a destructive force. I don't want to give too much up but I think (POSSIBLE SPOILER ALERT) there is very little sense of a happy outcome  
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I'm just starting this one, so I will come back with a full review later  
By Princess  
This one does hit close to home for anyone that finds that self-medication makes life look better. While I'm here, and since I haven't finished the book yet, let me recommend "Every Man Dies Alone", which deals with the WWII era. It was awesome and that book made me want to get every book by this author. Anyways, the protagonist in this book has a successful wholesale business, and somehow decides (or slides) into alcoholism. Seems like it's a midlife crisis, where he either blames or resents his super efficient wife. He gets swindled and also confused as to what he should be doing. He does some unreasonable things to spite his wife due to the resentment of her abilities (here comes that old-fashioned male superiority thing, that if proved wrong, goes disastrously). He starts resenting her abilities and undermines his own business based on a fantasy that he will run

away with a bunch of money and start a new life. But that doesn't happen since he is naïve and chooses his cohorts amongst the swindlers that just seem to be awaiting him (his growing dependence on drinking facilitates them taking advantage of him) When I read books like this from years ago, I realize that not that much has changed as regards human nature. There is always an abundance of people that expend an awful lot of energy upon ripping you off, and now I think they call them "enablers". Been there and have been done by that (enablee?) These people are smart in their own way (not to be confused with smart as in educated), and they know just how to entangle a person into a life where they have to really have to struggle to escape. I can relate to this and so, how many years ago was this book and all his others written? I do hope that Mr. Fallada gets his recognition and readership because his stuff is still SO relevant. I know that there are a lot of people that would see aspects of themselves in his books. I surely have. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Mid-Life Crisis Turns Man into Low-Life By Gerald Brennan Riveting and devastating, "The Drinker" chronicles one man's rapid descent from the heights--or at least the comfortable ledges--of middle-class respectability, down to the depths of alcoholic degradation. To most normal people, the story will perhaps seem baffling and incomprehensible, even in spite of Fallada's excellent, spare prose; most rational minds will have a hard time comprehending how one man can sink so low, so fast. But alcoholism, alas, is not a rational disease, and anyone who has ever seen the inside of an AA meeting or spent the night in a drunk tank will likely find this novel--particularly its early chapters and its final ones--impossible to put down, or to forget. Fallada's narrator, Herr Sommer, starts as a somewhat well-to-do businessman in Nazi-era Germany, but pretty much skips the social drinking phase of alcoholism and entangles himself in a rapidly worsening cycle of marital strife and monetary struggle, exacerbated by bad schnapps and worse decisions. "Jails, institutions, or death" are frequently cited as the three likely destinations of any alcoholic who chooses to keep drinking; Sommer almost manages to hit for the cycle. For those familiar with the literature of alcoholism, it will probably feel like an extended version of one of those first-person accounts of 1930s-era inebriated insanity that pepper the front of AA's "Big Book." Only for Sommer, there was no opportunity for a feel-good happy ending; rather than Dr Bob and the Good Old-Timers, his deliverance came from doctors and judges who shunted him off to a Nazi insane asylum. This book is reportedly somewhat autobiographical, for Fallada wrote it while confined in such an institution. Remarkably, though, it is relatively free from the twin perilous pillars of alcoholic authorship: self-pity and self-aggrandizement. Instead, it is full of honest writing, lean and spare, full of power and truth. Relatively early on, the narrator--unable or unwilling to maintain the effort needed to keep living the high life, or even the mid-life--tells his wife that people "can feel joy and sorrow down below, Magda, it's just like being up above, it's all the same whether you live up or down. Perhaps the most beautiful thing is to let yourself fall, to shut your eyes and plunge into nothingness, deeper and deeper into nothingness." This is, perhaps, a stretch, for what follows is as ugly, and as compelling, as a car accident. Still, it feels true, in that the alcoholic often secretly longs to simply stop living, without expending the effort or mental energy required for suicide. Those that keep drinking do so because the warm numbing fuzz of inebriation remains infinitely preferable to the bright sharp edges of reality; ultimately, however, their only salvation is oblivion.