



The Color of Money

Walter Tevis

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Fast Eddie Felsen was the best in the country—then walked out on his talent and for the next twenty years ran a pool room, got married, and watched pool games on television. One evening he watches a pool player who reminds him of Fats and the match of his life. When the show ends, Eddie goes to his pool room to play straight pool alone for hours, missing dinner for doing it, playing with the old excitement. And finally he allows himself to feel the feeling that has nagged at him since watching the show on television: “It was grief. The best part of him had died and he grieved for it.”

Leaving his pool room and his marriage, Eddie heads out in search of Fats and finds him retired in the Florida Keys. He persuades Fats to join him in a tour of the country playing each other for cable TV. His old nemesis becomes his mentor and encourages him to play eight-ball and nine-ball, and to improve his rusty skill enough to play in the big-money tournaments. Fats dies suddenly on the tour and Eddie goes on the road to hone his game for a tournament in Lake Tahoe where the prize is \$30,000. After an uphill battle competing with arrogant young players just as determined to win as he is, Eddie reasserts his supremacy and wins the prize.

“Tevis writes about pool with power and poetry and tension. From the opening scene of this fine book, the reunion between Eddie and Fats twenty years after, the staccato beat of the prose and finely drawn characters grab the reader and don’t let go. You don’t have to like pool to like this book, to appreciate its sense of living on the edge.”

—*The Washington Post*

The basis for a 1987 feature film starring Paul Newman, *The Color of Money* is full of tension and rich with deftly drawn characters—every bit as suspenseful and captivating as *The Hustler*.

About the Author

Walter Tevis was born in San Francisco in 1928 and lived in the Sunset District, close to Golden Gate Park and the sea, for the first ten years of his life. At the age of ten his parents placed him in the Stanford Children’s Convalescent Home for a year, during which time they returned to Kentucky, where the Tevis family had been given an early grant of land in Madison County. Walter traveled across country alone by train at the age of eleven to rejoin his family and felt the shock of entering Appalachian culture when he enrolled in the local school. He made friends with Toby Kavanaugh, a fellow student at the Lexington high school, and learned to shoot pool on the table of the recreation room in the Kavanaugh mansion, and to read science fiction books for the first time in Toby’s small library. They remained lifelong friends, and Toby grew up to become the owner of a pool room in Lexington.

At the age of seventeen, Walter became a carpenter’s mate in the Navy, serving on board the USS Hamil in Okinawa. After his discharge, he studied at the University of Kentucky where he received B.A. and M.A. degrees in English Literature and studied with Abe Guthrie, author of *The Big Sky*. Upon graduation he taught everything from the sciences and English to physical education in small-town Kentucky high schools. At that time he began writing short stories, which were published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Esquire*,

Redbook, Cosmopolitan, and Playboy. He wrote his first novel, *The Hustler*, which was published in 1959, and followed that with *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, which was published in 1963. He taught English literature and creative writing at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio for fourteen years, where he was a distinguished professor, and left that post in 1978 to come to New York and resume writing. He wrote four more novels—*Mockingbird*, *The Steps of the Sun*, *The Queen's Gambit* and *The Color of Money*—and a collection of short stories, *Far From Home*. He died of lung cancer in 1984. His books have been translated into 18 different languages.

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Karen Garcia:

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