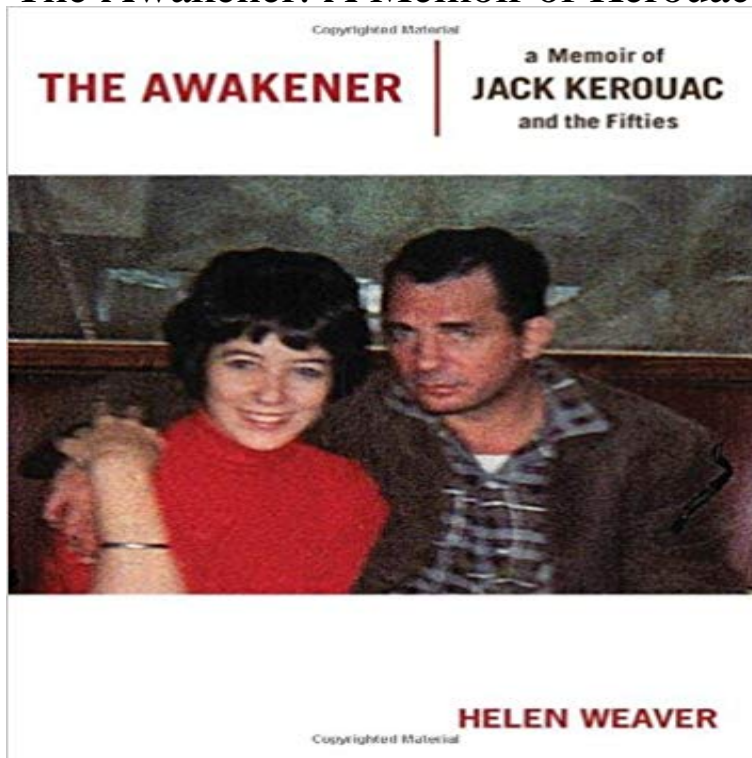


The Awakener: A Memoir of Kerouac and the Fifties



The Awakener is Helen Weavers long awaited memoir of her adventures with Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Lenny Bruce, and other wild characters from the New York City of the fifties and sixties. The sheltered but rebellious daughter of bookish Midwestern parents, Weaver survived a repressive upbringing in the wealthy suburbs of Scarsdale and an early divorce to land in Greenwich Village just in time for the birth of rock n rolland the counterculture movement known as the Beat Generation. Shortly after her arrival Kerouac, Ginsberg, and companyold friends of her roommatearrive on their doorstep after a non-stop drive from Mexico. Weaver and Kerouac fall in love on sight, and Kerouac moves in.[Weaver] paints a romantic picture of Greenwich Village in the 1950s and 60s, when she worked in publishing and hung out with Allen Ginsberg and the poet Richard Howard and was wild and loose, getting high and falling into bed almost immediately with her crushes, including Lenny BruceHer descriptions of the Village are evocative, recalling a time when she wore long skirts, Capezio ballet shoes and black stockings, and used to sit in the Bagatelle and have sweet vermouth on the rocks with a twist of lemon. Early on, she quotes Pasternak: You in others: this is your soul. Kerouacs soul lives on through many peopleJoyce Johnson, for onebut few have been as adept as Weaver at capturing both him and the New York bohemia of the time. He was lucky to have met her.Tara McKelvey, The New York Times Book ReviewThere is a tendency for memoirs written by women about The Great Man to be self-abnegating exercises in a kind of inverted narcissismthe author seeking to prove her worth as muse, as consort, as chosen one. Not so with Helen Weavers beautiful, plainspoken elegy for her time spent with Jack Kerouac, who suddenly appeared at her door in the West

Village one white, frosty morning with Allen Ginsberg, who knew Weavers roommate, in tow. New York Post Helen Weavers book was a revelation to me! This is the most graphic, honest, shameless, and moving documentary of what the newly liberated women in cities got up to how they lived, loved, and created. Who knew? It is time they did! And here's how. Carolyn Cassady Weaver recreates the excitement of a time when things were radically changing and shows us what it was like living with an eccentric genius at the turning point of his life. Eventually she asks Jack to leave but they remain friends, and over the years her respect for his writing grows even as Kerouac's reputation undergoes a gradual transition from enfant terrible to American icon. She comes to realize that by writing *On the Road* he woke America up along with her from the long dream of the fifties. And the Buddhist philosophy that once struck her as Jack's excuse for doing whatever he liked because nothing is real, it's all a dream eventually becomes her own. Helen Weavers memoir is a riveting account of her love affair and friendship with Jack Kerouac. She is both clear-eyed and passionate about him, and writes with truly amazing grace. Ann Charters Helen Weaver has translated over fifty books from the French of which one, Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) was a Finalist for the National Book Award in translation in 1976. She is co-author and general editor of the Larousse Encyclopedia of Astrology and author of *The Daisy Sutra*, a book on animal communication. She lives in Kingston, New York.

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