

Father Divine's Bikes by Steve Bassett.

4 stars

There is a war coming in Newark.

This book is about the dark side of post-war New Jersey. After the boom of the war years, Newark is struggling to cope with the multi-racial occupants in the ward. Two white altar boys are given the job of running numbers for a black gang under the guise of delivering newspapers. They are totally unaware that they are in serious danger of being hurt by another gang who also want the same numbers route. This book is how innocence and poverty can be used for nefarious goings-on by unscrupulous gangs.

This book was not really my cup of tea although I did enjoy it. The many characters in the book were a bit confusing and I kept going back to sort out who they were. Perhaps an index at the beginning may have been useful.

For anybody who is interested in post-war New Jersey and its problems, this is the book for you. It is well written and the poor boys are sorely used. My only other complaint is that the ending was very predictable, and I saw it coming three quarters of the way through, because the author gave away too much at one point.

A good book with strong characters and a sad story. I recommend it and hope others enjoy it.

Shesat

Breakaway Reviewers received copy of the book to review.