



The Gloves: A Boxing Chronicle

Robert Anasi

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A gritty, spirited inside look at the world of amateur boxing today

The Golden Gloves tournament is center stage in amateur boxing—a single-elimination contest in which young hopefuls square off in steamy gyms with the boxing elite looking on.

Robert Anasi took up boxing in his twenties to keep in shape, attract women, and sharpen his knuckles for the odd bar fight. He thought of entering "the Gloves," but put it off. Finally, at age thirty-two—his last year of eligibility—he vowed to fight, although he was an old man in a sport of teenagers and a light man who had to be even lighter (125 pounds) to fight others his size.

So begins Anasi's obsessive preparation for the Golden Gloves. He finds Milton, a wily and abusive trainer, and joins Milton's "Supreme Team": a black teenager who used to deal guns in Harlem, a bus driver with five kids, a hard-hitting woman champion who becomes his sparring partner. Meanwhile, he observes the changing world of amateur boxing, in which investment bankers spar with ex-convicts and everyone dreads a fatal blow to the head. With the Supreme Team, he goes to the tournament, whose outcome, it seems, is rigged, like so much in boxing life today.

Robert Anasi tells his story not as a journalist on assignment but as a man in the midst of one of the great adventures of his life. *The Gloves*, his first book, has the feel of a contemporary classic.

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