

## Edmund White's *A Boy's Own Story: The Graphic Novel*

**Edmund White**

**Brian Alessandro**

**Michael Carroll**

**Igor Karash, Illustrator**

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A classic gay coming-of-age story is adapted to graphic novel format in *Edmund White's A Boy's Own Story: The Graphic Novel*.

Based on an autobiographical 1982 novel, this book spans several decades to tell the tale of Eddie, who, as a young man of fifteen, realizes that he is homosexual. As the story progresses, Eddie faces the disapproval of his father and society, attempting to find his way to happiness without a clear map of how to do it.

The book preserves the literary approach of White's novel, a tactic apparent in its first few pages, as an adult Eddie observes a cabbie smoking and thinks, "For Proust, the madeline. For me, a cigar." The sight of the cigar, echoed in corresponding panels, sparks memories; with that, the story of Eddie's furtive, uncertain romantic escapades, and his coming to terms with his own sexual identity, ensues. The narrative takes place in an era not so long ago, but it's an illuminating reminder that acceptance for LGBTQ+ people was once much more difficult to achieve, both in society's eyes and in one's own.

The book's artwork has a classic look and feel, like a series of paintings set alongside one another. Text and dialogue are supplied with in-panel word balloons and captions that float across the pages like the fleeting memories they describe.

A revelatory account of growing up gay, *Edmund White's A Boy's Own Story* is an honest, affecting graphic memoir.

PETER DABBENE (November / December 2022)

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