



# Fante: A Family's Legacy of Writing, Drinking and Surviving

*Dan Fante*

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No two lives could have been more different, yet similar in a few essential ways than John and Dan Fante's. As father and son, John and Dan Fante were prone to fights, resentment and extended periods of silence. As men, they were damaged by alcoholism. As writers, they were compelled by anger, rage and unstoppable passion.

In FANTE, Dan Fante traces his family's history from the hillsides of Italy to the immigrant neighborhoods of Colorado to Los Angeles. There, John Fante struggles to gain the literary recognition he so badly craves, and despite the publication of his best known work, ASK THE DUST, he turns to the steady paycheck of Hollywood, working as a screenwriter to support his family. We follow Dan through a troubled childhood to his discovery of life's vices through work as a carnival barker and later as he hitchhikes to New York City, where he drives a taxi for twelve years. While John Fante's rage over his perceived failures as a writer and his struggle with debilitating diabetes make him more and more miserable, Dan struggles with alcoholic blackouts, suicidal thoughts and what he deems a broken mind.

John was a writer whose literary contributions were not recognised until the end of his life. Dan was an alcoholic saved by writing, who at the age of 45 picked up his father's old typewriter in order to ease the madness in his mind. Fante is the story of the evolution of a relationship between father and son who eventually found their way back to loving each other. In straightforward unapologetic prose, Dan Fante lays bare his family's story from his point of view, with the rage and passion of a writer, which he feels was his true inheritance and his father's greatest gift.

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