



Fear on Trial

John Henry Faulk

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John Henry Faulk was a popular radio and television personality during the McCarthy era. He was host of his own radio program on WCBS in New York when he publicly challenged AWARE, Inc., an ultrapatriotic group engaged in the systematic blacklisting of entertainment personalities. In response, an AWARE bulletin accused Faulk himself of subversive associations. Angry and frightened by this accusation, Faulk brought suit against AWARE, charging conspiracy to libel him and to destroy his career. Thus began one of the great civil rights cases of this century.

John Henry Faulk recounts the story of this harrowing time in *Fear on Trial*, the dramatic account of his six years on the "blacklist"—an exile that began with the AWARE bulletin and ended with his vindication by a jury award of \$3,500,000—the largest libel award in U.S. history at that time. The heart of the book is the trial of Faulk's libel action against AWARE, in which attorney Louis Nizer relentlessly exposed the blacklist for what it was—a cynical disdain of elementary decency couched in the rhetoric of patriotism.

Many of the people involved in the Faulk case were and are famous: attorneys Nizer and Roy Cohn; Edward R. Murrow and Charles Collingwood; Myrna Loy, Kim Hunter, Tony Randall, and Lee Grant; J. Frank Dobie; Ed Sullivan, David Susskind, and Mark Goodson. But the hero is Faulk himself, a man who—in the words of Studs Terkel—"faced the bastards and beat them down."

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