



# Is Fat Bob Dead Yet?: A Novel

Stephen Dobyns

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Stephen Dobyns—whom Stephen King has described as "the best of the best"—is back with a comic suspense novel about a small-time con operation, a pair of combative detectives, and the pride, revenge, and deception that guide us all. Richard Russo meets Elmore Leonard.

In the seaport town of New London, Connecticut, newcomer Connor Raposo has just witnessed a gruesome motorcycle accident on Bank Street. At least he thinks it was an accident. A man sliced in half by a reversing dump truck could *only* be an accident, right?

But these days, Connor can't be sure of anything—his entire line of work is based on games of artful deception. His days at Bounty, Inc., are spent soliciting funds for improbable, bogus charities; its last venture was Free Beagles from Nicotine Addiction, Inc. The new scam is Prom Queens Anonymous, Inc., dedicated to helping former high school celebs transition to humdrum daily grown-up lives; Connor's target is Angelina Rossi—Pumpkin Queen of 1985, proud beagle owner, and ex-wife of a man named Fat Bob.

Meanwhile, Manny Streeter and Benny Vikström are the local detectives assigned to the Bank Street motorcycle wreck, and despite their shared interest of proving each other wrong, the two eventually reach the same conclusion: This death by Harley was Murder One, pure and simple. As the detectives begin asking their questions around town, Connor is looking for similar answers that will determine whether he lives or dies. Among them: Who is Fat Bob, and is he actually dead?

Sharply written and entertainingly absurd, *Is Fat Bob Dead Yet?* is packed with Stephen Dobyns's trademark characters—whimsical, neurotic, puzzling yet familiar, and impossible to pin down. Dobyns again proves why he is an American master of the suspenseful, all-too-human land of the absurd.

From the Hardcover edition.



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