

Leaving Eden



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出版者:

出版时间:2003-4

装帧:

isbn:9780345445759

“The promise of beauty—the kind of real, personal beauty that can transform a person’s life—arrived in Eden, Virginia, on the fourth Thursday in June.” That’s the day Tallie Brock sees the sign at the Klip-N-Kurl, the beauty parlor where she works part-time, sweeping the floor and refilling shampoo bottles, among other chores. (What she really enjoys is listening to the women chat, gossip, and buzz like a beehive.) The sign in the front window announces GLAMOUR DAY. For twenty dollars, a woman can receive a complete professional makeover—and a glossy nine-by-twelve-inch picture of the result.

For Tallie, the glam shot just may be her ticket out of Lovettsville. She dreams of someday going to Hollywood and becoming a Star. Her mother, who was the spitting image of Natalie Wood, used to say “the sky’s the limit.” In fact, her mother once left home to make a movie in Los Angeles. But she returned six months later without whispering a word about it—and tried to pick up her life right where she left off. Tallie noticed something different, though. And her mother’s best friend, Martha Lee, the plainest woman within miles, knew the secret that soon the whole town would discover. At the time, Tallie was just afraid her mother would get antsy and disappear again. She was only half right.

But that was four years ago, and now Glamour Day is fast approaching. While jotting down observations in her Rulebook for Living (such as “Women with fat faces shouldn’t wear bangs” and “Beetles signify change”), Tallie finds herself changing in unexpected ways—as she tests the limits of trust, explores her growing attraction to a boy from a family as rich as her imagination, and reaches for the sky like she has never done before.

By turns funny and tender, joyous and poignant, bestselling author Anne LeClaire has written a winning, stylish novel of small-town Southern life— and what it means to be a mother, daughter, best friend, wife, and lover.

From the Hardcover edition.

作者介绍:

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