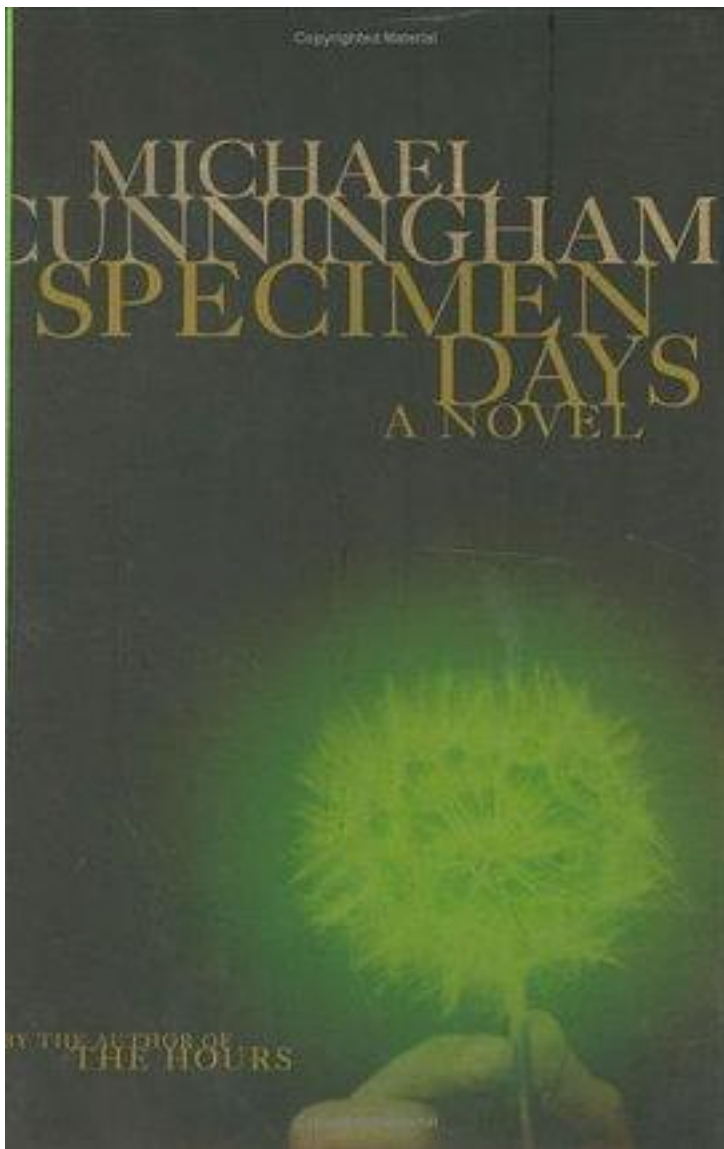


Specimen Days



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From the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of 'The Hours' comes a new thrilling and thought-provoking masterpiece. Specimen Days is a novel made up of three linked visionary narratives about the relationship between man and machine. The first narrative, a ghost story set at the height of the Industrial Revolution, tells the story of man-eating machines. An ecstatic boy, barely embodied in the physical world, speaks in the voice of the great visionary poet Walt Whitman. He works at an oppressive factory connected to the making of a mysterious substance with some universal function and on which the world's economy somehow depends. The slight boy can barely operate the massive machine which speaks to him in the voice of his devoured brother. A woman who was to have married the brother is now the object of obsessive interest by the boy. In a city in which all are mastered by the machine, the boy is convinced that the woman must be saved before she too is devoured. This grisly but ultimately transformative story establishes three main characters who will appear, reincarnated, in the other two sections of this startling modern novel. The boy, the man and the woman are each in search of some sort of transcendence as is made manifest by the recurrence of the words of Whitman ('It avails not, neither distance nor place! I am with you, and know how it is'). In part two, a noir thriller set in the early years of our current century, the city is at threat from maniacal bombers, while the third and last part plays with the sci-fi genre, taking our characters centuries into the future. The man who was devoured by a machine in part one is now literally a machine -- a robot who becomes fully human before our eyes. The woman is a refugee from another part of the universe, a warrior in her native land but a servant on this planet. Specimen Days is a genre-bending, haunting ode to life itself -- a work of surpassing power and beauty by one of the most original and daring writers at work today.

作者介绍:

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