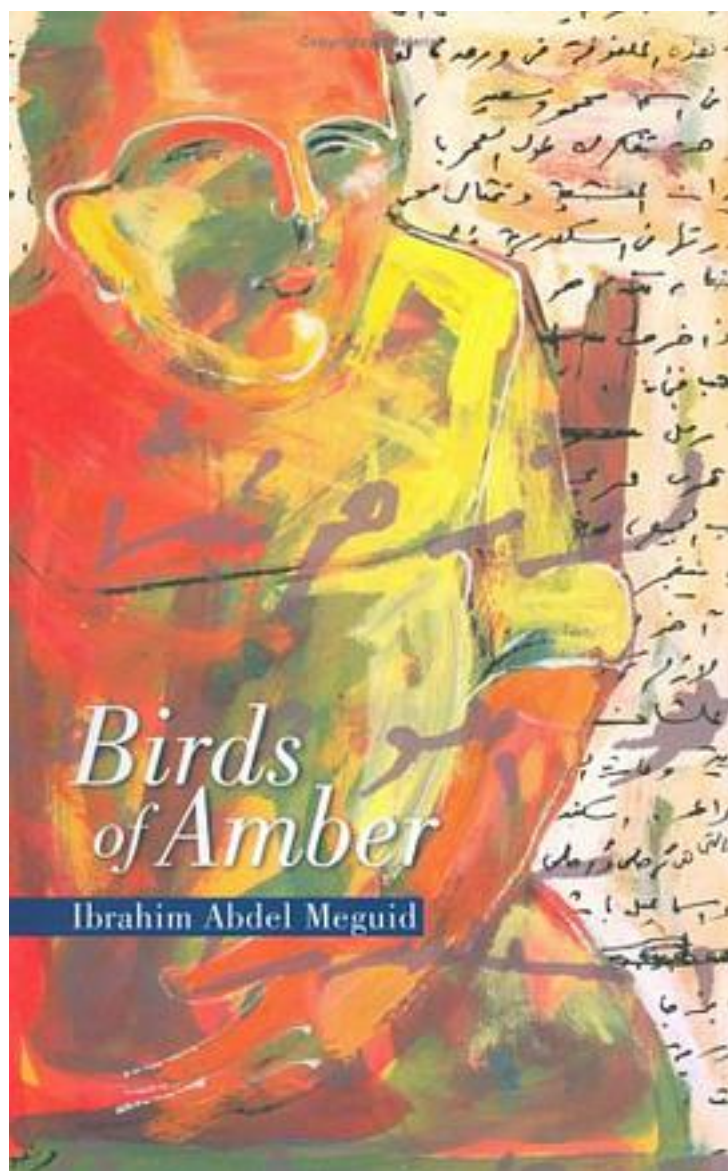


Birds of Amber



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During the 1956 Suez War-or the Tripartite Aggression, as it is known in Egypt-life in Alexandria goes on. The railroad workers and their families live in the low-income housing of el- Masakin, along the Mahmudiya Canal, but some of them take us on forays into the other, cosmopolitan Alexandria, whose European denizens, mainly Greeks, Italians, and Jews are departing in droves. This spellbinding novel teems with memorable characters, not a few of whom are themselves storytellers: a budding novelist writing about el-Masakin and its eccentric denizens and about his own improbable love affair with a 12-year-old girl; a spice merchant dreaming of the bygone glory of his ancestors and their trade along the spice road, beginning on the Malabar Coast; a train guard who is a teller of very tall tales; and a would-be filmmaker trying to make a film showing what happened in Port Said during the war. As in his earlier novel, No One Sleeps in Alexandria, Ibrahim Abdel Meguid here combines historical fact with fiction, and the mundane with the fantastical, to weave an engrossing, multilayered story of stories.

作者介绍:

目录:

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