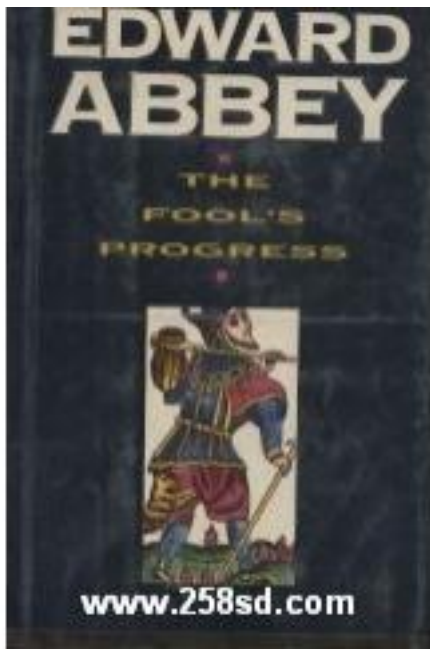


The Fool's Progress



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著者:

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Amazon.com Just before he died in 1989, Ed Abbey published what he called his "honest novel," one loosely based on his own life. Early in its opening pages, Abbey's alter ego, Lightcap, takes off from his nearly empty home (its contents just removed by a disgruntled spouse) in Tucson, Arizona--but not before shooting his refrigerator, a hated symbol of civilization. Lightcap makes a winding journey by car to his boyhood home in the Appalachian Mountains of Pennsylvania, calling on old friends along the road, visiting Indian reservations and out-of-the-way bars, and reminiscing about the triumphs and follies of his life. Readers would be mistaken to view this as pure autobiography, but *The Fool's Progress* nonetheless is an illuminating look into Abbey's time and his way of thinking, especially on matters of ecology and other social issues. It's also a picaresque tale humorously and artfully

told, a book that Abbey himself rightly regarded as one of his best works of fiction. --Gregory McNamee --This text refers to the Paperback edition. From Publishers Weekly Abbey has won a devoted following with such caustic meditations as *Desert Solitaire* and anarchistic novels like *The Brave Cowboy* and *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. None of them, however, could adequately have prepared one for *The Fool's Progress*, an epic exploration of Abbey's passionate loves and hatreds, set forth in a wild, picaresque novel that reads at times like a combination of Thomas Wolfe and Jack Kerouac. Henry Lightcap is a woodsman's son from a remote corner of West Virginia who has dedicated his life to nature, music, literature and the pursuit of booze and lovely women. He works only as he has to, to afford the things he craves which do not include any of the material products of our culture except for the necessary vehicles for his constant wanderings. Like Abbey himself, Lightcap has spent much of his 53 years in the wilderness of the American West, as park ranger or fire watcher, and is at once passionately devoted to the land and full of rage at what late 20th century America has done to it. At the beginning of the book one of his several wives has walked out on him. Typically, Henry shoots the refrigerator, then gathers up his dying dog and begins a despairing odyssey across a lovely but ruined land from Tucson to the Appalachian family farm still run by his brother; penniless, he has nowhere else to go. Along the way we learn of his childhood, his father, his women, his Army experiences and receive two huge narrative surprises, of a kind not easy to bring off in a book that is essentially a road novel with flashbacks. One involves the only real love of Henry's life, a tale told with aching tenderness and anguish; the other embraces his very existence. At his best Abbey writes with fierce eloquence of landscape and city, of stunted souls and drunken despair; he can be funny and poignant at once, and describes violent action with horrid vividness. At his worst he gets hyperbolic and full of bile, and a savage streak of male chauvinism surfaces. But Henry, and what he represents, seizes hold of the imagination, so that the reader is carried along as irrevocably as Henry's battered truck, lurching along interstates and fading country roads to a windup as absurdly moving as anything you have read in years. 50,000 first printing; author tour. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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目录:

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评论

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