

Blues Lessons: A Novel



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Growing up on his family's orchards in Appleton, Michigan, in the 1950s, Martin Dijksterhuis finds everything he needs in his extended family and in the land itself -- in the reassuring routines of growing and harvesting, spraying and pruning. Although his mother wants him to get out of Appleton, which she finds impossibly provincial, and attend a great university -- the University of Chicago, her alma mater -- he has no desire to leave. In the autumn of his junior year of high school, however, in the camp of the migrant workers who come north every year to pick the Dijksterhuis peaches and apples, Martin discovers his vocation, the country blues -- unsettling melodies that cry out from a place in the soul he never knew existed. He also falls in love with Corinna Williams, the strong-willed daughter of the black foreman who runs the Dijksterhuis orchards. His blues vocation and his love for Corinna are the two stories of his life. His struggle to combine them into a single story takes him a long way from home and from the life he had always envisioned for himself, and then it brings him back again in a way he could never have imagined. In this beautifully rendered novel, Robert Hellenga, author of *The Sixteen Pleasures* and *The Fall of a Sparrow*, explores the fragility of happiness, the difficulties of following one's calling in life, and the sorrows and satisfactions of being a parent.

作者介绍:

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