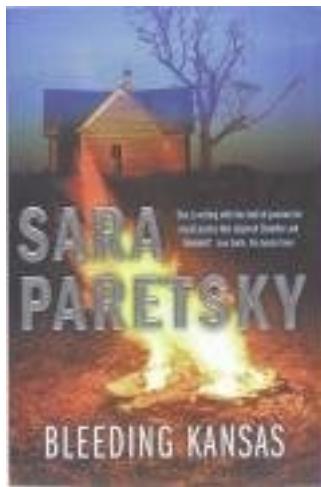


Bleeding Kansas



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出版者:

出版时间:

装帧:

isbn:9781423319818

Set in the Kaw River Valley, where Paretsky grew up, Bleeding Kansas is the story of the Schapens and the Grelliers, two farm families whose histories have been entwined since the 1850s, when their ancestors settled the valley as antislavery immigrants. Today, the Schapen family, still terrified by the lawlessness of the 1970s - when Lawrence was the most violent college town in the nation - have turned to that old-time religion for security. The Schapens keep a close eye on all their neighbors, most especially the Grelliers. They keep careful track of everyone's (TM)s misdeeds, and print the most egregious on their family website. When Gina Haring, a Wiccan, moves into a nearby empty farmhouse and starts practicing pagan rites, the Schapens are so outraged that they begin an active harassment campaign against the Wiccans. The family members worry, too, about who stands better with the Lord, they or the Grelliers. When a Schapen cow gives birth to what may be a perfect Red Heifer - needed if the Temple is ever rebuilt in Jerusalem - the Schapens are convinced that God is indeed smiling on them. The pastor at their church, Salvation Bible, proclaims: We were given a miracle, a chance to make history, in Kansas. The nation and the

world laugh at us. a What is the matter with Kansas?a (TM) liberals ask. We have a chance to say, a Nothinga (TM)s the matter with Kansas, generation of vipers. Everythinga (TM)s right with Kansas.a (TM) Whata (TM)s the matter is, you have turned your backs on the truth of the risen Lord.a Despite parental cautions, the Grelliersa (TM) teenage children are enraged by the Schapens. All their short lives, they and the young Schapens have fought, first in their country elementary school and now in high school. One particularly angry confrontation causes Chip Grellier to be expelled from school and consequently to join the Army. Chipa (TM)s death in Iraq is the catalyzing event for momentous, even monstrous, changes in the lives of not only the Schapens and the Grelliers but all the families in the Valley. The powerful, climactic scene at Gina Haringa (TM)s Samhain bonfire will forever haunt the listener.

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