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From Our House: A Memoir

Lee Martin



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From Our House is the luminous and uniquely American memoir of Lee Martin, born into a farming family the same year his father unexpectedly lost both hands. Lee's father, once known for "doing a good turn for his neighbors," changed that afternoon in the cornfields, becoming an embittered, hardened man. "All our lives have private truths," Martin writes, "and the truth about my father was that after his accident he brought a deep and abiding rage into our home. I knew his hooks as intimately as I ever knew anything about my father."

"How easily our bodies become us, our souls bound to the material, to the joy or grief or pain we feel through our skin," Martin muses. Ultimately it is his mother's quiet compassion that accounts for the grace that Lee and his father finally discover both within themselves and within their small family. Learning to live by the seasons and to fall asleep to the rumble of his father's tractor, braving snowstorms to sell hogs or to visit an ailing grandmother, playing basketball, listening to baseball games, and stealing records, Lee endures the anger and shame that haunt his family—yet grows up to tell his tale with rare beauty and remarkable forbearance.

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