

Billy Phelans Greatest Game Paperback | fbf0adad0cf7f519b0f093d54db89b5c

The Albany Cycle
Legs
O Albany!
Around the World
Roscoe
Dissident Gardens
True Confessions
An Albany Trio
Ragtime
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Ironweed
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O Albany!
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It's V-J Day, World War II is finally over, and Roscoe is quitting politics after twenty-six years as chief brainstruster of Albany's notorious Democratic machine. The suave, brilliant, unscrupulous Falstaffian wants to hang up his white double-breasted Palm Beach suit and drift into retirement. But how will he relax his hold on the lid without the political pot boiling over, scalding his beloved and her family? Armed with the politician's most powerful credo - 'Righteousness doesn't stand a chance against the imagination' - Roscoe fights his final political battles. Every step forward leads Roscoe into the past - to the early loss of his true love, to his own particular heroics in World War I, the takeover of City Hall and the methodical assassination of the gangster Jack 'Legs' Diamond. ROSCOE is a comic masterpiece from one of America's most revered novelists. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. To ensure a quality reading experience, this work has been proofread and republished using a format that seamlessly blends the original graphical elements with text in an easy-to-read typeface. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

A postmodern masterpiece about fraud and forgery by one of the most distinctive, accomplished novelists of the last century. The Recognitions is a sweeping depiction of a world in which everything that anyone recognizes as beautiful or true or good emerges as anything but: our world. The book is a masquerade, moving from New England to New York to Madrid, from the art world to the underworld, but it centers on the story of Wyatt Gwyon, the son of a New England minister, who forsakes religion to devote himself to painting, only to despair of his inspiration. In expiation, he will paint nothing but flawless copies of his revered old masters—copies, however, that find their way into the hands of a sinister financial wizard by the name of Reck tall Brown, who of course sells them as the real thing. Dismissed uncomprehendingly by reviewers on publication in 1955 and ignored by the literary world for decades after, The Recognitions is now established as one of the great American novels, immensely ambitious and entirely unique, a book of wild, Boschian inspiration and outrageous comedy that is also profoundly serious and sad. Now together in one volume, here are three early works from critically acclaimed author William Kennedy's Albany Cycle: LEGS, BILLY PHELAN'S GREATEST GAME and the Pulitzer Prize-winning IRONWEED. "Vivid characterization, dead-on dialogue and brilliantly imagined scenes . . . "THE NEW YORKER's review of recent Kennedy novel, THE FLAMING CORSAGE They stand proudly gazing across the Hudson River at the cliffs of New Jersey. Their brows are marked by ornamental pediments. Greek columns stand as sentries by their entrances and stone medallions bedeck their chests. They are seven graceful relics of Beaux Arts New York, townhouses built more than 100 years ago for a new class of industrialists, actors and scientists -- many from abroad -- who made their fortunes in the United States and shaped the lives of Americans. This book brings to life the ghosts who inhabit that row of townhouses on Manhattan's stately Riverside Drive for the first fifty years of the 20th Century, including a vicious crew of hoodlums who carried out what at the time was the largest armored car robbery in American history. It was a daring, minutely planned exploit that ended in blood, when one of the gangsters accidentally shot himself. He was taken to one of the townhouses -- then, in 1934, an underworld safehouse -- where he died and was stuffed in a steamer trunk (but his cohorts had to saw off one of his legs to fit him in it). From gangsters to industrialists, from future mayors to murderers, from movie stars to mafia dons, one block in a burgeoning city saw it all. The people who lived in each of the "Seven Sisters" reads like a mini Who's Who. Meet: * Percy Geary and John Oley, two Albany gangsters with a background in kidnapping and bootlegging; * Lucretia Davis, baking powder heiress whose parents were engaged in a bitter divorce that included allegations that her mother was trying get her father declared insane and take over his business; * Jokichi Takamine, the world's first biotech engineer and a rare Japanese scientist in the United States at the turn of the 19th century--He discovered diastase, an enzyme to ferment whisky and settle the stomach, and the adrenaline, a major scientific discovery; * Marion Davies, the mistress of William Randolph Hearst, who rose to movie stardom on the back of W.R.'s publicity machine while living on the block; * Julia Marlowe, American's greatest Shakespearean actress around 1900, just to name a few. If only the buildings could speak. * The Fabers of pencil fame * Billy Phelan's Greatest Game (Albany gang made famous by William Kennedy) * Duke Ellington, two mayors, and lurking in the background Legs Diamond. If only the walls could talk? Dan Wakins makes it so in this unforgettable intimate glimpse into the history of New York City. Kennedy's O Albany! is in part the non-fictional stories he covered in his novels, Legs and Billy Phelan's Greatest Game. Kennedy retells the exploits of the bootlegger Jack 'Legs' Diamond, the bungled 1933 kidnapping of John O'Connell, Jr., heir to the Albany Democratic machine and explores the Albany of his past, including its demographics and vanished neighborhoods. From the moment he rescues the beautiful, passionate Maud Fallon from the icy waters of the Hudson one wintry day in 1849, Daniel Quinn is thrust into a bewildering, adventure-filled journey through the tumult of nineteenth-century America. As he quests after the beguiling and elusive Maud, Daniel will witness the rise and fall of great dynasties in upstate

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New York, epochal prize fights, exotic life in the theatre, visitations from spirits beyond the grave, horrific battles between Irish immigrants and the "Know-Nothings," vicious New York draft riots, heroic passages through the Underground Railroad, and the bloody despair of the Civil War. Filled with Dickensian characters, a vivid sense of history, and a marvellously inventive humor, Quinn's *Bookies* is an engaging delight by an acclaimed modern master. The beloved Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, basis of the film starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep. Francis Phelan, ex-big-leaguer, part-time gravedigger, full-time bum with the gift of gab, is back in town. He left Albany twenty-two years earlier after he dropped his infant son accidentally, and the boy died. Now he's on the way back to the wife and home he abandoned, haunted at every corner by the ghosts of his violent life. Francis; his wine ladyfriend of nine years, Helen; and his stumblebum pal, Rudy, shuffle their ragtag way through the city's bleakest streets, surviving on gumption, muscatel, and black wit. *Estiny* is not their business. The premise of *Ironweed* was so unpromising, that in marketing terms the writer still to this day finds it funny: the story of a bunch of itinerant alcoholics, knocking around Kennedy's hometown, falling out, having visions, trying to pass for sober to cadge a bed for the night in the homeless shelter.' Guardian 'But for all the rich variety of prose and event, from hallucination to bedrock realism to slapstick and to blessed quotidian peace, "Ironweed" is more austere than its predecessors. It is more fierce, but also more forgiving.' Quoted from the classic New York Times review of *Ironweed*, which made it an overnight sensation. Finally Abby is thirteen. A real teenager who only wants to pierce her ears, have a boyfriend, and run her own life. But when her mother suffers a nervous breakdown, Abby faces a life far different from what she hoped for. Set in the Bay Area in the '70s, *An Egg on Three Sticks* is Jackie Moyer Fischer's emotional, funny, and extraordinarily heartfelt novel about Abby's struggle to hold her family together, find love from a mother who has little to give, and simply try to be thirteen. With a voice completely fresh and honest, Abby takes us on a journey that is often hilarious, sometimes heartbreaking, and overwhelmingly hopeful. But a journey no thirteen-year-old should have to take. A harrowing exploration of the collapse of American diplomacy and the abdication of global leadership, by the winner of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize in Public Service. His life radically changed by an encounter with Ernest Hemingway in Cuba, journalist Daniel Quinn embarks on a turbulent journey marked by such historical events as the Albany race riots, the rise of Fidel Castro and the assassination of Robert Kennedy. By the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Ironweed*. 75,000 first printing. *Hannah Coulter* is Wendell Berry's seventh novel and his first to employ the voice of a woman character in its telling. Hannah, the now-elderly narrator, recounts the love she has for the land and for her community. She remembers each of her two husbands, and all places and community connections threatened by twentieth-century technologies. At risk is the whole culture of family farming, hope redeemed when her wayward and once lost grandson, Virgil, returns to his rural home place to work the farm. *Legs* inaugurated William Kennedy's brilliant cycle of novels (including Billy Phelan's *Greatest Game* and *Ironweed*) set in Albany, New York. True to both life and myth, *Legs* brilliantly evokes the flamboyant career of the legendary gangster Jack "Legs" Diamond, who was finally murdered in Albany. Through the equivocal eyes of Diamond's attorney, Marcus Gorman (who scraps a promising political career for the more elemental excitement of the criminal underworld), we watch as Legs and his showgirl mistress, Kiki Roberts, blaze their gaudy trail across the tabloid pages of the 1920s and 1930s. Diamond and his gangster entourage emerge as emblematic figures from an era of American innocence-and corruption. In 1940s Los Angeles, an unidentified murder victim is found bisected in a shadowy lot. A catchy nickname is given her in jest—"The Virgin Tramp"—and suddenly a "nice little homicide that would have drifted off the front pages in a couple of days" becomes a storm center. Two brothers, Tom and Des Spellacy, are at the heart of this powerful novel of Irish-Catholic life in Southern California just after World War II. Played in the film version by Robert Duvall and Robert De Niro respectively, Tom is a homicide detective and Des is a priest on the rise within the Church. The murder investigation provides the background against which are played the ever changing loyalties of the two brothers. Theirs is a world of favors and fixes, power and promises, inhabited by priests and pimps, cops and contractors, boxers and jockeys and lesbian fight promoters and lawyers who know how to put the fix in. A fast-paced and often hilarious classic of contemporary fiction, *True Confessions* is about a crime that has no solutions, only victims. More important, it is about the complex relationship between Tom and Des Spellacy, each tainted with the guilt and hostility that separate brothers. A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK It is 1901 and Buffalo, New York, stands at the center of the nation's attention as a place of immense wealth and sophistication. The massive hydroelectric power development at nearby Niagara Falls and the grand Pan-American Exposition promise to bring the Great Lakes "city of light" even more repute. Against this rich historical backdrop lives Louisa Barrett, the attractive, articulate headmistress of the Macaulay School for Girls. Protected by its powerful all-male board, "Miss Barrett" is treated as an equal by the men who control the life of the city. Lulled by her unique relationship with these titans of business, Louisa feels secure in her position, until a mysterious death at the power plant triggers a sequence of events that forces her to return to a past she has struggled to conceal, and to question everything and everyone she holds dear. Both observer and participant, Louisa Barrett guides the reader through the culture and conflicts of a time and place where immigrant factory workers and nature conservationists protest violently against industrialists, where presidents broker politics, where wealthy "Negroes" fight for recognition and equality, and where women struggle to thrive in a system that allows them little freedom. Wrought with remarkable depth and intelligence, *City of Light* remains a work completely of its own era, and of ours as well. A stirring literary accomplishment, Lauren Belfer's first novel marks the debut of a fresh voice for the new millennium and heralds a major publishing event. The second novel in William Kennedy's much-loved Albany cycle depicts Billy Phelan, a slightly tarnished poker player, pool hustler, and small-time bookie. A resourceful man full of Irish pluck, Billy works the fringes of the Albany sporting life with his own particular style and private code of honor, until he finds himself in the dangerous position of potential go-between in the kidnapping of a political boss's son. To read these interviews given between 1969 and 1996 is to gain insights into William Kennedy's high seriousness in pursuing the craft of fiction and to witness the artistic growth of this remarkable writer. The twenty-four interviews in this collection reveal how the opportunities and challenges in Kennedy's writing life parallel those other contemporary writers have faced in the last years of the

century. The high drama of imagined worlds, he says, becomes a Rosetta Stone, the key that unlocks the very real mysteries and complexities of our daily lives. You're inventing out of a confluence of known facts and random ideas, he says about the process of writing, juxtaposing reality and abstractions, and then wham! You've got something brand new in your head, and on the page. You're functioning on a plane of existence you didn't know was possible. That's creation, and it's profound pleasure. It's what you live for. Readers of these interviews will be privy to another process as well, the arduous but exciting process by which Kennedy has emerged as a major voice in contemporary letters. His meteoric rise to fame in 1983 and his continuing popularity since are the stuff of drama and folklore. In that year his novel *Ironweed*, rejected earlier by thirteen publishers, was finally published by Viking. It earned him a MacArthur Award, the New York Book Critics Circle Award, and a Pulitzer Prize. Governor Mario Cuomo honored him with the New York State Governor's Arts Award and declared that in Kennedy Albany (had) found its Homer. Hollywood came calling and secured screen rights to *Ironweed*, *Legs*, and Billy Phelan's *Greatest Game*. With Francis Ford Coppola, Kennedy co-wrote the screenplay of *The Cotton Club*. The career that lifted off with such dramatic momentum has shown no signs of flagging. With steady regularity, Kennedy continues to add to his Albany Cycle of novels, as he experiments boldly with the craft of fiction. Sixteen-year-old Lucy Szabo is *Undead* -- at least according to her own theories about vampirism. Lucy believes that the first vampires -- with their pale skin, long teeth, and uncontrollable thirst -- were dying diabetics. And she should know. She's a diabetic herself. When Lucy becomes involved with Draco -- a self-proclaimed "real" vampire she meets in the Transylvania Internet chat room -- her world begins crashing down around her. Caught up in late-night parties and Goth culture, she begins to lose control of her grades, relationships, and health. Lucy realizes she needs to make some important choices, and fast. But it may already be too late. The #1 New York Times bestselling novel and basis for the Academy Award-winning film—a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't—nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read*. Aibileen is a black maid in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, who's always taken orders quietly, but lately she's unable to hold her bitterness back. Her friend Minny has never held her tongue but now must somehow keep secrets about her employer that leave her speechless. White socialite Skeeter just graduated college. She's full of ambition, but without a husband, she's considered a failure. Together, these seemingly different women join together to write a tell-all book about work as a black maid in the South, that could forever alter their destinies and the life of a small town. **NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY SLATE** • Includes an exclusive conversation between Lev Grossman and Lauren Owen For fans of *Anne Rice*, *The Historian*, and *The Night Circus*, an astonishing debut, a novel of epic scope and suspense that conjures up all the magic and menace of *Victorian London 1892*: James Norbury, a shy would-be poet newly down from Oxford, finds lodging with a charming young aristocrat. Through this new friendship, he is introduced to the drawing-rooms of high society and finds love in an unexpected quarter. Then, suddenly, he vanishes without a trace. Alarmed, his sister, Charlotte, sets out from their crumbling country estate determined to find him. In the sinister, labyrinthine London that greets her, she uncovers a hidden, supernatural city populated by unforgettable characters: a female rope walker turned vigilante, a street urchin with a deadly secret, and the chilling "Doctor Knife." But the answer to her brother's disappearance ultimately lies within the doors of the exclusive, secretive Aegolius Club, whose predatory members include the most ambitious, and most bloodthirsty, men in England. In her first novel, Lauren Owen has created a fantastical world that is both beguiling and terrifying. The *Quick* will establish her as one of fiction's most dazzling talents. Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more. "A suspenseful, gloriously atmospheric first novel, and a feast of gothic storytelling that is impossible to resist."—Kate Atkinson "A cracking good read . . . Owen takes the gothic conventions of the vampire novel in a refreshing new direction."—Deborah Harkness, author of *A Discovery of Witches* and *The Book of Life* "A good old-fashioned vampire novel . . . What fun."—The New York Times Book Review (Editor's Choice) "The *Quick* is that rare book that reviewers and readers live for: both plot- and character-driven, a stay-up-all-night reading romp. . . . This is elegant, witty, force-of-nature writing."—The Dallas Morning News "The book's energy, its wide reach and rich detail make it a confident example of the 'unputdownable' novel."—The Economist "A seamless blend of Victorian London and rich imagination."—Tana French, author of *In the Woods* "A thrilling tale . . . This book will give you chills even on a hot day."—Minneapolis Star Tribune "Stylishly sinister . . . will have you sleeping with the lights on."—O: The Oprah Magazine "A sly and glittering addition to the literature of the macabre."—Hilary Mantel, author of *Wolf Hall* "A big, sly bucketful of the most tremendous fun . . . [Owen] weaves what's here with what's beyond as easily as J. K. Rowling does."—Slate "[An author of] prodigious gifts . . . Owen captures Dickens's London with glee and produces a number of characters Dickens would be happy to call his own."—Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Following the changing seasons, the physics and astronomy professor presents meditations inspired by attention to the natural world. Challenged with circling the world solo at the end of the 19th century, three very different adventurers--avid bicyclist Thomas Stevens, fearless reporter Nellie Bly and retired sea captain Joshua Slocum--embark on epic journeys. By a Scott O'Dell Award-winning graphic novelist. "Gut-wrenching force A majestic, fiery epic. *The Given Day* is a huge, impassioned, intensively researched book that brings history alive." - The New York Times Dennis Lehane, the New York Times bestselling author of *Live by Night*—now a Warner Bros. movie starring Ben Affleck—offers an unflinching family epic that captures the political unrest of a nation caught between a well-patterned past and an unpredictable future. This beautifully written novel of American history tells the story of two families—one black, one white—swept up in a maelstrom of revolutionaries and anarchists, immigrants and ward bosses, Brahmins and ordinary citizens, all engaged in a battle for survival and power at the end of World War I. An historical profile of the capital of New York documents the neighborhoods, ethnicity, culture, society, and colorful people of Albany. A "wildly funny" novel of a monumentally unsuccessful newspaper strike in 1960s upstate New York from a Pulitzer Prize-winning author (*People*). The newspaper strike has stretched on for more than a year. When it began, the Guild boasted over 250 members. Now, they're down to eighteen, with only three truly serious about the cause. Their leader, Bailey, is a columnist with an outsize sense of his own importance and a hatred of scabs that borders on fanaticism. Married to a

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roller derby queen, but smitten with one of his fellow radicals, Bailey is on a path of self-destruction that could take the entire city's newspaper establishment down along with him. And that's just what he has in mind. With the cape-wearing old-school Rosenthal at his side, Bailey embarks on a mad mission: hijacking the newspaper's entire ink shipment and dumping it in the snow. But he's hardly taken his first step when the scheme spins out of control, trapping him between armies of gypsies, scabs, and the wildest hippies New York has to offer. Set in a city closely resembling his native Albany, the fiction debut of William Kennedy is "a bawdy Celtic romp," foreshadowing the wit and imagination that marked his literary career (Time). The New York Times bestseller: "Hilarious. No mushy tribute to the joys of fatherhood, Lewis' book addresses the good, the bad, and the merely baffling about having kids."—Boston Globe

When Michael Lewis became a father, he decided to keep a written record of what actually happened immediately after the birth of each of his three children. This book is that record. But it is also something else: maybe the funniest, most unsparing account of ordinary daily household life ever recorded, from the point of view of the man inside. The remarkable thing about this story isn't that Lewis is so unusual. It's that he is so typical. The only wonder is that his wife has allowed him to publish it.

A sweeping and enchanting new novel from the widely beloved, award-winning author Elizabeth McCracken about three generations of an unconventional New England family who own and operate a candlepin bowling alley. From the day she is discovered unconscious in a New England cemetery at the turn of the twentieth century—nothing but a bowling ball, a candlepin, and fifteen pounds of gold on her person—Bertha Truitt is an enigma to everyone in Salford, Massachusetts. She has no past to speak of, or at least none she is willing to reveal, and her mysterious origin scandalizes and intrigues the townspeople, as does her choice to marry and start a family with Leviticus Sprague, the doctor who revived her. But Bertha is plucky, tenacious, and entrepreneurial, and the bowling alley she opens quickly becomes Salford's most defining landmark—with Bertha its most notable resident. When Bertha dies in a freak accident, her past resurfaces in the form of a heretofore-unheard-of son, who arrives in Salford claiming he is heir apparent to Truitt Alleys. Soon it becomes clear that, even in her death, Bertha's defining spirit and the implications of her obfuscations live on, infecting and affecting future generations through inheritance battles, murky paternities, and hidden wills. In a voice laced with insight and her signature sharp humor, Elizabeth McCracken has written an epic family saga set against the backdrop of twentieth-century America. *Bowlaway* is both a stunning feat of language and a brilliant unraveling of a family's myths and secrets, its passions and betrayals, and the ties that bind and the rifts that divide. It is 1958 and the Phelan clan has gathered to hear Peter Phelan's will, read by the living Peter himself, an artist whose paintings about members of the family have given him belated critical recognition. The paintings illuminate the lives of his brother Francis (the exiled hero of *Ironweed*), and a family ancestor, Malachi McIlhenny, a true madman beset by demons, and determined to send them back to hell. Orson Purcell, bastard son of Peter, and half-mad himself, encounters his first true solace through this obsessive and close-knit family he has never quite entered; most especially through his Aunt Molly, whose intense love affair holds secrets that only another love can resurrect. It is through Orson's modern eye that we see the tragedies, obsessions, and clandestine joys of this singular family. This is climatic work in William Kennedy's Albany Cycle, riding on the melody of its language and the power of its story, which is full of surprise, comedy, terror, and earthly delight.

A multigenerational saga focuses on two extraordinary women, including Rose, a tyrannical Communist who terrorizes her neighborhood with her absolute beliefs, and her daughter Miriam, who embraces the counterculture of Greenwich Village. A lively portrait of mid-twentieth-century American book publishing—"A wonderful book, filled with anecdotal treasures" (The New York Times). According to Al Silverman, former publisher of Viking Press and president of the Book-of-the-Month Club, the golden age of book publishing began after World War II and lasted into the early 1980s. In this entertaining and affectionate industry biography, Silverman captures the passionate spirit of legendary houses such as Knopf; Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Grove Press; and Harper & Row, and profiles larger-than-life executives and editors, including Alfred and Blanche Knopf, Bennett Cerf, Roger Straus, Seymour Lawrence, and Cass Canfield. More than one hundred and twenty publishing insiders share their behind-the-scenes stories about how some of the most famous books in American literary history—from *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* to *The Silence of the Lambs*—came into being and why they're still being read today. A joyful tribute to the hard work and boundless energy of professionals who dedicate their careers to getting great books in front of enthusiastic readers, *The Time of Their Lives* will delight bibliophiles and anyone interested in this important and ever-evolving industry.

A sea-story of vivid adventures. In *Hazard* is set on board the British ship *Archimedes* which is bound for the Far East from Norfolk, Virginia, via the Panama Canal. When the crew suddenly find themselves in the middle of a violent hurricane, the book becomes an absorbing study of how different men behave when faced with danger. An author and college writing professor dies suddenly in the middle of typing a screenplay. He is transported to a place where all writers end up in the afterlife, many with regrets that their goals were not accomplished. Yet, there is a way to turn back, and that is to live one more week to accomplish those goals, and—failure is not an option.

Billy Phelan, a slightly tarnished poker player, pool hustler, and small-time bookie, moves through the lurid nighttime glare of a tough Depression-era town. A resourceful man full of Irish pluck, Billy works the fringes of Albany sporting life with his own particular style and private code of honor until he finds himself in the dangerous position of potential go-between in the kidnapping of a political boss's son. In relating Billy's fall from the underworld grace and his storybook redemption, Kennedy captures the seamy underside of a brassy, sweaty city that would prefer to pretend that the Depression doesn't exist. "You don't have to be Irish to cherish this literary gift—just being human and curious and from a family will suffice." —Malachy McCourt, New York Times bestselling author of *A Monk Swimming*. In the tradition of Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* and Alice Taylor's *To School Through the Fields*, Tom Phelan's *We Were Rich and We Didn't Know It* is a heartfelt and masterfully written memoir of growing up in Ireland in the 1940s. Tom Phelan, who was born and raised in County Laois in the Irish midlands, spent his formative years working with his wise and demanding father as he sought to wrest a livelihood from a farm that was often wet, muddy, and back-breaking. It was a time before rural electrification, the telephone, and indoor plumbing; a time when the main modes of travel were bicycle and animal cart; a time when

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small farmers struggled to survive and turkey eggs were hatched in the kitchen cupboard; a time when the Church exerted enormous control over Ireland. *We Were Rich and We Didn't Know It* recounts Tom's upbringing in an isolated, rural community from the day he was delivered by the local midwife. With tears and laughter, it speaks to the strength of the human spirit in the face of life's adversities. A clearly written, practical and illustrated handbook to woodcut techniques and printmaking, both a how-to book and reference for printmakers, designers and collectors that includes finished examples by accomplished woodcut artists. Francis Phelan is, alongside 'Legs' Diamond, William Kennedy's greatest character. Ex-ball player, latterly a bum, lush and hardcase, he is central to these three Albany novels: father to the pool shark Billy who struggles with his legacy of violence and self-glorification (*BILLY PHELAN'S GREATEST GAME*); brother to artist Peter whose paintings explore the dark corners of his family history, including Francis's life (*VERY OLD BONES*); and antihero of Pulitzer Prize winning *IRONWEED*, in which Phelan returns to Albany at the end of the Depression, roaming the familiar streets with his hobo pal Helen, trying to make peace with the ghosts of the past and present. In a Manhattan hotel room, the "Love Nest Killings of 1908" take place. But the mystery of who killed whom, and why, does not unravel until we explore the lives of Katrina Taylor and Edward Daughtery. He is a first-generation Irish American and a successful playwright. She is a high-born Protestant, a beautiful seductive woman with complex attitudes towards life. Their marriage is a passionate one, but a cataclysmic hotel fire changes it into something else altogether. Moving back and forth between the 1880s and 1912, *The Flaming Corsage* follows Katrina and Edward as other lives impact upon theirs—their socially opposed families; Edward's flirtatious actress paramour, Melissa Spencer; the physician Giles Fitzroy, and his wife; and Edward's friend, the cynical journalist Thomas Maginn. *The Flaming Corsage* evocatively portrays through the lens of Albany's robust Irishtown and English-Dutch aristocracy the seething, contradictory impulses of our humanity, lusts and furies that know no bounds of time or place. Selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best novels of all time. Published in 1975, *Ragtime* changed our very concept of what a novel could be. An extraordinary tapestry, *Ragtime* captures the spirit of America in the era between the turn of the century and the First World War. The story opens in 1906 in New Rochelle, New York, at the home of an affluent American family. One lazy Sunday afternoon, the famous escape artist Harry Houdini swerves his car into a telephone pole outside their house. And almost magically, the line between fantasy and historical fact, between real and imaginary characters, disappears. Henry Ford, Emma Goldman, J. P. Morgan, Evelyn Nesbit, Sigmund Freud, and Emiliano Zapata slip in and out of the tale, crossing paths with Doctorow's imagined family and other fictional characters, including an immigrant peddler and a ragtime musician from Harlem whose insistence on a point of justice drives him to revolutionary violence. Fifteen-year-old Drew "True" Robinson loves being the best point-guard prospect on his high-school basketball team, but learns the consequences of fame through a former player, as well as through the man who expects to be his manager when True reaches the NBA.

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