



Heyday: A Novel

Kurt Andersen

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Heyday is a brilliantly imagined, wildly entertaining tale of America's boisterous coming of age—a sweeping panorama of madcap rebellion and overnight fortunes, palaces and brothels, murder and revenge—as well as the story of a handful of unforgettable characters discovering the nature of freedom, loyalty, friendship, and true love.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, modern life is being born: the mind-boggling marvels of photography, the telegraph, and railroads; a flood of show business spectacles and newspapers; rampant sex and drugs and drink (and moral crusades against all three); Wall Street awash with money; and giddy utopian visions everywhere. Then, during a single amazing month at the beginning of 1848, history lurches: America wins its war of manifest destiny against Mexico, gold is discovered in northern California, and revolutions sweep across Europe—sending one eager English gentleman off on an epic transatlantic adventure. . . .

Amid the tumult, aristocratic Benjamin Knowles impulsively abandons the Old World to reinvent himself in New York, where he finds himself embraced by three restless young Americans: Timothy Skaggs, muckraking journalist, daguerreotypist, pleasure-seeker, stargazer; the fireman Duff Lucking, a sweet but dangerously damaged veteran of the Mexican War; and Duff's dazzling sister Polly Lucking, a strong-minded, free thinking actress (and discreet part-time prostitute) with whom Ben falls hopelessly in love.

Beckoned by the frontier, new beginnings, and the prospects of the California Gold Rush, all four set out on a transcontinental race west—relentlessly tracked, unbeknownst to them, by a cold-blooded killer bent on revenge.

A fresh, impeccable portrait of an era startlingly reminiscent of our own times, *Heyday* is by turns tragic and funny and sublime, filled with bona fide heroes and lost souls, visionaries (Walt Whitman, Charles Darwin, Alexis de Tocqueville) and monsters, expanding horizons and narrow escapes. It is also an affecting story of four people passionately chasing their American dreams at a time when America herself was still being dreamed up—an enthralling, old-fashioned yarn interwoven with a bracingly modern novel of ideas.

"In this utterly engaging novel, the author of *Turn of the Century* brings 19th-century America vividly to life . . . While this is a long book, it moves quickly, with historical detail that's involving but never a drag on the

action; the characters are beautifully drawn. A terrific book; highly recommended." —*Library Journal*

"*Heyday* is fueled by manic energy, fanatical research, and a wicked sense of humor.... It's a joyful, wild gallop through a joyful, wild time to be an American." —*Vanity Fair*

From the Hardcover edition.

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Jonathan Leake:

What is your hobby? Have you heard this question when you got scholars? We believe that that concern was given by teacher for their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. And you know that little person similar to reading or as studying become their hobby. You must know that reading is very important and book as to be the issue. Book is important thing to increase you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You get good news or update in relation to something by book. A substantial number of sorts of books that can you go onto be your object. One of them is this Heyday: A Novel.

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