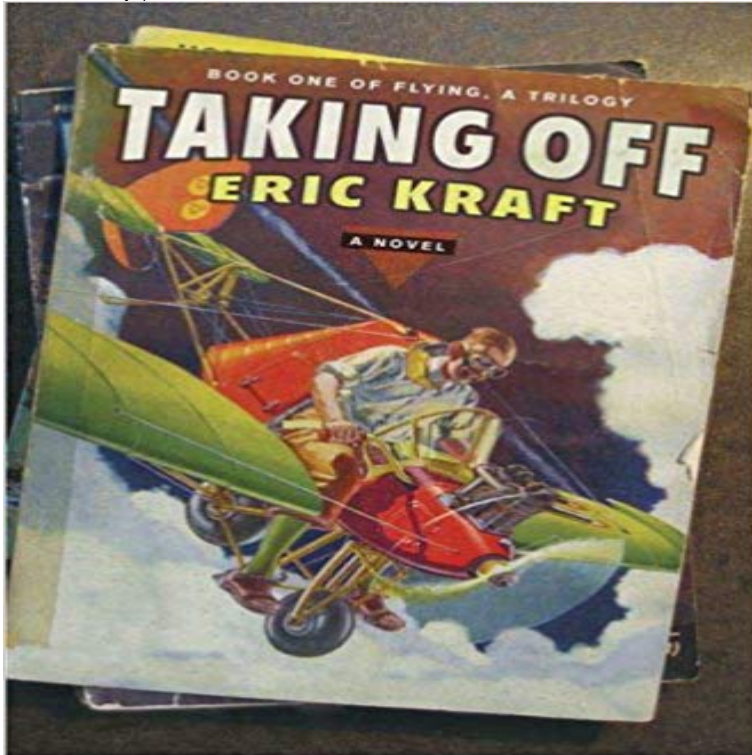


## Taking Off: A Novel



One day, middle-aged Manhattanite Peter Leroy receives an unsettling postcard from a childhood classmate. With his wife, Albertine, he returns to his hometown of Babbington, Long Island, and finds it both transformed and strangely the same. For Babbington has been redefined as a theme park, in a scheme to draw tourists to the struggling community, complete with trained actors, cultural interpreters, and carefully designed simulations of small-town 1950s life. On the wall of Legends restaurant, Peter sees his own commemoration: a picture of the triumphant day when, as a fifteen-year-old boy, he landed on Babbingtons Main Street in the aerocycle he had built in his parents garage, having flown four thousand miles to New Mexico and back. Hailed in newspapers as the Birdboy of Babbington, the youthful inventor reveled in his fame---but never disclosed the truth behind his flight. Now Peter wants to set the record straight---and with Albertine as his muse and conscience, he begins. Taking Off is the first in a trilogy of novels about Peter Leroy's magical flight and its digressions along the way. Funny, warm, wise, and artful, this book---like all of its companion novels about Peter and his world---explores matters little and large with a light touch. Readers familiar with and new to these novels will delight in the wide-ranging invention and imagination of Peter's creator, Eric Kraft.

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