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Edugyan, Esi. Half-Blood Blues

Edugyan?s Booker Prize shortlisted novel evokes Berlin and Paris during World War II through the eyes of a rag-tag bunch of jazz musicians looking for their big break. Having achieved some limited notoriety in Berlin during the Weimar era, the Hot-Time Swingers?two black ex-pat Americans, a Jewish pianist, and a couple of Germans, one of whom is black himself?are now struggling to stay alive in a Berlin that has turned against jazz and turned against half-breeds, or *mischlings,* Jews, and black people of all nationalities. When a jazz singer from America shows up to find them with word that she represents Louis Armstrong, the band thinks their fortunes are made. But first, they have to get from Berlin to Paris?and not all of them are going to make it. Eventually hitting Paris just in time for the Occupation to catch up with them, the group has to keep their heads down even further while at the same time trying to cut a record?the Half-Blood Blues, an anthem rejecting everything Nazis stand for. But it?s only a matter of time before the Boots?the Gestapo?catch up with them.

Cutting between 1940 and 1992, *Half-Blood Blues* is a story of race, friendship, secrets, and betrayal. Showing a side of World War II not often written about?that is, the story of the other, non-Jewish ethnic groups persecuted by the Reich?it is fascinating and textured.

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