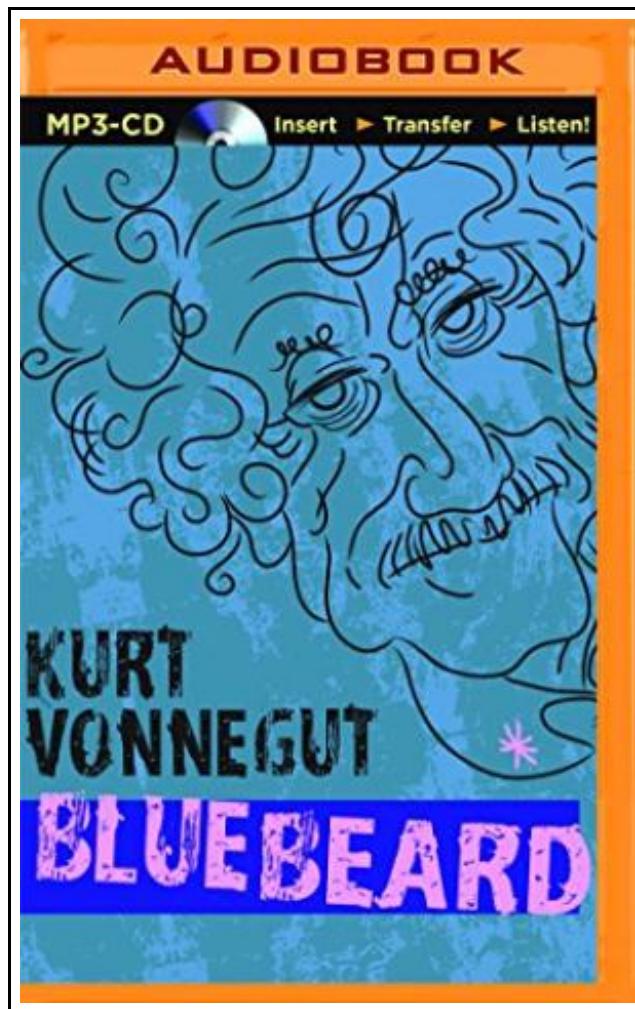


Bluebeard: The Autobiography of Rabo Karabekian (1916-1988)



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BLUEBEARD: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RABO KARABEKIAN (1916-1988)

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Audible Studios on Brilliance, United States, 2015. CD-Audio. Book Condition: New. Unabridged. 172 x 132 mm. Language: English . Brand New. Bluebeard, published in 1987, is Vonnegut's meditation on art, artists, surrealism, and disaster. Meet Rabo Karabekian, a moderately successful surrealist painter who we meet late in life and see struggling (like all of Vonnegut's key characters) with the dregs of unresolved pain and the consequences of brutality. Loosely based on the legend of Bluebeard (best realized in Bela Bartok's one-act opera), the novel follows Karabekian through the last events in his life, which are heavy with women, painting, artistic ambition, artistic fraudulence, and as of yet unknown consequence. Vonnegut's intention here is not so much satirical (although the contemporary art scene would be easy enough to deconstruct), nor is it documentary (although Karabekian does carry elements of Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko). Instead Vonnegut is using art for the same purpose he used science fiction cliches in *Slaughterhouse-Five* as a filter through which he can illuminate the savagery, cruelty, and essentially comic misdirection of human existence. Listeners will recognize familiar Vonnegut character types and archetypes as they drift in and out through the background; meanwhile Karabekian, betrayed and betrayer, sinks through a bottomless haze of recollection. Like most of Vonnegut's late works, this is both science fiction and cruel, contemporary realism at once, using science fiction as metaphor for human damage as well as failure to perceive. Listeners will find that Vonnegut's protagonists can never really clarify for us whether they are ultimately unwitting victims or simple barbarians, leaving it up to the listener to determine in which genre this audiobook really fits, if any at all.

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