



Luzhin Defense

By Vladimir Nabokov



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Nabokov's third novel, The Luzhin Defense, is a chilling story of obsession and madness. As a young boy, Luzhin was unattractive, distracted, withdrawn, sullen--an enigma to his parents and an object of ridicule to his classmates. He takes up chess as a refuge from the anxiety of his everyday life. His talent is prodigious and he rises to the rank of grandmaster--but at a cost: in Luzhin's obsessive mind, the game of chess gradually supplants the world of reality. His own world falls apart during a crucial championship match, when the intricate defense he has devised withers under his opponent's unexpected and unpredictabke lines of assault.



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