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▲ THE PERSONAL HISTORY, ADVENTURES,
EXPERIENCES & OBSERVATIONS OF
PETER LEROY: A SERIAL NOVEL

by Eric Kraft

A lot of great novels—*A Tale of Two Cities*, for instance—first appeared in serial form. Kraft is no Dickens, but so far seven volumes of his satisfying serial novel about a young man named Peter Leroy have been published, and a new one comes out every three or four months. The locale is a seacoast town called Babbington that figures prominently throughout. In the first volume, *My Mother Takes a Tumble*, Leroy, the narrator, is an infant, but he is able to recall his arrival at home from the hospital. He also discusses his parents' involvement with a neighbor who decides he will make a living by writing begging letters to gullible, lovesick men—signing them with a woman's name. The first person who answers is a lonely woman who pretends she is a man. In the same book Peter's mother, trying to juggle a drink and a cigarette while in a lawn chair, grabs for a falling table and takes an unforgettable spill. By Volume No. 7, Peter is in the fifth grade. Babbington has grown because a sociologist has written a book about how important its clams are in the potency of males. Peter has his first brush with sex when his little friend Veronica takes a fancy to him. Almost nothing in these rambling, extended anecdotes turns out the way one expects. The incidents are funny, but Kraft plays them for chuckles, not belly laughs. It would be easy to become addicted. Perhaps these are the reading person's answer to *Dallas* and *Dynasty*. (Applewood Books, \$4.95 each)—C.G.