



Contrary Motion: A Novel

Andy Mozina

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By turns hilarious and bittersweet, Andy Mozina's winning debut novel introduces a charming new hero for our times: a dysfunctional, divorced family man whose passion for life comes straight from the harp.

Matthew Grzbc is a talented musician who plays the concert harp. He is a divorced dad who lives in Chicago, has a sexy girlfriend, and has a major, potentially life-changing audition with an orchestra on the horizon. At least that's how he appears on paper. But take a closer look and a very different man starts to emerge: an obsessive, self-sabotaging Midwesterner, fumbling through his relationship with his curiously neurotic six-year-old daughter and headed for destruction in his romantic life by grasping at any remotely affectionate warm body, including that of his ex-wife. Instead of playing to sold-out concert halls, he spends his days plucking out "Send in the Clowns" at hotel brunches, and his weekends serenading the captive audience at the local hospice.

When his father dies unexpectedly (while listening to a meditation tape), Matt's life begins to come untethered. In quick succession his ex-wife gets engaged, his girlfriend begins to pull away, and his daughter starts acting out. With his audition rapidly approaching, Matt is paralyzed by panic—why can't he hold it together and follow his dream? And what does that even mean, if you're not sure what it is you really want?

Funny, poignant, and thoroughly engaging, *Contrary Motion* is a journey deep inside a male mind as it searches—desperately—for a way to balance life, love, and a harp.

Praise for *Contrary Motion*

"Mozina's finely detailed, painfully funny novel is a rollicking performance that will keep readers on the edge of their seats."—**Booklist** (starred review)

"Mozina has created a likeable, believable main character, the sort of guy alongside whom you could easily spend hours dissecting life over a couple of beers. It's the first novel for Mozina, . . . and it's sure to leave readers asking for more. Mozina's storytelling is easy and humorous, taking the stuff of everyday life and presenting it in a way that both entertains and draws out emotion."—**BookPage**

"Standing between world-class harpist Matt Grzbc and his dream, a permanent position in a top orchestra, is just about everybody in his life. This brilliant debut novel zigzags across Chicago's neighborhoods, exploring the obsession a striving artist must have for his craft, as he also makes a living and nourishes those near him, especially his eccentric and precocious six-year-old daughter. *Contrary Motion* is a wonderful story—beautifully written, hilarious, tortured, and filled with heavenly music."—**Bonnie Jo Campbell, author of National Book Award finalist *American Salvage***

"Charming . . . The painfully self-aware Matt has a great sense of humor, but his comic insights don't help him much as he faces a confounding array of personal problems. . . . The pleasures of [Mozina's] writing never flag."—**Kirkus Reviews**

"No portrait of an artist brings alive vulnerability, hilarity, desperation, hipness, absurdity, and painful

steadfastness as splendidly as Andy Mozina's *Contrary Motion*. A dazzling, unforgettable novel."—**Mark Wisniewski, author of *Watch Me Go***

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