

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Media Contact: Anne Terashima, 385.234.1341, anne@torreyhouse.com

Announcing the January publication of

My So-Called Ruined Life

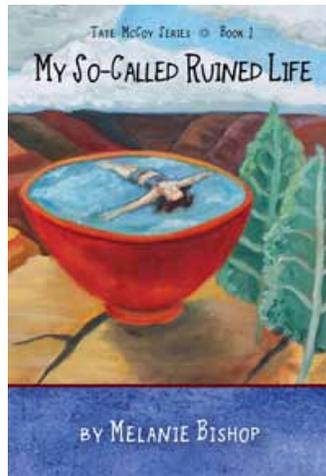
Tate McCoy Series • Book 1



by **Melanie Bishop**

“The first book in Bishop’s Tate McCoy series will have readers eager to hear more from her pragmatic, sarcastic, yet sweet 16-year-old heroine...an introspective page-turner.”

— **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**



Last summer was the worst summer of Tate McCoy’s life. Last summer, Tate’s mom was murdered—just as their damaged relationship was about to mend. Now, with her dad in jail as the prime suspect and her future unsettlingly uncertain, most people think Tate’s life is ruined—but Tate is not most people. Determined to make the most of her seventeenth summer, she’s spending plenty of time biking around town with her best friend, Kale, finding her buoyancy at Barton Springs, camping and hiking at the Grand Canyon with her Aunt Greta, and *not* following her “no boys for now” policy.

But a horrifying truth about her mom’s death puts Tate’s resilience to the test yet again. Full of refreshingly blunt teenage wisdom, bawdy, between-friends humor, and plenty of pool time, this debut novel explores the tightening and unraveling of relationships—and the rocky, empowering journey of realizing one’s own strength in tough times.

ISBN: 9781937226213 | January 2014 | \$14.95 | Trade Paper | 229 pp

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Early Praise for *My So-Called Ruined Life*

“Yet another tale of a plucky girl who overcomes the obstacles—but this one floats.”

— **KIRKUS REVIEWS**

“Readers will fall in love with brave and funny Tate McCoy in this powerful and heartfelt debut about human fallibility. One of the truest characters I’ve had the good luck to discover in YA recently.”

— **Beth Ann Bauman**, author of *Jersey Angel* and *Rosie and Skate*

“Tate McCoy is a keeper, and so is her best friend, Kale. I felt like I was *right there* during their conversations and excursions, and found Tate’s reflections on her life and painful situation deeply meaningful. Tate is a kid who *prevails*, her humanity fully intact.”

— **Kathleen Jeffrie Johnson**, author of *Target* and *The Parallel Universe of Liars*

“Melanie Bishop is not afraid to address tough issues—from unspeakable violence to dysfunctional family relationships—with realistic details and hit-you-in-the-gut emotion. The plot gracefully unfolds to a stunning climax that forces the characters—and readers—to reconsider the nature of love, justice, and forgiveness.”

— **Christine Seifert**, author of *The Predicteds*

“I want to be friends with Tate McCoy! Bright, funny and refreshingly pragmatic, Melanie Bishop’s 17-year-old protagonist is someone you’ll want to know better. Thank goodness Book 2 is on its way.”

— **Martha Baden**, Library Manager, Prescott Public Library (on YALSA’s Best Books for Young Adults Committee, 2009 and 2010, and Best Fiction for Young Adults, 2011)

“*My So-Called Ruined Life* is a page-turner with substance. Readers young and older will fall in love with smart and witty Tate McCoy as she struggles through more adversity than any one person should have, gaining strength and wisdom from what could have broken her. This poignant and inspiring book will fly off the shelf.”

— **Susan Lang**, Peregrine Book Co., Prescott, AZ

Watch the book trailer: <http://ow.ly/rnJOr>



About Melanie Bishop

Melanie Bishop writes fiction, nonfiction, and screenplays, and has taught all of these subjects for the past twenty-one years as a professor at Prescott College in Arizona. Her memoir, *Some Glad Morning*, will be published in 2014 by *Outpost 19*. Melanie has published short stories in numerous literary magazines, including *Glimmer Train*, *Greensboro Review* and *Georgetown Review*, and has a story forthcoming in *Potomac Review*. Melanie is founding editor and fiction and nonfiction editor of *Alligator Juniper*, Prescott College’s award-winning national literary magazine.

Visit Melanie’s website: MelanieBishopWriter.wordpress.com

A Few Questions for Melanie

Which talent would you most like to have?

Hmmmm... I think I’d like to be multi-lingual. They say people who are bi-lingual or tri-lingual use a part of their brains that remains dormant in the rest of us, who lazily have only managed to master one language! I wish I spoke at least another language fluently. I speak a tiny bit of Spanish, but I’m even rusty on that.

What is your most marked characteristic?

My loyalty and my ability to listen and offer solace to others.

Are you more like Tate or more like Kale?

I think I'm more like Tate. Sometimes I can be practical and level-headed like Kale is. But I also can flip out for a few minutes or hours or days before I find that balance where I know things will be okay. So that's more like Tate.

Do you have a crush on any fictional characters?

I can't think of any such crushes. But if I was a teenage girl right now, I could certainly see having a crush on Sawyer Madison in *My So-Called Ruined Life*. He's kind, sweet, smart, loyal, funny, talented, accomplished, and just the all-around perfect boyfriend for Tate McCoy. I sure hope Tate doesn't do anything in Book Two to jeopardize her relationship with him. Sometimes we mess it up with the very guys who are the best for us.

Where would you go for your dream vacation?

In the summer of 2011 I was fortunate to teach a month-long creative writing class in the Cycladic Islands of Greece. The island where I taught was called Paros. But the islands I dream of returning to are Santorini, Delos and Mykonos. I have no doubt I will make it back there, in five years or so. I'm determined.

There's a lot of food in *MSCRL*. Do you like to cook?

Yes! I remember baking a good bit by age eight. I made certain cakes and cookies so often I memorized the recipes. Fudge Cake. One-Two-Three-Four Cake. Snickerdoodles. Then, when I was just a little older than Tate, someone gave me the cookbook called *Beard on Bread* and I started experimenting. I bought huge Tupperware containers and filled them with all different kinds of flour. Around the same time, I also became a vegetarian. But I owe my comfort with cooking, being an experimental and intuitive cook, to my mother, Caroline Bishop. She was an amazing cook and a kind, patient, encouraging teacher for her four daughters.

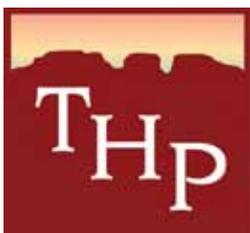
Are you still a vegetarian?

I'm not. Haven't been for a long time. I avoided meat from about age 20 to 27, though I occasionally slipped. The thing that was hardest for me to resist was my mother's pork chops. Now I eat absolutely everything and enjoy eating too much to nix anything from my diet.

What do you hope readers will receive or learn from reading your book?

My hope is that the book will help young readers from all different backgrounds and circumstances realize that parents are inherently flawed, and that there will come a time when we are not made to be captive audience to the antics of these parents, and that whatever happens to us in life, as kids, as young adults, as adults, and as elderly people, we always have the freedom to interpret the events in ways that convert them to be constructive rather than destructive.

About Torrey House Press



Torrey House is an independent book publisher of fiction and nonfiction about the environment, people, cultures, and resource management issues relating to America's wild places. Torrey House Press endeavors to increase appreciation for the importance of natural landscape through the power of pen and story. Through the 2% to the West program, Torrey House Press donates two percent of sales to not-for-profit environmental organizations and funds a scholarship for up-and-coming writers at colleges throughout the West.

