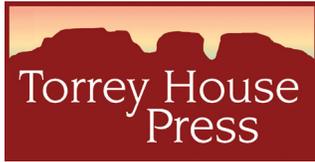


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



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Announcing the September 2014 publication of

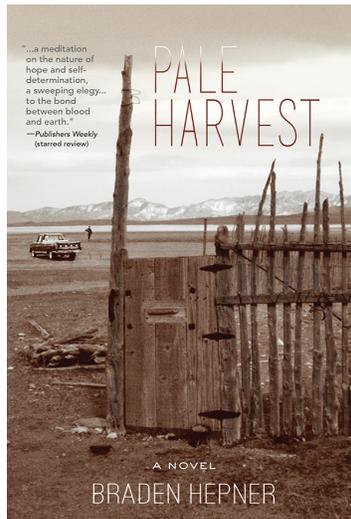
Pale Harvest

a debut novel by **Braden Hepner**

15 Bytes Book Award Winner

“...a meditation on the nature of hope and self determination, a sweeping elegy...to the bond between blood and earth.”

—**PUBLISHERS WEEKLY** (starred review)



Working a dying trade in a dead town, twenty-one-year-old dairy farmer Jack Selvedge finds his life and existence stagnant. Predictably patterned with milking and feeding the cows, tending the fields, and caring for his aging grandparents, Jack’s days are marked by monotony, yet pierced with nagging uncertainty for his future. When the lovely Rebekah Rainsford moves back to town on the run from her father, her dark history consumes him, and she becomes the potential for his salvation, the only thing that might dredge him up from his crisis of indifference.

The slow ruin of humanity within his troubled peers, coupled with Rebekah’s struggle to escape her own demons, culminates in tragedy, and Jack’s life is certain never to be the same, as death, lust, and betrayal break the peace of his small town and threaten to shelve his dreams. A deeply written and deeply felt story of love, depravity, and shattered ideals, *Pale Harvest* examines the loss of beauty, purity, and simplicity within the mindset of the rural American West.

ISBN: 978-1-937226-39-8 | September 2014 | \$16.95 | Trade Paper | 360 pp

Distributed to the trade by Consortium Book Sales and Distribution: 1-800-283-3572

Praise for *Pale Harvest*

“A dark novel by a deft storyteller.” —**HIGH COUNTRY NEWS**

“At once bleak and pleasingly beautiful, the novel grows true from pain, betrayal, loss, love, and pale salvation.”
—**15 BYTES**

“[A]n unforgettable literary blast....Hepner’s characters are among the most compelling to be experienced in contemporary fiction....” —**THE UTAH REVIEW**

“...a deeply moving and intellectually profound novel built on the iconic myth of the American West. Think McMurtry’s *The Last Picture Show* or *Horseman, Pass By*...A bravura debut.”
—**KIRKUS REVIEWS (starred review)**

“A quietly dazzling debut that any reader could enjoy.” —**LIBRARY JOURNAL (starred review)**

“Set in a rugged scrap of Utah, this first novel rings with the hard-scrabble tones of Steinbeck...lush with unusual vocabulary and microscopic detail that combine to evoke a land and a kind of life singular to the American West...” —**FOREWORD REVIEWS**

“Dazzlingly laconic, making poetry of the sheer sweat and physicality of everyday life in a worn-out landscape...” —**LIBRARY JOURNAL**, “Small-Press Gems”

“...an unforgettable addition to the ever more various stew of American literature.”
—**SCOTT SPENCER**, author of *Man in the Woods* and *Endless Love*

“Hepner is a master storyteller, a craftsman of the first order, and a fine new talent. His Western Realism is a refreshing jolt, a throwback to Steinbeck and Stegner with its own stamp of uniqueness.”
—**ANTHONY SWOFFORD**, author of *Jarhead* and *Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails*

Braden Hepner graduated from the Iowa Writers’ Workshop in 2009 and now lives in Idaho with his wife and son. This is his first novel.

[BradenHepner.com](http://bradenhepner.com)

Read an excerpt from the novel on **Terrain .org**: <http://ow.ly/D2XTe>

Eat More Books: **The Salty Beatnik** interview with Braden Hepner
<http://ow.ly/D2YrT>



A few questions for Braden

Who are your literary role models?

I like Thoreau, Melville, Faulkner, Graham Greene, Cormac McCarthy, Marilynne Robinson, and Barry Lopez. I like anyone who writes the hell out of a scene. Most writers write well, but move on without hammering a scene out to its full potential. I try to pause on themes and give them plenty of thought.

What events or people inspired you to write *Pale Harvest*?

I grew up working on my grandfather's struggling dairy farm. It was a lot like the one portrayed in the book. I worked for two dollars an hour from the time I could pick up littered strings (a penny a piece) until I was an adult, and I still go back and help out on occasion. Two dollars an hour at a time when minimum wage was somewhere around five dollars an hour. My cousin a few years older than me got \$2.50 an hour. I saw the bleak life that was this farm, and thought it was and is admirable for its struggle and simplicity.

What current events or social issues does your book touch upon?

The collapse of the small farmer, especially the dairy farmer. I remember hearing something about this on NPR a couple years ago—how the small dairy farms are disappearing and how the middleman is affecting their survival. It's no secret that we have fewer farmers owning more land and stock these days—the economic, environmental (monoculture, for instance), and social repercussions of which are only now being studied.

The book also examines the demise of the small town in the American West. Many small towns that used to thrive are now boarded up—their people still living there, but doing business elsewhere. These are commercial ghost towns. It's like the Walmart vs. Main Street issue. It seems that things leave—youth, commerce, vitality—and don't come back.

What book(s) are you reading now?

In the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods by Galen Rowell, *Giving Birth to Thunder*, *Sleeping with His Daughter* by Barry Lopez, *The Heart of the Matter* by Graham Greene.

About Torrey House Press

Love of the Land



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.



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