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One Foot in Eden: A Novel

By Ron Rash



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One Foot in Eden: A Novel By Ron Rash

Will Alexander is the sheriff in a small town in southern Appalachia, and he knows that the local thug Holland Winchester has been murdered. The only thing is the sheriff can find neither the body nor someone to attest to the killing. Simply, almost elementally told through the voices of the sheriff, a local farmer, his beautiful wife, their son, and the sheriff's deputy, *One Foot in Eden* signals the bellwether arrival of Ron Rash, one the most mature and distinctive voices in Southern literature.



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One Foot in Eden: A Novel By Ron Rash Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Rash's moody, potent slice of Southern gothic fiction centers on a murder and its devastating effect on a small Appalachian town in the 1950s. When Holland Winchester, local troublemaker in tiny Seneca, S.C., vanishes without a trace, it's up to town sheriff and WWII veteran Will Alexander to search for answers. Holland's mother claims to have heard a gunshot, and she insists that neighbor Billy Holcombe killed her son. Events unfurl slowly and methodically, and it's soon revealed that Billy's pregnant wife, Amy, had been having an affair with Holland. Shifting from Sheriff Alexander's narration, the story continues in Amy's voice as she recounts her frustration with Billy's sterility and her increasingly desperate need to bear a child. An impulsive visit to a spell-weaving widow for advice proves to be Amy's downfall when she's told that if her husband can't give her a child, she should "lay down with a man who can." The ensuing drama of infidelity, jealousy and betrayal is told by a chorus of characters with distinctive Appalachian voices: chief among them are Amy, Billy and Amy's young son, Isaac, whose discovery of the identity of his real father is both heartbreaking and liberating. As the valley is flooded to make room for a power company's land takeover, further tragedies unfold. Poet and short story writer Rash writes lyrically while maintaining the suspense of the central mystery. As each character reveals his or her secrets, the tale builds into a quiet storm-and a terrific first novel.

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Review

"A classic tale of passion and tragedy. Each voice rings as true as the sound of an ax in the cold early morning air." ?Lee Smith, author of *The Last Girls*

"Equal parts vintage crime novel and Southern Gothic, full of aching ambivalence and hard compromises, and rounded off by bad faith and bad choices, *One Foot in Eden* is a veritable garden of earthly disquiet." ?*Los Angeles Times*

"Ruggedly beautiful...Reading Rash's tale is like listening to a plaintive mountain ballad about a time and place long vanished: the lyrics are sweet and mournful, wistful and dark. And, oh, does *One Foot in Eden* linger!" ?*The Charlotte Observer*

"Rash's characters have a heroic quality as they struggle to fill the empty spaces in their hearts. They also have a poetic intensity." ?*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

"*One Foot In Eden* is a story of wild, almost primitive force and yet it is neatly and ingeniously put together. Ron Rash knows to the core the ways of those who yearn for what is just beyond their grasp. Here is a lasting experience." ?Fred Chappell, Poet Laureate of North Carolina

"Ron Rash writes like a prince!" ?Pat Conroy

"*One Foot in Eden* is a forceful but never forced narrative. Rash moves his tragedy along with great authority, revealing motives that build to the complexity of each character as well as our fascination with them and the outcome of their lives. It is a finely polished novel." ?*The Columbia State*

"If you are a fan of writers such as Robert Morgan, Lee Smith and Fred Chappell, you'll be pleased to know they liked this novel and wrote glowing jacket notes. And no wonder: *One Foot In Eden* could have been

written by any of these authors....Save yourself a nice stretch of time for this book. Once you start it, you will find it extremely hard to put down.” ?*The Anderson Independent*

“In this fine, passionate work, Rash combines a murder mystery with the occasion of the flooding of a South Carolina Appalachian valley by Carolina power. The story of *One Foot In Eden* is simple, elemental. The conclusion has the force and inevitability of real tragedy...a tragedy that occurs in the ancient, brooding mountains of the Southern Appalachians.” ?*Don Noble, Alabama Public Radio*

About the Author

Ron Rash is the author of the prize-winning novels *One Foot in Eden*, *Saints at the River* and *The World Made Straight*, as well as several collections of poetry and short stories. He is the recipient of an O. Henry Prize and the James Still Award from the Fellowship of Southern Writers. For *Saints at the River* he received the 2004 Weatherford Award for Best Novel and the 2005 SEBA Best Book Award for Fiction. Rash holds the John Parris Chair in Appalachian Studies at Western Carolina University and lives in Clemson, South Carolina.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nathan Wilson:

The book *One Foot in Eden: A Novel* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem with your subject. If you can make looking at a book *One Foot in Eden: A Novel* to be your habit, you can get much more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like wide open and read a book *One Foot in Eden: A Novel*. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or other individuals. So , how do you think about this reserve?

Alberto Alvarez:

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book mainly book entitled *One Foot in Eden: A Novel* your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each and every aspect that maybe not known for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a book then become one type conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get before. The *One Foot in Eden: A Novel* giving you another experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful details for your better life on this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

Kimberly Martin:

In this particular era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability in doing something more are more precious than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time very little but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of

several books in the top collection in your reading list is actually One Foot in Eden: A Novel. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Mountains can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking way up and review this book you can get many advantages.

Allison Lyon:

A number of people said that they feel weary when they reading a book. They are directly felt this when they get a half areas of the book. You can choose typically the book One Foot in Eden: A Novel to make your reading is interesting. Your own personal skill of reading skill is developing when you like reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy to see it and mingle the feeling about book and reading through especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to start a book and examine it. Beside that the publication One Foot in Eden: A Novel can to be your new friend when you're really feel alone and confuse with the information must you're doing of this time.

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