

WONDERLAND ROAD

a novel by Carrianne Leung

70,000 words / Final manuscript now available

**WHAT REMAINS WHEN ALL HOPE SEEMS TO BE LOST?
WHAT HAPPENS TO MARGINAL PEOPLE?**

In the near future, the collapse of social and political order turns a city upside down. Those who can afford it are leaving in droves for fortress communities to the north while those left behind are either migrating to the “Farms” to fill the gaps in the global supply chain or figuring out how to survive under the new conditions set out by a mega corporation, Bayson Inc. For the poor and marginalized, it’s a story of ingenuity, resilience, and hope.

Just because things are teetering towards disaster doesn’t mean that life has stopped. Some, like Pauline, are alone and mourning for lost loved ones; young adults such as Julian, who is gay, are trying to find purpose when the certainty of a known future is gone; and small, lonely girls like Jing find companionship by befriending crows. In a small neighbourhood in the suburbs of the city, community members of both the human and animal variety work side-by-side in order to find new ways to live.

Wonderland Road is a novel replete with hope for a new beginning even in the face of despair. Carrianne Leung brings deft insight to humanity’s reaction to an approaching finale and shows what really matters.

*“Extraordinary and deeply felt, *Wonderland Road* is a modern classic. Leung’s writing carries the immense weight of our troubled times, but where there is deep sorrow and permeating loss, there is also an abundance of unabashed beauty and hope in this stunning tale of radical kinship, community building, and chosen family.”* — **LINDSAY WONG, author of *The Woo Woo***

Wonderland Road is a slow-burning, cautionary tale—foreboding and unforgettable. It’s about lost connections, regret, hope, betrayal. About finding light in the dark. About coming of age in an apocalypse. About collusion and resistance. It’s about holding space for what hurts, and choosing to keep going anyway.” — **YASUKO THANH, author of *Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains***

“How do we love each other while the world is on fire? This is the question Carrianne Leung grapples with in her latest, much-anticipated book: A speculative fiction that isn’t made of endings, but rather beginnings; of doing, of believing, of continuing in the twilight of our existence.” — **CATHERINE HERNANDEZ, author of *Scarborough***



CARRIANNE LEUNG is a fiction writer and educator. Her first novel, *The Wondrous Woo* (Inanna Publications), was a finalist for the 2014 City of Toronto Book Award, and in 2018 *That Time I Loved You*, a collection of linked stories, won the Danuta Gleed Award for the best first story collection, and was also a finalist for the City of Toronto Book Award. She holds a PhD in Sociology and Equity Studies from OISE/University of Toronto. She lives in Toronto with her son.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: HarperCollins (April 2026)

WONDERLAND ROAD AN EXCERPT

a novel by Carrianne Leung

BUT THEN BAYSON CAME, and the city, the nation, got reorganized. Bayson was headed by a charismatic talker named Guy Bayson whose speeches cut through the meaningless drivel of the government types. He didn't waste time proposing policy; he spoke in plain language so that people said, "Oh, that Guy is a regular guy who knows how to set things right." He gave them infrastructure, a plan, an organization. It didn't matter that he was a billionaire and probably wasn't so regular. Someone had to do something, and Guy stepped up.

Even Pauline, in her hermetic life, was aware that Bayson had in a very short time grown to be an enormous force, consolidating agribusinesses and housing and pretty much whatever the government had allowed to be privatized in the last few years. It had happened so rapidly, and now almost everybody worked for Bayson in some capacity. The Bayson Farms, where Mei said she was working, were supposed to be part of the solution to bring the supply chain back into balance. The Farms were many things, including giant greenhouses and manufacturing plants meant to distribute food and goods domestically, now that the availability of imports was at a standstill due to the trade wars.

Bayson also built planned communities in more bucolic settings, away from the downtown pollution and growing unrest, where everybody wanted to live if they could afford it. Many of Pauline's neighbours from her posh condo had moved there. They were called Bayson Gardens or Bayson Springs or some other word that evoked tranquility. These places became their own villages and social ecosystems, leaving the cities to rot.

Pauline knew these things because Jacko told her. Pauline only ever spoke to one person, and it was Jacko, who owned the corner store that she frequented for her canned beans. Canned beans were her main sustenance now, and Jacko would save her favourite chickpeas under the counter for her. At the twice-weekly visits to the store, Pauline got the gist of the changing world from Jacko, who didn't have to move at all from his counter because the news of the world came to him through his customers. After she got the letter from Mei, Pauline asked Jacko what one did to work on the Farms, and Jacko explained that you didn't need experience to work there, but you had to be strong enough to withstand eight-to-ten-hour shifts doing physical labour.

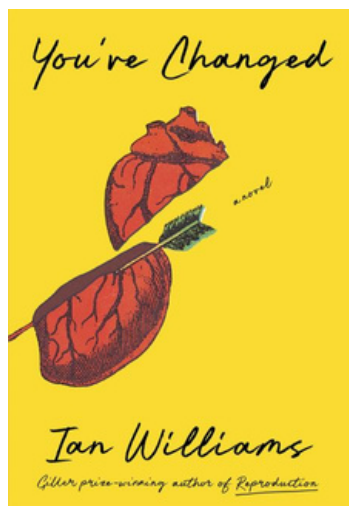
When they were growing up, Ma had always made Pauline do all the grunt work in the bakery while Mei studied upstairs in their apartment. Mei's hands would remain soft and the only tool they would hold would be a pen. Also, Mei was the clumsiest person she had ever seen, so she was glad Mei was not in the kitchen. Her sister was gangly and uncoordinated, wore glasses with coke-bottle lenses, and often tripped on her own feet. Pauline was the one with the worker hands, stretched and hardened before she even hit high school. Her hands were the ones that knew how to knead dough, retrieve things from scorching ovens, push a heavy mop across the floor. How strange then to think of Mei now with dirt under her nails, her palms calloused like Pauline's once were.

YOU'VE CHANGED

a novel by Ian Williams

320 pages / Final page proofs now available

A HILARIOUS TRAFFIC JAM OF EMOTION ABOUT MARRIAGE, RACE, AND SEXUALITY FROM AN AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR



IAN WILLIAMS is the author of the novel *Reproduction*, which was the winner of the 2019 Scotiabank Giller Prize and was published in the U.S., U.K., and Italy; *Personals*, which was shortlisted for the Griffin Poetry Prize and the Robert Kroetsch Poetry Book Award; *Not Anyone's Anything*, winner of the Danuta Gleed Literary Award for the best first collection of short fiction in Canada, and *You Know Who You Are*, a finalist for the ReLit Prize for poetry. In fall 2021 he released *Disorientation: Being Black in the World*, which was shortlisted for the Hilary Weston Writers Trust Prize for Non-Fiction and the BC Book Prize for Non-Fiction. He was the 2024 CBC Massey Lecturer.

Middle-aged and recently dumped from his construction job, Beckett is not feeling his best—especially since he was already under pressure to improve himself from his wife, Princess, a fitness instructor devoted to looking and feeling her best. Still, they both think their marriage is basically fine, until a couple of friends show up for a visit, their far more affectionate marriage and sexual chemistry loudly on display. In one weekend, they upset the tenuous balance between Beckett and Princess, throwing them into parallel midlife crises.

Princess thinks the problem is with her physical self, and attempts to revive Beckett's interest with relentless surgical alterations and bodily enhancements that have the opposite effect on her husband. Beckett tries to woo Princess back to him by relaunching his contracting business, laying his manly accomplishments at her feet. Then, while Princess is away pursuing even more drastic beauty measures, Beckett meets Gluten, an energetic and erratic man devoted to living in the moment, whom Beckett feels drawn to in ways that surprise him. Beckett is changing, Princess is changing: what will happen to their already stressed marriage?

Sharp, inventive and absurdly funny, *You've Changed* is a wild ride exploring identity, insecurity, intimacy and desire, as well as the creatures that individuals become when they unite, and how they change despite promising not to.

Williams is Professor of English at the University of Toronto. He has held fellowships or residencies from Vermont Studio Center, the Banff Center, Cave Canem, the William Southam Journalism Fellowship, and the National Humanities Center.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: Random House (August 2025)

PRAISE FOR *REPRODUCTION* (2019)

"With so many hundreds of books, it's hard even to scratch the surface, but one debut to look out for is Canadian prizewinner *Reproduction* by Ian Williams (*Dialogue*, September), an enjoyably offbeat family saga set in polyglot Toronto." — **THE GUARDIAN, UK**

"Williams's unsparing view on the past's repetition is heartrending. This ambitious experiment yields worthwhile results." — **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**

"...This work successfully examines major themes of empathy, responsibility, secrecy, race, multiculturalism, misogyny, and honesty." — **LIBRARY JOURNAL, starred review**

"There is an entire modern Canadian literature that fortunately arrives in Italy and shows what is possible with words.... In this brainy structure, Williams puts all his ability to experiment, in a complicated yet brilliant metaphor of the process of forming a family." — **L'INDIPENDENTE, Italy**

YOU'VE CHANGED AN EXCERPT

a novel by Ian Williams

THE DAY AFTER THE WOODS LEFT, Beckett got fired.

His supervisor, the Mouth, was ripping into a kid, barely twenty-years-old, for not properly securing chicken wire to an OSB subfloor.

To no one in particular, to everyone, the Mouth said, This is why you guys will spend your lives doing basements and condos. Nobody's going to give you a luxury home if you can't even staple chicken wire to a subfloor. The kid knuckled his chest like he had indigestion. He was Afghan, Muslim, took breaks to pray. When the supervisor left, Beckett went over to help him finish, not immediately or obviously. He complained to the kid about the layout of the condos. Who cared if you had three window walls if there was nowhere to mount a TV? While they were talking, the kid's gun malfunctioned or ran out of staples and the Mouth happened to see him struggling to open the magazine. Beckett tried to exchange his staple gun with the kid, but the Mouth pushed Beckett's hand down to his side.

Load your own gun, he said to the kid.

Beckett tried to help him again, but the Mouth touched his steeltoe to Beckett's thigh to stop him. The kid fumbled, trembling visibly. After a few moments, the Mouth took a box from his henchman and overturned strips of staples on the kid's head.

Everyone froze. The mixing drill went quiet. He was reliving the previous night. His hands were tingling. He wanted to slam the Mouth's head against the railing outside then hoist him up by the collar and belt and throw him over. Very unQuaker.

The Mouth wasn't done making an example out of the kid.

He motioned for the five men in the unit to gather round. He went away and made a dramatic re-entry. He slammed a gun and a few boxes of staples on a workbench.

Load the gun, he said. He pointed at Habibi, his henchman, first. He intended to call on them one by one.

Habibi didn't just load the gun, but he loaded it so quickly, with the blurry fingers of a champion rubix cube solver, that Beckett was unprepared when the Mouth pointed at him. His fingers weren't just tingling, his hands were shaking.

Load the gun, he said.

Beckett knew what he meant. He was looking at the stapler, but he couldn't help thinking of a rifle. How many times had Beckett loaded a staple gun, a nail gun, manual, electric, and pneumatic? But today he couldn't summon the muscle memory to fit the sleeve into the magazine. Someone snickered. The test only lasted a few seconds before the Mouth snatched the gun from Beckett. He must have compromised it, Beckett thought. Later, Beckett realized that he had picked up the wrong size staples for that particular stapler and was trying to jam them in.

The other men picked up the correct staples and loaded the gun fine. The Mouth pointed to Beckett and the boy and said, You guys are done. The only job you guys are fit for are blowjobs.

EDGELANDS: A LIFE ON SOCIETY'S MARGINS

a memoir by Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali

70,000 words / Manuscript available November 2025

FROM THE AUTHOR OF *ANGRY QUEER SOMALI BOY* COMES A NEW BOOK THAT OFFERS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

"Edgeland: The apparently unplanned, certainly uncelebrated and largely incomprehensible territory where town and country meet and rarely forms the settings for films, books or television shows....

Sometimes these areas are so little acknowledged that they have not even been given distinctive names.

They are the "ignored landscape."

— Marion Shoard, *Edgeland*s

Who gets to be in the city and who gets to tell its stories? In *Edgeland: A Life on Society's Margins*, Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali sets out to answer these questions and many more in an effort to offer a better understanding of the urban world by using his own experiences and education in urban planning as starting points. As a person who has been forced across several borders, both geographical and personal, Ali is intrigued by the way we choose to live amongst and beside each other. Through a series of personal tales, he takes us from his kidnapping by his father in Somalia at age 5 in 1990 to his reunion with his mother in Minneapolis thirty years later. His story brings us a unique perspective on the way we live now.

"Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali has been through a lot since he was born almost 35 years ago in Mogadishu, Somalia. A ruinous civil war; migrating to the Netherlands and then to Canada, a Muslim in a strange land; a fractured family; discovering he was gay; homelessness, alcoholism and addiction. You might say that anyone who's lived through all that should write a memoir. That's what he did. It's called Angry Queer Somali Boy: A Complicated Memoir, and it was widely acclaimed as one of the best Canadian books of 2019." — **CBC BOOKS on *Angry Queer Somali Boy***



MOHAMED ABDULKARIM ALI, born in Mogadishu, Somalia, is a survivor. He survived civil war, a shattered family, dislocations, abuse, homelessness, addiction and alcoholism. He wrote his first book, *Angry Queer Somali Boy: A Complicated Memoir*, which was selected as one of the best works of non-fiction to come in 2019 by CBC Books, while living in a homeless shelter. He currently lives in Minneapolis.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: Knopf (August 2026)

"Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali is a remarkable writer." — **THE GLOBE AND MAIL**, "Ten recent books on racism in Canada and the US"

"One of the best LGBTQ memoirs of 2019... A masterpiece of memoir, but also a cultural critique of the first order." — **THE ADVOCATE on *Angry Queer Somali Boy***

EDGE LANDS: A LIFE ON SOCIETY'S MARGINS

AN EXCERPT

a memoir by Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali

ON SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2005, at age nineteen, I escaped an arranged marriage to a woman in northeastern Somalia whom I'd never met. I'd arrived in London in early June, en route to meet my father in Abu Dhabi; we were supposed to fly to Somalia together. He was keen for me to get married to cover up the stench of my homosexuality. While in London, during a phone call with my stepmother back in Toronto she said I could still chase boys in Somalia as long as I gave her some grandkids. I knew that if I didn't escape, I would lead a life of regret in the land of my ancestors.

The whole debacle began while I was having my stomach pumped at the old Keele Street site of Humber River Hospital. I'd been admitted because I took a deadly dose of pills after a violent argument with my stepmother. She lunged at me; I pushed her to the ground and ran out of the apartment barefoot. I sat in the stairwell and decided I was going to kill myself that night. Suicide had always been a fantasy but in that moment, I worked up the courage to try it. I was no longer satisfied with imagining my body underneath a car or torn asunder by the force of a speeding train, bones protruding out of sockets and flesh cut to the bone.

On that spring evening in 2005, nestled beside the Humber River, I downed a few bottles of benzodiazepines and painkillers in the bathroom. The painkillers belonged to my stepsister Fadumo, who had been in a car accident.

There I was, hooked up to various machines measuring my vitals and others trying to empty my guts of the sedating pills. I was told, by Fadumo, that I was given over to outbursts in which I accused various family members of wrongdoing and yelled that I would *hate them forevermore*.

Once discharged, the doctors and nurses told me to return for group therapy but I didn't. At home, everyone treated me with kid gloves and my stepmother seemed maternal for a change. No longer harping on about my failures.

At this point, she insisted I ought to fly out to the Horn of Africa to calm my nerves. She figured camel rides and lounging on the beach would undo whatever was ailing me. My stepsister, the one who had been in the car accident, would change not only the trajectory of that trip but my entire life.

Shortly after my discharge, I accompanied Fadumo to an appointment with her lawyer. She was expecting to receive news about a potential insurance settlement. A motorcyclist had cut off her boyfriend on the highway. The motorcyclist lost his life and she and her boyfriend were left injured. As we made our way downtown, she told me that she heard me confess to homosexual relations while I was having my stomach pumped. Apparently, I had been going on about the man I had lost my virginity to. She didn't think it was right that her mother was blaming herself for my suicide attempt and gave me an ultimatum.

Either you tell her or I will. It's up to you.

I couldn't believe this heifer. Here she was asking for my moral support in getting over her car accident but she had very little compassion for me. Then again, I shouldn't have been surprised because that was my role in this family. I was the whipping post and scapegoat but everyone needed my help, be it with their schoolwork or with money. I was good for nothing but good enough to ghostwrite an essay about Othello and Desdemona.

THE FALLING MARIA

a novel by Yasuko Thanh

55,000 words / Manuscript available Spring 2026

A LYRICAL, MULTI-LAYERED AND SHOCKING TALE FROM THE AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF MYSTERIOUS FRAGRANCE OF THE YELLOW MOUNTAINS

What happens when a woman refuses to conform to the expectations of her gender? In 1920, Maria Mandapat, veteran female WWI fighter pilot and international celebrity, is tried and executed for serial murder, for exacting revenge on her male abusers. But at the very moment the noose tightens, her soul continues its journey, slipping right through her stockings and out the soles of her shoes. She finds herself seated on a train—to Heaven.

The afterlife is unlike any Heaven Maria imagined. It is a dreary bureaucracy little distinguishable from Earth's, populated by busybody angels, well-meaning but ineffectual saints, and the listless dregs of souls waiting in futility for promised salvation. Maria, a controversial figure in death and in life, is quickly put on trial—but this time, St. Adelaide of Rome, patron saint of abused women, has taken a personal interest in Maria's case, because her heavenly trial is not for the crime of murder, but for a much graver sin.

The Falling Maria explores motherhood and freedom, and the tensions between dirtiness and holiness, right and wrong, disobedience and survival, and the lives of the forgotten. It serves as a meditation on suffering and the bonds between mothers and daughters, as well as the many meanings of falling: falling from God, from grace, through the air, into death, and toward a form of holiness and liberation.



YASUKO THANH's story collection *Floating Like the Dead* (2012) was shortlisted for the Danuta Gleed Award and the B.C. Book Prize for Fiction. One story in it won an Arthur Ellis Award for Best Crime Short Story. The title story won the Journey Prize for the best story published in Canada in 2009. *Quill and Quire* named *Floating like the Dead* a best book of the year. Her debut novel *Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains*, inspired by the history of her father's family in French Indochina, won the Rogers Writers' Trust Prize for the best novel of 2016, and her memoir, *Mistakes to Run With*, was a national bestseller. Her latest novel, *To the Bridge*, made the Audible Best of 2023 list.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: Hamish Hamilton
(Spring 2027)

PRAISE FOR MYSTERIOUS FRAGRANCE OF THE YELLOW MOUNTAINS (2016)

"With compelling narrative drive, Yasuko Thanh imbues Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains with atmosphere and resonance, and creates mesmerizing characters who undergo complex change—politically, socially, personally, sexually—as they are gathered into a vortex of intrigue and risk. [Thanh] is as fearless and as wise in reshaping the mystique of the revolutionary as she is in delineating a dramatic time and place in this elegant and tantalizing novel." — **Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize jury citation**

THE FALLING MARIA AN EXCERPT

a novel by Yasuko Thanh

IN THE PHOTOGRAPH, only Maria was visible, her figure isolated and poignant. Its composition had drawn comparisons to the works of old masters, each element carefully arranged to capture a moment. A photograph is a catastrophe, an intractable reality—the rest is mere history. She hung there, as if suspended above an unfathomable gulf, much like the lingering odor of elephants in the air after a rain. Maria gesticulated, caught in the act of falling.

When a pregnant woman dies the baby yanks the mother to Heaven by the umbilical cord. This elucidates the mystery behind Maria's peculiar suspension. Naturally, Maria was oblivious to this phenomenon at the time of her fall. It was why Maria's face remained sharply, horrifyingly in focus while other women, like five little flung stones, blurred into mere smudges. They were reminiscent of coal dust clouds rising from the mines below, or indistinct fingerprints fading from memory.

"Look at that," St. Adelaide said the next morning, her finger hovering over the photo. "Pouff! She was gone. One moment she was there, and the next—nothing. Just like that. Plucked off the train like a tick from a dog, flung over God's shoulder like a little stone tossed into a dung heap."

"Flung?" Nicolas echoed, his voice thick with disbelief. "I'd say she was flung to the dunghill like an old shoe—worn out and forgotten. Then God with his many hounds descended upon the train she was on, and shook the land, and made tunnels collapse. Many fled from the surrounding mine shafts like rats from a sinking ship. God shook until his arms grew tired, and then even a little more. And as he sat catching his breath watching the remnants trickle out, a person here, a person there, like a small drop of blood in the only place a wound has not yet clotted, I took my leave. And of course he was still muttering, 'You can't do anything with a kid like that.'"

St. Lucian joined their search, guilt weighing heavily on him; after all, it was his fault Maria had been thrown from the train to Heaven in the first place, a consequence of his father's terrible mood. "It's infuriating, really. It feels so careless, doesn't it?"

"She will simply become one of the disappeared, one among the thousands," St. Adelaide replied, her tone matter-of-fact. "An image of people in the streets, holding vigil candles and clutching photographs of their lost loved ones."

LIKE RABBITS

a linked story collection by Nayani Jensen

44,000 words

Partial manuscript now available

Complete manuscript available Early 2026

THE HUMAN STORIES AT THE HEART OF SCIENCE

A POWERFUL DEBUT FROM RHODES SCHOLAR AND BRONWEN WALLACE AWARD WINNER NAYANI JENSEN

Canadian English-language rights to *Like Rabbits*, the astonishing debut from Rhodes Scholar and award-winning author Nayani Jensen, were pre-empted by Scribner Canada on the basis of one single story. We now have six of the 12 stories.

The collection imagines the inner lives of people poised at the intersection of history and science. A new father in the Golden Age of Dutch Science searches for the source of life; two aviators at the cusp of their careers grapple with adulthood and a disastrous crash; a young woman prepares to write the Olympics of mathematics exams in nineteenth-century Cambridge; a manuscript changes hands from 9th-century Baghdad across continents, altering meanings as it goes. Based on historical figures and archival research, in each story the deeply personal and the scientific layer to produce unexpected new meanings. *Like Rabbits* will appeal to fans of scientific biography (*Oppenheimer*, *The Theory of Everything*), or to readers of Benjamin Labatut and Andrea Barrett. The collection features:

- “Like Rabbits” (Regnier De Graaf, Delft, the Dutch Republic, 1672): A new father fight for priority in the discovery of the human egg while grappling with the death of his infant son.
- “Proof” (Philippa Fawcett, Cambridge, 1890): A young woman races the men in the Olympics of mathematics exams in 19th-century Cambridge.
- “Gutta Percha” (Telegraph workers, Karachi, 1865): In the rush to expand telegraph systems as the arm of the British Empire, workers grapple with loyalties while harvesting the necessary natural resin used as electrical insulator.



After studying Mechanical Engineering and working on climate research projects, **NAYANI JENSEN** received a Rhodes Scholarship and went on to study English Literature and History of Science at the University of Oxford. In both her academic and creative work, she is interested in merging arts and sciences in interdisciplinary approaches to history, science, and fiction. Nayani is currently undertaking research toward her doctorate at the University of Toronto.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: Scribner (2027)

PRAISE FOR NAYANI JENSEN

“‘Like Rabbits’ is historical fiction at its most intimate and convincing. This story beautifully harks back to the Golden Age of Dutch science, a time when men played gods. As one such man attempts to conceive with his wife, he seeks credit for his ground-breaking discoveries at great personal cost — only to face tragedy and his own mortality. With elegance, authority, and vitality, Nayani Jensen gives us a timeless story of ambition and a tender portrait of a marriage.” — JURY CITATION, 2024 Bronwen Wallace Award for Emerging Writers

LIKE RABBITS AN EXCERPT

a linked story collection by Nayani Jensen

Like Rabbits

Delft, the Dutch Republic. June, 1672.

MARIA WAS BLACK-HAIRED and soft-formed. Her mouth was the colour of apricots, and around her eyes the skin was pink as a baby's. She laughed easily and angered quickly, and sometimes when they lay together in their small bed he thought of the rabbits in his experiments, the ones with pink or paler skin above their eyes.

Sometimes while he was thinking this Maria would tug at his hair, would put her teeth around his earlobe just a little too roughly, would run her tongue from his ear down to the cleft in his chin and say, *Silly boy*, even though he was nine years elder.

But most of the time he thought nothing. He watched the flush of pleasure across her skin, her eyes pooling black, and when she laughed he put his fingers in her mouth.

They have eggs, he would tell her. He was trying to teach her. *Everything does. It's all the same, inside.*

You're telling me I'm like your rabbits? she'd say.

Everything is. It all is. And he'd show her Steno's drawing of the dogfish shark, which gave birth to live young, and his old friend Swammerdam's frogs. *Look!* he'd say. He wanted her to understand the enormity of it. *Ten years ago, they were convinced butterflies appeared from nowhere. That all matter for life came from the male.*

Maria, smiling, said, *Who thinks that?*

Maybe he just wanted her to be impressed.

Show me where, she'd say, and he'd run his fingers over the soft folds of her stomach, lower.

Here.

Eggs? she said, and he said, *Yes, but they would be so small.*

Sometimes she was interested and most of the time she laughed. *What do you know about it*, she said. Sometimes she pulled away warily, and then he would think of the rabbits, of watching them together, counting the days, catching the female and opening it, and he thought perhaps she was right.

Sometimes he thought it was only because of the war that they had gotten married so suddenly. All over the city people lay together like this, and life began to form in its inscrutable way — the first sight of the heart, veins, toes — and down the street or one town away other people lay dead as veins broke, as blood stopped.

His book had been finished in March; the war started in May; by June they were married. By July he was embroiled in a vicious priority debate over the discovery of the human egg.

And on it went.

OCHIMBA! A DAUGHTER'S MEMOIR

by Cheluchi Onyemelukwe

80,000 words

Manuscript available December 2025

Partial manuscript now available

AN ILLUMINATING TALE SHOWCASING THE DYNAMICS OF SURVIVING COLONISATION, CULTURAL CHANGE, AND GRIEF IN TIMES OF CONFLICT, BY AN AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR

On February 24, 2022, Obidinma Isaiah Okoli Onyemelukwe, an eighty-four-year-old retired professor, public servant, and economist, was shot dead in Anambra State, Nigeria, on his way to his hometown, by gunmen spouting separatist ideas. In



the days after, a few papers would write about the incident, noting “Nigeria Prize for Literature Winner’s Father Killed.” Three years later, the country has moved on. Random murders are common in Nigeria, and never resolved.

The death of his parents when he was very young led to Okoli’s intriguing story of survival, resilience, and the impacts of change in an increasingly complex world. Okoli became an *Ochimba*, a pillar of his family and community. The book harkens back to Chinua Achebe’s *There Was a Country*, a personal history of Biafra. Like Chimamanda Adichie’s *Notes on Grief*, it also explores processing and living with grief. However, it is also about joy and the tapestry of lives.

Ochimba! addresses, humanises, and holds space for people who grieve the deaths of loved ones, especially those who are caught in the middle of insecurity brought on by political and societal conflicts in different parts of the world. It is a story about the evolution of a country from the early twentieth century to the present day, from colonial rule to military rule to democratic rule, the gradual disconnections of cultural mores, and the impact that these have had and continue to have on ordinary people.



CHELUCHI ONYEMELUKWE is a writer, novelist, human rights and social justice advocate, lawyer, and academic. She is the author of *The Son of the House*, a critically acclaimed, award-winning novel, published by Penguin Random House South Africa. It has also been published in the UK (Europa Editions), the US and Canada (Dundurn), has been translated into Italian and Armenian, and is forthcoming in Arabic. It won the Best International Fiction Prize at the Sharjah International Book Fair in 2019; the Spring Women Author’s Prize in 2020; and in 2021 it won Africa’s richest and most prestigious prize, The Nigeria Prize for Literature, and was a finalist for the Chinua Achebe Prize, and for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. Three months after Cheluchi returned to Nigeria from the Giller Gala, her father was murdered.

PRAISE FOR *THE SON OF THE HOUSE* (2019)

“Onyemelukwe-Onuobia’s striking debut tackles gender inequality, abuse, and classism in a story of friendship and resilience set in Nigeria [...] Her masterly storytelling makes this consistently entertaining. The result is as moving as it is thought-provoking.” — Publishers Weekly

“Powerful, nuanced, feminist fiction.” — Quill & Quire

“A compelling novel about two women caught in a constricting web of tradition, class, gender, and motherhood.” — Foreword Reviews, starred review

OCHIMBA! A DAUGHTER'S MEMOIR AN EXCERPT

by Cheluchi Onyemelukwe

HIS FATHER TOOK HIM to the school the first time. At the Anglican school, the Head Teacher, an Igbo man from Ogidi, made him put his hand over his head to his opposite ear, as was the practice then. In the absence of documents and birth certificates, the colonial and missionary educators not putting much faith in the age grade system that had existed for centuries before their arrival, would have students loop their right hand over their head to touch their left ears. If you could touch your ears, then you were old enough to go to school. If you could not, you were sent home to grow some more.

Okoli, a small boy, smaller than many his age, could not make his right hand reach his left ear, no matter the encouragement Ezenwaka gave him. They went home. But Ezenwaka did not give up.

He took him to the Roman Catholic Mission where they were not as strict on whose hands could reach their ears. They took Ezenwaka's word that his son was ready to start school. Thus in 1943, Okoli began Standard 1 at the Roman Catholic Mission school in Okpolonnambia. The headmaster told his father that he had done very well.

"School is important," Ezenwaka informed his son. "White people have come and made it so. So when you get to that school, gbado anya. Be careful. And pay attention to what they teach, do you hear me?" He pulled his ears for emphasis. "Soon you will be reading me letters and I will have to stop paying Nwafor's son six shillings," he smiled at his son.

Okoli nodded in agreement. It was a promise, even though he wasn't entirely sure what he was promising. He held his excitement, though he was eager to rush out to look for Nwankwo, Nwaeleele and the others, who were not yet going to school, to tell them about his new uniform, a white shirt and a pair of grey shorts that his father had bought from Onitsha a couple of days before.

In the morning, he would wake up and sweep the compound and then walk to school in Okolonambia. There he learned his 1,2,3s and a, b, cs. But he also learned that the Roman Catholic Church was the way to heaven. The Father, the priest who came into school from time to time, showed them pamphlets with the pictures of the broad way that leads to perdition, to hell. The hordes of people walking, seemingly without a care, were those people who chose to go to the Anglican Church.

In later years, he would laugh so loud, his body quaking as he told us about the two churches that sat opposite each other. Each told their congregants that the people in the opposite church would go to hell. He would shake his head in mirth and wonder. Perhaps this was why, despite becoming Christian himself, he remained tolerant of all faiths and of none, never losing his respect for tradition and culture. A firm Christian, his library was filled with books about different faiths. He took traditional Igbo titles and participated in Igbo traditions almost as vigorously as his church activities.

ADANNA'S SECRET

a novel by Cheluchi Onyemelukwe

100,000 words

Manuscript available December 2026

Partial manuscript now available

**A HEARTRENDING STORY OF FRIENDSHIP,
BULLYING, DISABILITY, AND FAMILY TIES
FROM AN AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR**

Young up-and-coming lawyer Adanna learns that her father, newly diagnosed with dementia, has gone missing. She is quick to pass the message to her three friends, who are bound together by a terrible secret.

The four have been a close-knit group since the age of nine. Adanna, smart but shy, quiet, and reserved, was born to a doting professor father and a strict senior civil-servant mother. Ifenkili, the leader, is the glue that holds everyone together, her boldness concealing shame over her poverty and her envy of others. Okey, nicknamed Oyibo Pepper, is a young albino boy, academically bright. Last is Ikechukwu, nicknamed IK, a boy dedicated to fun and enjoying his wildness.

The four of them gather often in Adanna's beautiful home, but there are rooms that are out of bounds. At Ifenkili's prodding, one day the children gain access to them and discover Adanna's secret: her twin Nwamaka, who suffered severe brain damage at birth and is unable to speak, walk, or do much of anything. One of them feeds her a palm kernel, and she chokes on it. Adanna hurries them out, but delays telling anyone what happened for fear of her mother. By the time Nwamaka is discovered, it is too late. The children carry their secret with them for the rest of their lives.

Written in revolving perspectives from all four protagonists, *Adanna's Secret* follows their lives across Enugu, Lagos, and Halifax, Canada. It explores disability and shame, friendship, bullying, living with albinism, university elitism, parent/child relationships, spirituality, and ambition, against the political and historical backdrop of Nigeria from the 1980s to the present day.



CHELUCHI ONYEMELUKWE is a writer, novelist, human rights and social justice advocate, lawyer, and academic. She is the author of *The Son of the House*, a critically acclaimed, award-winning novel, published by Penguin Random House South Africa. It has also been published in the UK (Europa Editions), the US and Canada (Dundurn), has been translated into Italian and Armenian, and is forthcoming in Arabic. It won the Best International Fiction Prize at the Sharjah International Book Fair in 2019; the Spring Women Author's Prize in 2020; and in 2021 it won Africa's richest and most prestigious prize, The Nigeria Prize for Literature, and was a finalist for the Chinua Achebe Prize, and for the Scotiabank Giller Prize.

PRAISE FOR *THE SON OF THE HOUSE* (2019)

"Onyemelukwe-Onuobia's striking debut tackles gender inequality, abuse, and classism in a story of friendship and resilience set in Nigeria [...] Her intimate study of the issues facing contemporary Nigeria resonates, and her masterly storytelling makes this consistently entertaining. The result is as moving as it is thought-provoking." — **Publishers Weekly**

"Powerful, nuanced, feminist fiction." — **Quill & Quire**

"A compelling novel about two women caught in a constricting web of tradition, class, gender, and motherhood." — **Foreword Reviews, starred review**

ADANNA'S SECRET

AN EXCERPT

a novel by Cheluchi Onyemelukwe

“NNE, ARE YOU BACK?”

“I am at the airport,” Adanna replied.

“Thank God,” now she could hear the anxiety in her sister’s voice.

“Is there a problem? How is Daddy? Is he all right?”

“That is why I am calling.”

“Why you are calling? What happened?”

“Daddy is missing,” Amarachi said.

“What do you mean, ‘Daddy is missing’?”

“I took him to Camp last night,” Adanna heard some sniffing. Was Amarachi crying?

“You took him where?” She felt her voice rise, and looked around to see if she had drawn attention.

“I took him to Camp, the last Friday of the month. It was a special service. I went to the altar for prayers. I wanted to go with him so that Papa GO could lay hands on him but he would not get up to go with me. When I came back, he was not there. We have been looking for him since then.” The tears came out fully now.

Adanna’s heart hammered crazily in her chest.

“I have been trying to reach you but your phone was not going through.”

“How could this happen? How could you let this happen?” She shouted at her sister. By now Amarachi was wailing into the phone.

The airport was noisy with the crush of people coming in, but her voice still carried. It made people stop and look at the chic, smallish dark woman, clad in stylish jeans and trainers, who looked too put together to be shouting as she was.

She felt herself go woozy, and she struggled to keep hold of herself. How could Amarachi take Daddy to camp? She had heard of those camps, filled with thousands of people. God, please don’t let this happen, she prayed, an overwhelming sense of desperation sweeping over her. She could feel herself trembling all over, fuming and sweating as she waited for her bags, wanting to be outside already, to be at Amarachi’s house, to go into Lagos and find Daddy. Think solution, she thought as she dialed her friend Ikechukwu, known to his friends as IK, solution, solution.

His voice was sluggish, and she realized her phone call must have woken him up. But she plunged in without apologies.

“Daddy is missing.” They all called him Daddy.

And, saying it out loud, it struck her in her chest. A heavy thud, like the strike of Daddy’s hammer from his well-equipped tool box on a nail in her mother’s poultry house, or to solder in a bolt falling off the door in the house in Enugu, saying while doing so, ‘there is no need to call a carpenter for work that any man can do.’ Or, more frightening, she thought now, like the thud of red sand that landed remorseless on her mother’s coffin.

Daddy, Professor Josiah Ifemelunma Iloabachie, eminent lawyer, holder of important national positions, widower, father of four, grandfather of four, late seventies, newly diagnosed with dementia, the specific type of which was not fully determined, was missing. In Lagos, a small, vibrant, throbbing city, on whose brown soil twenty million people fought for space and air.

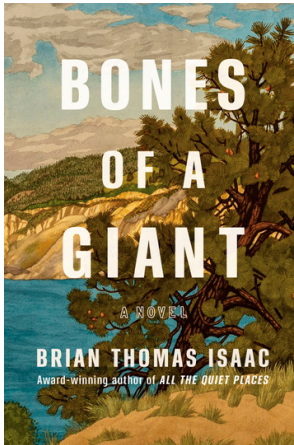
BONES OF A GIANT

a novel by Brian Thomas Isaac

320 pages / Finished book now available

A UNIQUE INDIGENOUS COMING-OF-AGE STORY

AN INDIGO BOOK OF THE MONTH AND BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR



Summer, 1968. For the first time since his big brother, Eddie, disappeared two years earlier, sixteen-year-old Lewis Toma has shaken off some of his grief. His mother has gone south to the United States to pick fruit to earn the cash she needs to put a bathroom and running water into the isolated three-room shack they share in the bush, leaving Lewis to spend the summer with his cousins. Their warm family life highlights the pressure he feels as a boy trying to become a man in a place where responsible adult men like his uncle are largely absent, broken by residential school and racism.

Lewis has vowed never to be like his lowlife father, but an encounter with a predatory older woman tests him and he suffers the consequences. Worse, his dad is back in town and scheming to use the Indian Act to steal the land Lewis and his mom live on. And then, at summer's end, more shocking revelations shake the family, unleashing a deadly force of anger and frustration.

RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: Random House (May 2025)



BRIAN THOMAS ISAAC was born in 1950 on the Okanagan Indian Reserve near Vernon, BC. At the age of fifty, without any formal training, he began to write and fifteen years later he completed his first novel, *All the Quiet Places*. His bestselling debut won the 2022 Indigenous Voices Award, was a finalist for the Governor General's Award and the Amazon Canada First Novel Award, and was longlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and CBC's Canada Reads. He was also a member of the jury for the 2023 Scotia Bank Giller Prize.

*"Brian Thomas Isaac is one of the most authentic voices among Indigenous authors. In *Bones of a Giant*, he spins a complex yet navigable tale that opens a window onto a time of struggle, privation and an undying determination to survive and thrive."* — **MICHELLE GOOD**, author of *Five Little Indians*

"I developed such an affinity with this family and community that the book felt like a tremendous gift. With this novel, Brian Thomas Isaac has generously created both a refuge for and celebration of Indigenous resilience." — **WAUBGESHIG RICE**, author of *Moon of the Turning Leaves*

*"Brian Thomas Isaac reinforces his place as one of Canada's most engaging novelists [...]. I couldn't put *Bones of a Giant* down, wondering to the end if Lewis is just too sweet and vulnerable for the mean world around him."* — **CAROL OFF**, author of *At a Loss for Words*

"What makes the novel so very compelling is the talent that Thomas Isaac has for writing naturalistically, with dialogue that reads true to life." — **The British Columbia Review**

BONES OF A GIANT AN EXCERPT

a novel by Brian Thomas Isaac

WHEN HE FINISHED HE GAVE A SHIVER, pulled up his zipper and turned around to see Lily Edwards watching him from ten feet away. She stood with her hands on her hips, feet planted wide, as the light from the dance hall lit her shapely legs and hips through her flimsy dress.

"I been looking all over for you and here you are in the dark just waiting for me." She walked over to the car, closed the passenger door, and opened the rear door. "Get in."

"What?"

"I said, get in the car."

"What for?"

Lily grabbed Lewis and pushed him. He fell back on the car seat. When he tried to sit up, she climbed on and held him down by his shoulders.

"Now you just stay down there sunshine. Don't you move, now."

She stepped back and lifted her dress over her head, her full breasts hung up in the material for a split second, releasing and falling down, a single bounce. All the while her hot eyes were on him. Almost breathless, Lewis couldn't take his eyes off her because he was seeing what he had only dreamed about. Her dress and panties fell to the floor. She worked quickly, unbuckled his belt, grabbed his pants and underwear as one and yanked them down, then took hold of his spallq, squeezed gently, expertly stroking him slowly, then positioned herself above Lewis. She eased herself down. And then, he was inside her. Lewis let out a groan.

"You like that, don'tcha? Now don't just lay there and make me do all the work. Let's see that horse buck around a little bit." Like they were out of his control, his hips began moving.

"Yeah, like that. Atta boy. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah."

Lewis couldn't take his eyes off her breasts.

"Well don't just stare at 'em," Lily said, grabbing his hands and placing them where they both wanted them to be. "Squeeze them together until the nipples touch and get that tongue going. Do I have to tell you everything?"

When he came he felt like he had been jabbed with a stock prod. His temples throbbed and then a rushing sound like a waterfall boomed in his ears, his toes curled under, and he squeezed his ass cheeks together. Lily laughed at the faces he made but continued rocking on him, her movements becoming faster. Lewis wondered how he could still be hard when she let out her own long groan herself. She quivered and shook like a wet horse shedding water, rolled her hips, and pushed her breasts into Lewis's face.

MOON OF THE CRUSTED SNOW

a novel by Waubgeshig Rice

224 pages / Finished book now available

AN INDIGENOUS POST-APOCALYPTIC NOVEL FROM A POWERFUL LITERARY VOICE

With winter looming, a small northern Anishinaabe community goes dark. Cut off, people become passive and confused. Panic builds as the food supply dwindles. While the band council and a pocket of community members struggle to maintain order, an unexpected visitor arrives, escaping the crumbling society to the south. Soon after, others follow.

The community leadership loses its grip on power as the visitors manipulate the tired and hungry to take control of the reserve. Tensions rise and, as the months pass, so does the death toll due to sickness and despair. Frustrated by the building chaos, a group of young friends and their families turn to the land and Anishinaabe tradition in hopes of helping their community thrive again. Guided through the chaos by an unlikely leader named Evan Whitesky, they endeavor to restore order while grappling with a grave decision.

Blending action and allegory, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* upends our expectations. Out of catastrophe comes resilience. And as one society collapses, another is reborn.

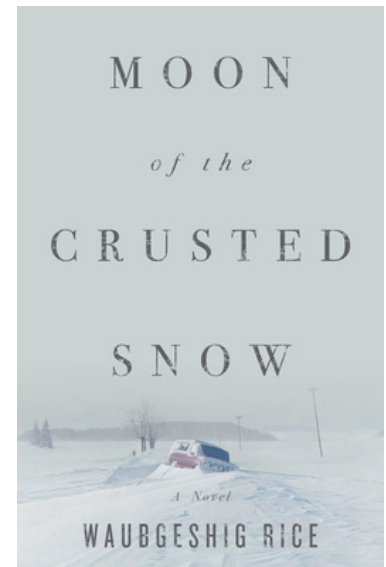
PRAISE FOR MOON OF THE CRUSTED SNOW

"The rising literary star has created an unsettling story about a snowbound northern Anishinaabe community, where a postapocalyptic reality—no power, dwindling food, chaos—slowly creeps its way through the band. A young man, Evan Whitesky, seeks to restore hope and order to his community by turning to the land—to Anishinaabe tradition. A stellar Indigenous thriller." — **THE GLOBE AND MAIL**

"Rice seamlessly injects Anishinaabe language into the dialogue and creates a beautiful rendering of the natural world... This title will appeal to fans of literary science fiction akin to Cormac McCarthy as well as to readers looking for a fresh voice in indigenous fiction." — **BOOKLIST**

"This slow-burning thriller is also a powerful story of survival and will leave readers breathless." — **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**

*"The novel's most significant achievement may be its mood. From mundane beginnings, the book increases its tension continuously across its 200 pages. It's a cliché, but this book is hard to put down. Written with such guilelessness that it's easy to read, and with such strong linearity and so little waste that it's extremely absorbing, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* is a humble but welcome addition to apocalyptic literature."* — **LOCUS**



RIGHTS SOLD

CANADA: ECW Press (October 2018)
FRANCE: Les Arènes (September 2022)
FRENCH CANADA: Mémoire d'encrier (Fall 2025)
GERMANY: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach (March 2024)



WAUBGESHIG RICE is an author and journalist originally from Wasauksing First Nation. His first short story collection, *Midnight Sweatlodge*, was inspired by his experiences growing up in an Anishinaabe community, and won an Independent Publishers Book Award in 2012. His debut novel, *Legacy*, followed in 2014 and was published in French in 2017. His second novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, was released in October 2018 and has sold over 100,000 copies in Canada alone. His latest novel, *Moon of the Turning Leaves*, was a #1 National Bestseller and has sold rights in the US and Germany. He lives in Sudbury, Ontario, where he is working on an Indigenous children's book to be published by Swift Water Books.

MOON OF THE CRUSTED SNOW AN EXCERPT

a novel by Waubgeshig Rice

AILEEN TURNED TO THE CROWD and spoke. “Boozhoo, Zhaawshgogiiizhgokwe n’dizhnakaaz,” she said. “Wawashkesh n’dodem.” After introducing herself in Anishinaabemowin, she addressed the crowd in English. “Good afternoon, my relatives. Thank you all for coming here today.” As an elder, she had the full attention of everyone in the room. Any eyes that might have rolled during the smudge were nonetheless now fixed on her. She was everyone’s auntie, even if they weren’t related by blood.

“Winter is here,” she continued. “Maybe it came a little earlier than we all expected. It’s the time when the trees go to sleep. The bears go to sleep. We all rest. And then we will be reborn in the spring. But it’s important to make sure we’re ready. Now is the time to help your relatives prepare their winter homes. Make sure they have enough food. Enough wood. Enough medicine to make it through the dark season.”

Heads nodded in the crowd. Evan tried to read the faces, people no doubt thinking of their own winter inventory and what they would need. Some looked slightly panicked.

“So I’m going to offer a prayer,” Aileen smiled. “I’m gonna ask the Great Spirit to take care of us this winter. We’re gonna need it.” She smiled reassuringly and began to speak in her first language once again, giving thanks for health and all the other gifts from the Creator.

Aileen finished with a strong miigwech, and a smattering of responses rolled through the audience as they thanked the elder for opening the meeting. Candace helped her back to her chair while Evan finished smudging the last few people lined up in front of him.

That was Terry’s cue. He cleared his throat, wiped his palms on the thighs of his jeans, and stood up.

“As you all know by now,” he started, “we’re having some issues with the infrastructure here in the community. If you didn’t know, you must be living under a rock.” The feeble joke got a chuckle out of some people, and he relaxed a bit. He pushed it. “Anyone who’s still living under a rock is buried under three feet of snow by now!” Louder laughter followed. A hint of tension lingered in some stoic faces, but most of it had dissipated.

His voice became more serious. “Last Wednesday, our satellite service went out. That knocked out TV and internet. Most of you noticed. Sometime in there, the phone lines went down for some reason too. When all those things still weren’t working on Thursday, we tried to call our service provider down in Gibson with our off-grid sat phone. But that wasn’t working either. Then sometime overnight Thursday, the power went out. It’s the first time we’ve lost power like that since we connected to the grid three years ago. We sent our guys to check the nearest transformers. They looked fine but they’re dead. There’s nothing coming in from the dam. And because we have no communication, we’ve had no updates.”

Parkas rustled as people whispered to neighbours and family. From their place at the front of the room, Terry and the councillors could see the anxiety building in the gym.

MOON OF THE TURNING LEAVES

a novel by Waubgeshig Rice

320 pages / Finished book now available

A NATIONAL BESTSELLER

WHEN THE WORLD GOES DARK, HOW WILL YOU SURVIVE?

Twelve years have passed since a widespread blackout triggered the rapid collapse of society, when the constants of the old world—cell service, landlines, satellite and internet—disappeared. The horrors of that first winter only steeled the resolve of Evan Whitesky and the other members of the Anishinaabe community to survive on their own terms.

Now, years after the power went out, the community has reconnected with its Anishinaabe customs based on living on the land. Empowered and stronger than ever, Evan, his teenage daughter Nangohns, and a small team of resourceful community members have resolved to venture south on a four-month-long exploratory mission to their ancestral homelands on Georgian Bay and to discover the cause of the mysterious catastrophe that had plunged the world into darkness.

On their journey they will encounter settlements born from the ashes of what was once civilization—some ruled by order and others by chaos, vigilantes, and terrible violence. But whatever the challenges they face, hope continues to drive them forward, leading them ultimately to an astounding discovery at destination's end.

"Rice puts a refreshing, Indigenous perspective on postapocalyptic tropes.... The humanity and heart on offer here make this a showstopper."

— **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY** (starred review)

"Rice renders an achingly realistic portrayal of a broken, postapocalyptic world that still manages to contain hope and beauty." — **LIBRARY JOURNAL** (starred review)

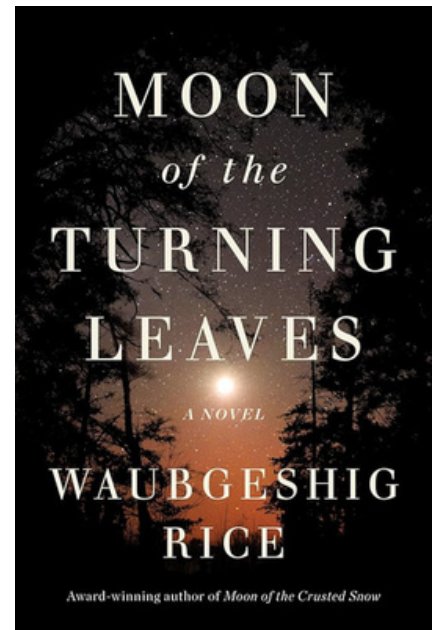
"There's a kindness, a gentleness, and a deep respect at the heart of the culture Rice portrays, and it stands in refreshing contrast to the usual violence and cynicism of most dystopian fiction." — **BOOKLIST** (starred review)

"The attention to the material culture of the future Anishinaabe people is particular and impressive. . . yields an immersive power." — **WALL STREET JOURNAL**

"In Rice's harrowing sequel to Moon of the Crusted Snow, set 12 years after a global power outage, the Anishinaabe people who settled in New Village are forced to relocate, trekking through a dystopian landscape in hope of finding a new home. Rice chronicles their journey in gorgeous prose, placing plenty of postapocalyptic horrors in their path but never losing sight of hope."

— **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**, Best Books of the Year

"[Moon of the Turning Leaves] is gripping, to say the least, and it's a haunting read that'll linger in the recesses of your mind for quite some time." — **Book Riot**



RIGHTS SOLD

US: William Morrow (February 2024)

CANADA: Random House (October 2023)

GERMANY: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach
(March 2024)

FRENCH CANADA: Prise de Parole
(Fall 2025)

FRANCE: Plon (September 2026)



WAUBGESHIG RICE is an author and journalist originally from Wasauksing First Nation. His first short story collection, *Midnight Sweatlodge*, was inspired by his experiences growing up in an Anishinaabe community, and won an Independent Publishers Book Award in 2012. His debut novel, *Legacy*, followed in 2014 and was published in French in 2017. His second novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, was released in October 2018 and has sold over 100,000 copies in Canada alone. His latest novel, *Moon of the Turning Leaves*, was a #1 National Bestseller and has sold rights in the US and Germany. He lives in Sudbury, Ontario, where he is working on an Indigenous children's book to be published by Swift Water Books.

MOON OF THE TURNING LEAVES AN EXCERPT

a novel by Waubgeshig Rice

PIICHE SQUEEZED HER EYES TIGHT and drew a long breath into her nostrils. She let out her air long and smoothly at first, followed by a brief tremble at the end of the exhale. “Aambe,” muttered Amber. “Let’s go, it’s almost time for another one.” Maiingan looked to his partner’s eyes for an opening—any kind of recognition or awareness of the space around her—but she appeared firmly focused on bringing her baby out into this world. He continued to steadily caress her shoulders. Nicole watched her son’s eager anticipation proudly and nervously. She was excited to become a grandmother, yet anxious about her son’s soon rapid ascension into adulthood. He looked up at her from across the fire, and she saw the worry in his brown eyes. She reflexively raised the corners of her mouth in a reassuring smile, trying to comfort her son without being able to say anything or touch him.

In this immense moment, Nicole couldn’t help but reminisce about her own son’s birth nearly two decades earlier. Maiingan was her and her partner Evan’s first child. Their home community didn’t have a clinic equipped or staffed well enough to handle childbirth, and midwifery had yet to return to their people in any traditional sense. So two weeks from her due date, at the end of a snowy and cold winter, she and Evan boarded a small two-propellor plane that took off to the closest big city to the south. They stayed in a hotel for a week until the contractions began, and Maiingan was born in a bright white hospital room crowded with people in gowns and masks just two days later. Nicole remembered their rigid eyes and monotonous voices, and after all these years, she wondered if any of them was still alive. The doctors, the nurses, the pilot, and even the front desk clerk at the hotel were all likely long dead, and the buildings they worked in were probably now crumbling and decrepit. There was no way to know for sure, though, because they hadn’t left this place since the lights went out.

But life was about to emerge here once again, in their tiny settlement in the bush a half-day’s walk from their original reserve. Piiche began with a low groan, which built to another rumbling cry. Her voice faded, and she eased back in to steady, quieter breathing. Active labour had begun shortly after sundown, and as they approached midnight, the anticipation became palpable with each audible breath. Faith and Amber moved in front of Piiche, waiting for the top of the baby’s head to emerge. The elder midwife looked over her shoulder behind her, and over her duct-taped glasses, she locked eyes with Patricia and gave a slight nod.