

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE WHISPER MAN*

THE SHADOWS

A NOVEL



ALEX NORTH

THE
SHADOWS

ALEX NORTH



CELADON
BOOKS
NEW YORK

ALSO BY ALEX NORTH

The Whisper Man

This is a work of fiction. All of the characters, organizations, and events portrayed in this novel are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

THE SHADOWS. Copyright © 2020 by Alex North. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. For information, address Celadon Books, a Division of Macmillan Publishers, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

www.celadonbooks.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: North, Alex, 1976– author.

Title: The shadows / Alex North.

Description: First edition. | New York : Celadon Books, 2020.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020002697 | ISBN 9781250318039 (hardcover) |

ISBN 9781250771902 (international, sold outside the U.S., subject to rights availability) | ISBN 9781250318022 (ebook)

Subjects: GSAFD: Suspense fiction.

Classification: LCC PR6113.O85 S53 2020 | DDC 823/.92—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020002697>

Our books may be purchased in bulk for promotional, educational, or business use. Please contact your local bookseller or the Macmillan Corporate and Premium Sales Department at 1-800-221-7945, extension 5442, or by email at MacmillanSpecialMarkets@macmillan.com.

First U.S. Edition: July 2020

First International Edition: July 2020

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

PROLOGUE

It was my mother who took me to the police station.

The officers had wanted to drive me in the back of their squad car, but she told them no. It's the only time I can remember her losing her temper. I was fifteen years old, standing in the kitchen, flanked by two huge policemen. My mother was in the doorway. I remember her expression changing as they told her why they were there and what they wanted to talk to me about. At first she seemed confused by what she was hearing, but then her face shifted to fear as she looked at me and saw how lost and scared I was right at that moment.

And, while my mother was a small woman, something in the quiet ferocity of her voice and the strength of her posture caused both of those huge policemen to take a step back from me. On the way to the police station, I sat in the passenger seat beside my mother, feeling numb as we followed the car that was escorting us through the town.

It slowed as we reached the old playground.

“Don't look,” my mother told me.

But I did. I saw the cordons that had been put in place. The officers lining the street, their faces grim. All the vehicles that were parked along the roadside, their lights rotating silently in the late afternoon sun. And I saw the old jungle gym. The ground beside it

had always been dull and gray before, but right now I could see it was patterned in red. It all seemed so quiet and solemn, the atmosphere almost reverential.

And then the car ahead of us came to a stop.

The officers were making sure I got a good look at a scene they were certain I was responsible for.

You have to do something about Charlie.

It was a thought I'd had a great deal in the months leading up to that day, and I still remember the frustration it always brought. I was fifteen years old, and it wasn't fair. Back then, it felt like my entire life was constrained and controlled by the adults around me, and yet none of them appeared to have noticed the black flower rotting in the middle of the yard. Or else they had decided it was easier to leave it alone—that the grass it was poisoning didn't matter.

It should not have been left to me to deal with Charlie.

I understand that now.

And yet, as I sat in the car right then, the guilt they wanted me to feel overwhelmed me. Earlier that day, I had been walking through the dusty streets, squinting against the sun and sweating in the simmering heat, and I had spotted James right there in the playground. My oldest friend. A small, lonely figure in the distance, perched awkwardly on the jungle gym. And while it had been weeks by then since he and I had spoken, I had known full well what he was doing. That he was waiting there for Charlie and Billy.

A number of the officers at the scene turned to look at us, and for a moment I felt trapped in a pocket of absolute silence. Stared at and judged.

Then I flinched as a sudden noise filled the air.

It took me a second to realize that my mother was leaning on the car horn. The blaring volume of the sound seemed jarring and profane in the setting—a scream at a funeral—but when I looked at her

I saw my mother's jaw was clenched and her gaze directed furiously at the police car ahead. She kept her hand pressed down, and the sound continued, echoing around the town.

Five seconds.

"Mom."

Ten seconds.

"Mom."

Then the police car in front of us began moving slowly away again. My mother lifted her hand from the horn and the world fell quiet. When she turned to me, her expression was somehow both helpless and resolute at the same time, as though my hurt were her own and she was determined to bear the weight of it for me as much as she could.

Because I was her son, and she was going to look after me.

"It's going to be okay," she said.

I did not reply. I just stared back, recognizing the seriousness in her voice and the conviction on her face, and feeling grateful that there was someone there to look after me, even if I would never have admitted it. Grateful there was someone with me who cared about me. Someone who had such faith in my innocence that the words themselves didn't need to be spoken out loud.

Someone who would do anything to protect me.

After what felt like an age, she nodded to herself, and began driving. We followed the car out of the town and left the parked police vans, the staring officers, and the bloodstained playground behind us. And my mother's words were still echoing in my head as we reached the main road.

It's going to be okay.

Twenty-five years have passed, but I still think about that a lot. It's what all good parents tell their children. And yet what does it really amount to? It's a hope, a wish. A hostage to fortune. It's a promise you

have to make, and one you must do your best to believe in, because what else is there?

It's going to be okay.

Yes, I think about that a lot.

How every good parent says it, and how often they're wrong.

PART ONE



ONE

NOW

On the day it began, Detective Amanda Beck was technically off work. She slept late. Having been woken in the early hours by the familiar nightmare, she clung to the thin threads of sleep for as long as possible, and it was approaching noon by the time she was up and showered and making coffee. A boy was being killed right then, but nobody knew it yet.

In the middle of the afternoon, Amanda started out on the short drive to visit her father. When she arrived at Rosewood Gardens, there were a few other cars parked in the lot, but she saw nobody. A profound silence settled over the world as she walked up the winding path between the flower beds that led to the gated entrance, and then took the turns she had committed to memory over the last two and a half years, passing gravestones that had become familiar markers.

Was it strange to think of the dead as friends?

Perhaps, but a part of her did. She visited the cemetery at least once a week, which meant she saw more of the people lying here than the handful of living friends she had. She ticked them off as she walked. Here was the grave that was always well attended by fresh flowers. There, the one with the old, empty whiskey bottle balanced

against the stone. And then the plot covered with stuffed toys: a child's grave, that one, Amanda guessed, the presents left by grieving parents who couldn't quite allow their child to leave them yet.

And then, around a final corner, her father's grave.

She stopped and pushed her hands into the pockets of her coat. The plot was marked by a rectangular stone, broad and strong, the way she remembered her father from growing up. There was something pleasingly implacable in the simplicity of it—the way there was just his name and a pair of dates that bookmarked his life. No fuss, exactly the way he would have wanted. Her father had been loving and caring at home, but his life had been spent on the force, where he had done his duty and left his work in the office at the end of the day. It had felt right to reflect that aspect of his character in her choice of headstone. She had found something that did the job required of it—and did it well—but kept emotion separate.

No bloody flowers on my grave, Amanda.

When I'm gone, I'm gone.

One of the many orders she had followed.

But, God, it still felt odd and jarring to her that he was no longer in the world. As a child, she had been scared of the dark, and it had always been her father who came to her when she called out. Whenever he was out on a night shift, she remembered being anxious, as though a safety net had been taken away and if she fell there would be nothing there to catch her. That was the way life seemed these days too. There was a constant sensation in the back of her mind that something was wrong, something missing, but that it wouldn't last. Then she would remember her father was dead, and the stark realization would come. If she called out now, there was nobody to find her in the night.

She pulled her coat a little tighter around her.

No talking to me after I'm gone either.

Another order, so all she ever did when she visited the grave was

stand and think. Her father was right, of course. Like him, she wasn't religious, and so she didn't see much point in saying anything out loud. There was nobody to hear now, after all; the opportunity for interrogation had passed. She had been left with the short lifetime of experience and wisdom her father had gifted her, and it was down to her to sift through that. To hold parts up to the light, blow dust from them, and see what worked and what she could use.

Dispassionate.

Aloof.

Practical.

That was how he had been when it came to his job. She thought often of the advice he had given her: When you saw something awful, you had to put it away in a box. The box was something you kept locked in your head, and you only ever opened it to throw something else inside. The work, and the sights it brought you, had to be kept separate from your life at all costs. It had sounded so simple, so neat.

He had been so proud of her joining the police, and while she missed him with all her heart, there was also a small part of her that was glad he wasn't around to see how she'd dealt with the last two years. The box of horrors in her head that would not stay closed. The nightmares she had. The fact that it had turned out she wasn't the kind of officer he had been, and that she wondered whether she ever could be.

And although she followed her father's instructions, it didn't stop her from thinking about him. Today, as always, she wondered how disappointed he would be.

She was on the way back to the car when her phone rang.

Half an hour later, Amanda was back in Featherbank, walking across the waste ground.

She hated this place. She hated its coarse, sun-scorched bushes. The silence and seclusion. The way the air always felt *sick* here, as

though the land itself had gone sour and you could sense the rot and poison in the ground on some primal level.

“That’s where they found him, right?”

Detective John Dyson, walking beside her, was gesturing toward a skeletal bush. Like everything else that managed to grow here, it was tough and dry and sharp.

“Yeah,” she said. “It is.”

Where they found him.

But it was where they had lost him first. Two years ago, a little boy had disappeared while walking home here, and then, a few weeks afterward, his body had been dumped in the same location. It had been her case. The events that followed had sent her career into a free fall. Before the dead boy, she had imagined herself rising steadily up the ranks over the years, the box in her head sealed safely shut, but it turned out she hadn’t known herself at all.

Dyson nodded to himself.

“They should fence this place off. Nuke it from orbit.”

“It’s people who do bad things,” she said. “If they didn’t do them in one place, they’d just do them somewhere else instead.”

“Maybe.”

He didn’t sound convinced, but nor did he really seem to care. Dyson, Amanda thought, was pretty stupid. In his defense, he at least seemed to realize that, and his entire career had been marked by a singular lack of ambition. In his early fifties now, he did the work, collected the pay, and went home evenings without so much as a backward glance. She envied him.

The thick tree line that marked the top of the quarry was just ahead of them now. She glanced back. The cordon she’d ordered to be set up around the waste ground was obscured by the undergrowth, but she could sense it there. And beyond that, of course, the invisible gears of a major investigation already beginning to turn.

They reached the trees.

“Watch your step here,” Dyson said.

“Watch your own.”

She stepped deliberately in front of him, bending the fence that separated the waste ground from the quarry and then ducking under. There was a faded warning sign attached a little way along, which did nothing to stop local children from exploring the terrain. Perhaps it was even an incentive; it probably would have been to her as a kid. But Dyson was right. The ground here was steep and treacherous, and she concentrated on her footing as she led the way. If she slipped in front of him now she would have to fucking kill him to save face.

The sides of the quarry were dangerously steep, and she made her way down cautiously. Roots and branches, baked pale by the oppressive summer heat, hung out from the rock like tendons, and she gripped the rough coils of them for balance. It was about a hundred and fifty feet down, and she was relieved when she reached solid ground.

A moment later, Dyson’s feet scuffed the stone beside her.

And then there was no sound at all.

The quarry had an eerie, otherworldly quality. It felt self-contained and desolate, and while the sun was still strong on the waste ground above, the temperature was much cooler here. She looked around at the fallen rocks and the clusters of yellowing bushes that grew down here. The place was a maze.

A maze that Elliot Hick had given them directions through.

“This way,” she said.

Earlier that afternoon, two teenage boys had been taken into custody outside a nearby house. One of them, Elliot Hick, had been borderline hysterical; the other, Robbie Foster, empty and calm. Each was holding a knife and a book, and both were soaked almost head to toe in blood. They were being held for questioning at the station, but Hick had already told the attending officer what the two of them had done, and where they would find the results of it.

It wasn't far, he'd said.

Three hundred feet or so.

Amanda headed between the rocks, taking her time, moving slowly and carefully. There was a pressure to the silence here that felt like being underwater, and her chest was tightening with apprehension at the thought of what they were about to see. Assuming Hick was telling the truth, of course. There was always a chance there was nothing to be found here at all. That this was some kind of bizarre prank.

Amanda reached out and moved a curtain of sharp branches to one side. The notion that this was a practical joke seemed absurd, but it was infinitely preferable to the idea that she was about to step out into a clearing and see—

She stopped in her tracks.

And see that.

Dyson stepped out and stood next to her. He was breathing a little faster, although it wasn't clear if that was from the physical exertion of the climb and the walk, or the sight that lay before them now.

"Jesus Christ," Dyson said.

The clearing ahead of them was roughly hexagonal, the ground jagged but basically flat, and it was bordered on all sides by trees and tangles of bushes. There was something almost occult about the setting, a first impression that was only enhanced by the tableau laid out there.

The body was about fifteen feet away, directly in the center. It had been posed in a kneeling position, bent over almost in prayer, the thin arms folded backward along the ground like broken wings. It appeared to be that of a teenage boy. He was dressed in shorts and a T-shirt that had ridden up to his armpits, but the blood made it difficult to tell what color the clothing had been. Amanda's gaze moved over the body. There were numerous dark stab wounds on the boy's exposed torso, the blood around them pale brown smears on the

skin. There was a deeper pool beneath his head, which was tilted awkwardly to one side, barely attached, and facing mercifully away from her.

Dispassionate, Amanda reminded herself.

Aloof.

Practical.

For a moment, the world was completely still. Then she saw something else and frowned.

“What’s that on the ground?” she said.

“It’s a kid’s fucking body, Amanda.”

She ignored Dyson, and took a couple of careful steps farther into the clearing, anxious not to disturb the scene but needing to make sense of what she was seeing. There was more blood on the stone floor, stretching out in a circle on all sides around the body. The pattern seemed too uniform to be accidental, but it was only when she reached the edge of the bloodstains themselves that she realized what they were.

She stared down, her gaze moving here and there.

“What is it?” Dyson said.

Again, she didn’t reply, but this time it was because she didn’t quite know how. Dyson walked across to join her. She was expecting another exclamation, more bluster, but he remained silent and she could tell he was just as disturbed as she was.

She counted the stains as best she could, but it was hard to keep track of them. They were a storm on the ground.

Hundreds of blood-red handprints pressed carefully against the stone.

TWO

The hospice in which my mother was dying was on the grounds of Gritten Hospital.

It seemed a slightly melancholy arrangement to me. On the long drive cross-country, I had wondered why they didn't go for the hat trick and install a cemetery and a conveyer belt while they were at it. But the grounds turned out to be pleasant. Once past the hospital, the driveway curled leisurely between carefully trimmed lawns dotted with brightly colored flower beds and apple trees, and then over a small bridge with a stream burbling underneath. It was a hot day, and I'd rolled the car window down. The air outside was saturated with the rich smell of freshly cut grass, and the sound of the water on the rocks below seemed threaded through with a child's laughter.

Tranquil surroundings for the end of a life.

After a minute, I reached a two-story building with lush swathes of ivy covering its blackened walls. The car tires crackled over a sea of neatly turned pebbles. When I killed the engine, the only noise was the gentle trill of birdsong, the silence behind it heavy and profound.

I lit a cigarette and sat for a moment.

Even now, it wasn't too late to go back.

It had taken four hours to drive here, and I'd felt the presence of Gritten growing closer the whole time, and the dread inside me had increased with every passing mile. The sky might have been bright and clear, but it had felt as though I were driving toward a thunderstorm, and I had half expected to hear rumbling in the distance and see crackles of lightning at the horizon. By the time I was driving through the ramshackle streets and flat industrial estates, past the rows of weathered shops and factories and the forecourts scattered with litter and broken glass, I was feeling so sick that it had been an effort not to turn the car around.

I smoked now, my hand shaking.

Twenty-five years since I'd been here in Gritten.

It's going to be okay, I told myself.

I stubbed out the cigarette, then got out and walked across to the hospice. The glass doors at the entrance slid open to reveal a clean and minimalist reception area, with a polished black-and-white floor. I gave my name at the desk and waited, smelling polish and disinfectant. Aside from the sound of cutlery clinking somewhere away to one side, the building was as quiet as a library, and I felt an urge to cough, simply because it felt like I shouldn't.

"Mr. Adams? Daphne's son?"

I looked up. A woman was approaching me. She was in her mid-twenties, short, with pale blue hair, numerous ear piercings, and she was dressed in casual clothes. Not an orderly here.

"Yes," I said. "Sally, right?"

"That's me."

I shook her hand. "Call me Paul."

"Will do."

Sally led me up a set of stairs, and then down a warren of quiet corridors, making small talk along the way.

"How was your journey?"

"Fine."

“How long has it been since you’ve been back to Gritten?”

I told her. She looked shocked.

“*Actual* wow. Do you still have friends locally?”

The question made me think of Jenny, and my heart leaped slightly. I wondered what it would be like to see her again after all these years.

“I don’t know,” I said.

“I guess the distance makes it difficult?” Sally said.

“Yeah, it does.”

She meant geography, but distance worked in other ways too. The car journey today might have taken four hours, but this short walk inside the hospice seemed longer. And while a quarter of a century should be a span of history with heft and weight, I was shivering inside. It felt like the years had dropped dangerously away, and that what had happened here in Gritten all those years ago might as well have occurred yesterday.

It’s going to be okay.

“Well, I’m glad you could come,” Sally said.

“Work’s always quiet over the summer.”

“You’re a professor, right?”

“I teach English, but I’m not that high up.”

“Creative writing?”

“That’s one of the classes.”

“Daphne was proud of you, you know? She always told me you’d be a great writer one day.”

“I don’t write.” I hesitated. “She actually said that?”

“Yeah, totally.”

“I didn’t know.”

But then, there was a lot about my mother’s life I hadn’t known. We might have spoken on the phone every month or so, but they were always short, casual conversations in which she had asked after me, and I had lied, and I had not asked after her, so she hadn’t needed to. She had never given me a hint that anything was wrong.

And then three days ago I had received a phone call from Sally, my mother's care worker. I hadn't known about Sally. I also hadn't known that my mother had been suffering from steadily advancing dementia for years now, and that over the last six months her cancer had become untreatable. That in recent weeks my mother had become so frail that the stairs were difficult for her to climb, and so she had been living almost entirely on the ground floor of the house. That she had refused to be moved. That one evening earlier in the week, Sally had entered the house to find her unconscious at the bottom of the stairs.

Because, either out of frustration or confusion, it seemed my mother had made an attempt to reach the landing above and her body had betrayed her. The head injury she suffered was serious rather than fatal, but the fall had goaded the rest of her afflictions into attacking more swiftly.

There was so much I hadn't known.

Time was short, Sally had told me. Could I come?

"Daphne's mostly sleeping," she said now. "She's receiving palliative care and pain relief, and she's doing as well as she can. But what will happen over the next few days is that she'll sleep more often, for more prolonged periods of time. And then, eventually, she'll . . ."

"Not wake up?"

"That's right. Just pass away peacefully."

I nodded. That sounded like a good death. Given there has to be an end, maybe that's all any of us can hope for—to drift steadily off. Some people believed there were dreams or nightmares to come afterward, but I've never really understood why. As I know better than most, those things happen in the shallow stages of sleep, and I've always hoped that death would be a much deeper state than that.

We stopped outside a door.

"Is she lucid?" I said.

“It varies. Sometimes she recognizes people and seems to understand vaguely where she is. But more often it’s like she’s in a different place and time.” She pushed open the door and spoke more softly. “Ah—here’s our girl.”

I followed her into the room, bracing myself for what I was about to see. But the sight was still a shock. A hospital bed rested against the nearest wall, with wheels on the legs and controls to elevate and change its position. To the side of it, there was more machinery than I’d been expecting: a cart with a bank of monitors, and a stand of clear bags with tubes looping out, connected to the figure lying beneath the covers.

My mother.

I faltered. I had not seen her in twenty-five years, and, as I stood in the doorway now, it looked like someone had made a model of her from wax, but one far smaller and frailer than the old memories I had. My heart fluttered. Her head was bandaged on one side, and what I could see of her face was yellow and motionless, her lips slightly parted. The thin covers were barely disturbed enough to suggest a body beneath, and for a moment I wasn’t sure she was even alive.

Sally seemed unperturbed. She walked across and then bent over slightly, checking the monitors. I caught the faint scent of the flowers on the table beside the machinery, but the smell was corrupted by a hint of something sweeter and more sickly.

“You’re free to sit with her, of course.” Sally finished her examination and straightened up. “But it’s probably best not to disturb her.”

“I won’t.”

“There’s water on the table if she wakes and wants it.” She pointed to the bed rail. “And if there are any problems, there’s a call button there.”

“Thank you,” I said.

She closed the door behind her as she left.

And then silence.

Except not quite. The window nearest the bed was half open, and I could hear the peaceful, soporific buzz of a lawn mower coming from somewhere in the distance. And then, beneath that, the slow, shallow breaths my mother was taking. There were long stretches of empty seconds between them. Looking down at her, I noticed the pink floral pattern of the bedsheets for the first time, and the sight of them delivered a ghost of memory. They weren't identical to the ones I recalled from childhood, but close enough. Sally must have brought them from the house to make my mother feel more at home here.

I looked around. The room reminded me of the one in the residence halls during my first year at college: small but comfortable, with an en suite bathroom built into one corner and a desk and cabinets along the wall opposite the bed. There were a handful of objects spread out on the desk. Some of them were clearly medical—empty bottles, popped pill cases, and torn strips of cotton wool—but others looked more ordinary, more familiar. There was a pile of carefully folded clothes. Eyeglasses in an open case. The old photograph of my parents' wedding I remembered sitting on the mantelpiece when I was a child: here now, and angled so my mother could see it from the bed if she woke.

I walked over to the desk. The photo should have been a record of a happy occasion, but, while my mother was smiling and hopeful, my father's face looked as stern as always. It was the only expression of his I could remember from childhood, whether illuminated by the constant fires he would build in the backyard or shadowed in the hallway as we passed each other without speaking. He had always been serious and sour—a man let down by everything in his life—and we had both been glad to be rid of each other when I left here. None of the phone calls from my mother over the years had featured

him. And when he died six years ago, I had not returned to Gritten for the funeral.

I glanced along the desk and saw something I hadn't noticed before. A thick book, placed cover-down. It was old and weathered, and the spine was slightly twisted, as though it had been soaked in water at some point and then left to dry crooked. My mother had never been much of a reader; my father had always been sneeringly dismissive of fiction, and of me and my love for it. Perhaps my mother had discovered a passion for it after his death, and this was what she had been reading before the accident. A nice gesture on Sally's part, although it seemed fairly optimistic to imagine my mother was going to finish it now.

I turned the book over, and saw the red, leering devil's face on the cover—and then pulled my hand away quickly, my fingertips tingling as if they'd been burned.

The Nightmare People.

"Paul?"

I jumped and turned around. My mother was awake. She had moved onto her side and was propped up on one elbow, staring at me almost suspiciously with the one eye I could see, her hair hanging down to the pillow in a thin gray stream.

My heart was beating too quickly.

"Yes." I spoke quietly, trying to calm myself. "It's me, Mom."

She frowned.

"You . . . shouldn't be here."

There was a chair by the bed. I walked slowly across and sat down. Her gaze followed me, as wary as that of an animal primed to flee.

"You shouldn't be here," she said again.

"I kind of *had* to be. You fell. Do you remember?"

She continued staring at me for a moment. Then her expression softened and she leaned toward me and whispered conspiratorially.

"I hope Eileen's not here."

I looked around the room helplessly. "She isn't, Mom."

"I shouldn't say that, really. But we both know what a *bitch* that woman is. Poor Carl." She looked sad. "And poor little James too. We're only doing this for him, aren't we? You know that, I think. We don't need to say so, but you understand."

It's like she's in a different place, a different time.

This was a place and time I recognized.

"Yes, Mom," I said. "I did understand."

She lay down carefully again and closed her eyes, whispering.

"You shouldn't be here."

"Do you want some water?" I said.

For a moment, my mother did nothing. She just lay there breathing steadily, as though the question were taking time to work its way through the confusing labyrinth of her mind. I had no faith that it would reach its destination, but I couldn't think of anything else to say right now. And then suddenly my mother lurched awake again, jolting upright at the waist, and reached out and grabbed my wrist so fast there was no time for me to recoil.

"You shouldn't be here!" she shouted.

"Mom—"

"Red hands, Paul! There are red hands everywhere."

Her eyes were wide and unblinking, staring at me in absolute horror.

"Mom—"

"Red hands, Paul."

She let go of me and collapsed back on the bed. I stood up and staggered backward a little, the white imprint of her grip on my skin. I pictured a jungle gym and a ground patterned in crimson, and her words repeated over and over in my head in time with my heartbeat.

Red hands, red hands, red hands everywhere—

“Oh God, it’s in the house, Paul!”

And then my mother’s face contorted in anguish, and she screamed at the ceiling, or perhaps at something out of sight above.

“It’s in the fucking house!”

And with panic lighting up my whole body, I scabbled for the alarm button.



CELADON
BOOKS

Founded in 2017, Celadon Books, a division of Macmillan Publishers, publishes a highly curated list of twenty to twenty-five new titles a year. The list of both fiction and nonfiction is eclectic and focuses on publishing commercial and literary books and discovering and nurturing talent.