

NEWS FROM
voice

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For Immediate Release:

“(Stephen) Lovely’s debut novel, a touching journey of the heart, tracks what happens to two Midwestern families after a death and a gift of life. ...The delicate handling of loaded material, attention to detail and depth of character make this a standout.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

“...evocative prose throughout...”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Lovely patiently and tenderly details...the emotions of his principal characters as they deal with grief, loss, and survivor’s guilt. ...A sensitive debut novel that assiduously avoids the sentimental while facing up to the difficulties of finding one’s way back to...health.”

—*Booklist*

IRREPLACEABLE

by

Stephen Lovely

- *Explores tough issues surrounding organ donation*
- *Author worked for seven years as a night clerk in a pediatric intensive care unit*
- *Debut novel*
- *Chosen as:*
 - *Premier Pick, January 2009, by Ingram Books Group*
 - *Indie Next Pick, February 2009, by Independent Booksellers*
 - *Midwest Connections Pick, February 2009, by Midwest Booksellers*

In the summer of 1993 Stephen Lovely was twenty-seven and working as a night clerk in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. One night a young boy was admitted with a severe head wound. He’d been in a car accident and was pronounced brain dead. His parents, in the middle of their extreme distress, expressed a desire to donate his organs. As Lovely assisted the doctors and nurses in preparing the boy for the operating room, he was stricken by the

patience and bravery of the parents as they stood by their son's bedside. Stephen thought of where the organs might go—how far they would travel and to whom. He also thought of the person driving the car that killed the boy, what kind of person he was and what he might do if he knew that killing that boy had resulted, indirectly, in saving others' lives. What resulted from Lovely's experience that night is his extraordinary debut novel, **IRREPLACEABLE (Voice; February 3, 2009; Hardcover / \$24.99)**, in which he takes readers inside the complex and connected story of two families whose lives intersect in the aftermath of a heart transplant.

Lovely's narrative plays out through four alternating points of view over the course of a year following a life-claiming accident and subsequent heart transplant. Alex, the still grieving husband, is unable to move on after reluctantly agreeing with the wishes of his wife, Isabel, to be an organ donor. Janet, the heart recipient, is both grateful and deeply guilt-ridden. Isabel's mother, Bernice, finds solace in Janet's requests for friendship, while Jasper, the reckless driver, seeks absolution.

IRREPLACEABLE is the story of what happens next—after the transplant and the funeral, when families are left to pick up the pieces and rebuild their splintered lives. Lovely masterfully interweaves the lives of everyone connected to the transplant, and the result is a heart-wrenching and unexpected novel that explores how the rare and complex transaction of a transplant can have powerful effects on the families of both the donor and the recipient. Lovely deftly navigates the difficult choices a family must make in the face of death and sorrow in this grippingly realistic portrayal, ultimately showing the redemptive power that lies in giving hope to a stranger even in the depths of grief.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Stephen Lovely graduated from Kenyon College and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. For seven years he worked as a night clerk in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, where the idea for this novel was born. He lives in Iowa City. This is his first novel.

IRREPLACEABLE
by Stephen Lovely
Voice

Publication Date: February 3, 2009

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ISBN: 978-1-4013-2282-3

Also available as a

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