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"The novel is brimming with arresting descriptions, and the western setting is employed to surprising effect, as in a sequence contrasting the removal of an invasive salt cedar bush with a father's awareness of his son's first crush. Meyers's small masterpiece deserves comparison to the work of Raymond Carver, Joy Williams and Peter Matthiessen."  
—*Publisher's Weekly*, STARRED review

"*Twisted Tree* makes me think of Winesburg, and the fine line between plain folks and grotesques--how one day, through the quirks of circumstance, we find ourselves on the other side of that line, and wonder how long we've been there. Like Russell Banks in *The Sweet Hereafter*, Kent Meyers spins out his intimate life stories from the hub of a small-town tragedy and takes us into places we never thought we'd go."

—Stewart O’Nan, author of *Songs for the Missing* and *Last Night at the Lobster*

## TWISTED TREE

BY KENT MEYERS

*To this Ana he was Mary, though he’s been Emily and Josephine and Edwina. The avatars shape themselves out of conversation, seeded and entwined in the Ana’s individual needs, until they emerge fully formed, revealed. He loves them. They surprise him.*

From the dark, almost-too-real-to-face opening chapter to the off-beat, good-humored epilogue, ALA Alex Award winner **Kent Meyers** pens one flourishing word after another in his latest novel, **TWISTED TREE** (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 9/24/09). The lives of members of the small town of Twisted Tree, South Dakota are jarringly interrupted when one of their own, Hayley Jo Zimmerman, goes missing and is eventually murdered. As her story unfolds and her secret battle with anorexia surfaces, those who knew her must come to terms with the responsibilities they did or did not take while she was alive.

**TWISTED TREE** by Kent Meyers  
September 24, 2009 \* \$24.00 \* 304 pages \* 6 x 9 \* ISBN: 978-0-15-101389-0  
Jacket scans and press materials are available at [www.hmhbooks.com](http://www.hmhbooks.com)

Kent Meyer's remarkably complex, dynamic characters make up a community rife with real struggles and flaws, whose interactions are at once astonishingly violent and tender. Inside **TWISTED TREE**, you'll meet:

**Alexander Stoughton**, the "I-90 Killer" who, making up for his unresolved pain from childhood obesity and a strict Catholic mother, befriends unwitting, helpless anorexic women in pro-anorexic chat rooms and arranges to "meet" them once he has them in full trust;

**Laura Morrison**, Hayley Jo's best friend who blames herself for Hayley Jo's death and for doing her part in feeding her friend's addiction by the constant exercising they did together;

**Clay Mattingly**, Hayley Jo's childhood friend, fishing buddy, and neighbor who must live with the fact that he refused Laura's pleas to help the disturbingly thin Hayley Jo, and must imagine a life without the girl he will always love;

**Elise Thompson**, checkout girl at the local supermarket who can guess the habits of her customers based on what they buy and remembers finding something odd about Hayley Jo's purchases;

**Father Caleb**, former priest of Twisted Tree who leaves the church to become a rancher after having an affair with Laura's mother;

**Sophie Lawrence**, molested by her step-father when she was a child and exacts revenge on him in his old age;

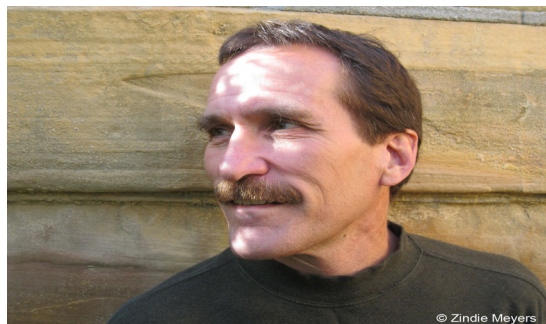
...and many, many more.

With boundless passion and sensitivity, Meyers paints a solid picture of how secrets can creep into the glue that molds people together and challenge it, test it, but somehow only make it stronger.

**Kent Meyers** is the author of *The Work of Wolves*, *Light in the Crossing*, *The River Warren*, and *The Witness of Combines*. He is the recipient of an ALA Alex Award, two Minnesota Book Awards, and a Mountains and Plains Booksellers Association Award. His work has been included in the *New York Times* list of notable books and published in a wide array of prestigious magazine.

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## Praise for Kent Meyers



"Intelligent and intuitive--a very promising writer."  
—Peter Matthiessen

"Kent Meyers evokes his people with fierce compassion. In these spare and elegant tales, stark beauty is the merciful counterpoint of sorrow."  
—Melanie Rae Thon

"Written with simple, poetic dignity and a savvy for the land that can only come from having been raised up in it with eyes wide open."  
—Sam Shepard

"Meyers tells stories with precision and joy. He understands how the rhythms of the land bind farmers, give them hope and purpose."  
—Linda Hasselstrom

"It's hard to find Chinese spices in Twisted Tree, South Dakota, but you'll find just about everything else in Kent Meyers' evocation of the American West, including a world of fascinating characters all tugged toward their central star, the lost girl Hayley Jo Zimmermann. Meyers, like Faulkner and McCarthy, knows that the smallest corner of the country can contain the universe. This is a brilliant and lyrical novel."  
—Marjorie Sandor, author of *Night Gardner* and *Portrait of My Mother*

"*Twisted Tree* brings all of the dynamics of rural America to life with vivid prose and true to life characters. Kent Meyers is writing some of the most groundbreaking novels about the West today. He looks at this part of the country without blinking, and writes it just as he sees it. A fabulous writer."  
—Russell Rowland, author of *In Open Spaces* and *The Watershed Years*

If you review or otherwise cover **TWISTED TREE** in your publication, please send two  
tearsheets or a link to:

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