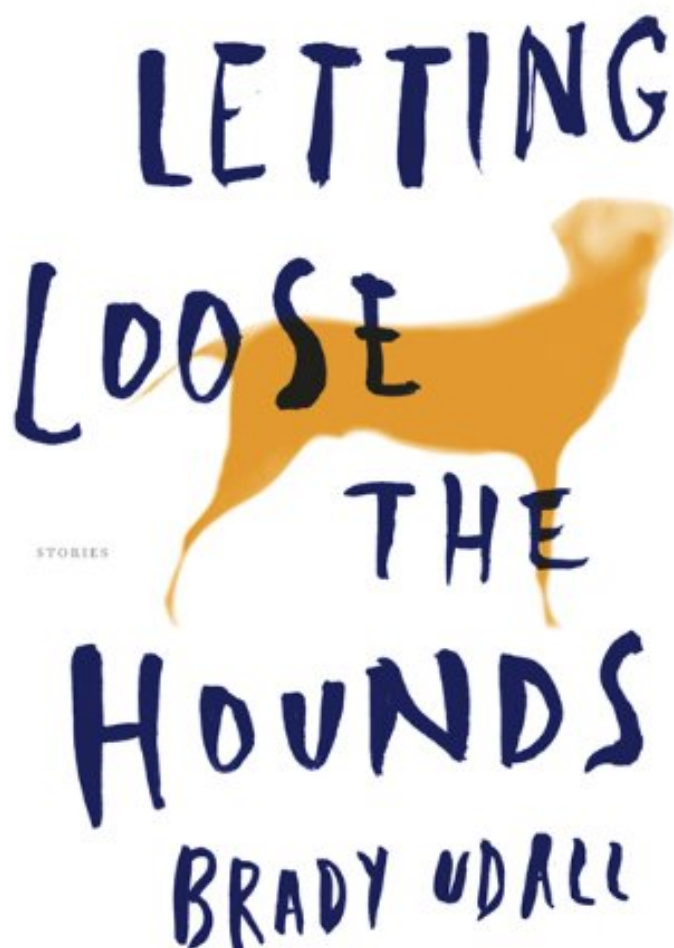


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Letting Loose the Hounds: Stories



Par Brady Udall

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[Library ebook] Letting Loose the Hounds: Stories

Par Brady Udall : Letting Loose the Hounds: Stories before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Letting Loose the Hounds: Stories:

"Exhilarating or chilling... Udall's stories can be as funny as they are dark." —New York Times Book Review

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurFunny, unpredictable, and abounding with strange beauty . . . a fierce new voice of the American West.OutsideExploding with an unsettling exuberance, Brady Udalls stories traverse a geography of lost love, fragmented lives, and satisfying revenge. From the night a six-foot-three Apache Indian holding a goat steps into a moonlit Arizona backyard in "Midnight Raid" to the pivotal moment when a man, delirious from a dental extraction, gets rescued by a stranger in the title story, Udall injects his stories and characters with equal parts darkness and humor. These are sad and sweet stories, moving from the familiar to surprising destinations. But even when disaster looms, Udall's fine comic sense sustains his men and women in their sometimes extravagant efforts to connect and cope. Plunged in the moment, these stories have velocity; they spray gravel as they take off..comThe West is a pretty grim place to live, judging by the

characters who populate Brady Udall's collection of short stories, *Letting Loose the Hounds*. Misfits, miscreants and outcasts all, his heroes stumble miserably through a desert landscape of "petrified wood and dinosaur bones," of failed marriages, dysfunctional families and their own aching loneliness in search of reconnection to the world they've lost. What redeems this collection, and often the characters as well, is Mr. Udall's trenchant humor and sharp appreciation for the ridiculous. No one is more aware of the absurdity of his situation than the main character of "Midnight Raid" who is caught red-handed breaking into his ex-wife's house with a pygmy goat under his arm. In "Vernon" the narrator sees the irony in returning to his dead-end hometown after a semester of college: "I liked college . . . Just the idea made me ridiculously happy . . . But I had this nervous feeling I couldn't get rid of, like something in the bottom of my gut slowly eating at my insides . . . I came back to Vernon to stay." The only recourse for these lost souls are small, often funny, always sad acts of rebellion. Mr. Udall's West might not be a great place to live, but in *Letting Loose the Hounds* it makes for a compelling visit.

From Publishers Weekly
In most of the 11 stories of Udall's gritty debut, narrators reconstruct the genesis of their current woes and seize-or at least seek-control of their lives in moments of decisive, often dramatic action. In "Midnight Raid," a man's late-night visit to his ex-wife's new house a year after their divorce culminates in a confrontation with his former spouse and her new husband in which the narrator's desperate attempt to avenge his suffering and assuage his loss of love is both funny and achingly sad. In the title story (the only one that isn't a first-person narrative), a husband returns home after months hunting in the mountains to find that his wife has abandoned him. Recalling these recent events whips him into a rage and provokes even more outrageous actions. Some stories do falter: the disastrous road trip of "The Opposite of Loneliness" ends with the hodgepodge cast too neatly united; in "Junk Court," a young man's desire to connect himself to the world plays itself out in a forced, disingenuous relationship with a disabled woman. Most of the time, however, Udall articulates the sorrow and humor of his characters' situations so well that their bellowing displays of bravado do provide a catharsis of sorts. Udall clearly understands the truth about punching walls: it won't make problems go away, but it sometimes feels awfully good.

Author tour. (Jan.) FYI: Udall, whose stories have appeared in *GQ*, the *Paris*, *Playboy* and *Story*, is a James Michener Fellow. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.