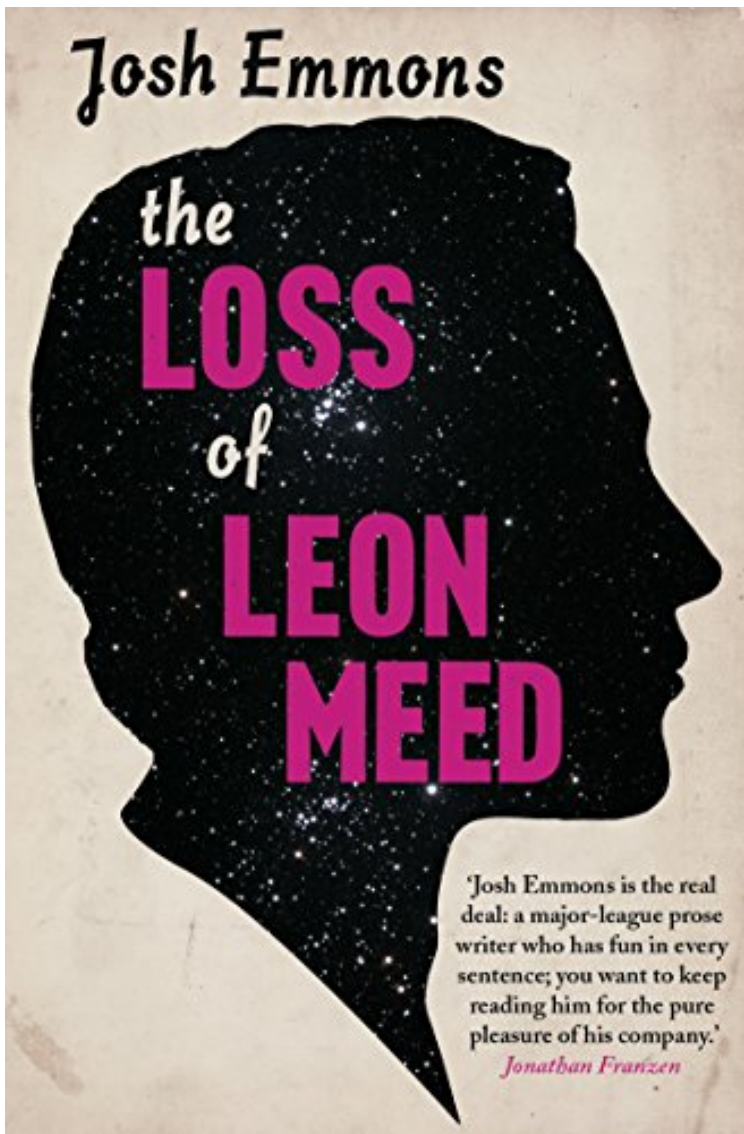


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The Loss of Leon Meed



Par Josh Emmons
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Description : Description du produit In Josh Emmons's inventive and utterly engaging debut, ten residents of Eureka, California, are brought together by a mysterious man, Leon Meed, who repeatedly and inexplicably appears -- in the ocean, at a local rock music club, clinging to the roof of a barreling truck, standing in the middle of Main Street's oncoming traffic -- and then, as if by magic, disappears. Young and old, married and single, punk and evangelical, black, white, and Korean, each witness to these bewildering events interprets them differently, yet all of their lives are changed -- by the phenomenon itself, and by what it provokes in them. And whether they in turn stagger toward love, or heartbreakingly dissolve it, Emmons's portrayal of their stories is strikingly real and emotionally affecting.

Prsentation de l'diteur Josh Emmons is the real deal: a major league prose writer who has fun in every sentence; you want to keep reading him for the pure pleasure of his company Jonathan Franzen Over the

course of one December, ten residents of Eureka, California, are brought together by a mysterious man, Leon Meed, who repeatedly and inexplicably appears in the ocean, at a local music club, clinging to the roof of a barrelling truck, standing in the middle of Main Streets oncoming traffic and then, as if by magic, disappears. Each witness to these bewildering events young and old, married and single, punk and evangelical, black, white and Korean interprets them differently, yet all of their lives are irrevocably changed. Over time, these ten characters, previously only tenuously connected, form a strange community of shared experience. Highly original and brilliantly written, Josh Emmons' award-winning debut is a mystery, a love story and something else entirely. From Publishers Weekly

In his affecting but meandering debut, Emmons explores how the lives of a loosely connected group of residents of Eureka, Calif., are changed by the sudden, mysterious appearances (and disappearances) of a local man who's been reported missing. From teenage Lillith, the pregnant, practicing Wiccan, to "black as he can be" Prentiss, a recovering alcoholic, and Elaine, the fourth-grade teacher who suffers through two troubled marriages, each character visited by Leon Meed receives equal narrative treatment by Emmons, which highlights his talent for subtle ventriloquism but gives the book its curiously unfocused quality. Even Leon's bewildering plight stays somehow on the periphery; barring an unsuccessful pagan ceremony designed to pull him back from the astral plane, no one much tries to help him. Halfway into the book, Emmons, in a flurry of exposition, goes through the backstory about how Leon started disappearing after the accidental death of his wife and daughter. The novel then skips ahead 10 years, returning to each character as they learn of Leon's death. While Leon is supposed to be a catalyst for each character's personal enlightenment, too many self-discoveries from too many people keep their stories from fully resonating. This is a promising debut that suffers from its outsized ambitions.

Agent, Susan Golomb. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Booklist

In Emmons' imaginative debut novel, 54-year-old Leon Meed inexplicably appears and then disappears in the oddest of places, including the middle of the Pacific Ocean, inside a woman's shower, and at a Longaberger basket party. For one month, 10 residents of the small town of Eureka, California, are privy to his remarkable visitations. Over the course of the next decade, the 10 people--black and white, men and women, gay and straight--are drawn into each other's lives in crucial ways, although each of them puts a different spin on the purpose of Leon's appearances. Emmons threads his narrative with interesting meditations on religion, psychotherapy, death, and fate; he also endows each of his characters with a defining emotion, such as fear, loneliness, and ennui. It is sometimes difficult to keep track of the large cast, and interest may wax and wane according to which character (some are more intriguing than others) is at center stage. Still, Emmons shows considerable flair in his striking ability to give his whimsical premise such philosophical overtones. Joanne Wilkinson

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