

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JANUARY 11, 2022

Eric Nguyen Wins Crook's Corner Book Prize for Debut Novel *Things We Lost to the Water*

Chapel Hill, North Carolina—*Things We Lost to the Water* by Eric Nguyen, published by Knopf, is the winner of the ninth annual Crook's Corner Book Prize. The prize awards \$5,000 annually for the best debut novel set in the American South.

Chosen by this year's judge, acclaimed poet, short story writer, and novelist Ron Rash, *Things We Lost to the Water* is a captivating novel about an immigrant Vietnamese family who settles in New Orleans as they search for identity—as individuals and as a family—and struggle to remain connected to one another as their lives are inexorably reshaped.

Rash says, “There is much to admire in Nguyen’s novel, but two aspects stand out to me. The first is his ability to reveal the inner lives of his characters. Their motivations and actions are distinctly individual, but they always feel true to the vagaries of the human heart. Equally impressive, and rarer in a first novel, is the novel’s superb structure, which moves the characters and the reader toward a climax that is both surprising and inevitable.”

The winner was chosen from the Shortlist announced in September 2021. The shortlisted titles were *The Prophets* by Robert Jones, Jr. (G.P. Putnam's Sons), *The Girls in the Stilt House* by Kelly Mustian (Sourcebooks Landmark), and *Things We Lost to the Water* by Eric Nguyen (Knopf).

Eric Nguyen earned an MFA in Creative Writing from McNeese State University in Louisiana. He has been awarded fellowships from Lambda Literary, Voices of Our Nation Arts, and the Tin House Writers Workshop. He is the editor-in-chief of diaCRITICS.org. and lives in Washington, DC.

The Crook's Corner Book Prize, established as a collaboration between the iconic Southern restaurant Crook's Corner, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and the Crook's Corner Book Prize Foundation, was inspired by the prestigious book awards long given by famous "literary cafés" in Paris.

Submissions are now open for next year's Prize. For more information on the Prize and submission guidelines, please visit www.crookscornerbookprize.com or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

Media contact: Cindy Hamel, cindyhsellers@gmail.com, 917-544-1793 and April Starling, april@GetLinkCommunications.com, 917-544-0608.

###