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CROOK'S CORNER BOOK PRIZE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 10TH ANNUAL SHORTLIST
\$5,000 Prize to be Awarded to Best Debut Novel Set in the South

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022—Today, the Crook’s Corner Book Prize Foundation announces the three finalists for its annual Shortlist - vying for best debut novel set in the American South. The winner, to be announced in January 2023, will be awarded the \$5,000 literary prize. The purpose of the [Crook’s Corner Book Prize](#) is to highlight emerging fiction writers, who typically face some of the toughest obstacles in publishing.

The Shortlist is:

- [“Shadows of Pecan Hollow”](#) by Caroline Frost (Morrow/HarperCollins): A gritty yet tender novel, “Shadows of Pecan Hollow” follows a feisty young woman and her abductor, turned partner-in-crime, as they make a life for themselves that includes an infamous string of robberies. Set in Texas and spanning three decades, the story explores the complexity of love and the bonds that hold us together. Frost has a Master of Professional Writing from the University of Southern California and is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.
- [“All Her Little Secrets”](#) by Wanda M. Morris (Morrow/HarperCollins): In this fast-paced thriller, Morris crafts a deft mystery about a Black lawyer who gets caught in a dangerous plot after the sudden death of her boss. Set in Atlanta, “All Her Little Secrets” weaves a web of race, the legal system, conspiracies and dark secrets. Morris is a corporate attorney and has worked in the legal departments of some of America’s top Fortune 100 companies. She is a member of Sisters in Crime, Mystery Writers of America and Crime Writers of Color.
- [“Bewilderness”](#) by Karen Tucker (Catapult): This piercing novel follows best friends through rural North Carolina as they scheme and hustle to feed their opioid addiction - until a new boyfriend steps in to change everything. “Bewilderness” is told as a dialogue between the girls’ addicted past and hopeful future to provide an intimate look at friendships and the way they can shape every woman’s life. Tucker's short fiction has appeared in outlets such as *The Missouri Review*, *The Yale Review*, *Boulevard*, *EPOCH*, *Tin House* and *American Literary Review*. She teaches fiction and creative nonfiction at UNC Chapel Hill.

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“The Prize’s commitment to supporting and encouraging debut novelists has felt especially critical over the past two years,” says Anna Hayes, Foundation President. “This year’s Shortlist represents an impressive range of books by three talented new authors.”

Although eligible books must be predominantly set in the South, authors may live anywhere, and all genres of fiction, except for Young Adult, are eligible.

This year’s Shortlist will be judged by [Ben Fountain](#). His most recent book is “Beautiful Country Burn Again,” a narrative, with history, of the 2016 presidential election. He is also the author of the novel “Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk,” which was adapted for film by three-time Oscar winner Ang Lee, and the short story collection “Brief Encounters with Che Guevara.” His work has received the National Book Critics’ Circle Award, the PEN/Hemingway Award, the Los Angeles Times Book Award, the Flaherty-Dunn First Novel Prize, and a Whiting Writer’s Award, and has been a finalist for the National Book Award. His novel “The Jacmel Wreck” will appear in 2023.

The 2022 Prize, awarded last January, went to Eric Nguyen’s “[Things We Lost to the Water](#).”

About the Crook’s Corner Book Prize

Inspired by the literary prizes awarded by famous Parisian cafés such as the Deux Magots and the Café de Flore, the Crook’s Corner Book Prize honors the iconic Crook’s Corner, which for 40 years was a culinary, literary, and artistic beacon in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Sadly, Crook’s Corner closed in 2021. However, the Crook’s Corner Book Prize will continue its annual award, a fitting homage to the unforgettable restaurant. For more information on the Prize and submission guidelines, please visit www.CrooksCornerBookPrize.com or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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