

LADDERBIRD
LITERARY
AGENCY

2 0 2 1

RIGHTS GUIDE



Cody T. Luff . Apex Books . August '19

RATION

An upmarket horror novel and an unflinching take on the ways society can both thrive and go wrong as food resources become scarce and the pressure to survive builds.

Years ago, a virus swept over the world, eliminating all of the men, animals, and plant life. The women survived, but in a dark world with little food, factions break out and compete for resources.

Cynthia is one of these women--just a girl, really--in one of these groups. She lives with others in 'The Apartments,' impenetrable towers that keep her community isolated from the rest of the terrifying world. When she's falsely accused of stealing food from the others, she's thrown out of the only home that she's ever known and into a world of even more scarcity than she ever imagined. It's a world filled with politics and intrigue which she must learn to navigate if she's to survive and get revenge on her enemies in *The Apartments*.

Luff's stories have appeared in *Pilgrimage*, *Cirque*, *KYSO Flash*, *Menda City Review*, *Swamp Biscuits & Tea*, and others. He is the fiction winner of the 2016 Montana Book Festival Regional Emerging Writers Contest, served as editor of an anthology of short fiction with twelve contributors titled *Soul's Road*, holds an MFA in Creative Writing, and works as a college professor and story editor.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding NA English

Crystal Bird Farmer . New Society . October '20

THE TOKEN

Common Sense Ideas for Increasing Diversity in Your Organization

In THE TOKEN, Crystal Byrd Farmer, acts as the bridge between majority organizations and "diverse" people in the community they want to recruit, ranging in identities of skin color, nationality, religion, LGBTQ, education, socioeconomic status, and disability. Not limited to just an American experience, Farmer's ideas translate to any society coming to terms with how to include these newcomers into their community, workplace, and organizations.

Farmer outlines how to help your organization make real transformative change toward diversity. Coverage includes:

- What marginalized people experience and what they need to feel safe and comfortable in order to succeed
- Doing "The Work" – how to have deep conversations with your membership about the reality of bias, privilege, and microaggressions
- Practical exercises and discussion questions
- How to choose appropriate meeting locations and establish ground rules, when to bring in outside help, and how to recruit support within your organization
- Strategies on how to talk to friends or colleagues who are resistant to progressive ideas.

THE TOKEN is for anyone in a workplace, political organization, or community group who wants to engage minorities and cannot figure out why they fail to attract any.

Crystal Byrd Farmer is an engineer turned educator, organizer, and speaker who focuses on cohousing, black, and polyamorous communities. She serves on the Editorial Review Board of Communities Magazine and is a contributor to Medium Magazine.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English



A NIGHT at the SWEET GUM HEAD

Drag, Drugs, Disco, and Atlanta's Gay Revolution

MARTIN PADGETT

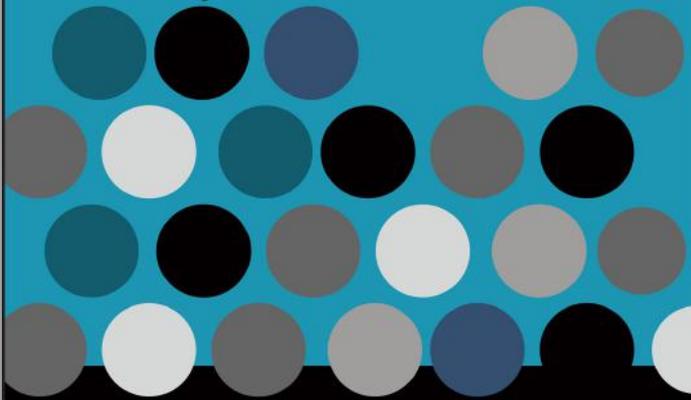


Crystal Byrd Farmer

THE TOKEN



Common Sense Ideas
for Increasing Diversity
in Your Organization



Martin Padgett . W.W. Norton . June '21

A NIGHT AT THE SWEET GUM HEAD

Drag, Drugs, Disco, and Atlanta's Gay Revolution

Pulsing with a disco beat, the Sweet Gum Head was the club for achieving drag stardom. Author Martin Padgett explores the lives of two men who shaped and were shaped by this club:

John Greenwell, a runaway from a small, conservative town who found himself and his avocation performing in drag; and Bill Smith, who took to the streets and court rooms to change antigay laws. Against this optimism for visibility and rights, gay people lived with daily police harassment and drug dealing and murder in their discos and drag clubs. Conducting interviews with many of the major figures and reading through archives, Padgett expertly sets the scene from a time when a vibrant, new queer culture of drag and pride came into being.

Martin Padgett has an MFA from the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and received a 2019 Lambda Literary Fellowship. He has written for Oxford American, Gravy, Details, and Business Week.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English

Tessa Brunton . Graphic Universe . Spring '22

NOTES FROM A SICKBED

An autobiographical graphic novel about a woman stuck inside her home with a maddening mystery illness who must use her humor and imagination to reckon with the helplessness, loneliness, bitterness, and fear she faces each day.

Tessa is stuck at home, sick for days, weeks, and sometimes months at a time, at the mercy of a disabling illness. She knows how “proper” sick people are supposed to act: They’re stoic; They’re hopeful; They’re happy for others who are doing well. But trapped at home day after day and struggling with nightmare symptoms, Tessa is neither stoic nor hopeful. Instead of feeling happy for healthy people, she is--as much as she hates to admit it--jealous of them.

Notes from a Sickbed is a collection of wry, observational, autobiographical comics that pays no mind to how “proper” sick people are supposed to act and instead delves into the emotional realities of chronic illness. Comic by comic, Tessa uses humor, frankness, and fantasy to turn these struggles into funny and relatable tales.

Tessa Brunton's comics have appeared in Bitch Magazine, Maisonneuve Magazine, The Comics Journal, and many anthologies. Her first comic book *Passage* was published by Sparkplug Comic Books in 2011 and was nominated for two Ignatz Awards: Outstanding Comic and Promising New Talent. Her mini-comic *Second Banana* is a Best American Comics 2014 notable comic, and *Domestic Times*, a faux-magazine she created about co-habitation, is a Best American Comics 2016 notable comic. She has also been the Charles M. Schulz Museum Cartoonist in Residence and the featured artist in the Cartoon Art Museum's Small Press Spotlight.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English



Emily Wolf . She Writes Press . Autumn '22

MY THIRTY-FIRST YEAR (AND OTHER CALAMITIES)

The unsentimental family drama of *How to Party with an Infant* meets the subtle feminist cry of *How to Build a Girl* delivered with the dry sass and 'tits-up' attitude of *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* in this story of reinvention.

Zoe Greene had her life figured out. Meet her soul mate as a teenager. Check. Attend university together. Check. Get married. Check. Have a baby. Check--Wait, scratch that.

When Zoe tells her husband she's pregnant, he tells her he neither wants the baby nor the wife. Rather than becoming a family of three, she makes the decision to end the pregnancy and rebuild her life alone.

She goes to a therapist who sends her to a divorce lawyer. She goes to a Rabbi who sends her to a Mikveh. And she goes on what seems like a million terrible dates which mostly send her running.

After going to everyone else to help put her life back on track, Zoe begins to learn what it means to just let go.

Emily Wolf is a Harvard educated lawyer and essayist. This is her first novel.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding NA English

Jennifer Savran Kelly . Algonquin . ~Autumn '22/Spring '23

ENDPAPERS

Unable to fit into the body that New York in 2003 has prescribed for them, gender-fluid bookbinder Dawn Levit has nevertheless built a life that fits—with their boyfriend Lukas, who also defies gender norms, and a job conserving books at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Then Dawn encounters two intriguing messages: a love letter written by a lesbian on the back of an old queer pulp cover, hidden in the binding of a 1950s-era art book, and a transgender street artist's plea for acceptance, barely noticeable in the graffiti under a Manhattan bridge. As these discoveries inspire Dawn to venture out of the safe world they've built, they track down the author of the letter, looking to her for inspiration. But Dawn's best friend becomes a casualty of a homophobic attack and Dawn's life with Lukas begins to spiral downward. Now Dawn must confront whether they have the strength to press ahead, turning their fascination with the letter and graffiti into obsession. How did a lesbian in 1950s New York find the courage to risk revealing herself? And what if art could be the answer to living an authentic life? These questions propel Dawn on an unusual search for a path forward—looking to a stranger from the past and to the street artists of post-9/11 New York City.

Savran Kelly is a production editor at Cornell University Press and award recipient of the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund. Author of several works of short fiction, ENDPAPERS is Savran Kelly's debut novel.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English

H.D. Hunter . FSG Children's . Summer '23

SOMETHING LIKE RIGHT

Xavier's mother always said his mouth would get him in trouble. Sure enough, it got him into his first and only fight. To graduate on time and stay out of trouble, he's forced to move in with his aunt hours away from his friends and transfer to an alternative school. There is one silver lining in all this—he doesn't have to deal with his estranged father who has suddenly returned after being released from prison.

When "Zay" meets Feven, a first-generation Eritrean girl, it's not long before they get caught up in one another. Yet Feven is also struggling for her own identity as she tries to balance school, her cultural expectations, and now Zay. Zay doesn't notice he's getting only pieces of her until Feven no longer has pieces to give. Emotionally lost as everything falls apart, Zay finds comfort in the letters his mother started sending him as a part of her therapy and when the dust finally clears, everything is not all right, or what it used to be, but something like it starts to take shape from the debris. Zay learns that you may not end up with what or who you wanted but you'll always get what you were meant to have which for him was a chance to find his own path.

SOMETHING LIKE RIGHT is the complex relationship of Lamar Giles' NOT SO PURE AND SIMPLE subtly meeting the themes of PUNCHING THE AIR by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam. Readers will not only fall in love with Zay and Feven but the community around them which is filled with many other students who like Zay aren't given second chances and have nowhere else to go.

Hugh "H.D." Hunter is a storyteller and community organizer. He's the author of two self-published books and the upcoming middle-grade sci-fi adventure, FUTURELAND, sold to Penguin Random House (Fall 2022) in a seven-figure deal at auction, as well as the winner of several indie book awards for multicultural fiction. He's committed to #ownvoices stories about Black kids and their many expansive worlds. Hugh loves vegan snacks, basketball, and stories that make you cry—but make you smile after.

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English

Emily Ettinger . Penguin Workshop . Summer '23

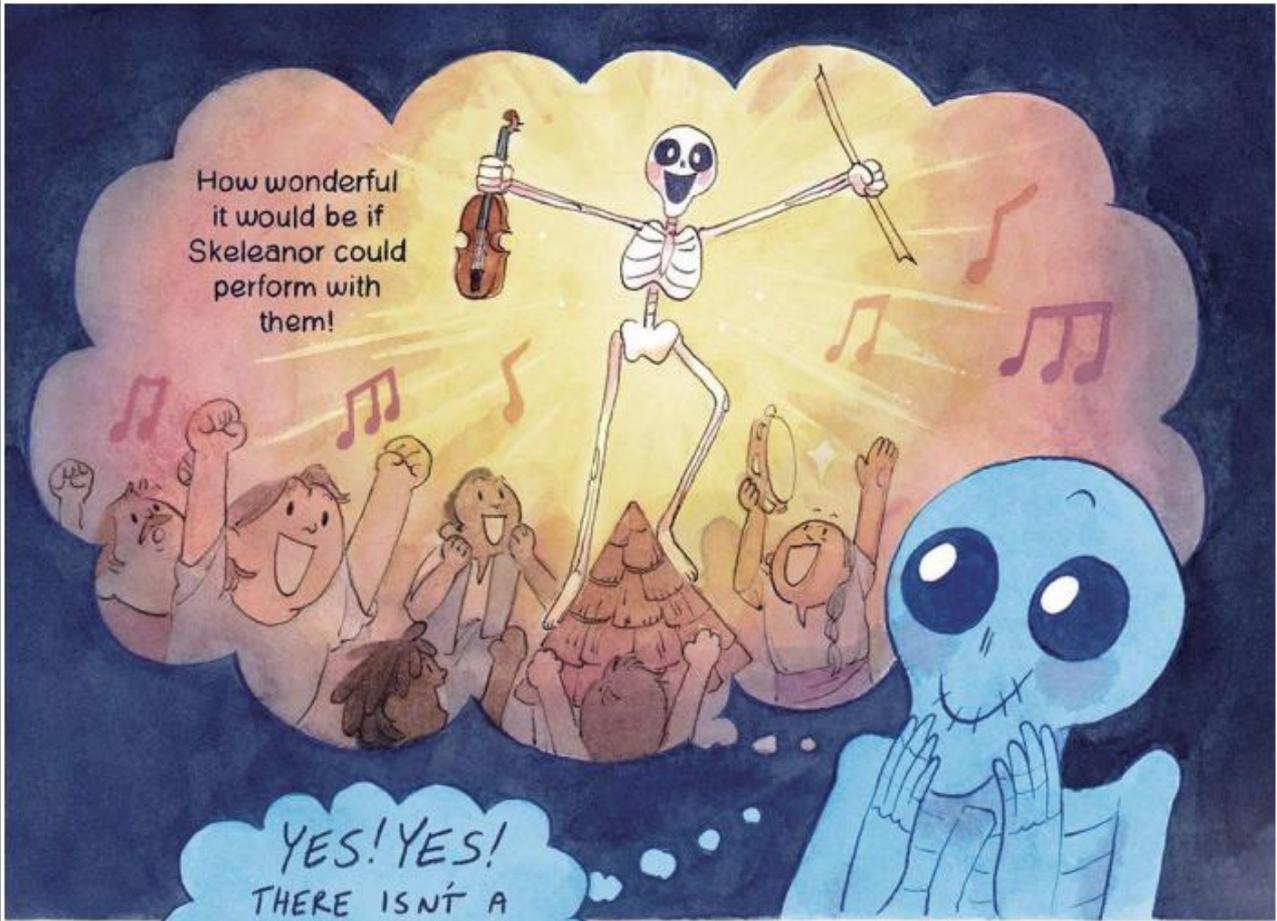
SKELEANOR THE DECOMPOSER

Nightmare Before Christmas meets Lorena Alvarez Gomez's NIGHTLIGHTS in this graphic novel about fitting in, pursuing your passion, and never giving up.

Skeleanor is a friendly skeleton with big dreams and many out-of-tune instruments. With the town fair approaching, her winged-friend, Batima, encourages her to show the people what she can do. Practice makes perfect, but when Skeleanor tries to practice in the middle of the village square, the townspeople run away. They don't know what's scarier, a skeleton playing music or the screeching music the skeleton plays! A kindly music teacher hears Skeleanor and decides to help her realize her potential, giving Skeleanor more rhythm than rattle and making friends along the way.

Emily Ettlinger is an illustrator, cartoonist, and product designer. She graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design

RIGHTS AVAILABLE: World Excluding English



LADDERBIRD
LITERARY AGENCY

www.ladderbird.com

Katelin Spector
katelinspector@ladderbird.com