

A spine-tingling Indigenous mystery from  
the award-winning author of *Hearts Unbroken*



NSK Neustadt Laureate and *New York Times* best-selling author Cynthia Leitich Smith delivers a thrilling cross-genre follow-up to the acclaimed *Hearts Unbroken*.



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# HARVEST HOUSE

CYNTHIA LEITICH SMITH

Deftly leading readers to the literary crossroads of contemporary realism and haunting mystery, Cynthia Leitich Smith revisits the world of her American Indian Youth Literature Award winner *Hearts Unbroken*. Halloween is near, and Hughie Wolfe is volunteering at a new rural attraction: Harvest House. He's excited to take part in the fun, spooky show—until he learns that an actor playing the vengeful spirit of an “Indian maiden,” a ghost inspired by local legend, will headline. Folklore aside, unusual things *have* been happening at night at the crossroads near Harvest House. A creepy man is stalking teenage girls and young women, particularly Indigenous women; dogs are fretful and on edge; and wild animals are behaving strangely. While Hughie weighs how and when to speak up about the bigoted legend, he and his friends begin to investigate the crossroads and whether it might be haunted after all. As Moon rises on All Hallows' Eve, will they be able to protect themselves and their community? Gripping and evocative, *Harvest House* showcases a versatile storyteller at her spooky, unsettling best.



On sale April 11, 2023

HC: 978-1-5362-1860-2

\$19.99 (\$25.99 CAN)

320 pages

Age 12 and up

Also available as an e-book

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# A NOTE FROM AUTHOR CYNTHIA LEITICH SMITH

Hesci, friends,

On one level, *Harvest House* is a contemporary young adult novel about a diverse group of teens coming together to solve a spooky mystery. On another, it's about reclaiming the positive power of Story after it has been long buried and corrupted.

Throughout the colonization of this continent, Story has been viciously wielded to demonize, erase, minimize, and mythologize Indigenous peoples and our Nations. That continues to this day. Battles over our lands and lives still wage in the courts, on the streets, in the criminal justice system, in the news media, and on library bookshelves.

*Harvest House* reflects those realities, zeroing in on the *missing* aspect of the current crisis often summed up as MMIWG2S (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People) and the critical role of journalists in raising awareness that will help to end it.

The novel depicts a misrepresentation of tragedy, law enforcement failures, an inadequate media response, and offensive local lore, repurposed for public entertainment. Furthermore, it shows a bigoted parent group fighting to suppress school theater, a school library, and a student newspaper. Though *Harvest House* is fiction, these plot elements are representative of our real-world landscape.

For tens of thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have been storytelling peoples, and despite everything, our voices remain strong. The Native teen characters of *Harvest House* are storytellers in a myriad of ways—on the stage, on the page, through written and spoken language. They join forces with loyal friends and enduring allies. Together, the young heroes all find the courage to seek

truths, speak truths, and embrace healing. Moreover, Story bonds them to one another in family, community, friendship, and romance, in hope, laughter, grief, and determination, in connecting to Earth herself.

My first Native children's book was published in 2000. My first young adult Gothic fantasy novel was published in 2007. Until very recently, the conversation of books has heavily showcased one Indigenous author at a time for each of those audiences. For too long, the societal devotion to the white gaze relegated Native narratives to those that primarily and comfortably educated outsiders.

Today, thanks to the dedicated efforts of equity and empowerment advocates, we're welcoming *all* young readers—including Native and First Nations young readers—into the world of books.

It's a profound and long-awaited pleasure for me to finally combine two of my storytelling passions on the page and to do so in a rising literary community of Indigenous writers. We're creating a wide range of books—many joyful and many, like *Harvest House*, a narrative braid of various emotions and influences. While the MMIWG2S crisis impacts us all, its layered complexities are being addressed by our unique voices from different angles.

The days of a single star are over. We are a constellation. Together, we shine.

Mvto for reading *Harvest House*. I hope you'll find it a page turner, grounded in Indigenous sensibilities, that keeps you guessing and sends a shiver up your spine.

Boo!



Photo by Christopher T. Assaf

CYNTHIA LEITICH SMITH is the *New York Times* best-selling, award-winning author of *Hearts Unbroken*, the Tantalize series, and the Feral trilogy. An NSK Neustadt Laureate and the author-curator of Heartdrum, a Native-focused imprint at HarperCollins Children's Books, she was named the inaugural Katherine Paterson Chair on the faculty of the Vermont College of Fine Arts MFA program in Writing for Children and Young Adults. A citizen of the Muscogee Nation, Cynthia Leitich Smith lives in Austin, Texas.



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# Hearts UNBROKEN

New York Times best-selling author Cynthia Leitich Smith turns to realistic fiction with the thoughtful story of a Native teen navigating the complicated, confusing waters of high school—and first love.

Winner of an American Indian Youth Literature Award

★ “Blending teen romance with complex questions of identity, equality, and censorship, this is an excellent choice for most collections.”

—*School Library Journal* (starred review)

“Smith depicts the Wolfes’ warm family life as a stable foundation as Hughie and Lou each confront challenges, and she is especially successful at portraying the camaraderie and conflicts of the newspaper staff. . . . A thought-provoking work of realistic teen fiction.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“In a time when #ownvoices stories are rising in popularity among YA readers, this brings an insightful story to the conversation. . . . This is truly a thought-provoking and educational novel.”

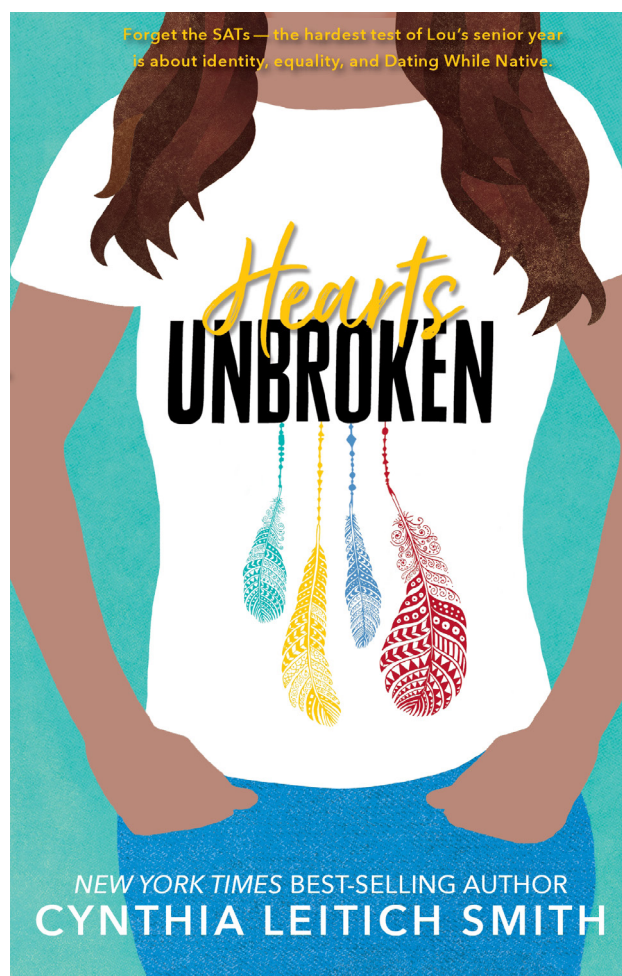
—*Booklist*

“Louise is believable in her own missteps, and her younger brother’s moral quandary—he’s unsure if he wants to stay in the play after finding out about L. Frank Baum’s virulent anti-Native prejudice—is compellingly explored. . . . A revealing account of a bigotry experience that sometimes gets overshadowed by others.”

—*Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*

“Smith effectively presents the continuous microaggressions Lou faces as a young Native woman alongside the central narrative arc of the school play.”

—*The Horn Book*



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