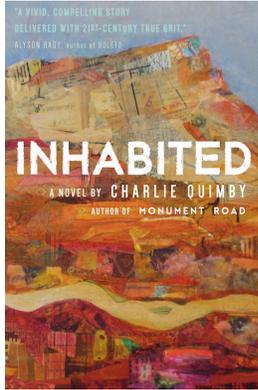


Join the Author of *Inhabited* for a Dialogue about Home

Homelessness is a symptom of many underlying issues—lack of employment, mental and physical health, addiction, abuse and broken families, veterans' welfare and the shortage of safe, affordable housing. For communities, a visible "homeless problem" affects businesses, government budgets and quality of life. For the "homed" it may represent a troubling condition best avoided, policed or addressed by categorizing people as deserving or undeserving of help.



In Charlie Quimby's stirring new novel, *Inhabited*, an authentic cast of characters grapples with the consequences of reinventing the local economy by attracting strangers with money, while banishing the have-nots who don't fit a developer's gleaming vision. Author Jonathan Odell (*The Healing* and *Miss Hazel and the Rosa Parks League*) says of *Inhabited*:

"On one end of the *Inhabited* spectrum, a realtor, a dealer in homes, harbors a secret crime that unsettles her soul. On the other, a mentally disordered young man, homeless, searches for his own place in the world to inhabit. Quimby, besides being a superb storyteller, has the keen eye of a social scientist. I loved *Inhabited*. It transformed my understanding of the homeless in America."

If your organization serves poor or marginalized members of your community, you'll want to join Charlie Quimby for a dialogue about *Inhabited* and how deep stories open hearts and move minds.

The novel

Meg sells pricey real estate, writes a Home column for a glossy magazine and is a figurehead business member of her town's homeless coalition. Isaac's life is upended when the town begins to clean up its riverfront without taking into account the campers who dwell in the tamarisk thickets along the bank. When Isaac finds a lost artifact, his search for its owner threatens Meg's hard-won sense of herself as a good and compassionate person.

Inhabited is a novel about home and loss and finding places where we can choose to realize our better selves.

For more than a decade, Charlie Quimby has written *Across the Great Divide*, a blog that addresses the question: "How can people disagree and still build a decent world? Discuss." His debut novel, the *Booklist Editors'* 2013 pick *Monument Road*, was widely praised for "revealing slowly blossoming characters who are beautifully flawed and realistic" and representing the "tangled, complicated thing that is a human life." He volunteers with a family shelter, a day center serving the unsheltered and a community for adults seeking companionship, personal affirmation and safety from the streets.

How a dialogue works

An advocacy organization, civic group or faith community partners with a local bookseller to host a dialogue between Charlie and a community member who has read *Inhabited*. Their dialogue springs from themes in the novel and Charlie's experiences, but may range across subjects pertinent to the co-sponsoring organization and the audience. Books will be for sale at the event and the co-sponsor will be free to distribute its materials as well. The publisher will provide a free advance copy for the discussion leader and can collaborate on media promotion.

Bookstores benefit by attracting new potential patrons. Organizations gain visibility, engage new volunteers and deepen donor connection to their mission. Readers grasp the power of extending inclusion and dignity to others.

**To learn more about how Charlie might interact with your group,
contact charlie@charliequimby.com or visit his website at www.charliequimby.com.**

The impact of *Inhabited*

"*Inhabited* turns a typical community 'homeless problem' into a layered drama about our responsibilities to each other and the blunders and scars we must endure. I salute Charlie Quimby for following the path of Steinbeck and Orwell in writing empathetic portraits of the ignored and the shunned."

—JIM LYNCH, author of *Before the Wind*

"The plight of the homeless was not something I was particularly interested in and it made me hesitant to read Charlie Quimby's *Inhabited*. I'm so glad I did. This is a beautifully readable and thought-provoking book. [His] ability to make us think about the people on the street corner, who they are, who they want to be, is compelling and perspective-changing. Quimby makes us rethink our own feelings, sentiments, prejudices and values."

—MARYA JOHNSON, Out West Books, Grand Junction, CO

"[Charlie was invited give a program at a recent college alumni retreat. What began as a pre-dinner author presentation quickly turned into a provocative discussion involving 40 people. His commitment to great writing as an agent of change is beautiful and, as a speaker, he has the power to take an audience to unanticipated depths.]"

—KATHY VALYI, Nonprofit Board and Development Consultant, New York, NY

A word from the author



I chose to write about the tension between a promising new development and a town's homeless population because who wins and who's left behind is a central struggle in our society. Increasingly, the public good is framed in economic terms and the price tag of a moral decision is more important than its outcome. Meanwhile, we're slipping toward a more exclusionary and jingoistic notion of nationhood. We, the Prosperous, has replaced We, the People.

But even if we gate our communities and fill our houses with comforts, where does that leave our souls?

You'll find no such preaching in *Inhabited*, though. It isn't a tract on politics and homelessness. I wanted to explore these tensions on a more intimate scale that allows the reader to surface, through the story and these varied characters, their own conflicted feelings about love, family and self-worth, where notions of success, goodness and justice collide with the challenges of mental health, addiction and offensive behavior. To consider where we set our "boundaries of kinship," as one character calls it.

Inhabited is primarily Meg's story, about her love of her hometown, yet also her inability to feel truly at home. She carries an unresolved guilt that prevents her from fully being herself and from being intimately known by others. She's involved with good causes and helps others find the "lifestyle of their dreams." But it's not quite working.

Meg joins a side in the town's conflict but remains uncertain about her choice. She has made life altering mistakes before. And then she encounters Isaac, whose decency and desire for order shines through his life's disrepair.

"Oh, Sister, this reality's so dark and far from mine. I'm afraid I can't do the work justice."

"Yes, we've all thought that. The problem's too big. I'm only one person, my skills aren't right, nothing I do can possibly make a difference. It must be difficult for successful people like you to associate with an issue you don't believe can be resolved."

—From *Inhabited*

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