

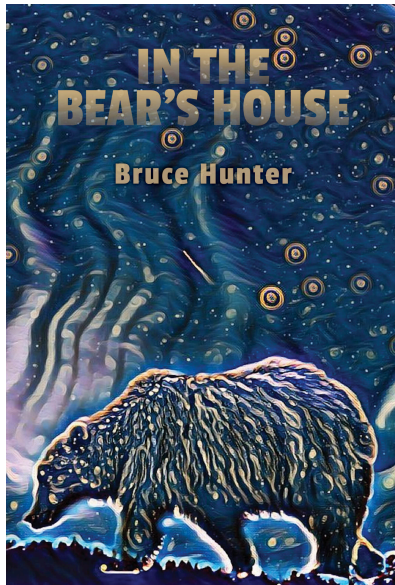
For Immediate Release

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For the May 23, 2025 reissue of

In The Bear's House

by Bruce Hunter



Set in 1960s Calgary and Alberta 's backcountry, this reissue of *In the Bear's House* tells the story of a creative young mother, Clare Dunlop, raising her deaf son against the insurmountable odds of poverty, mental illness and hardship.

The novel opens as seventeen-year-old Clare gives birth to her son, while her husband serves a penitentiary sentence for a serious crime. After contracting pneumonia, her infant son loses his hearing.

Later, the young boy, nicknamed Trout, struggles to find his way until his 99-year-old auntie gives him a conch shell. For Trout, the conch becomes a literal and metaphorical hearing aid. He cannot hear the sea in the shell. Instead, he hears the mad swirl of the adult world around him full of contradictions and deceptions. Out of chaos, he finds clarity.

At the death of his beloved auntie, Trout spirals out of control, getting into serious trouble at school and at home. His mother, challenged with chronic depression and the impending birth of her fifth child, sends 12 year old Trout to live with her deaf uncle, Jack, in the wilderness of historic Kootenay Plains. There, Trout thrives, finding adventure, connection, and belonging, with his forest ranger great-uncle and his musician wife. Trout learns the wisdom of survival, listening and observing, from the elders of his own Scottish clan and those of the nearby Îyârhe Nakoda. He bears witness to land theft from First Nations to build the controversial and environmentally ruinous Bighorn Dam.

Despite its devastating sociological and ecological impact, the dam becomes Alberta's largest reservoir and hydroelectric plant. Trout sees what others may not. Both the rugged beauty of the land, and especially its people, the destruction of their sacred places, homes and livelihoods. Disability becomes an unexpected gift of insight. *In the Bear's House* is ultimately about listening to the wild and the wilderness, and what we lose when it's gone.

In The Bear's House | Bruce Hunter | \$24.95 CAD | May 23, 2025
978-1-989466-98-8 (paper) | 6x9 | 320 pp. | Frontenac House Ltd.

Distributed in Canada by Alpine Book Peddlers +1 (866) 478-2280

Praise for *In The Bear's House*

Bruce Hunter employs his impressive talents as a poet to craft perfectly honed images and details on every page of his novel *In the Bear's House*, a coming-of-age story that follows a young deaf boy as he moves from mid-twentieth-century Calgary to an isolated ranger station in the Rocky Mountains. From describing Trout listening to his mother for the first time (“with his new hearing aid his name, in her voice, soft fur on it like the belly of his cat”) to contemplating ancient origins of the mountains that take hold of his imagination (“the wreckage of the Devonian seabed heaving thick plates of shale and limestone into the sky”), Hunter skillfully constructs a narrative that sustains deep engagement. This reissued novel from Frontenac House will captivate new readers and re-readers alike, who will be rewarded by being immersed in the realistic, yet emotionally and poetically heightened, world that Hunter has fashioned.

~ **David Martin, *Limited Verse***

I love this book. I love the places in it – early Calgary and Kootenay Plains. I love the voices of the mother of a deaf child, with whom I identify, and of the child himself as he grows up. Bruce Hunter writes in a clear and beautiful style that feels effortless. A classic novel of the west and disability.

~ **Katherine Govier, *The Three Sisters Bar & Hotel***



About Bruce Hunter

Born in Calgary, Alberta, on Treaty Seven lands, Bruce was deafened as an infant and afflicted with low vision much of his adult life.

After high school, he worked as a labourer, equipment operator, Zamboni driver, and completed his technical education as a gardener and arborist. In his late twenties, his poetry earned him a scholarship to the Banff School of Fine Arts to study with novelist W.O. Mitchell and poet Irving Layton. He went on to York University to study the humanities and taught in the creative writing department before landing a position at Seneca College. He is an active writer, editor, speaker and mentor.

For more information, contact Skylar Kay at promo@frontenachouse.com

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