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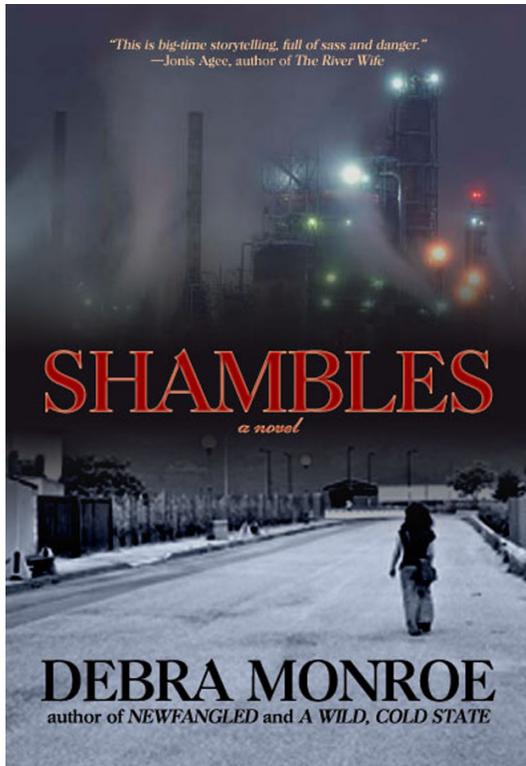
victoria@enginebooks.org

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SHAMBLES

a novel by Debra Monroe

now in paperback and ebook editions from Engine Books



“Delia Arco is the sort of woman you welcome into your life—sister, neighbor, mentor, force of nature—because she embodies a contemporary version of the American Dream: tolerance, compassion, humor, and forgiveness. This book might move mountains.”

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“Debra Monroe writes about people who live on the fringes of society with so much compassion and in so much detail, she leaves us wondering who draws those lines in the first place. Her prose is like fireworks, bright, layered, and surprising.

A smart, funny, wry, and winning book.”

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This is big-time storytelling, full of sass and danger.”

—JONIS AGEE, AUTHOR OF *THE RIVER WIFE*

“Reading Monroe is like reading Chekhov—you understand that when the story’s over, you’ll be changed. In luminous and passionate prose, Monroe tells the story of Delia Arco’s struggle to build a family and find a place in a strange new world.

Irresistible...Monroe at her edgiest and wisest.”

—JOHN DUFRESNE, AUTHOR OF *REQUIEM, MASS.*

Shambles bring readers the story of Delia Arco, a school social worker in a Texas refinery town in the year 2000. At the outset of the academic year, Delia, who is white and has just adopted a black baby girl, lives a financially insecure, socially isolated life. Over the following months, Delia is pulled in every direction—by an unstable intern whose parents’ murder has been immortalized in a true crime book; by the sudden death of the mother who abandoned Delia as a baby; by the reform school girls and public high school kids she counsels out of—and, inadvertently, into—dramatic troubles; and by the men in her life, who all seem to Delia to take more than they give. Delia learns good mothering, after having had none of her own, and navigates threats both real and perceived, threats highlighted and made urgent by her new motherhood. She struggles to know who she can engage and who she must keep at bay. And she navigates one terrible night when everything she has worked to build threatens to blow apart.

This is the story of life in the aftermath—of loss, of trauma, of neglect—and the bridges we build to move past survival toward a hopeful future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DEBRA MONROE has written four books of fiction and one memoir: *The Source of Trouble*; *A Wild, Cold State*; *Newfangled*; *Shambles*; and *On the Outskirts of Normal*. Her books have been widely reviewed and won many awards, including The Flannery O’Connor Award and the John Gardner Fellowship. They’ve been nominated for the National Book Award, listed as “Required Reading” in *Vanity Fair*, as “Our Picks” on *Salon.com*, as “Recommended Reading” in *O: The Oprah Magazine*, and named in annual “Best Ten Books” lists by *Elle* magazine and *The Barnes and Noble Review*. She lives in Austin, Texas, and teaches in the MFA program at Texas State University.

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AUTHOR: DEBRA MONROE

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ABOUT ENGINE BOOKS

Engine Books is a boutique fiction press publishing novels, short story collections, collected novellas, and related volumes established in 2011. We publish four titles each year, ensuring full attention to the editing, production, and promotion of each title. *On the Outskirts of Normal* and *Shambles* comprise the press’ first releases. Forthcoming titles include original short story collections from National Book Award Finalist Patricia Henley and award-winning short story writer Gregory Spatz, among others. Learn more at enginebooks.org.