

LEGACIES OF CHERRY RIDGE

A Novel by
CRAIG STEVENS

Craig Stevens, publisher of *Capital Region BUILDING* magazine, has written his first novel about a man's love/hate relationship with the small town where he grew up, a murder, wealth, found love and an heroic dog.

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When we first meet Christopher St. James he is a chronically depressed, intelligent, 39-year-old man who has no family and believes his only real friend is his dog. He functions methodically day-to-day but he is socially and emotionally out of touch, particularly within his own generation. He prefers his romantic view of earlier eras.

A midlife crisis does not evolve from within him; instead, it is thrust upon him when he unexpectedly comes into great wealth and the psychological upheaval that goes with it.

His dying benefactor, Angus "Scottie" Ferguson, has a shady, mysterious and intriguing history. Ferguson leaves behind a video in which he implores St. James "to be my redeemer." St. James is forced to face his own demons and cope and evolve with challenges and opportunities. Stoicism, anomie and idealism face off with reality.

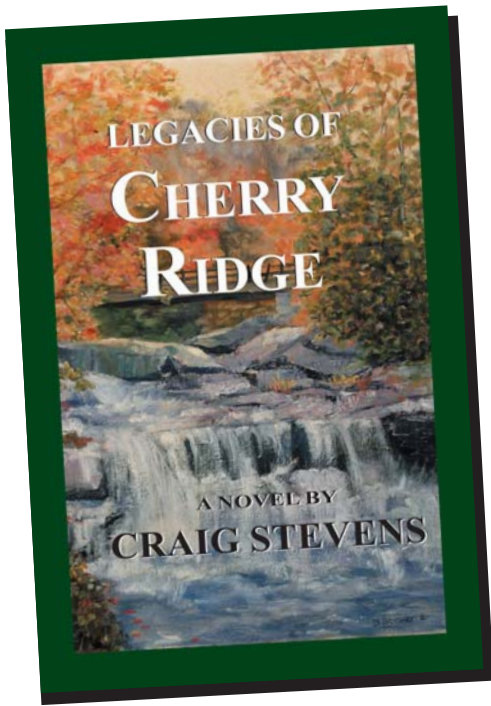
St. James learns that he does have friends if he is willing to reach out and place trust in them. Foremost among them is 28-year-old, tall, athletic Maggie O'Connor who has had her own dreams shattered in a car accident. Responsible and conservative by nature, her vibrant demeanor hides her emotional and physical scars.

St. James begins to assert himself, sometimes whimsically, sometimes in a foreshadowing of his future. It is a journey fraught with the unexpected: Ferguson's life and legacy trigger two murders, a suicide, a violent assault, corruption and malfeasance.

Over the course of nine months, the drama moves from near Albany, New York where St. James lives, to his small hometown with which he has a love/hate relationship.

A classic diner, a derelict 19th century castle, and Ferguson's survivalist refuge add architectural complexion and more than a touch of intrigue. Social commentary, nostalgia, colorful characters and humor meander through the pages.





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