

## In praise of Leonard Nash's *You Can't Get There from Here...*

"No one should be able to write this damn good the first time out. Leonard Nash's *You Can't Get There from Here* is more than a promising debut by a gifted fiction writer; it's a mesmerizing collection of the first order. I was flat knocked out! The stories here are full of wisdom and wit, tenderness and honesty. The book is funny and as serious as a heart attack. The people in Nash's Miami seem to know they're not going to win, but if they struggle, they just might break even. Nash breathes life into his characters, and his characters will breathe life into you. Do yourself a favor, buy this book, pour yourself a drink, settle into a comfy chair, open the book, and begin your marvelous and heartbreaking journey. You won't be leaving the chair any time soon." —John Dufresne, *Johnny Too Bad, Deep in the Shade of Paradise, Love Warps the Mind a Little, Louisiana Power and Light, The Way that Water Enters Stone*

"Characters so real you'll feel they are sitting next to you telling their tales of the pathos and bathos that makes the secrets of each life compelling. Leonard Nash is a first-rate observer of humankind, and his stories give a clear glimpse into the essential survivor in each of us." —John Bond, *The Home Poker Handbook* (with Roy Cook)

"Leonard Nash has produced a debut collection that is as down-home powerful and rock-ribbed as any I have read in years. Many of these pieces are as dead-pan and dead-on as Ray Carver's, and with every bit as much heart." —Les Standiford, *Last Train to Paradise*

"In clean, incisive prose, Leonard Nash lays bare the lives of ordinary folks who are caught up in the emotionally charged struggles of modern life. His attention to detail, his vivid scenes, his juicy, crunchy characters all resonate long after the stories end. This is a strong and touching collection." —James W. Hall, *Magic City*

"Leonard Nash's stories have style, wit, irony, and a sharp eye for dissecting the contemporary mating dance." —Dan Wakefield, *The Hijacking of Jesus*

"Acute insight and deft imagery reminiscent of Raymond Carver draw the reader into Leonard Nash's native South Florida environment, following his characters on an elusive search for love and reasonable happiness, wringing pleasure from life's stubborn ambiguities in story after story." —Vicki Hendricks, *Cruel Poetry*

"Leonard Nash blends pain and profundity with the practiced ease of a master tale spinner. Each story is a triumph of poignancy, humor, and insight into the human condition. *You Can't Get There from Here* is a book of heart songs—of love, of loss, of longing—every magical word of it reads like truth." —Preston L. Allen, *All or Nothing*

In Leonard Nash's superb collection, *You Can't Get There from Here*, characters and their objects constantly transform, take on new lives. Owners exchange used cars, a pregnancy kit found in the trash, and a dead mother's penny-filled Dippity-Do jars, all to surprising and significant results. Nash's inventiveness and wit infuse every sentence. His stories are set in south Florida—its beauty, transience, and fragility fitting metaphors for his continuous discoveries. —Denise Duhamel, *Two and Two*

"In this beautiful collection, Leonard Nash summons characters who suffer through their lives, often nicked and scraped by pain and indignity. But against this backdrop of sorrow come moments of real redemption. Like Raymond Carver, Leonard Nash tells stories of average people living mundane lives, but also, like Carver, he brings moments of flashing insight so intense they hurt and delight us. And ultimately, we are uplifted, almost saved, while at the same time our hearts are breaking, one sentence at a time." —Jesse Millner, *The Drowned Boys, On the Saturday After the Rapture*