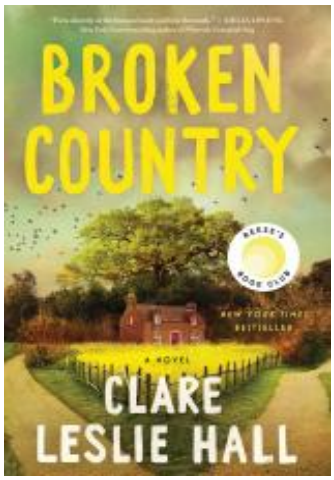
Broken Country

by Clare Leslie Hall



About the Book

A love triangle unearths dangerous, deadly secrets from the past in this thrilling tale perfect for fans of THE PAPER PALACE and WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING.

?The farmer is dead. He is dead, and all anyone wants to know is who killed him.?

Beth and her gentle, kind husband, Frank, are happily married, though their relationship relies on the past staying buried. But when Beth?s brother-in-law shoots a dog going after their sheep, Beth doesn?t realize that the gunshot will alter the course of their lives. For the dog belonged to none other than Gabriel Wolfe, the man Beth loved as a teenager --- the man who broke her heart years ago. Gabriel has returned to the village with his young son, Leo, a boy who reminds Beth very much of her own son, who died in a tragic accident.

As Beth is pulled back into Gabriel?s life, tensions around the village rise, and dangerous secrets and jealousies from the past resurface, this time with deadly consequences. Beth is forced to make a choice between the woman she once was and the woman she has become.

A sweeping love story with the pace and twists of a thriller, BROKEN COUNTRY is a novel of simmering passion, impossible choices and explosive consequences that toggles between the past and present to explore the far-reaching legacy of first love.

Discussion Guide

1. How does Gabriel?s return challenge Beth?s perception of her own life choices? Did you find Beth?s internal struggle between her past self and the woman she has become relatable?

2. If you were Beth, would you have chosen Frank or Gabriel?

3. Discuss the small-town setting of BROKEN COUNTRY. How did the tight-knit atmosphere of the village contribute to the unfolding drama? Do you think the events of the novel would have played out differently if it weren?t set in a rural farming village?

4. Did you enjoy the way Clare Leslie Hall teased out the details of the murder trial? Who did you initially suspect was on trial? Did it play out the way you thought it would?

5. Before Beth and Gabriel consummate their affair, do you think Beth is being fair to Frank by keeping the extent of her emotional connection to Gabriel a secret? Is it possible for someone to fully move on from a past relationship if they haven?t completely healed from it?

6. How did Beth and Frank?s marriage seem to you at the start of the novel? Once you read on, did your perception of their marriage change?

7. Discuss the role that grief and loss play in the novel. How do different characters respond to loss? How does the loss of Bobby affect Beth and Frank?s marriage? What role does grief play in shaping Beth?s relationship with Gabriel?

8. The novel is full of hidden secrets and repressed emotions, especially in the way people in the village react to Gabriel?s return. What role do these secrets play in the novel? How do they affect Beth?s relationships and her sense of self?

9. Discuss Beth?s journey of coming to terms with her son?s death. How does the arrival of Leo and Gabriel affect her ability to cope with that loss?

10. Do the rural setting and the natural world have symbolic significance for the characters and the plot? How might the land and country itself mirror the emotional conflicts in the story?

11. What do you think Clare Leslie Hall is trying to say about the power of first love in BROKEN COUNTRY? Does it always leave a lasting impact? Did you feel that Beth?s past love with Gabriel was a source of strength or pain for her? How does this influence the way she views herself and her current life?

12. Throughout the novel, Beth is confronted with the woman she once was versus the woman she has become. What do you think the author is saying about identity, particularly how it is shaped by love, grief and time?

13. The novel ends with some explosive consequences and twists. Were you surprised by the revelations at the end? Did you see any of them coming? If so, when?

Author Bio

Clare Leslie Hall is a novelist and journalist who lives in the wilds of Dorset, England, with her family. She is the author

of BROKEN COUNTRY, PICTURES OF HIM and DAYS YOU WERE MINE.

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Publication Date: March 4, 2025
Genres: Fiction, Historical Fiction, Women's Fiction
Hardcover: 320 pages
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
ISBN-10: 166807818X
ISBN-13: 9781668078181