

## Steplings: A Novel



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## STEPLINGS: A NOVEL

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Texas Christian University Press,U.S. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Steplings: A Novel, C. W. Smith, Nineteen-year-old Jason is lost. The rush of graduation parties has subsided, the ubiquitous discussion of college departures dimmed to a dull roar. His former classmates have made elaborate plans, but the only date on Jason's calendar is a court appearance next Monday. Jason, who dropped out of high school just two months shy of graduation, finds himself stuck in the well-worn grooves of his hometown. But when his over-achieving girlfriend Lisa departs for UT Austin to study medicine, Jason finds Mesquite a place he can hardly recognize. Jason's family can offer him little direction. After his mother Sue's unexpected death a few years back, his father Burl, fifteen years sober, slipped into old drinking habits. Jason watched the once clockwork-perfect routine of his family life descend into chaos. When Burl marries Lily, a high-strung, high-powered attorney, she brings a daughter into the house: Emily, eleven years old and a self-described know-it-all whose very existence is enough to irritate Jason.Three days before Jason must appear in court, he receives a "Dear John" letter from Lisa. Heartbroken and determined to convince Lisa of his worth, Jason decides to hitchhike to Lisa's dorm in Austin--but Emily, desperate to return to her father, a UT professor, overhears Jason's plans and demands to accompany him. When Burl and Lily return home to find their children missing, Lily puts out an Amber Alert for Emily, accusing Jason of abducting her daughter. The frantic search effort that ensues threatens to destroy the tentative household that Burl and Lily have just begun to establish.Smith's gift for creating three-dimensional characters, abundantly demonstrated in his previous TCU Press titles including "Understanding Women" and "Purple Hearts," lends this coming-of-age tale an unexpected quality of honesty...

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