



★ **MEM**

Bethany C. Morrow

Unnamed Press (May 22, 2018)

Hardcover \$25.00 (192pp)

978-1-944700-55-3

“Inside the Vault, everything was an experiment,” and Dolores Extract No. 1 has been told to return there no later than August 30, 1925. Told in Dolores Extract No. 1’s own voice, Bethany C. Morrow’s *MEM* is set in an early twentieth century where the wealthy separate themselves from their memories. These memories are property to flaunt, vault, or remold—but Dolores Extract No. 1 isn’t a memory like most. Her fate will be no different, however, unless she can prove—to the courts, her source, and herself—that she’s “real.”

When Canadian professor Dr. Toutant discovers how to remove memories and contain them in identical humanoid vessels called Mems, the rich flock to Montreal for extractions. But society debutante Dolores’s first Mem exhibits unique traits. Instead of being trapped in her spawning memory, this Mem’s awareness grows and expands, while other Mems expire once the emotion of their spawning memories plays out. For this singular Mem, eighteen years have passed, and she’s still trying to figure out what makes her different before it’s too late.

In *MEM*, technology doesn’t hold center stage; Morrow touches on science in order to further explore humanity. Memory extraction science borrows the language of banking, which only emphasizes the issues of class and privilege at play. Money grants the rich the ability to decide which parts of themselves they own or disown—quite literally. Within this slim novel, such choices center the eschatological and ethical questions underpinning the science of the mind.

Morrow delivers a new classic in her exploration of identity, memory, and human property, proving that, like experience itself, memory is slippery, unpredictable, and rarely what it seems. For those rich enough to capitalize on it, this new science yields unexpected results, but none is more unintended than Dolores Extract No. 1 herself.

LETITIA MONTGOMERY-RODGERS (March/April 2018)

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