

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Vida Engstrand, Communications Director

Phone: (212-407-1573)

Email: vengstrand@kensingtonbooks.com

“ **FOUR DAYS BEFORE THE OSTRICHES STOPPED LAYING EGGS, GRANDMA HELEN DIED IN AN ACCIDENT THAT WASN'T REALLY AN ACCIDENT.** ”

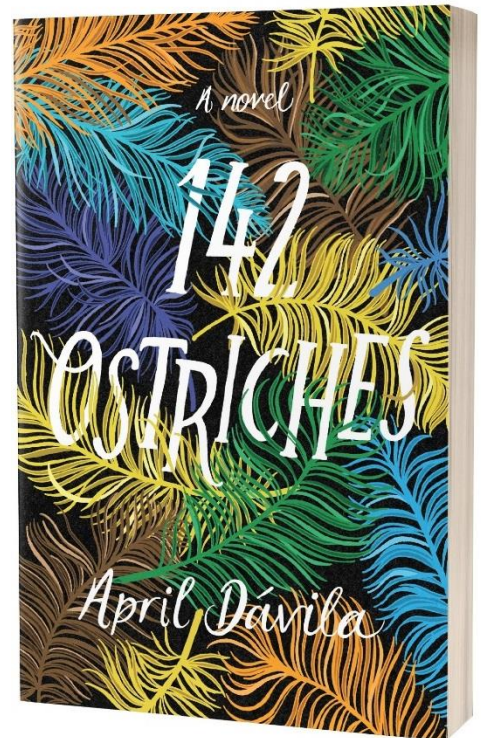
– A love letter to the California desert and a portrait of a family reckoning with addiction and denial, on sale February 25, 2020 –

“A story told with depth and beauty about the many things we inherit from our families. Davila's characters are familiar, yet unforgettable, and I'm waiting patiently for what she writes next.”

—Wayétu Moore, Author of *She Would Be King*

"An engrossing and original tale of love, betrayal, and extremely large birds. Fiercely independent, brave, and tender, Tallulah Jones is a heroine for our time."

—Seth Greenland, author of *The Hazards of Good Fortune*



PublishersLunch

Buzz Books



READING GROUP
CHOICES

For lovers of stark beauty, **142 OSTRICHES**, the debut novel by Pushcart Prize-nominated author April Dávila, explores the muddled love of a desert ranch family long-mired in disconnect, addiction and denial. At its center is Tallulah Jones, a young woman desperate to escape life on the Mojave Desert ostrich farm where her grandmother raised her. But when her grandmother dies under questionable circumstances, Tallulah finds herself as the sole heir to the ranch – just as the birds mysteriously stop laying eggs during the peak laying season.

A fourth-generation Californian, April Dávila's connection to place is woven into her writing. Her home and family life seep into the page through a cast of characters made up almost entirely of fierce, independent women, themes of substance abuse and grief, and a wanderlust for the desert.

Part love letter to the California desert, part intimate portrait of a family reckoning with drug abuse and denial, *142 Ostriches* brilliantly captures the anxieties of a young woman who suddenly bears responsibility amid great stress.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Set against the unexpected splendor of an ostrich ranch in the California desert, April Dávila's beautifully written debut conjures an absorbing and compelling heroine in a story of courage, family and forgiveness.

When Tallulah Jones was thirteen, her grandmother plucked her from the dank Oakland apartment she shared with her unreliable mom and brought her to the family ostrich ranch in the Mojave Desert. After eleven years caring for the curious, graceful birds, Tallulah accepts a job in Montana and prepares to leave home. But when Grandma Helen dies under strange circumstances, Tallulah inherits everything—just days before the birds inexplicably stop laying eggs.

Guarding the secret of the suddenly barren birds, Tallulah endeavors to force through a sale of the ranch, a task that is complicated by the arrival of her extended family. Their designs on the property, and deeply rooted dysfunction, threaten Tallulah's ambitions and eventually her life. With no options left, Tallulah must pull her head out of the sand and face the fifty-year legacy of a family in turmoil: the reality of her grandmother's death, her mother's alcoholism, her uncle's covetous anger, and the 142 ostriches whose lives are in her hands.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



April Dávila is a fourth generation Californian and Pushcart Prize-nominated author of the debut novel, *142 Ostriches*. Her mother's family established a dairy farm in the Sacramento Valley in the 1880's and her father's family came from Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl. She has lived briefly in places as far flung as Ecuador, the Caribbean, and the Marshall Islands, but always comes back to California.

The daughter of an artist, Dávila studied marine biology at Scripps College before going on to study writing at USC. She is an attendee of the Squaw Valley Community of Writers, a past resident at the Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, and runs LitWeekLA, a weekly newsletter covering Los Angeles area literary events. *Writers Digest* named her blog at AprilDavila.com one of the 101 Best Websites for Writers. A practicing Buddhist, half-hearted gardener, and occasional runner, she lives outside of Los Angeles with her husband and two children.

Visit April online:
www.AprilDavila.com

142 OSTRICHES

by April Dávila

Kensington Books, an imprint of Kensington Publishing Corp.

On Sale: February 25, 2020 / Trade Paperback

Fiction / \$15.95 (\$21.95 CAN) / ISBN: 978-1-4967-2470-0

Author Residence: **La Cañada, California (Near Los Angeles)**

Novel Setting: **California—Mojave Desert**

For review copies, interview requests and other publicity queries, please contact:
Vida Engstrand / Communications Director / vengstrand@kensingtonbooks.com