

Improper Bostonian

“The land of Ashaunt—truly a play on ‘haunt’—wraps itself around all the characters. In 1947, the spirited Helen pens exuberant letters home from Europe. Later, she writes diaries as a grown up, balancing—with disgruntled unease—motherhood, graduate school, and psychoanalysis.

The narrative voices—Bea, Helen, Charlie—are so varied and compelling that at times Graver makes it sound as if the characters are thinking to themselves in poetry, even dreams . . . Charlie’s adolescent distress and loyalty to his family turf feel painfully authentic and oddly beautiful. The same can be said of his friendship with an alienated Vietnam Vet, Jerry, who’s several steps crazier than the young man, but is likewise in love with the land.”

—Mopsy Strange Kennedy, *The Improper Bostonian*