

BRAD GRABER

# AFTER THE FALL

A NOVEL



AFTER THE FALL BRAD GRABER

DARK VICTORY PRESS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AFTER** THE **FALL**  
**BRAD GRABER**

Brad Graber's new novel, **AFTER THE FALL**, introduces Rikki, a shy and awkward teenager, who has a secret. She can't remember her mother who died a few years earlier. Being raised by her grandmother in Queens, every time Rikki asks Rita a question, the older woman falls apart and refuses to discuss the matter. Desperate to learn the truth, Rikki finds a hidden album with family photographs. Can the boy in the picture with her mother be a long lost uncle? Determined to unlock the mystery, she embarks on a journey from New York City to Toledo, then on to Detroit and Phoenix to meet Harry, a writer who is struggling with his own issues of identity. From the award-winning writer of **THE INTERSECT**, comes **AFTER THE FALL**, an emotional rollercoaster packed with personality and charm. Once you start the journey, you won't be able to turn back. Available on Amazon and other fine book stores. **AFTER THE FALL** (May 2018, ISBN 9780997604221, Original Trade Paperback.)

**About Brad Graber**

Brad Graber writes novels because he grew up in a family where no one ever listened to him—so he made up stories about them. Born and raised in New York City, Brad obtained a B.A. in Biology from the State University of New York at Buffalo and an M.H.A. from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. A former healthcare executive, Brad has held a number of management positions and been a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a Certified Medical Executive through the Medical Group Management Association. Though he no longer works in healthcare, he continues to volunteer with local non-profits.

**AFTER THE FALL** is Brad's second novel. His debut novel, **THE INTERSECT**, released in 2016, has won multiple awards and garnered rave reviews. Brad currently resides in Phoenix on the grounds of the Arizona Biltmore with his husband Jeff and their dog Charlie. He writes a weekly blog: *There, I Said it!* For more information, visit his website: [bradgraber.com](http://bradgraber.com) or follow him on Twitter @Jefbra1

**AFTER THE FALL**

By Brad Graber

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# About Brad Graber

## Author of *After the Fall* and *The Intersect*



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Brad has lived in Highland Park, a suburb of Chicago; West Bloomfield, a suburb of Detroit; and Mill Valley, a suburb of San Francisco. He currently resides in Phoenix on the grounds of the Arizona Biltmore with his husband Jeff and their dog Charlie.

# A Conversation With Brad Graber, Author of *After the Fall*

***After the Fall* is a novel about Rikki, a 15-year old teenager being raised by her 75-year old grandmother, Rita, who goes on a journey to uncover the secrets of her family. What captured your interest in telling this particular story?**

I've always been interested in cross-generational relationships. I was close to my grandmother when I was growing up and I was aware that there are secrets in families that impede healthy relationships. So, it just seemed like fertile ground to explore. And of course there can be this natural tension between a grandmother and teen. Love may be there, but teenagers see the world in such a different way. Rikki is just learning about life—she has a significant gap in her memory—she can't remember her mother—and she knows her grandmother is withholding information. She understands that Rita is manipulative, but still loves her dearly. All the while, she doesn't know the history of her family. So as Rikki goes on her journey—that becomes the focus of the novel—the push/pull with Rita. Rikki is determined to uncover the secrets that Rita is hiding.

**The story at first might seem Young Adult, but then there is Harry, who occupies the other major story line. Harry is a writer in his mid-fifties who lives in Phoenix and has an inner dialogue going on that guides him. What is it about Harry that captured your imagination?**

Harry is basically stuck and I think there are a lot of adults who find themselves in precisely that circumstance. He may be a successful author, earning a living as a mystery writer, but in fact, his life stopped when he lost the love of his life. And so Harry has receded into a fairly solitary existence. He's transferred all of his affection to his beloved wire-haired fox terrier, Beetle, but mostly, Harry lives in his head. That's not a hard stretch for a writer.

**Is Harry based on yourself?**

There are elements of Harry that I share. After all, I'm the one behind his creation. But as the story evolves, I slip away, and Henry steps forward, fully alive and very independent.

**Rita is a fascinating character. The relationship between Rikki and Rita is beautifully crafted. It's playful at moments, and then tense. How did you manage to strike that balance? Is that relationship based on any experiences in your own life?**

When I was an adolescent, I was always interested in the adult conversations that were going on around me and those conversations were always easily in earshot. All you had to do was stop and listen. And I was close to my grandparents, so I knew the lingo of how those conversations tended to go. At least in my family. Though I have to say, Rita is unique. She certainly isn't exactly like my grandmother. However, she does share one quality. The fierce love she has for her granddaughter. But the playfulness, that I attribute to my mother who could be a lot of fun and also very protective.

**Lil shows up as the seductress. What do you want readers to take away from her role in the story?**

Lil is a survivor. She is the friend we all wish we had. Loving, warm, accepting—and sometimes just too pushy for her own good. But the thing that is wonderful about Lil is that she doesn't let her disappointments rule her. She is the eternal optimist. And that is really how I see her.

**Are any of the characters based on people you know or have met?**

The characters are unique—but as any writer will tell you—there's always a seed of truth to the story. The circumstances are quite different, but years ago someone I loved died, and through that death, years later, I learned about the niece who was interested in knowing more about her uncle. So, in a way, the story is inspired by that truth. Though, as in all good fiction, *After the Fall* has very little to do with the reality of that experience. It is fiction!

**Rikki goes on a journey to find the answers to her family's secrets. Do you think it's important to leave home in order to find yourself?**

It does tend to speed up the process. If you remain cocooned, you really can't get to the root of the issues that are keeping you stuck. And in *After the Fall*, Rikki is certainly struggling to understand what has happened to her family and how it has affected her life.

**What is one lesson you'd like readers to take away from the book?**

There are two. The most compelling is that human beings are fallible. We may believe that we're acting out of love, but sometimes, we can do more harm than good. Another lesson is that we construct stories to help explain our lives, and sometimes, these stories become traps, limiting our ability to grow. I think we all have a tendency to identify with our own truths, and sometimes, the way to move forward is to tear down those walls and shift perspective.

**What is your next project?**

I've been working on a third novel, tentatively titled, *Boca by Moonlight*. The story of two men in their sixties and the ladies that they love. It should be an interesting change.

# Characters of *After the Fall*

## **Rikki Goldenbaum**

Rikki is a fifteen year-old high school sophomore who is being raised by her grandmother in New York City. Rikki considers herself a Midwesterner after growing up in Birmingham, Michigan. She's awkward and shy, and despite a psychiatric hospitalization, still can't remember her mother who died a few years earlier. The doctors have assured Rikki that her memory will slowly return, but after four years, Rikki is desperate to remember.

## **Rita Goldenbaum**

Rita is Rikki's 75-year old grandmother. Bold and brash, her red hair and red finger nails hint at the edgy nature of Rita's character. She's very protective of her granddaughter and prefers that Rikki call her Rita. She struggles with raising Rikki in light of her past failings as a mother. She loves her granddaughter deeply—and stonewalls Rikki about family history. She is afraid what will happen if Rikki's memory returns.

## **Barbra Winer**

Barbra is Rikki's best friend. She lives in Rikki's building with her father and a step-mother who she bitterly resents. She has transformed herself from dorky into an Amy Winehouse look-alike. She distrusts the adults in her life.

## **Barney Appleton**

Barney is the attractive boy in high school who has captured the attention of both Rikki and Barbra. He's shy and withdrawn, which is at first mistaken for being aloof. Barney is being raised in a foster home after a history of physical abuse.

## **Evelyn Sherman**

Evelyn is the Michigan neighbor who looked after Rikki as a child when her mother worked. Evelyn adores Rikki and though she has tried to stay connected, Rikki has never seen her letters or been allowed to take her phone calls.

## **Harry Aldon**

Harry is a successful mystery writer in his mid-fifties who lives in Phoenix with his wire-hair fox terrier, Beetle. Harry has a fairly solitary existence, writing during the day while maintaining an ongoing inner dialogue with a lost love. Beetle is the central figure in Harry's life. His energy and focus are on his very senior dog.

## **Edward Heaton**

Edward is Harry's New York City editor who keeps Harry on pace with the development of his novels.

## **Lil Turner**

Lil is the yoga instructor who lives down the street from Harry. She is vivacious, attractive, and doesn't listen very well. She has set her sights on Harry and is determined to bed him.