

5-1-2014

Review of A Brave Man Seven Storeys Tall by Will Chancellor

Kevin Clouther

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/wrtswrkshpfacpub>

Please take our feedback survey at: [https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/](https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE)

[SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE](https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE)

A Brave Man Seven Storeys Tall.
By Will Chancellor.

July 2014. 400p. Harper, \$25.99 (9780062280008).

Chancellor's intelligent debut novel follows the parallel tracks of father and son as they navigate a summer of personal and professional transformation. Professor Burr flees America to find his son, Owen, who leaves Stanford after being blinded in one

eye during a water polo match. Owen wants to be an artist—the novel never really clarifies why—and Professor Burr wants to be a public intellectual or leftist revolutionary or at least famous. In Europe, each encounters an over-the-top provocateur; even as satire, these characters strain credulity and sap emotional impact from the story. The novel's long denouement indulges an unexpected maritime romance. Owen's observations of his paramour, and a world he struggles to feel at home in, can be quite moving: "The sunblush on her cheeks made her eyes seem impossibly blue, a milky opalescent blue with the same promise a drowning man sees when his foot is pinned in the reef and he looks up to the bright sky." —*Kevin Cloutier*

A Brave Man Seven Storeys Tall.

By Will Chancellor.

July 2014. 400p. Harper, \$25.99 (9780062280008).

Chancellor's intelligent debut novel follows the parallel tracks of father and son as they navigate a summer of personal and professional transformation. Professor Burr flees America to find his son, Owen, who leaves Stanford after being blinded in one eye during a water polo match. Owen wants to be an artist—the novel never really clarifies why—and Professor Burr wants to be a public intellectual or

leftist revolutionary or at least famous. In Europe, each encounters an over-the-top provocateur; even as satire, these characters strain credulity and sap emotional impact from the story. The novel's long denouement indulges an unexpected maritime romance. Owen's observations of his paramour, and a world he struggles to feel at home in, can be quite moving: "The sunblush on her cheeks made her eyes seem impossibly blue, a milky opalescent blue with the same promise a drowning man sees when his foot is pinned in the reef and he looks up to the bright sky." —Kevin Clouter