

SOON

Stories

Pam Durban

Foreword by Mary Hood

"We all have our stories, don't we? . . . There's what happens, and there's what you make of what happens; the story you tell, so you can take it."—from "The Jap Room"

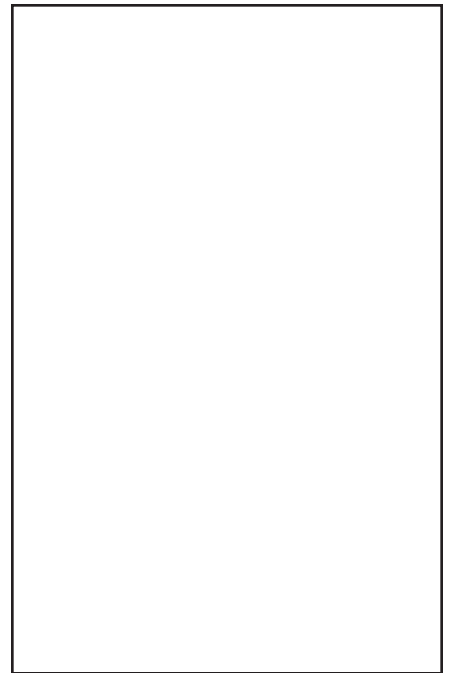
Pam Durban's new collection of stories explores the myriad ways people lose, find, and hold on to one another. When all else fails her characters—science, religion, family, self—the powerful act of storytelling itself keeps their broken lives together and fosters hope. Each story in this rewarding and multifaceted collection introduces people who yearn for better lives and find themselves entangled in the hopes and dreams that heal and bind us all.

The title story in *Soon*—chosen by John Updike for *The Best American Short Stories of the Century* anthology—follows two generations of a family whose lives are driven by the "patient and brutal need that people called hope, which . . . formed from your present life a future where you would be healed or loved." In "The Jap Room," winner of the 2008 Goodheart Prize, a woman tries to help her husband, a World War II veteran, finally come home. "Rowing to Darien" introduces a famous English actress as she rows away from her husband's rice plantation. In "Hush" a gravely ill man encounters himself in the darkness of Kentucky's iconic Mammoth Cave. An adopted child waits for his mother to come back for him in "Birth Mother," and, in "Forward, Elsewhere, Out," a mother must come to terms with her adolescent son's sexuality. The stories in this collection deftly broach universal themes of love, loss, and the redemptive power of storytelling.

The collection includes a foreword from novelist and short story writer Mary Hood, winner of the Flannery O'Connor Prize, Townsend Prize, and Lillian Smith Award.

Story River Books • Pat Conroy, editor at large

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Pam Durban is the author of the novels *The Laughing Place* (winner of the Townsend Prize), *So Far Back* (winner of the Lillian Smith Award), and *The Tree of Forgetfulness* and the short story collection *All Set About with Fever Trees*. Her short fiction has been published in *Georgia Review*, *Tri-Quarterly*, *Southern Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Crazyhorse*, *Epoch*, *New Virginia Review*, *Ohio Review*, and elsewhere. With former Georgia poet laureate David Bottoms, she is founding coeditor of *Five Points* literary magazine. She is the Doris Betts Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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