



The Prince of Tides

Pat Conroy

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In his most brilliant and powerful novel, Pat Conroy tells the story of Tom Wingo, his twin sister, Savannah, and the dark and violent past of the family into which they were born. Set in New York City and the lowcountry of South Carolina, the novel opens when Tom, a high school football coach whose marriage and career are crumbling, flies from South Carolina to New York after learning of his twin sister's suicide attempt. Savannah is one of the most gifted poets of her generation, and both the cadenced beauty of her art and the jumbled cries of her illness are clues to the too-long-hidden story of her wounded family. In the paneled offices and luxurious restaurants of New York City, Tom and Susan Lowenstein, Savannah's psychiatrist, unravel a history of violence, abandonment, commitment, and love. And Tom realizes that trying to save his sister is perhaps his last chance to save himself. With passion and a rare gift of language, the author moves from present to past, tracing the amazing history of the Wingos from World War II through the final days of the war in Vietnam and into the 1980s, drawing a rich range of characters: the lovable, crazy Mr. Fruit, who for decades has wordlessly directed traffic at the same intersection in the southern town of Colleton; Reese Newbury, the ruthless, patrician land speculator who threatens the Wingos' only secure worldly possession, Melrose Island; Herbert Woodruff, Susan Lowenstein's husband, a world-famous violinist; Tolitha Wingo, Savannah's mentor and eccentric grandmother, the first real feminist in the Wingo family. Pat Conroy reveals the lives of his characters with surpassing depth and power, capturing the vanishing beauty of the South Carolina lowcountry and a lost way of life. His lyric gifts, abundant good humor, and compelling storytelling are well known to readers of *The Great Santini* and *The Lords of Discipline*. *The Prince of Tides* continues that tradition yet displays a new, mature voice of Pat Conroy, signaling this work as his greatest accomplishment.

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