



## The Prince of Tides

By Pat Conroy

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### The Prince of Tides By Pat Conroy

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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## **The Prince of Tides** By Pat Conroy Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #238462 in Books
- Brand: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

For sheer storytelling finesse, Conroy will have few rivals this season. His fourth novel is a seductive narrative, told with bravado flourishes, portentous foreshadowing, sardonic humor and eloquent turns of phrase. Like *The Great Santini*, it is the story of a destructive family relationship wherein a violent father abuses his wife and children. Henry Wingo is a shrimper who fishes the seas off the South Carolina coast and regularly squanders what little money he amasses in farcical business schemes; his beautiful wife, Lila, is both his victim and a manipulative and guilt-inflicting mother. The story is narrated by one of the children, Tom Wingo, a former high school teacher and coach, now out of work after a nervous breakdown. Tom alternately recalls his growing-up years on isolated Melrose Island, then switches to the present in Manhattan, where his twin sister and renowned poet, Savannah, is recovering from a suicide attempt. One secret at the heart of this tale is the fate of their older brother Luke; we know he is dead, but the circumstances are slowly revealed. Also kept veiled is "what happened on the island that day" a grisly scene of horror, rape and carnage that eventually explains much of the sorrow, pain and emotional alienation endured by the Wingo siblings. Conroy deftly manages a large cast of characters and a convoluted plot, although he dangerously undermines credibility through a device by which Tom tells the Wingo family saga to Savannah's psychiatrist. Some readers may find here a pale replica of Robert Penn Warren's powerful evocation of the Southern myth; others may see resemblances to John Irving's baroque imaginings. Most, however, will be swept along by Conroy's felicitous, often poetic prose, his ironic comments on the nature of man and society, his passion for the marshland country of the South and his skill with narrative. 250,000 first printing; \$250,000 ad/promo; movie rights to United Artists; BOMC main selection; author tour. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

YA In order to aid a psychiatrist who is treating his psychotic sister, Tom Wingo arrives in Manhattan and describes figures from his youth, among them an abusive father, a mother obsessed with being accepted by Colleton's tawdry elite, eccentric grandparents, stolid brother Luke, and sensitive, poet-sister Savannah. Despite the book's length, scenes such as Grandmother Tolitha's visit to Ogletree's funeral home to try out coffins, Grandfather's yearly re-enactment of the stations of the Cross, Mrs. Wingo's passive-aggressive retaliation by serving her husband dog food, Luke's Rambo-like attempt to keep Colleton from becoming a nuclear plant site, and a bloody football game with the team's first black player deserve students' attention. While Conroy's skills at characterization and storytelling have made the book popular, his writing style may place it among modern classics. He adds enough detail so that readers can smell the salty low-country marsh, see the regal porpoise Snow against the dark ocean, and taste Mrs. Wingo's gourmet cooking and doctored dog food. The story is wholly Tom's; Conroy resists the temptation to include the vantage points of other characters. It is the reluctance of Tom to tell all, to recount rather than recreate his family's past, and to face up to the Wingos' mutual rejections that maintain the tension just below the story's surface. It is Tom's coming clean about his past that lays bare the truth and elevates *Prince of Tides* above a scintillating best seller. Alice Conlon, Univ . of Houston  
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From Library Journal

Savannah Wingo, a successful feminist poet who has suffered from hallucinations and suicidal tendencies since childhood, has never been able to reconcile her life in New York with her early South Carolina tidewater heritage. Her suicide attempt brings her twin brother, Tom, to New York, where he spends the next few months, at the request of Savannah's psychiatrist, helping to reconstruct and analyze her early life. In

beautifully contrasting memories which play childhood fears against the joys and wonders of being alive, Tom creates and communicates the all-consuming sense of family which is Savannah's major strength as a poet and her tragic flaw as a human being. Conroy has achieved a penetrating vision of the Southern psyche in this enormous novel of power and emotion. BOMC main selection. Thomas L. Kilpatrick, Southern Illinois Univ. Lib., Carbondale  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Lela Hird:**

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#### **Hazel Fletcher:**

People live in this new day of lifestyle always aim to and must have the free time or they will get lots of

stress from both lifestyle and work. So , when we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not really a huge robot. Then we request again, what kind of activity are you experiencing when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, the book you have read is actually The Prince of Tides.

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