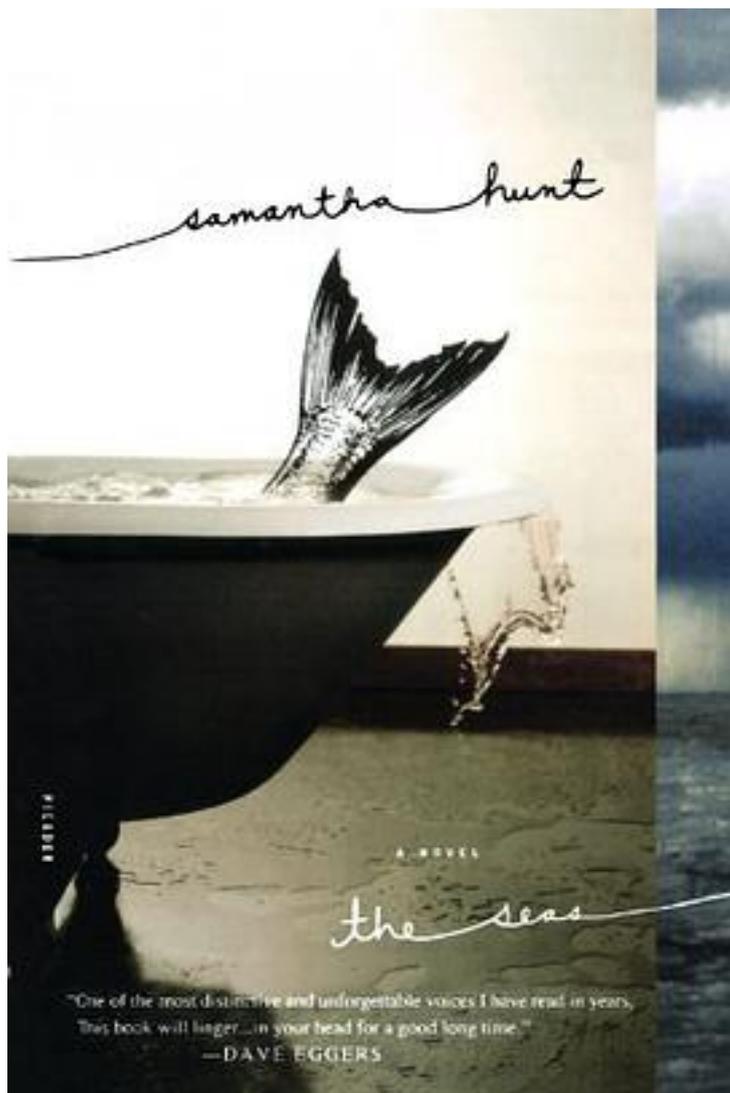


The Seas



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Ever since her father walked into the ocean eleven years ago, a young woman waits for him to return. Life in her coastal town is decidedly bleak. Her mother spends her time quietly monitoring the ocean for her missing husband. Her grandfather passes the days typesetting dictionaries that will never be printed. Rather than suffer the contortions of becoming a woman and accepting her father's apparent suicide, the narrator convinces herself she is a mermaid and escapes her dreary, northern town life via a fantastic myth. When not chambermaiding at decrepit motels and dreaming of becoming a scientist, she dedicates her time to falling obsessively in love with Jude, a drinker and a sailor twice her age who bears more than a passing similarity to her father. She knows Jude has a troubling secret that will, when revealed, help to fulfill the narrator's peculiar sense of her identity. Part modern gothic, part coming-of-age story, *The Seas* explores the very real possibilities in the unreal, straddling the horizons between the ocean and the land; literature and science; wishing and reality.

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