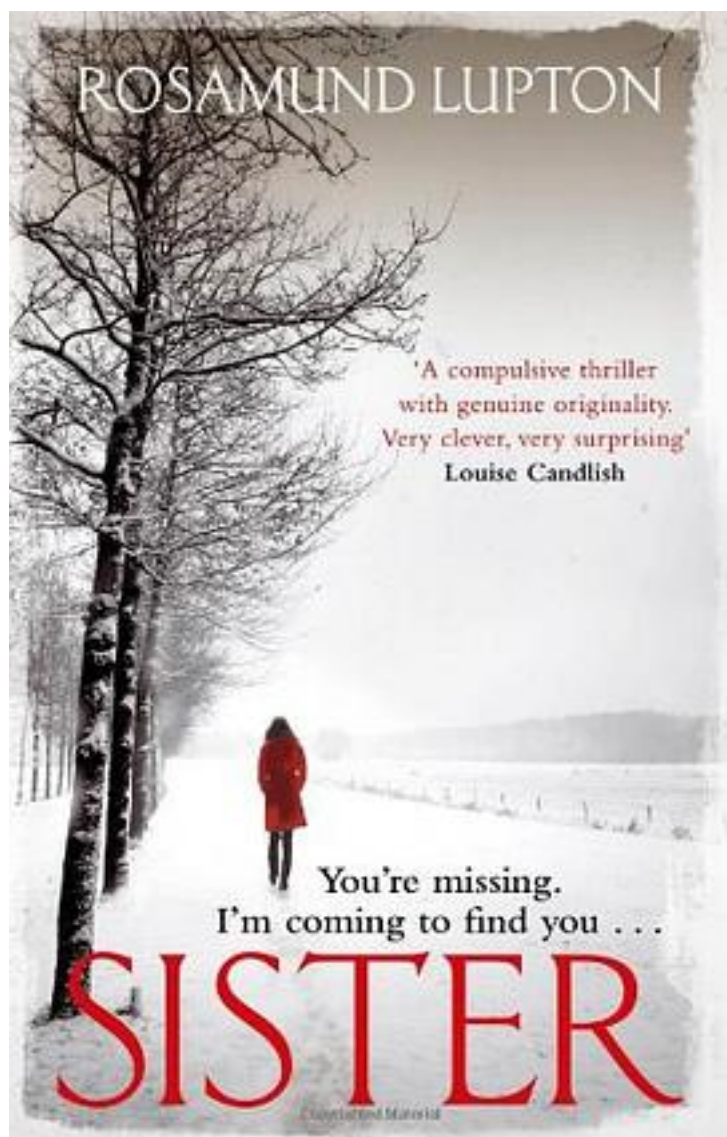


# Sister



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著者:Brown, Nicole

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Nickole Brown's first book opens with the dramatic declarative, "Sister," which begins the book's machinations of understanding the complex and fraught relationships between siblings and family. Brown writes in the first poem titled "Preface," Sister, we come from water we made ourselves with the suckle and swallow of our unmade bodies submerged in a sac so sweet with our vestal piss that we breathed it From the cruelty of the narrator releasing her younger sister's fire-flies to the regret that "this is all/I know--not your favorite/color or dinner or show, not/the name of this crush or that," Brown maps the terrain of childhood and adulthood for two women in a family filled with both abuse and love. In addition to its thematic coherence, the book also uses structural devices to hold it together. A series of poems all titled "What I Did" and then numbered one through seven recur sequentially, though at random intervals, through the first two sections of the book. In addition, Brown's insistence of the address to the sister--part epistolary, part direct address, part prayerful evocation--holds together the various explorations of the unifying narrative. The strength of Sister is in the details, some of which are constructed through Brown's diction, which is gently infused with a southern dialect but resists caricature. She writes of cutting her finger then blood "pollacking the paper with red" or of "fried comfort" or when her sister came home "bawling, colicky, dispositioned/bad, a mess of black tar meconium." In each phrase, the particular word from the South captures a precise detail, making Brown's poems visually, as well as aurally, rich. In telling of her own birth, she writes of "how the doctor grabbed/the slippery blue/feet first, an impossible breech, a twist/with a snap that meant/leg braces, special shoes, a grown woman/who would never walk right/in red heels." The balance of this poem, titled "Footling," explores how her mother, sixteen years old at the birth, "cooed/footling, thinking it sounded/more like the name of some imp/than a complication." The interplay between girlhood and womanhood for the narrator's mother is another theme carried through the entire collection and explored among the three central characters of the book: the mother, the narrator, and the sister. This trifecta of women is brought to life with great pathos through Brown's artistry. Resisting sentimentality, but also dancing dangerously close to it. Brown's narrative poems in Sister are vital. In the tradition of Sylvia Plath in its insistence to look at and capture the realities of women's lives, Sister is a strong debut collection.

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