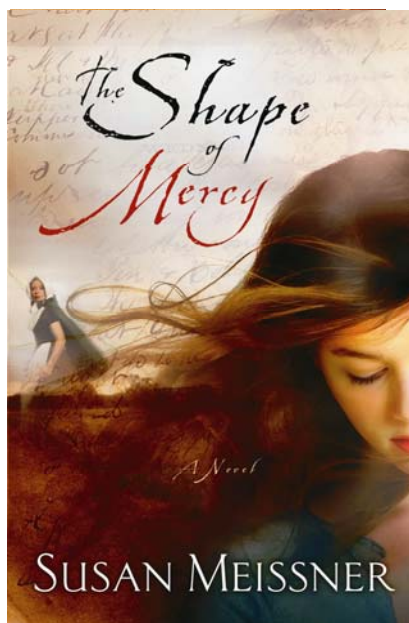


For Immediate Release
from WaterBrook Press
a division of Random House, Inc.

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Susan Meissner's *The Shape of Mercy* Named ECPA and ACFW's Best Book of the Year

"Meissner's newest novel is **potentially life-changing**, the kind of inspirational fiction that prompts readers to call up old friends, lost loves or fallen-away family members to tell them that all is forgiven and that life is too short for holding grudges. Achingly romantic . . . Meissner's prose is exquisite and she is a stunning storyteller. This is a novel to be shared with friends." ~ *Publishers Weekly*



Colorado Springs, Colo. — Susan Meissner's critically acclaimed novel *The Shape of Mercy* (WaterBrook Press, September, 2008) has received rave reviews from *Publisher's Weekly* and *Romantic Times* and numerous awards: it received the Best Religious Fiction of 2008 award from *Publishers Weekly*, as well as the title of 2008 ECPA Best Book of the Year, ACFW 2009 Book of the Year and a nomination for the 2009 RWA RITA award for a novel with strong romantic elements. The contemporary novel with a strong historical thread explores the connections between the present and the past, the dangers of judging too quickly, and sweet reality that all things can change for the better in an instant: it's never too late.

Protagonist Lauren "Lars" Durough is expected to gracefully embrace a life of privilege. Determined to create her own story, Lauren cuts the purse strings that bind her to her wealthy family and sets out to plot a new life course: college at a state school in California. But a part-time job transcribing an old diary soon challenges everything she knows.

The diary belonged to Mercy Hayworth, a seventeenth-century victim of the Salem witch trials. Hired by 83-year-old librarian Abigail Boyles to transcribe the diary, Lauren finds herself irresistibly drawn to this girl who lived and died four centuries ago. Page by page, Lauren follows Mercy's hopes, dreams, and fears as she is pulled into a tragic current of accusations and superstitions. Unsettled by the deep affinity she feels to both Mercy and Abigail, Lauren is forced to take a deep look at her own life, relationships, and assumptions about herself and those around her...including a young man named Raul. As she searches for the truth, it may set more than one person free.

Fans of historical and contemporary fiction alike will enjoy *The Shape of Mercy's* juxtaposition of stories, engrossing writing, and layered characters. Includes a discussion guide.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Meissner is a multi-published award-winning author with a background in community journalism. She is a pastor's wife and a mother of four young adults. *Publisher's Weekly* says "Meissner's prose is exquisite and she is a stunning storyteller." When she's not writing, Susan directs the Small Groups and Connection Ministries program at her San Diego church. Find her online at susanmeissner.com and facebook.com/SusanMeissnerAuthor.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

"As raindrops become mighty rivers, Susan Meissner's words seem simple in the beginning, but one thought builds naturally upon another, phrases and sentences flow together with effortless fluidity, and before you know it, you are totally engrossed by the powerful undercurrents of her story. To read Ms. Meissner is to put yourself into the hands of that rarest kind of author: an artist working in the medium of words."

—**Athol Dickson**, Christy Award-winning author of *The Cure* and *Winter Haven*

"I loved *The Shape of Mercy* from beginning to end. Ms. Meissner's prose sings, and her characters captured my interest from the start. As the story unfolded, those same characters captured my heart. I won't soon forget Mercy, Lauren, or Abigail."

—**Robin Lee Hatcher**, award-winning author of *Wagered Heart* and *When Love Blooms*

"*The Shape of Mercy* is vintage Susan Meissner: tender storytelling that keeps you hooked; living, breathing characters that capture your heart and madden you, too; and a message of redemption that sticks with you. Meissner deftly weaves the stories of three women of vastly different generations, connecting them perfectly and crafting a winsome, interesting, powerful read."

—**Mary E. DeMuth**, author of *Watching the Tree Limbs* and *Daisy Chain*

"A compelling tale that will resonate long after you turn the last page. A haunting story, deftly woven, full of layers and textures that will quickly pull you out of the present and into the long forgotten past. Meissner recalls a tale that must not be forgotten, about the tragedies and senseless cruelties which happen when we abandon grace and turn our backs on mercy."

—**Siri Mitchell**, author of *A Constant Heart*

Contemporary Fiction / Historical Fiction

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