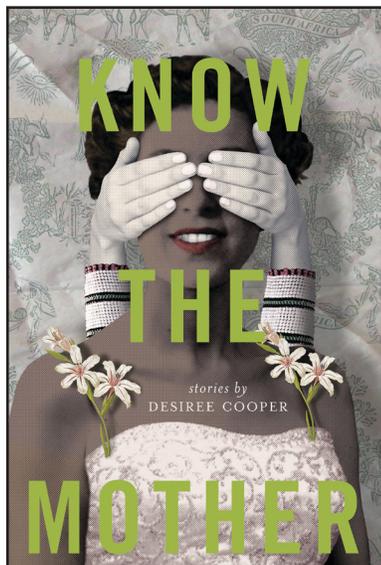




For immediate release



Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist pens first short story collection

“The stories in *Know the Mother* are like jewels—glittering, finely wrought and worthy of careful appraisal. Here is fiction that not only examines the everyday messiness of living, but the painful miracle of birth and the beautiful mystery of death with equal insight. Cooper’s elegant, wise, and energetic collection is about what it means to be a woman, a mother, a sister, a wife, a child, and most of all, human.”

—Angela Flournoy, author of *The Turner House*

DETROIT, November 20, 2015—While a mother can be defined as a creator, a nurturer, a protector—at the center of each mother is an individual who is attempting to manage her own fears, desires, and responsibilities in different and sometimes unexpected ways. In *Know the Mother*, author Desiree Cooper explores the complex archetype of the mother in all of her incarnations. In a collage of meditative stories, women—both black and white—find themselves wedged between their own yearnings and their roles as daughters, sisters, grandmothers, and wives.

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MADE IN MICHIGAN
WRITERS SERIES

In this heart-wrenching collection, Cooper reveals that gender and race are often unanticipated interlopers in family life. An anxious mother reflects on her prenatal fantasies of suicide while waiting for her daughter to come home late one night. A lawyer miscarries during a conference call and must proceed as though nothing has happened. On a rare night out with her husband, a new mother tries convincing herself that everything is still the same. A politician’s wife’s thoughts turn to slavery as she contemplates her own escape: “Even Harriet Tubman had realized that freedom wasn’t worth the price of abandoning her family, so she’d come back home. She’d risked it all for love.” With her lyrical and carefully crafted prose, Cooper’s stories provide truths without sermon and invite empathy without sentimentality.

Know the Mother explores the intersection of race and gender in vignettes that pull you in and then are gone in an instant. Readers of short fiction will appreciate this deeply felt collection.

About the author: A 2015 Kresge Artist Fellow, Desiree Cooper is a former attorney, Pulitzer Prize–nominated journalist, and Detroit community activist. Her fiction and poetry have appeared in *Callaloo*, *Detroit Noir*, *Best African American Fiction 2010*, and *Tidal Basin Review*, among other online and print publications. Cooper was a founding board member of Cave Canem, a national residency for emerging black poets, and she is a Kimbilio fellow, a national residency for African American fiction writers.

For more information on this book or the author, please contact Kristina Stonehill, Promotions Manager, Wayne State University Press, (313) 577-6127 tel; (313) 577-6131 fax; kristina.stonehill@wayne.edu.

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