



If I'd Known You Were Coming (Iowa Short Fiction Award)

Kate Milliken

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In these twelve award-winning stories, Kate Milliken unflinchingly shows us what can happen when the uninvited guest of our darkest desires comes to call. Whether surrounded by the white noise of a Hollywood celebration or enduring a stark winter in Maine, the characters of *If I'd Known You Were Coming* yearn to heal old wounds with new hurts. With a wry wit and a keen eye for emotive detail, the author of this unforgettable collection sets intersections in motion that will leave you both winded and wanting more.

In one story, a mother, driven by greed, unwittingly finds out how far her needs will push her. A hand model surprises himself and everyone else at the birthday party of an old friend's daughter in another. With poetic deftness, a woman evaluates the meaning, the familial stories, that we carry with us from birth. In a story ripped from the headlines, a woman pines for the legs her husband lost in a freak accident at a Santa Monica farmer's market. A medical clerk, restless and alone, takes advantage of a disabled neighbor.

Kate Milliken knows the ties that bind and how tautly we will pull them. These are stories about desire, betrayal, love, regret, and family. Like all great fiction, *If I'd Known You Were Coming* possesses that uncanny ability to reveal us to ourselves.

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