

Bio

Naseem Rakha author of *The Crying Tree*

Naseem is an award-winning journalist whose stories have been heard on NPR's *All Things Considered*, *Morning Edition*, *Marketplace Radio*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Living on Earth*. Prior to journalism Naseem taught *Holistic Resource Management* to farmers, ranchers and tribes throughout the US and Canada. Naseem is a graduate of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale where she received her degree in Geology. She now lives in Oregon with her husband, son, and many animals. When Naseem isn't writing, she's reading, knitting, hiking, gardening, collecting rocks, or just watching the seasons roll in and out.

Naseem is represented by Laney Katz Becker of Folio Literary Management in NYC: www.foliolit.com.

From The Author

The murder of a child dredges up the most painful emotions. There is no justice in it, no justification, and no way to find solace. Remorse and vengeance become inseparable from the souls of the people left behind. Yet, somehow there are inspirational stories of those who have come to forgiveness.

I found this baffling situation as a reporter covering an execution for public radio and then later in interviews with the parents of murder victims. I wanted to understand how an individual can move from one place to another – hate to forgiveness, despondency to hope – what that road looks like, and what toll it must exact.

THE CRYING TREE is that story, told through the lives of two main characters: Irene Stanley, the mother of slain 15-year-old Steven Joseph Stanley, and Tab Mason, the stoic and determined superintendent of the Oregon State Penitentiary who is preparing to execute the boy's murderer. Powerful and touching, this book provides insight into how murder, death row, capital punishment, and enduring these experiences deeply impact victims' families.

THE CRYING TREE is a story of things not being what they seem, family secrets and how they reverberate through lives, and being submerged in loss, yet finding ways to go on. It's a story of forgiveness and redemption and of the difficult decisions that lead people through life and that ultimately give life meaning.

THE CRYING TREE is set in both southern Illinois, central Oregon, and Salem's Oregon State Penitentiary.