

BOOKS

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# Liberate yourself, forgive

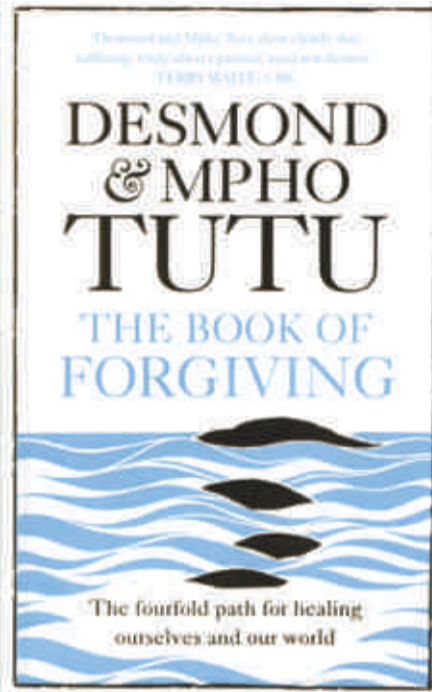
**THE BOOK OF FORGIVING**  
DESMOND AND MPHOTO TUTU  
WILLIAM COLLINS

**BOOK REVIEWER:**  
CHRISTOPHER MERRETT

FORGIVENESS liberates both victim and perpetrator from the captivity of a destructive relationship. Not only does this freedom benefit society, but it assists the mental and physical well-being of the individuals concerned. It is hard to think of nation more in need of the techniques of forgiveness than South Africa, ably presented in this self-help book by Mpho Tutu and her esteemed archbishop emeritus father.

At times it is hard to work out whose voice the reader is hearing. The text is dominated by the fourfold path for healing that boils down to factual and emotional explanation, forgiveness, and renewal and restoration. These steps are accompanied by meditation, ritual and other exercises. The authors have included a number of extraordinary stories of liberation from victimhood and the burden of culpability, but explanation of the intellectual foundation of forgiveness is somewhat overshadowed.

Revenge, argue the Tutus, leads nowhere even if the humanity of perpetrators is sometimes difficult to identify. Forgiveness, they explain, is neither easy nor quick. They also argue it is not a sign of weakness, a matter of reversal, or a process of forgetting; but one of restoration of dignity. And of course there is always the possibility of redemption. Facing up to past pain



*“Revenge, argue the Tutus, leads nowhere even if the humanity of perpetrators is sometimes difficult to identify. Forgiveness, they explain, is neither easy nor quick.”*

would lead to a more forgiving society. The Tutus also provide some wise words on guilt and shame that deserve to be widely read. People, they reveal, are more likely to cope with life's difficulties if they have a clear sense of themselves in the context of a truthful past handed down by parents.

Recognition of common humanity, this book confirms, is a prerequisite of reconciliation and peace but it does not replace justice, preferably of the restorative rather than retributive brand. Despite its brevity, the Tutus' book is a significant contribution to the process of releasing us from prisons of the past.

and suffering requires courage, the reward being a lifting of the corrosive burden of the victim and rediscovery of self. There are echoes here of the processes required to deal successfully with grief.

It is all a matter of individual choice and growth, and adopted on a widespread scale

## Author launches PMB crime novel

CHARLOTTE Otter, a former Pietermaritzburg resident and one-time trainee reporter of the then *Natal Witness*, is about to launch her first novel, *Balthasar's Gift*, which is set in city.

Otter, who has lived in Germany since 1996, wrote the book in English, had it translated into German and it has been published in that country to critical acclaim.

*Die Welt* described it as “the hard-hitting overture to what we hope will be a long series”. In South Africa it is published by Modjaji Books.

*Balthasar's Gift* has crime reporter Maggie Cloete as its central character. Set in Pietermaritzburg at the dawn of the 21st century, the action opens when Cloete ignores a phone call from a softly spoken man. But someone then puts four bullets into him.

As Cloete tries to find out the truth behind the killing, she comes up against gangsters and politicians and their henchmen. The book is being hailed as part of the pacy, hard-boiled tradition of South African crime fiction.

Otter is a journalist by training, having worked as a crime and court reporter at *The Citizen* before moving into corporate communications. She now works for the German technology company SAP.

A series of launches and signings are planned. First is the main launch at the Tatham Art Gallery Coffee Shop on Thursday at 5 pm. Otter will be in conversation with Professor Cheryl Stobie.

On June 13, there will be a book signing at



Charlotte Otter, former Pietermaritzburg resident and one-time trainee reporter of the then *Natal Witness*, is launching her novel, *Balthasar's Gift*. PHOTO: SUPPLIED



the Mona Lisa Book Shop in Hilton from 2 pm to 4 pm, and the following day, Otter will be at Bookworld in Cascades from 10 am to 11.30 am and will then go to Exclusive Books

in the Midlands Mall from noon until 2 pm. At all the signings, Otter will be able to talk to readers and buyers about her book. — Books Editor.

## Top poet to read latest work

THE Live Poets Society (LiPS), which meets on the first Wednesday of each month, will be hosting a reading by Pietermaritzburg-based poet Kobus Moolman of his latest collection, *Left Over* (Dye Hard Press), at 5.30 pm for 6 pm on Wednesday, June 4 at A Novel Idea, 157 Blair Atholl Road, Westville North.

*Left Over* is Moolman's sixth collection of poems, and is widely acknowledged as his strongest to date.

It describes the inner world of a man dealing with what the poet calls “being in the flesh, being a body in the world”. Sparse but dense, the prose-like poetry is arresting in its intensity and power.

Speaking of the work, Kelwyn Sole says, “Kobus Moolman's elliptical, foreshortened poetry opens up a world of exploration and heightened experience from which the reader eventually emerges, chastened but delighted. These are poems of acumen, depth and extraordinary pressure.”

Moolman, who teaches creative writing at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, has won numerous awards, including the Ingrid Jonker Prize, the Dalro poetry prize, the BBC African Theatre award, the South African Literary Award for poetry, and most recently the Sol Plaatje European Union poetry award.

In 2013 he was the Mellon Writer in Residence for three months in Grahamstown, courtesy of Rhodes University.

Poets and lovers of poetry are welcome to listen and to read and to share their works and

to discuss poetry in all its varied forms and uniqueness at LiPS meetings.

Admission is free. Inquiries: Danny Naicker at 083 282 0865 or e-mail danny.naicker@NDEngineering.co.za. — Arts Editor. arts@witness.co.za



Kobus Moolman will be reading his poetry at a meeting of the Live Poets Society in Westville on June 4. PHOTO: FILE

# HOME GUIDE

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(NB: The Home Guide will be published daily if space permits)

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As an AA quality-assured service provider, Watson Motors is committed to a Code of Conduct that is fair, based on sound business principles and that protects and upholds the consumers' rights in accordance with the law.

Watson Motors has been a member of the Pietermaritzburg chapter of Business Network International (BNI) for 15 months. By networking with other businesses this venture has proved to be most beneficial to the business and to the other members.

“We continually review our business operation to identify and implement improvements to ensure that our customers remain satisfied. We invite new customers to test us and enjoy the ‘Watson Motors Experience’. You will never look back!” said Paul.

Paul obtained his matric at Maritzburg College and started his career in the motor world as an apprentice at Neil Woolridge Motors in Pietermaritzburg and went on to qualify as a motor vehicle technician at Barloworld in Pietermaritzburg. During this period he was fortunate to be a member of the Ford Off-Road Racing Team and gained valuable experience.

“We thank all our customers for their ongoing support and we look forward to their continued support in the future. We continue to receive tremendous support from numerous suppliers and trade associated service providers and trust that our relationships can grow in leaps and bounds in the many



The Watson Motors team from left are, standing: Phumzile Dlamini, Jonathan Prinsloo, Peter Watson, Paul Watson, Glen Watson and Edwin Riggien. Front: Blake Chalmers and Jason DuPlessis.



Watson Motors at 45 Clough Street, Pietermaritzburg, offers COR assessments and general repairs and maintenance to all makes of light motor vehicles.

PHOTOS: KAVITHA PILLAY

years to come. Once again a big thank you to you all!” said Paul.

Contact Paul or Peter Watson to arrange for the servicing or maintenance of your light motor vehicle.

Watson Motors is situated at 45 Clough Street, Pietermaritzburg. Visit www.watsonmotors.co.za, e-mail watson-

motors@vodamail.co.za or call 033 3455 108 for more information. — Supplied.

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