THE DO-RIGHT

LISA SANDLIN
1959. DELPHA WADE KILLED A MAN WHO WAS RAPEING HER.

Wanted to kill the other one too, but he got away. Now, after fourteen years in prison, she's out. It's 1971, and nobody's rushing to hire a parolee. Persistence and smarts land her a secretarial job with Tom Phelan, an ex-roughneck turned neophyte private eye. Together these two pry into the dark corners of Beaumont, a blue-collar, Cajun-influenced town dominated by Big Oil. A mysterious client plots mayhem against a small petrochemical company—why? Searching...
LISA SANDLIN was born in Beaumont, Texas, and grew up in oil-refinery air, sixty miles from the Gulf of Mexico. She raised a son in Santa Fe, New Mexico, then moved to Nebraska where she's taught for the better part of twenty years. Her work has earned an NEA Fellowship, a Dobie Paisano Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, the Jesse Jones Award from the Texas Institute of Letters, story-of-the-year awards from Shenandoah, Southwest Review, and Crazy Horse. Her story collections are The Famous Thing About Death, Message to the Nurse of Dreams, In the River Province, and You Who Make the Sky Bend. The Do–Right is her first novel.
"The Do-Right"—that’s old Southern talk for prison. Delpha Wade doesn’t want to go back there. Fourteen years is enough.

Nobody was in this ten-by-twelve space but her. No other breathing, gabbing, farting, pouting person. Everybody, everything else shut out. Locked out, on the other side. No one could walk in. She was not counted. She did not have to speak. She did not have to share or to hoard, yet. She had to hear no one, except an occasional door shutting, a word or two from down the hall whose meaning she was not obliged to heed. She lay inside this idea for an indecipherable while, breaking the spell periodically to check the key up there on top of the chest of drawers. Still there.

Light had faded from the window, and the dark had come in to hang beneath the ceiling.

"SANDLIN BLENDS PATHOS, HUMOR, AND POETIC PROSE IN A STRONG DEBUT."
—Kirkus STARRED review

"IMPRESSION DEBUT... PHELAN INVESTIGATIONS ATTRACTION A MOTLEY LOT OF CASES, INCLUDING ONE BOASTING A SCENARIO WORTHY OF THE COEN BROTHERS..."
—PW STARRED review

"THOMAS PHELAN AND DELPHA WADE ARE UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTERS, AS GRITTY AS THE RAMSHACKLE OFFICE THEY INHABIT. BUT THEIR GRIT HAS SOUL, AND PLENTY OF IT."
—Johnny Temple, editor of USA Noir

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