



**SHARON J. O'DONNELL** was born in Raleigh in 1962. Her father, Samuel A. Johnson, owns a sewing machine sales and repair business and is a patented inventor. Her mother, Wiloree W. Johnson – the inspiration for this story – is a homemaker and doting grandmother. A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, O'Donnell is a columnist for The Cary News and a freelance writer. She also leads writing workshops in schools as part of a United Arts Council Writer-in-Residence. She lives in Cary with her husband, Kevin, and their three sons, ages 11, 8 and 2.

## Sunday Reader

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*Each week, Sunday Reader features an original work of short fiction or poetry by a Southern writer.*

# Bluebirds Fly

BY SHARON J. O'DONNELL

A black crow soared through the sky as Willow splashed cold water on her face at the side of the tobacco barn. She was mesmerized as she watched the bird glide above the treetops, cawing loudly. She wondered where it was flying to, what it would see of the world below.

Pulling a wisp of brown hair back from her sweaty face, Willow looked at the tobacco fields surrounding her, engulfing her. As she squinted in the sunlight, she sighed loudly.

