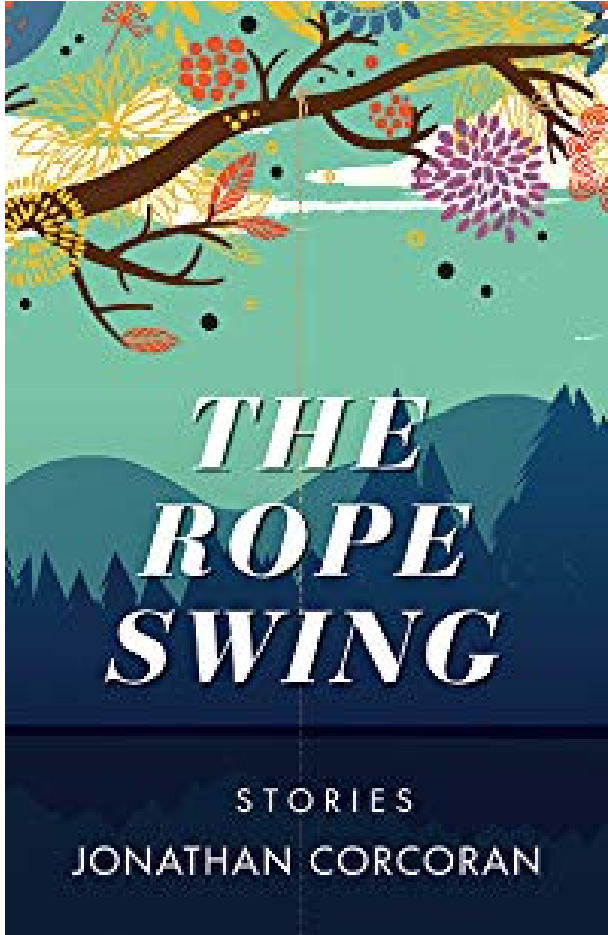


# The Rope Swing: Stories



<b>Goodreads Rating:</b>	4.26
<b>ISBN13:</b>	9781943665112
<b>Genre:</b>	Short Stories
<b>Author:</b>	Jonathan Corcoran
<b>Published:</b>	April 1st 2016 by Vandalia Press
<b>Pages:</b>	163
<b>ISBN10:</b>	1943665117

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Finalist for the Lambda Literary Awards and long-listed for The Story Prize! A once-booming West Virginia rail town no longer has a working train. The residents left behind in this tiny hamlet look to the mountains that surround them on all sides: The outside world encroaches, and the buildings of the gilded past seem to crumble more every day. These are the stories of outsiders—the down and out. What happens to the young boy whose burgeoning sexuality pushes him to the edge of the forest to explore what might be love with another boy? What happens when one lost soul finally makes it to New York City, yet the reminders of his past life are omnipresent? What happens when an old woman struggles to find a purpose and reinvent herself after decades of living in the shadow of her platonic life partner? What happens to those who dare to live their lives outside of the strict confines of the town's traditional and regimented ways? The characters in *The Rope Swing*—gay and straight alike—yearn for that which seems so close but impossibly far, the world over the jagged peaks of the mountains.