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Recommended Citation

(2014) "Back Cover," *Ontario Review*: Vol. 67, Article 24.

Available at: <http://repository.usfca.edu/ontarioreview/vol67/iss1/24>

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Mysteries of Winterthurn



Joyce Carol Oates

The first paperback reprint since 1986 of the author's favorite among her several acclaimed and controversial Gothic novels.

In *Mysteries of Winterthurn*, the brilliant young detective-hero Xavier Kilgarvan is confronted with three baffling cases—"The Virgin in the Rose-Bower," "The Devil's Half-Acre," and "The Blood-Stained Gown"—that tax his genius for detection to the utmost; as his forbidden passion for his cousin Perdita becomes an obsession that shapes his life.

"Exactly why *Mysteries of Winterthurn*, or more specifically, the youthful detective hero Xavier Kilgarvan remains so close to my heart is something of a mystery to me. It must be that Xavier, the painstaking, often frustrated, balked, discouraged, and depressed amateur detective so misunderstood by his public, is a self-portrait of a kind: after Xavier has achieved a modicum of fame, or notoriety, in his 'hazardous' profession, he comes to feel that his public image is terribly misleading, since the public can have no awareness of the 'painstaking labor, the daily and hourly "grind," of the detective's work: and is woefully misled as to the glamorous ease with which mysteries are solved' as novels may appear, at a distance, to be 'easily' written if the novelist has a reputation for being prolific."

—Joyce Carol Oates, from the Afterword

Joyce Carol Oates is the recipient of the National Book Award and the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in Short Fiction. She is the author of the national bestsellers *We Were the Mulvaney*s and *Blonde*; and the New York Times bestsellers *The Falls*—winner of the 2005 Prix Femina—and *The Gravedigger's Daughter*. She is the Roger S. Berlind Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at Princeton University.

May 2008 / \$17.95 paperback



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