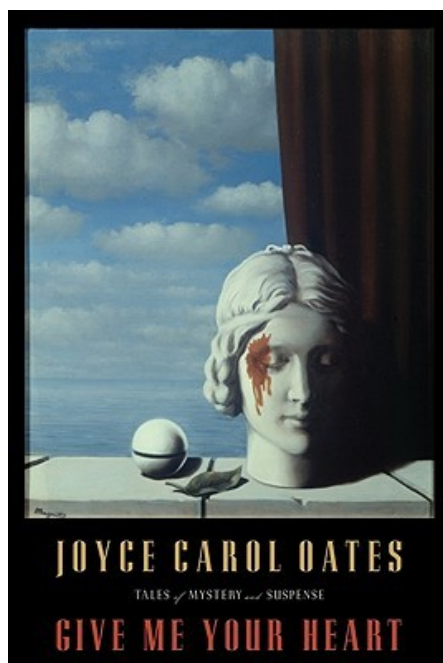




Give Me Your Heart

Joyce Carol Oates

Download now

Read Online ➞

Give Me Your Heart

Joyce Carol Oates

Give Me Your Heart Joyce Carol Oates

An Otto Penzler Book

In the suspenseful “Strip Poker,” a reckless adolescent girl must find a way of turning the tables on a gathering of increasingly threatening young men—Can she “outplay” them? In the award-winning “Smother!” a young woman’s nightmare memory of childhood brings trouble on her professor-mother—Which of them will “win”? In “Split/Brain” a woman who has blundered into a lethal situation confronts the possibility of saving herself—Will she take it? In “The First Husband,” a jealous man discovers that his wife seems to have lied about her first marriage, and exacts a cruel revenge, years after the fact. In these and other powerful tales, children veer beyond their parents’ control, wives and husbands wake up to find that they hardly know each other, haunted pasts intrude upon uncertain futures, and those who bring us the most harm may be the nearest at hand.

In ten razor-sharp stories, National Book Award winner Joyce Carol Oates shows that the most deadly mysteries often begin at home.

Give Me Your Heart Details

Date : Published January 7th 2011 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (first published January 1st 2010)

ISBN : 9780547385464

Author : Joyce Carol Oates

Format : Hardcover 260 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Horror, Mystery

 [Download Give Me Your Heart ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Give Me Your Heart ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Give Me Your Heart Joyce Carol Oates

From Reader Review Give Me Your Heart for online ebook

Downward says

Joyce Carol Oates, fiction's high priestess of rape culture narratives, gives us here an uneven collection full of fractured narratives that swerve with lack of determinacy and structure. These stories rarely end, instead they push you to a point and then stop, leaving a certain amount of drama off the page. It seeks to mimic real life, or seems to, with its misremembered details and subjective interpretations, and in its best stories - Strip Poker, Bleed - Oates achieves a gross uneasiness ripe with paranoia and the threat of violence. When it misses though, it feels like stream of conscious nonsense; totally unedited swill.

Bonnie Brody says

Give Me Your Heart, the newest collection of short stories by Joyce Carol Oates, shimmers with violence, actual or imagined. Reading these stories is like hearing footsteps in your home when you know you're the only one there. They're like seeing something impossible out of the corner of your eye and being sure that you've seen it no matter what your rational self tells you. The stories make your heart race and your eyes open wide in horror. They do not come to us gently. Joyce Carol Oates grabs the reader and pulls him into her unique vision where fear, panic, tension, death, love and murder prevail, often simultaneously. These are horror stories without any element of the super-natural. She's the real McCoy of this genre.

This collection contains ten stories, many of them about the dark side of needing love. In 'Give Me Your Heart', we hear an ex-lover rant about wanting her lover's heart - actually and metaphorically. We listen to her as she goes more and more around the bend. In 'Split/Brain', Trudy Gould has been caretaker for her ill husband day and night, spending all her time at the hospital. One day, he demands that she return home to get a journal that he forgot. When she arrives at her home, she recognizes her sister's car parked there and imagines her troubled, drug-addled and violent nephew in her house. She plays out this scenario in head: she either enters the house and is killed by her nephew or she turns and leaves. What will her choice be?

Some of these stories deal with the obsessive character of love or the feeling that you don't really know the person you love. In 'The First Husband', a married man stumbles across photos of his wife with her first husband. He can't get over his jealousy and believes that his wife is hiding something from him. He becomes obsessed with her first husband and this leads to tragic consequences.

The theme that love is dangerous is apparent in almost every story. In 'Strip Poker', a group of older men in their twenties get a fourteen year-old girl to go with them to their lake cabin. They get her drunk and play strip poker with her. The game is tense and on the verge of becoming dangerous. How the girl turns events to her favor is a joy to behold in all its poignancy. In 'Smothered', a troubled woman with a history of drug addiction and rootlessness has recovered memories of her parents smothering and killing a baby girl. This memory is part of a sensational murder case that occurred in 1974. The smothered child was never identified and the murderer was never found. When the police come to question the woman's mother, she is shocked. The memory appears to be part of a drug-addled incident in the daughter's teen-aged years. However, the mother feels torn and betrayed as this is just another way her estranged daughter has turned against her.

Sometimes, the most dangerous person is the one that is closest to you. In 'The Spill', John Henry is what we'd now call developmentally disabled or chronically mentally ill. When he is an adolescent, he is brought to live at his uncle's home as his mother can no longer handle him. It is 1951 and there is no such thing as special education in the rural Adirondacks where this story takes place. John Henry, after repeating fourth

grade, is told he can't return to school. His uncle has him doing difficult farm chores all day. His aunt Lizabeta has a special connection with John Henry while also being very leery of him with her own children. Her emotions start to get twisted up inside her.

'Bleed' is my favorite story in the collection. A boy evolves from closeness with his parents to distance. He leaves his childhood behind him. This is due to two distinct incidents, both involving child abductions and rapes. His parents question him about these incidents, of which he has no knowledge. However, these images continue to haunt him and, as a young man, he finds himself caught up in a nightmare situation consisting of rape and abduction.

These are not stories for the fragile or weak-hearted among us. They are all scary and they all play on our visceral fears and nightmares. Joyce Carol Oates is a master of this. She understands those things we all fear, the nightmares that are common to us all. That these stories do not contain elements of the super-natural is not comforting. It makes them all the more frightening.

Laurel-Rain says

In this short story collection by Joyce Carol Oates, themes of love connect the stories. Obsessive, self-destructive, unpredictable love. We visit forbidden and chilling places with the characters.

Most notable stories include the titled selection "Give Me Your Heart," in which a woman pursues an obsessive love...someone who shunned her years ago. Her relentless quest takes us to dark and disturbing places.

In "Smother," an unstable young artist relives bits and pieces of nightmare memories until one day, everything clicks into place. When her mother, a professor and apparently upright individual, is brought into the mix, we see her perspective on events. Who will we believe?

"The First Husband" carries us along on a second husband's journey to exact revenge after he discovers that his wife has lied about the relationship. Will the consequences be too overwhelming?

Haunted pasts intrude on the present in these ten razor sharp stories that reveal that deadly mysteries often begin at home.

As usual, I found these journeys fascinating and compelling. I would definitely rate this collection, "Give Me Your Heart: Tales of Mystery and Suspense," with five stars.

Cristina says

He quedado totalmente maravillada. Los relatos me encantan, y estos han conseguido evadirme por completo. Me han resultado casi góticos por ese trasfondo inquietante, recóndito y violento en el andamiaje mental de los personajes, que como una traslúcida cortina, deja entrever algo oscuro y obsesivo. Son introspectivos en gran parte, pero también físicos y manifiestos. A su manera me han recordado a los relatos de Katherine Anne Porter.

Berna Labourdette says

Impresionante como en estos 10 cuentos de suspenso, Carol Oates puede conjurar el terror a relaciones vacías, hijas desquiciadas, mujeres en busca de venganza y celos patológicos que terminan en tragedia. Todos son cuentos recursivos sobre amores posesivos, dementes, que arrasan con todo, incluyendo las mujeres que lo sienten (o ya no). La mayoría de los cuentos son muy buenos, aunque me gustó mucho: "Asfixia". Dénle el Nobel de una buena vez, por favor.

Judi says

Probably not my best choice for a holiday read/listen. Viscerally dark collection of short stories of people on the precipice of emotional collapse. The actual bloody endings are left to the reader to interpret. Perhaps I am penalizing Joyce Carol Oates a star for the depressing nature of the tales. They are well written. Gotta search out some lighter reading material heading into the New Year. Fluff.

Thomas Strömquist says

The cover text on this one led me to believe that JCO had strayed into some unexplored realm of ghost stories and haunted places or something. But, more true to form, it is a collection of stories of haunted and desperate people. She writes beautifully, as always, but the dark and depressing stories are actually a bit too alike for me to whole-heartedly recommend the book. I felt that I could really use a glimmer of light or hope... I would suggest reading one or a couple of stories at a time.

Kornela says

I must admit that I'm not a huge short story fan. I feel that it's almost impossible to create a compelling character and an interesting plot in such a short literary medium. Give me a novel that has time to fully flesh out its characters any day. Plus most short story collections tends to be mixed bags—a couple of good stories thrown in with some really bad or indifferent ones. Give Me Your Heart by Joyce Carol Oates was no exception to this—there were some bad stories in here but it was elevated from other collections by two facts: Oates can write and her gifts are such that they were perfectly suited for a short story format.

Give Me Your Heart is a collection of stories about people's need for love. But since this is Oates, things get a little dark. Oates chooses to focus on what happens when love is obsessive or unhealthy leading to madness, self-destruction, and murder. The first story, "Give Me Your Heart," is an excellent opening and perfectly encapsulates what is to come throughout the rest of the book. In the story, a woman pens a letter to an ex-lover many years after he ended their affair and cast her aside. She lets him know that even though she isn't in his life anymore, she never really left it and has kept a close eye on him and his adventures throughout the years. She will continue to do so until she gets close enough to him to take the one thing she's always wanted and feels that she deserves—his heart. Literally.

The other stories in here follow in the same vein and range from making you a little uneasy—"Split/Brain," "Strip Poker" to being downright disturbing, "Bleed." They're not all wonderful but they are well-written, tense nail-biters that demand to be read compulsively, even as they are filling you with dread.

Nora says

I recently read Give Me Your Heart by Joyce Carol Oates. I thought that it was excellent writing and challenging as well, but I did not enjoy reading it because it was extremely depressing. The writing was so quality that the mood of the piece affected my mood as well, and my week suffered because of it. It was often gruesome and harsh, which is normal for Oates' work. Give me Your Heart is compiled of many short stories that were published in 2010. Oates has also written Where are You Going, Where Have You Been?, and A Book of American Martyrs.

The short stories are of the thriller fiction genre and only relate to each other in their themes. They follow many people of different genders, ages, and backgrounds as they battle situations that force them to confront their inner demons, mostly pertaining to love. The character in the stories is extremely well-developed with more description of their inner self than their outside. Oates allows the reader to relate to their character, especially in their flaws. The characters are so much more frightening because you could find them in any normal society.

The plots of the story are original in a sense. They are meant to represent common occurrences in people's lives that are horribly wrong or turn horribly wrong. Occasionally some of the plots of different stories will seem very similar, which made them a bit boring. Although, they are very realistic and always have a twist at the end.

This book is very similar to what goes on today. It represents people in terrible situations involving love or hate, such as abusive relationships and rape. This book looks at different perspectives in order to fully understand the human race. Oates presents a theme that is still ongoing in today's society in order to confront these issues.

In a way, this work reminds me of the works of Edgar Allan Poe. Her stories start out with a normal scenario, and as the story continues, more alarming information is revealed about the character, and then sinks into a gruesome and violent end. Although, Give Me Your Heart is much more realistic than that of Poe, who uses supernatural themes in order to represent certain themes. Oates still portrays the natural evilness of humans just as clearly.

This book majorly discusses abusive relationships, rape, mental disorders, and other topics. The short stories are examples of situations where the character is taking advantage or is being taken advantage of.

The theme of this novel is that people are inherently evil, and our inner desires, though hidden, can often judge our actions. Oates also questions the very concept of love, and whether it is ever true or not.

I would recommend this novel to someone who likes dark concepts and can handle depressing subjects. This book can be read by both males and females and should be high school and up. It is perfectly appropriate for the advanced student, in order to teach them to analyze the text and the themes of the story.

Lizzie Shannon-Little says

This book is my discovery of Joyce Carol Oates. And I was not disappointed. I sort out this author because

she is - I think - a short story writer first and foremost, and the more short stories I can consume at the moment the better. And secondly, because she edits OUP's "The Oxford Book of American Short Stories" (what a coop for the Press!) and I wanted to know what her writing was like...

I selected this book to read first because the stories were billed as "Tales of Mystery and Suspense". That sounds like my bag. It was. These are stunning suspense stories. Not suspense in a waiting-for-the-dead-man-to-crawl-up-the-basement-stairs kind of horror, but a much more sophisticated horror than that; an everyday horror, the suspense in the slow build of the stories of human life and interaction. The suspense is in the human, the knowing how the natural order of things, the way humans act and events occur, and then twisting away or throwing something just jarring enough to wind you off course with your skin creeping and a need to rush through the words just to get them read because you cannot bear it any more. That kind of suspense.

I've got to say the title story 'Give Me Your Heart' felt like an off-kilter way to start a collection, perhaps because of the style or the voice, but once I got into the rhythm of Oates' way of telling a story, I was hooked. I liked 'Split/Brain' for the possibilities of events; I liked 'First Husband' for the pasts that cannot be changed and secret jealousies that take seed as a consequence; I loved 'Strip Poker' for the choking fear Oates generates in her reader for the young girl and the wonderfully satisfying finish. There are more, but these are highlights I recall. I'm just done another Oates' book too, which I might review here also.... Gripping read, good short stories.

Sarah says

The first two stories failed miserably and the rest never improved enough to make up for that. Most were ok but still felt too much like the output from a creative writing class where angst young adults attempt to write about the dark side of human nature. When Oates hits the right cord she really nails it but that only happened for me on two of the stories. Not very many authors can pull off the macabre well and this is a prime example of an attempt can bad.

Kevin Shepherd says

My introduction to Joyce Carol Oates. She writes with such grace, even here where the characters are often nefarious and the events range from disheartening to disturbing to downright gruesome. And yet, these are stories of love. Love spurned. Love hoarded. Love lost. Love contorted by jealousy, lust, rage, injury...

For me, this is the best kind of horror. Not monsters from outer space (though those are fun too!) but monsters from within. The ghastly beings that dwell here in Give Me Your Heart dwell in all of us and can be coaxed out by the stress of circumstance. I think the real genius of Oates is that she knows how to tap in to that. We're not so much horrified by the atrocities on the page, but by the repressed notion that, given the right circumstances, that could be me dispatching an ex with a pitchfork.

Ian Baaske says

(One of a number of books I found for dirt cheap in the Borders meltdown. Depressingly, there were a

number of copies still available. But it was heartening to see large quantities of books by Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin massively discounted and unsold.)

For several reasons, I enjoyed this book less as I worked my way through it. For one thing, I started it while on vacation by the lake and finished it on a crowded El train. But I also read Andrea Thompson's "meh" review and, while I don't think of myself as being easily swayed by reading reviews, who knows--maybe I am. My favorite stories are the opening titular one (in the form of a nasty, vaguely threatening, angry letter) and the fourth one, "Strip Poker." (I walked my wife briefly through the plot of "Strip Poker" and told her it had really inspired me. "You mean as a writer?" she said. "No," I said, "as a father who's going to beat the ass of anyone who messes with my little girl.") But there is a sameness to some of the others: the internal workings of a killer's mind, repeated phrases, italics, confusion. And though Thompson was wrong about the two stories I mentioned, this bit from her review did stick out to me, "[T]here's little doubt that Oates is a well-practiced storyteller. Too well practiced, perhaps: the impact...tends to be more mechanical than visceral." Though often extremely hard to read, I did start to wonder how many of these stories were "necessary."

J says

They're not all winners, but when Joyce Carol Oates gets it right, it's spellbinding.

My favorites from this collection:

Split/Brain

The First Husband

Strip Poker

Vena Cava

However, the highlight is "The Spill". This story was so well-crafted, dark, and genuinely shocking that I can't believe that it hasn't taken the place of "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" as Oates' most famous work.

Connie says

"Give Me Your Heart" is a collection of ten dark short stories about people looking for love and acceptance. They are often downtrodden people who are emotionally on the edge, or teenagers who have found themselves over their heads in dangerous situations. The title story is about an older man who promised a woman student that he would love her forever--and the rejected woman is stalking him and planning her revenge years later. "Strip Poker" involves an adolescent girl getting caught up in a card game with some older male teens in an isolated cottage--and trying to outsmart them. "Vena Cava" tells the story of a soldier returning from Iraq with PTSD and terrible injuries to his head which prevent him from emotionally connecting to the civilian world.

The stories were so intense that I found I only wanted to read a couple in one sitting. A few stories had endings that went a bit overboard. But the rest were frighteningly plausible, much like the activities of real deranged people we read about in our newspapers. Joyce Carol Oates is a good storyteller, building up tension higher and higher, then ending in a twist or horrific event.
