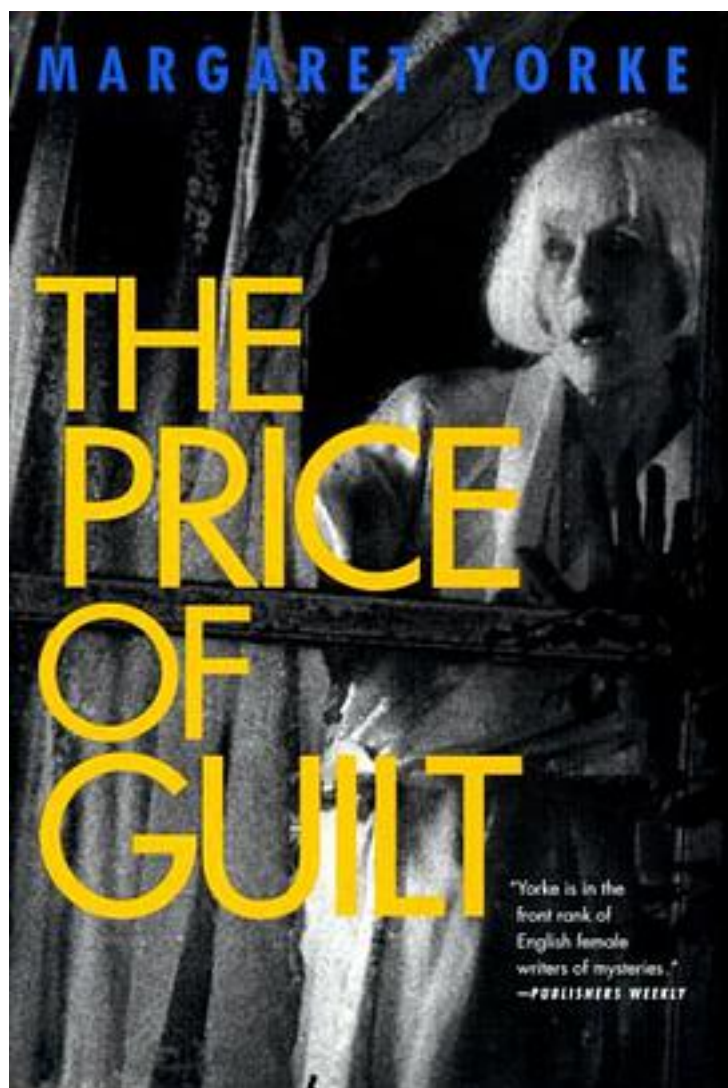


The Price of Guilt



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出版者:St. Martin's Minotaur

出版时间:2000-03-09

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780312253325

From Publishers Weekly Soon after inheriting a house and starting a new life in the village of Croxbury, Louise Widdows reads an Anita Brookner novel: "in elegant, measured prose the soul of a sad, solitary woman was skillfully exposed." So might it be said of this genteel English suspense thriller, whose hapless heroine attempts to make the most of an unexpected legacy while murder lurks in the background. Louise's husband, Colin, may or may not have driven the car that almost kills her in a hit-and-run accident. At any rate, after a loveless marriage, she has no regrets when Colin disappears the day of the accident with the contents of their joint savings account. Louise's thoughts turn to a long-ago affair, and to the illegitimate child that she had to give up at birth for adoption. Now that she's free of Colin, might she try to trace her lost son, who would be about the age of the kindly reporter who rescues her from beer-swilling yobs on the train to her new home? A fate full of irony awaits Louise in Croxbury, where a good deed--checking on an acquaintance's house while the woman is away--doesn't go unpunished. Like Brookner, Yorke is a master at making the reader care about meek and lonely middle-aged women. While the latter part of the novel largely fills in the motivations of minor characters in flashback, Colin's fate remains up in the air until the very end--and is as ironic as Louise's, if more just. (Mar.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Louise Widdows's mentally abusive husband disappears the same night she suffers injuries in a hit-and-run accident. About the same time, Louise learns she has inherited a cottage, so she moves, hoping to start anew and perhaps locate the son she gave up for adoption 30-odd years earlier. Meanwhile, a magazine reporter she encounters senses a story of some sort and, while investigating the murder of a woman who died near the time of the hit-and-run, tries to discover Louise's whereabouts. Ferreting out psychological motivations and relating them to a deceptively simple plot is Yorke's forte. Highly recommended. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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目录:

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