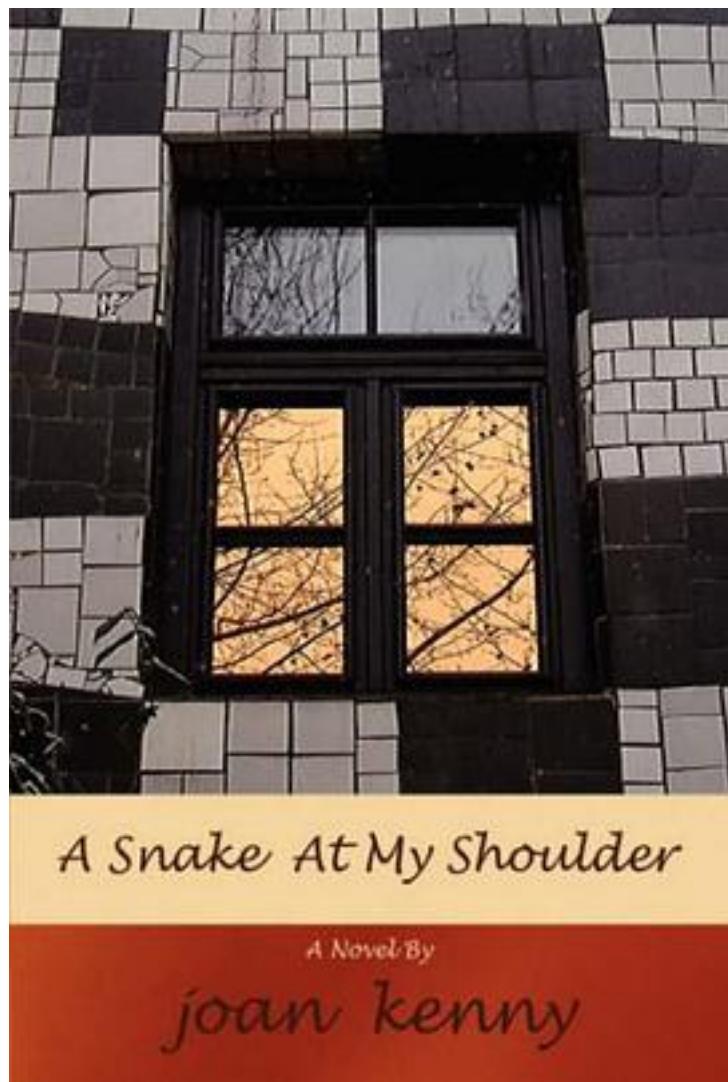


A Snake At My Shoulder



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"I refused to lay down with my fears and in a way, it might have been running away but along with leaving the fears, I brought a dream with me instead." Audrey drives slowly into the Canadian countryside, the haven and haunt of her youth. With the death of her brother James, she returns to scatter his ashes in the river of their lazy summer days. During a terrible storm, Audrey's car crashes through the town bridge. Pulled from the wreckage, Audrey is hospitalized, where she weaves the threads of her tortured childhood with the trials and triumphs of her new life into a soulful narrative. Audrey presents the blended fabric of her life to a childhood friend, Frank, in a fitful and imagined conversation. Audrey recounts both the ghosts and comforts of her fraught past to Frank, from her distant father and two stepmothers to her dark and dangerous cousin Struan, who thrust himself upon her and James with unspeakable horror. By retelling her stories, Audrey confronts her troubled home life. She tells Frank, too, of the film company she and James created in London and their home in exotic and bustling Cairo. Through Audrey's lyrical reminiscences, Frank becomes an invisible vessel for her ravings, where she ultimately finds peace in her tumultuous life.

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