



The Corn Maiden

Joyce Carol Oates

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An incomparable master storyteller in all forms, in *The Corn Maiden and Other Nightmares* Joyce Carol Oates spins six imaginative tales of suspense. "The Corn Maiden" is the gut-wrenching story of Marissa, a beautiful and sweet eleven-year-old girl with hair the color of corn silk. Taken by an older girl from her school who has told two friends in her thrall of the Indian legend of the Corn Maiden, in which a girl is sacrificed to ensure a good crop, Marissa is kept in a secluded basement and convinced that the world has ended. Marissa's seemingly inevitable fate becomes ever more terrifying as the older girl relishes her power, giving the tale unbearable tension with a shocking conclusion. In "Helping Hands," published here for the first time, a lonely woman meets a man in the unlikely clutter of a dingy charity shop and extends friendship. She has no idea what kinds of doors she may be opening. The powerful stories in this extraordinary collection further enhance Joyce Carol Oates's standing as one of the world's greatest writers of suspense.



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