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Written on the Body

By Jeanette Winterson



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The most beguilingly seductive novel to date from the author of *The Passion* and *Sexing the Cherry*. Winterson chronicles the consuming affair between the narrator, who is given neither name nor gender, and the beloved, a complex and confused married woman. "At once a love story and a philosophical meditation."--New York Times Book Review.



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Written on the Body By Jeanette Winterson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This fourth effort from British writer Winterson (*Sexing the Cherry*) is a high-concept erotic novelette, a Vox for the postmarital crowd. The narrator, a lifelong philanderer ("I used to think marriage was a plate-glass window just begging for a brick"), has fallen in love with Louise, a pre-Raphaelite beauty. Louise is unhappily married to a workaholic cancer researcher, so the narrator leads her into a sexually combative affair. This scenario seems obvious enough, but Winterson never reveals whether the narrator is male or female. Rather, she teases readers out of their expectations about women and men and romance: Louise calls the narrator "the most beautiful creature male or female that I have ever seen," and the narrator observes, "I thought difference was rated to be the largest part of sexual attraction but there are so many things about us that are the same." When the narrator breaks off the affair after learning that Louise has cancer--only her husband can cure her--the work turns into a eulogy for lost love. Winterson manipulates gender expertly here, but her real achievement is her manipulation of genre : the capacious first-person narration, now addressed to the reader, now to the lover, enfolds aphorisms, meditations on extracts from an anatomy textbook, and essayistic riffs on science, virtual reality and the art of fiction ("I don't want to reproduce, I want to create something entirely new"). "It's as if Louise never existed," the narrator observes, "like a character in a book. Did I invent her?" One wonders, as Winterson intends, and then wonders some more. For Louise--and the narrator's love for her--never seems quite real; in this cold-hearted novel love itself, however eloquently expressed, is finally nothing more than a product of the imagination.

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From Library Journal

Like Andre Breton's dizzying poem, "Ma Femme a la chevelure de feu de bois" ("my woman with her belly like the unfolding fan of days/... My woman with her swan's back buttocks"), the narrator of Winterson's (*Sexing the Cherry* , LJ 2/15/90) new novel relentlessly celebrates the beauty of a beloved woman's body--but the trick here is that we do not know whether the narrator is a man or a woman. The story is minimal and not altogether original: a corrosive sensualist experiences many women but finally becomes obsessed with one, stealing her from her husband, only to discover that she has been guarding a terrible secret: she is threatened by a terminal illness. The fascination is the lush, plush language and the way two aspects of the physical--passion and bodily decay--are delicately interwoven. Not to everyone's taste, but serious readers and sensualists will enjoy. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 10/1/92.

- *Barbara Hoffert, "Library Journal"*

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Review

"Winterson's novels are about exploding our complacent notions of the real, breaking down received ideas of gender, time and space... John Donne wrote, "Love...makes one little room, as everywhere." Winterson's novel arrives at a similar affirmation" Time Out "An ambitious work, at once a love story and a philosophical meditation on the body...the result is a work that is consistently revelatory about the phenomenon of love" New York Times Book Review "This book is a deep sensual plunge, a worship of the body, inside and out" Guardian

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gary McKinney:

As people who live in often the modest era should be revise about what going on or information even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era and that is always change and advance. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to you is you don't know what one you should start with. This Written on the Body is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Vicki Harris:

Typically the book Written on the Body will bring someone to the new experience of reading a book. The author style to spell out the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book to learn, this book very acceptable to you. The book Written on the Body is much recommended to you you just read. You can also get the e-book through the official web site, so you can more readily to read the book.

Jimmy Stone:

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Denise Wallis:

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