

Unless Carol Shields

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New York and Toronto Novels after Postmodernism HarperCollins UK

These two companion novels tell the stories of Jack and Brenda Bowman during a rare time apart in their many years of marriage. In The Husband's Story, Jack is at home coping with domestic crises and two uncouth adolescents while immobilised by self-doubt and questioning his worth as a historian. In The Wife's Story, Brenda, travelling alone for the first time, is in a strange city grappling with an array of emotions and toying with the idea of an affair.

Happenstance Vintage Canada

An accomplished biographer wants to create a compelling life story of her own in a novel by the New York Times—bestselling author of The Stone Diaries. What is the matter with me, I wonder. Why am I always the one who watches? Judith Gill lives with her husband, son, and daughter in a nice house in the suburbs of Ontario. She has carved out a niche as a respected biographer. Her universe is shaped and bounded by the lives around her, from her family to the subjects of her books. She finds herself in the background of her life, but she hungers to tell stories of her own. In this witty, nuanced novel about art, life, love, and fiction, Carol Shields reveals Judith to readers and to herself—a woman with bold emotions, powerful instincts, and a knack for observing the small ceremonies that give our lives meaning.

A Fairly Conventional Woman LSU Press

“ Unless you ’ re lucky, unless you ’ re healthy, fertile, unless you ’ re loved and fed, unless you ’ re offered what others are offered, you go down in the darkness, down to despair.” Reta Winters has many reasons to be happy: Her three almost grown daughters. Her twenty-year relationship with their father. Her work translating the larger-than-life French intellectual and feminist Danielle Westerman. Her modest success with a novel of her own, and the clamour of her American publisher for a sequel. Then in the spring of her forty-fourth year, all the quiet satisfactions of her well-lived life disappear in a moment: her eldest daughter Norah suddenly runs from the family and ends up mute and begging on a Toronto street corner, with a hand-lettered sign reading GOODNESS around her neck. GOODNESS. With the inconceivable loss of her daughter like a lump in her throat, Reta tackles the mystery of this message. What in this world has broken Norah, and what could bring her back to the provisional safety of home? Reta ’ s wit is the weapon she most often brandishes as she kicks against the pricks that have brought her daughter down: Carol Shields brings us Reta ’ s voice in all its poignancy, outrage and droll humour. Piercing and sad, astute and evocative, full of tenderness and laughter, Unless will stand with The Stone Diaries in the canon of Carol Shields ’ s fiction.

A Novel Blizzard Pub Limited

WINNER OF CBC CANADA READS Here’s the set up: A burnt-out politcal aide quits just before an election--but is forced to run a hopeless campaign on the way out. He makes a deal with a crusty old Scot, Angus McLintock--an engineering professor who will do anything, anything, to avoid teaching English to engineers--to let his name stand in the election. No need to campaign, certain to lose, and so on. Then a great scandal blows away his opponent, and to their horror, Angus is elected. He decides to see what good an honest M.P. who doesn’t care about being re-elected can do in Parliament. The results are hilarious--and with chess, a hovercraft, and the love of a good woman thrown in, this very funny book has something for everyone.

A Novel Harcourt

Never has contemporary fiction been more widely discussed and passionately analysed; recent years have seen a huge growth in the number of reading groups and in the interest of a non-academic readership in the discussion of how novels work. Drawing on his weekly Guardian column, 'Elements of Fiction', John Mullan examines novels mostly of the last ten years, many of which have become firm favourites with reading groups. He reveals the rich resources of novelistic technique, setting recent fiction alongside classics of the past. Nick Hornby's adoption of a female narrator is compared to Daniel Defoe's; Ian McEwan's use of weather is set against Austen's and Hardy's; Carole Shield's chapter divisions are likened to Fanny Burney's. Each section shows how some basic element of fiction is used. Some topics (like plot, dialogue, or location) will appear familiar to most novel readers; others (metanarrative, prolepsis, amplification) will open readers' eyes to new ways of understanding and appreciating the writer's craft. How Novels Work explains how the pleasures of novel reading often come from the formal ingenuity of the novelist. It is an entertaining and stimulating exploration of that ingenuity. Addressed to anyone who is interested in the close reading of fiction, it makes visible techniques and effects we are often only half-aware of as we read. It shows that literary criticism is something that all fiction enthusiasts can do. Contemporary novels discussed include: Monica Ali's Brick Lane; Martin Amis's Money; Margaret Atwood's The Blind Assassin; A.S. Byatt's Possession; Jonathan Coe's The Rotters' Club; J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace; Michael Cunningham's The Hours; Don DeLillo's Underworld; Michel Faber's The Crimson Petal and the White; Ian Fleming's From Russia with Love; Jonathan Franzen's The Corrections; Mark Haddon's The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time; Patricia Highsmith's Ripley under Ground; Alan Hollinghurst's The Spell; Nick Hornby's How to Be Good; Ian McEwan's Atonement; John le Carr é 's The Constant Gardener; Andrea Levy's Small Island; David Mitchell's Cloud Atlas; Andrew O'Hagan's Personality; Orhan Pamuk's My Name Is Red; Ann Patchett's Bel Canto; Ruth Rendell's Adam and Eve and Pinch Me; Philip Roth's The Human Stain; Jonathan Safran Foer's

Everything Is Illuminated; Carol Shields's Unless; Zadie Smith's White Teeth; Muriel Spark's Aiding and Abetting; Graham Swift's Last Orders; Donna Tartt's The Secret History; William Trevor's The Hill Bachelors; and Richard Yates's Revolutionary Road .

Various Miracles Camden House

Winner of the Marian Engel Award: Passion, longing, regret, and transformation infuse these twelve tales by one of our most “ shrewd and skillful ” storytellers (Chicago Tribune) “ Milk Bread Beer Ice ” is a road trip shared by a husband and wife who no longer communicate through meaningful dialogue. Fifty-year-old “ Hazel ” is forced to enter an alien workplace after the sudden death of her husband. In “ Today Is the Day, ” the village women gather together for their annual ritual of planting blisterililies. And “ Family Secrets ” travels to DeKalb, Illinois, and the First World War, as the narrator searches for a missing year in her mother ’ s life . . . and unearths a surprising connection to Ernest Hemingway. From a group of musicians who discover they share more than classical “ Chemistry ” to an unhappily married couple who may get a second chance, this remarkable collection, like the ageless orange fish of the title story, is filled with the wonder and magic of everyday life.

Thirteen Hands And Other Plays MacMillan of Canada

With a Foreword by the Author “ Before becoming a playwright I was a novelist, and one who was often impatient with the requisite description of weather or scenery or even with the business of moving people from room to room. I was more interested in the sound of people talking to each other, reacting to each other, or leaving silences for others to fall into. ” -- Carol Shields From one of Canada ’ s most beloved authors comes a collection of four works written for the stage, including her most popular and highly acclaimed play Thirteen Hands. The theatrical form allows Carol Shields ’ strength as a master of dialogue to shine at its brightest, as she returns to themes she explores in her prose: love, family, friendship, and the hidden meanings and larger truths found beneath the surface of the minutiae of daily life. Thirteen Hands and Other Plays is an exhilarating introduction to Shields ’ considerable achievements as a playwright. Departures and Arrivals (1990) dramatizes how lives are heightened and enlarged when taken within the frame of public spaces -- airports, train stations, public streets -- so that we all become, in a sense, actors. Thirteen Hands (1993), a musical, valorizes a consistently overlooked group in our society, “ the blue-rinse set ” -- also known as “ the white glove brigade ” or “ the bridge club biddies ” -- and has had the strongest professional run of all Shields ’ plays. Fashion, Power, Guilt and the Charity of Families (1995), written with her daughter, Catherine Shields, interrogates the ambivalence felt towards families, the drive we all share to find or create some kind of family, and the equally strong desire to escape the family ’ s fury. Anniversary (1998), written with Dave Williamson, is a domestic drama of discontented, middle class suburbanites. One couple in the play are married and pretending to be close to separation. Another couple, who are separated, are pretending to be married. The additional irony is that the separated couple are still emotionally together, while the married couple have already emotionally separated.

There But For The University of Toronto Press

A Memoir of Friendship is a rich collection of the letters Shields and Howard exchanged from 1975 to 2003. Carol Shields took her place on the world literary stage when she won the Pulitzer Prize for The Stone Diaries. Blanche Howard, 22 years older than Carol and herself a published, award-winning author, became Shields's mentor and confidante.Written with humour and insight, this window into their daily lives explores their friendship, their disappointment and joys, their ambitions, and their thoughts on other writers and the craft of writing. Collected Stories Vintage Canada

From the acclaimed, award-winning author—when a dinner-party guest named Miles locks himself in an upstairs room and refuses to come out, he sets off a media frenzy. He also sets in motion a mesmerizing puzzle of a novel, one that harnesses acrobatic verbal playfulness to a truly affecting story. Miles communicates only by cryptic notes slipped under the door. We see him through the eyes of four people who barely know him, ranging from a precocious child to a confused elderly woman. But while the characters ’ wit and wordplay soar, their story remains profoundly grounded. As it probes our paradoxical need for both separation and true connection, There but for the balances cleverness with compassion, the surreal with the deeply, movingly real, in a way that only Ali Smith can.

The Art of the Epigraph Vintage Canada

The idea for Dropped Threads: What We Aren't Told came up between Carol Shields and longtime friend Marjorie Anderson over lunch. It appeared that after decades of feminism, the “ women's network ” still wasn't able to prevent women being caught off-guard by life. There remained subjects women just didn't talk about, or felt they couldn't talk about. Holes existed in the fabric of women's discourse, and they needed examining. They asked thirty-four women to write about moments in life that had taken them by surprise or experiences that received too little discussion, and then they compiled these pieces into a book. It became an instant number one bestseller, a book clubs' favourite and a runaway success. Dropped Threads, says Anderson, "tapped into a powerful need to share personal stories about life's defining moments of surprise and silence." Readers recognized themselves in these honest and intimate stories; there was something universal in these deeply personal accounts. Other stories and suggestions poured in. Dropped Threads would clearly be an ongoing project. Like the first volume, Dropped Threads 2 features stories by well-known novelists and journalists such as Jane Urquhart, Susan Swan and Shelagh Rogers, but also many excellent new writers including teachers, mothers, a civil servant, a therapist. This triumphant follow-up received a starred first review in Quill and Quire magazine, which called it “ compassionate and unflinching. ” The book deals with such difficult topics as loss, depression, disease, widowhood, violence, and coming to terms with death. Several stories address some of the darker sides of motherhood: - A mother describes how, while sleep-deprived and in a miserable marriage, she is shocked to find infanticide crossing her mind. - Another woman recounts a memory of her alcoholic mother demanding the children prove their loyalty in a terrifying way. - A woman desperate for children refers to the bleak truth as: "Another Christmas of feeling barren." Narrating the fertility treatment she undergoes, the hopes dashed, she is amusing in retrospect and yet brutally honest. While they deal with loss and trauma, the pieces show the path to some kind of acceptance, showing the authors ’ determination to learn from pain and pass on the wisdom gained. The volume also covers the rewards of learning to be a parent, choosing to remain single, or fitting in as a lesbian parent. It explores how women feel when something is missing in a friendship, how they experience discrimination, relationship challenges, and other emotions less easily defined but just as close to the bone: - Alison Wearing in “ My Life as a Shadow ” subtly describes allowing her personality to be subsumed by her boyfriend's. - Pamela Mala Sinha tells how, after suffering a brutal attack, she felt self-hatred and a longing for retribution. - Dana McNairn talks of her uncomfortable marriage to a man from a different social background: "I wanted to fit in with this strange, wondrous family who never raised their voices, never swore and never threw things at one another." Humour, a confiding tone, and beautiful writing elevate and enliven even the darkest stories. Details bring scenes vividly to life, so we feel we are in the room with

Barbara Defago when the doctor tells her she has breast cancer, coolly dividing her life into a 'before and after.' Lucid, reflective and poignant, *Dropped Threads 2* is for anyone interested in women's true stories.

[How Great Books Begin](#) Vintage Canada

In an original collaboration two award-winning authors, Carol Shields and Blanche Howard, have written an immensely enjoyable novel which give us both sides of a story about the breakdown of traditional roles, rules and communication in a marriage.

[Notes](#) Open Road Media

"Long ago in 1945 all the nice people in England were poor, allowing for exceptions," begins *The Girls of Slender Means*, Dame Muriel Spark's tragic and rapier-witted portrait of a London ladies' hostel just emerging from the shadow of World War II. Like the May of Teck Club itself—"three times window shattered since 1940 but never directly hit"—its lady inhabitants do their best to act as if the world were back to normal: practicing elocution, and jostling over suitors and a single Schiaparelli gown. The novel's harrowing ending reveals that the girls' giddy literary and amorous peregrinations are hiding some tragically painful war wounds. Chosen by Anthony Burgess as one of the Best Modern Novels in the Sunday Times of London, *The Girls of Slender Means* is a taut and eerily perfect novel by an author The New York Times has called "one of this century's finest creators of comic-metaphysical entertainment."

[The Booklover's Guide to New Orleans](#) Simon and Schuster

Denise's stepdaughter Greta is a med student who swims ocean marathons and runs off to Africa with a family friend four times her age—and also battles an eating disorder. When Judy, Greta's birth mother, returns from Japan (to which she ran off herself, with a Mexican tennis pro) and tries to ingratiate herself with the husband and daughter she left, Denise must navigate their complicated relationships with each other while attempting to bring Greta's addiction to light—and learning how to live more charitably.

[The Orange Fish](#) Vintage Canada

With the same sensitivity and artfulness that are the trademarks of her award-winning novels, Carol Shields explores the life of a writer whose own novels have engaged and delighted readers for the past two hundred years. In Jane Austen, Shields follows this superb and beloved novelist from her early family life in Steventown to her later years in Bath, her broken engagement, and her intense relationship with her sister Cassandra. She reveals both the very private woman and the acclaimed author behind the enduring classics *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Emma*. With its fascinating insights into the writing process from an award – winning novelist, Carol Shields's magnificent biography of Jane Austen is also a compelling meditation on how great fiction is created.

A Life Penguin

With the profound maturity and exquisite eye for detail that never failed to capture readers of her prize-winning novels, Carol Shields dazzles with these remarkable stories. Generous, delightful, and acutely observed, this essential collection illuminates the miracles that grace our lives; it will continue to enchant for years to come.

Thirteen Hands Anchor

Dazzling novel from Carol Shields, author of 'The Stone Diaries', winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and 'Larry's Party', winner of the Orange Prize.

[Larry's Party](#) OUP Oxford

The Stone Diaries marked a new phase in a literary career already ablaze with achievement. As well as the many international awards it received, including the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Governor General's Award, the book also met with universal critical acclaim and topped bestseller lists around the world. "Carol Shields," raved Maclean's, "has crafted a small miracle of a novel." "The Stone Diaries," said the New York Times Book Review, "reminds us again why literature matters." The San Diego Tribune called *The Stone Diaries* "a universal study of what makes women tick." Now, in *Larry's Party*, Carol Shields does the same for men. Larry Weller, born in 1950, is an ordinary guy made extraordinary by his creator's perception, irony and tenderness. *Larry's Party* gives us, as it were, a CAT scan of his life, in episodes between 1977 and 1997 that flash backward and forward seamlessly. As Larry journeys toward the new millennium, adapting to society's changing expectations of men, Shields' elegant prose transforms the trivial into the momentous. We follow this young floral designer through two marriages and divorces, his interactions with parents, friends and a son. And throughout, we witness his deepening passion for garden mazes -- so like life, with their teasing treachery and promise of reward. Among all the paradoxes and accidents of his existence, Larry moves through the spontaneity of the seventies, the blind enchantment of the eighties and the lean, mean nineties, completing at last his quiet, stubborn search for self. Larry's odyssey mirrors the male condition at the end of our century with targeted wit, unerring poignancy and faultless wisdom.

The Fog Garden HarperCollins UK

UnlessVintage Canada

A Novel Vintage Canada

With a viewpoint that shifts as crisply as cards in the hands of a blackjack dealer, Carol Shields introduces us to two shell-shocked veterans of the wars of the heart. There's Fay, a folklorist whose passion for mermaids has kept her from focusing on any one man. And right across the street there's Tom, a popular radio talk-show host who has focused a little too intently, having married and divorced three times. Can Fay believe in lasting love with such a man? Will romantic love conquer all rational expectations? Only Carol Shields could describe so adroitly this couple who fall in love as thoroughly and satisfyingly as any Victorian couple and the modern complications that beset them in this touching and ironic book.

[Jane Austen](#) Borealis

The literary tradition of New Orleans spans centuries and touches every genre; its living heritage winds through storied neighborhoods and is celebrated at numerous festivals across the city. For booklovers, a visit to the Big Easy isn't complete without whiling away the hours in an antiquarian bookstore in the French Quarter or stepping out on a literary walking tour. Perhaps only among the oak-lined avenues, Creole town houses, and famed hotels of New Orleans can the lust of A Streetcar Named Desire, the zaniness of A Confederacy of Dunces, the chill of Interview with the Vampire, and the heartbreak of Walker Percy's Moviegoer begin to resonate. Susan Larson's revised and updated edition of *The Booklover's Guide to New Orleans* not only explores the legacy of Tennessee Williams and William Faulkner, but also visits the haunts of celebrated writers of today, including Anne Rice and James Lee Burke. This definitive guide provides a key to the books, authors, festivals, stores, and famed addresses that make the Crescent City a literary destination.