



Blonde: A Novel

By Joyce Carol Oates

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One of America's most acclaimed novelists boldly re-imagines one of America's most enduring icons in *Blonde*—the National Book Award-nominated bestseller by Joyce Carol Oates. The legend of Marilyn Monroe—aka Norma Jeane Baker—comes provocatively alive in this powerful tale of Hollywood myth and heartbreaking reality. Marilyn Monroe lives—reborn to tell her untold history; her story of a star created to shine brightest in the Hollywood firmament before her fall to earth. *Blonde* is a dazzling fictional portrait of the intricate inner life of the idolized and desired movie star as only the inimitable Joyce Carol Oates could paint it.

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Blonde: A Novel By Joyce Carol Oates Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Penzler Pick, April 2000: It is surprising and shocking to realize that Joyce Carol Oates, one of the great writers living today, has never made *The New York Times* bestseller list (at least not in recent memory). Far less talented (and less famous) authors have made it while she, in all likelihood not caring much, has been shut out. That could easily change with her new novel, *Blonde*, which may be the masterpiece of a staggeringly distinguished career.

This 700-plus-page tome is based on the life of (you guessed it) Marilyn Monroe. In fictional form, with names changed (husband Joe DiMaggio is referred to as "The Ex-Athlete," Arthur Miller as "The Playwright," John F. Kennedy as "The President," for example), this may be the most accurate and compelling portrait of this beautiful and complex woman that one is ever likely to read.

But why discuss it on the mystery page, you might well be asking yourself. It was the author's intent to structure the book as a mystery, and of course she succeeds, as she seems to succeed at everything she attempts in the world of letters. And there is a murder, apparently arranged by a secret government bureau (FBI? CIA?), although that could be the victim's hallucination. Of course, it could also be both real *and* hallucinated (remember, even paranoids have enemies).

If you like biographies, you'll like *Blonde*. If you like novels, you'll like *Blonde*. If you like mysteries, you'll like *Blonde*. And if you fear that more than 700 pages by one of the greatest of living literary lions might be tough slogging, here's a little excerpt from the chapter titled "The President's Pimp:"

Sure he was a pimp.

But not just any pimp. Not him!

He was a pimp *par excellence*. A pimp *nonpareil*. A pimp *sui generis*. A pimp with a wardrobe, and a pimp with style. A pimp with a classy Brit accent. Posterity would honor him as the President's Pimp.

A man of pride and stature: the President's Pimp.

At Rancho Mirage in Palm Springs in March 1962 there was the President poking him in the ribs with a low whistle. "That blonde. That's Marilyn Monroe?"

He told the President yes it was. Monroe, a friend of his. Luscious, eh? But a little crazy.

Thoughtfully, the President asked, "Have I dated her yet?"

Nothing inaccessible about Joyce Carol Oates, especially in this most readable and relentlessly fascinating study of the lovely woman with whom the whole country was at least a little in love. --*Otto Penzler*

From Publishers Weekly

Atkinson narrates Oates's fictional biography of Marilyn Monroe in an intense, slightly husky voice that immediately grabs and holds the listener's attention. Film actress Atkinson deftly

switches back and forth between Oates's prose, a breathy Monroe (who "comments" periodically throughout the novel), Monroe's brassy mother, Gladys (who soon succumbs to mental illness), and a series of powerful, impatient men who callously exploit the vulnerable young actress. Her only false note is the dialogue of John F. Kennedy, which she reads without any attempt at the president's distinctive Massachusetts accent. Abridging Oates's epic is no small feat, but all the major events in Monroe's life remain in vivid and often heartbreaking detail. The audio also includes an exclusive interview with Oates, who talks about her impressions of Monroe as a person and as an icon, and discusses how she came to write the 700-plus-page novel, which she originally intended as a 175-page novella. Based on the HarperCollins/ Ecco hardcover (Forecasts, Feb. 14). (Apr.)
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From Library Journal

Will our fascination with celebrities never cease? Over the past few years, there has been a proliferation of Marilyn Monroe biographies. Oates, at least, is not focused on the celebrity but on the frightened, orphaned Norma Jean, a figure perfectly in keeping with other lonely outsiders who populate her fiction. Writing in short sections that carry over extremely well to audio, she's able to achieve segues that add depth to the life being explored and fabricated. Details, images, thoughts, and feelings abound, so credible we forget such insights could not have been known to any biographer. And as to facts, Oates explains in an illuminating interview (included on tape six) that, as a fiction writer, she's able to simplify, combining "several" abortions into one, merging various characters. True, there is no suspense in this audiobook, narrated by Jayne Atkinson: none of the haunting stream-of-consciousness Oates so masterfully placed into Mary Jo Kopechne's mouth in her novella *Black Water*, but these tapes have much to offer. Considering the book is 768 pages, even die-hard Oates fans might appreciate this adeptly abridged audio version. Recommended, especially for larger collections. ARochelle Ratner, formerly with "Soho Weekly News," New York
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sylvia Dasilva:

Now a day people that Living in the era exactly where everything reachable by interact with the internet and the resources in it can be true or not need people to be aware of each facts they get. How a lot more to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the reply is reading a book. Reading a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information specifically this *Blonde: A Novel* book since this book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred per cent guarantees there is no doubt in it you know.

Gail Brasfield:

People live in this new time of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the extra time or they will get great deal of stress from both everyday life and work. So , if we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not only a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to you of course your answer can unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative

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John Yates:

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