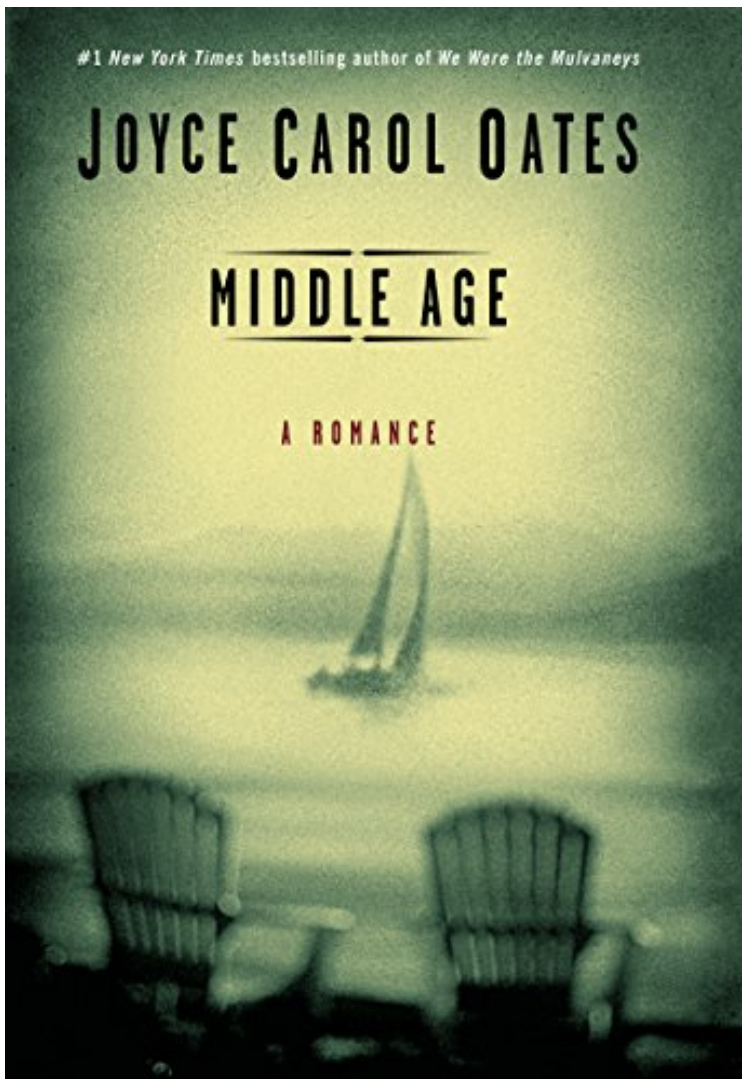


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Middle Age: A Romance: A Romance



Par Joyce Carol Oates
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Description : Description du produitA darkly comic novel from the author of *Blonde* and *We Were the Mulvaney's* In Salthill-on-Hudson, a half-hour train ride from Manhattan, everyone is rich, beautiful, and -- though they look much younger -- middle-age. But when Adam Berendt, a charismatic, mysterious sculptor, dies suddenly in a brash act of heroism, shock waves rock the town. But who was Adam Berendt? Was he in fact a hero, or someone more flawed and human? His loss and the rumor that surface of his possible lovers plunge his friends into grief, confusion, and self-reflection. The women who loved Adam find themselves engaging in life-altering romantic adventures. The men who were Adam's closest friends become utterly transformed in his absence. Adam's lawyer, Roger Cavenagh, who has broken the law for Adam's sake, becomes invlove with an elusive and perhaps treacherous young woman. Marina Troy exiles herself to fullfill a wish Adam had made for her. Lionel Hoffman sets out, unwisely but with great hope, to recapture his lost youth after a lifetime of soulless financial success, even as his wife, Camille, discovers an unspeckable joy close to home. Augusta Cutler, a hitherto sensuous, unreflective woman defiantly endeavors

to solve the mystery of Adam's origins, even if it means losing her marriage and family. *Middle Age: A Romance* is an intimately drawn, richly sympathetic, yet unsparingly comic portrait of the affluent class at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Incisive, insightful, and never predictable, it's a uniquely American sage of self-determination and identity from one of our finest writers of contemporary fiction.

*Presentation de l'diteur*In Salthill-on-Hudson, a half-hour train ride from Manhattan, everyone is rich, beautiful, and -- though they look much younger -- middle-aged. But when Adam Berendt, a charismatic, mysterious sculptor, dies suddenly in a brash act of heroism, shock waves rock the town. But who was Adam Berendt? Was he in fact a hero, or someone more flawed and human? From Publishers Weekly
A romance? The hero dies in the opening pages, adolescents renounce their parents and the grownups aren't true to themselves, much less each other, because they have no idea what they are. In the Lexus-crowded town of Salthill-on-Hudson, husbands and wives share beds in which the linens meet more crisply than the bodies. "How eternal is a single night, and of what eternities are our long marriages composed!" And yet romance is deep in the bones of this soaring epic of renewal and redemption, an Easter of the flesh, a Viagra of the soul. Sculptor Adam Berendt goes into cardiac arrest while saving a child from drowning, and so redeems the 50-somethings of Salthill with his death; he confers the idea and the actuality of grace on their lives. It may be said of Oates's oeuvre that it is a long marriage between author and reader, composed of many eternities. Her sentences seem to contain more sentiment per word than anyone else's. She punishes us with terrible truths: Death lurks at every window and Eros is a demon, worshiped at awful cost. In marriages charged with such import, one must cheat in order to breathe, as Augusta Cutler discovers after Adam's death, when she leaves her husband, Owen, to ferret out the truth about Adam, and herself, and to find respite. Reminiscent of her powerful *Black Water*, but equipped with a happy ending, Oates's latest once more confirms her mastery of the form. (Sept. 10) Forecast: Of late, Oates can do no wrong. Deep in her career, she is pulling out the stops again. Since the success of *Blonde*, and Oprah's February 2001 selection of *We Were the Mulvaney's*, more readers than ever will be gravitating to her new work (and her backlist, too), and they should be thoroughly satisfied with her latest offering. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal
Death has a curious side effect. For some people it is an impetus that awakens one's zest for living; for others it forces open doors to the past; for still others, death is a reminder of one's own mortality, the grief and anger giving way to fear and then eventual renewal. When Adam Berendt dies performing a selfless act, the community of Salt Hill is stunned. Adam was loved by women and respected by men, and his death has a profound impact on those left behind. The affluent community of middle-aged adults finds itself undergoing an unexpected rebirth as they realize that they are headed inexorably to that place Adam has already gone but that they need not go softly. Mary Peiffer reads with deliberate distance, not wanting to influence the lyrical nature of the writing. Her crisp diction is layered with her audible pleasure in the story. A very long audio, but Oates disciples will be pleased by its rendering.

Jodi L. Israel, MLS, Jamaica Plain, MA Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.