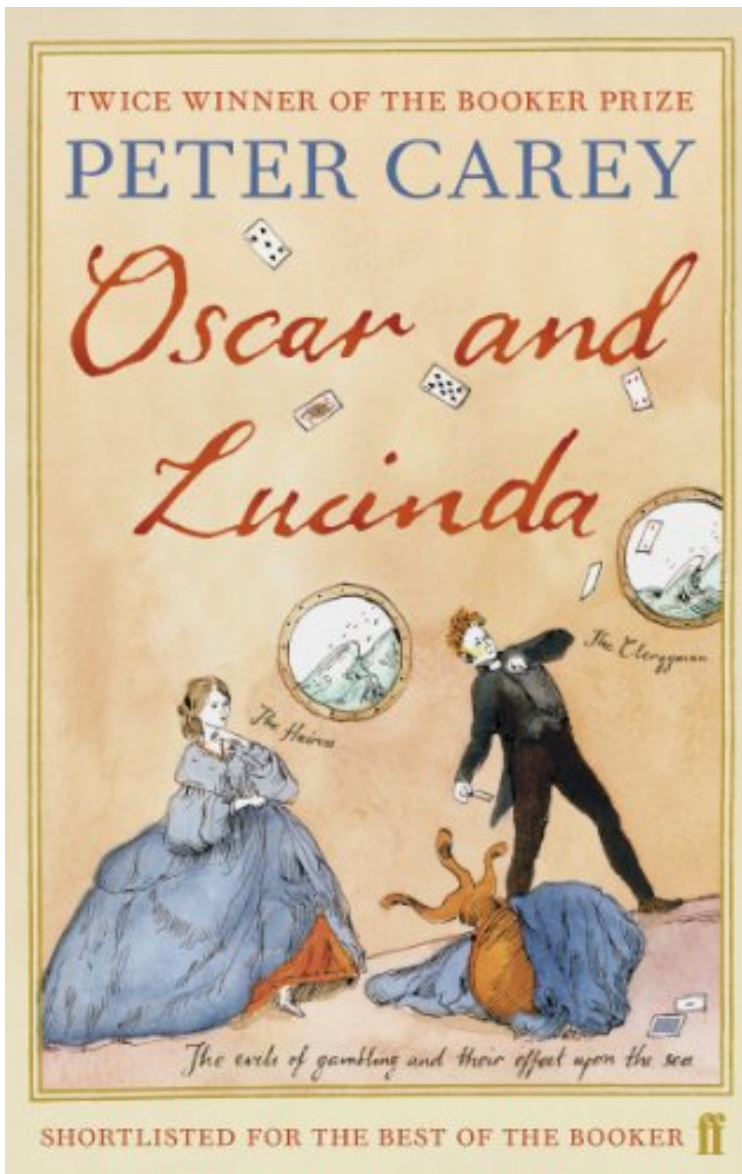


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Oscar and Lucinda (English Edition)



Par Peter Carey
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(Read and download) Oscar and Lucinda (English Edition)

Par Peter Carey : Oscar and Lucinda (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oscar and Lucinda (English Edition):

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Description : Description du produitThe Booker Prize-winning novel--now a major motion picture from Fox Searchlight Pictures.This sweeping, irrepressibly inventive novel, is a romance, but a romance of the sort that could only take place in nineteenth-century Australia. For only on that sprawling continent--a haven for misfits of both the animal and human kingdoms--could a nervous Anglican minister who gambles on the instructions of the Divine become allied with a teenaged heiress who buys a glassworks to help liberate her sex. And only the prodigious imagination of Peter Carey could implicate Oscar and Lucinda in a narrative of love and commerce, religion and colonialism, that culminates in a half-mad expedition to transport a glass church across the Outback.

Prsentation de l'diteurPeter Carey's novel of the undeclared love between clergyman Oscar Hopkins and the

heiress Lucinda Leplastrier is both a moving and beautiful love story and a historical tour de force set in Victorian times. Made for each other, the two are gamblers - one obsessive, the other compulsive - incapable of winning at the game of love. Oscar and Lucinda is now available as a Faber Modern Classics edition..com Oscar Hopkins is a high-strung preacher's kid with hydrophobia and noisy knees. Lucinda Leplastrier is a frizzy-haired heiress who impulsively buys a glass factory with the inheritance forced on her by a well-intentioned adviser. In the early parts of this lushly written book, author Peter Carey renders the seminal turning points in his protagonists' childhoods as exquisite 19th-century set pieces. Young Oscar, denied the heavenly fruit of a Christmas pudding by his cruelly stern father, forever renounces his father's religion in favor of the Anglican Church. "Dear God," Oscar prays, "if it be Thy will that Thy people eat pudding, smite him!" Lucinda's childhood trauma involves a beautiful doll bought by her struggling mother with savings from the jam jar; in a misguided attempt to tame the doll's unruly curls, young Lucinda mutilates her treasure beyond repair. Neither of these coming-of-age stories quite explains how the grownup Oscar and Lucinda each develop a guilty passion for gambling. Oscar plays the horses while at school, and Lucinda, now an orphaned heiress, finds comfort in a game of cards with an odd collection of acquaintances. When the two finally meet, on board a ship bound for New South Wales, they are bound by their affinity for risk, their loneliness, and their awkwardly blossoming (but unexpressed) mutual affection. Their final high-stakes folly--transporting a crystal palace of a church across (literally) godforsaken terrain--strains plausibility, and events turn ghastly as Oscar plays out his bid for Lucinda's heart. Yet even the unconvincing plot turns are made up for by Carey's rich prose and the tale's unpredictable outcome.

Although love proves to be the ultimate gamble for Oscar and Lucinda, the story never strays too far from the terrible possibility that even the most thunderstruck lovers can remain isolated in parallel lives. Extrait 1

The Church If there was a bishop, my mother would have him to tea. She would sit him, not where you would imagine, not at the head of the big oval table, but in the middle of the long side, where, with his back to the view of the Bellinger River, he might gaze at the wall which held the sacred glass daguerreotype of my great-grandfather, the Reverend Oscar Hopkins (1841-66). These bishops were, for the most part, bishops of Grafton. Once there was a bishop of Wollongong, travelling through. There was also a canon, and various other visiting or relieving reverends. Sometimes they were short-sighted or inattentive and had to have the daguerreotype handed to them across the table. My mother crooked her finger as she picked up her teacup. She would not tell the bishops that my great-grandfather's dog-collar was an act of rebellion. They would look at a Victorian clergyman. They would see the ramrod back, the tight lips, the pinched nose, the long stretched neck and never once, you can bet, guess that this was caused by Oscar Hopkins holding his breath, trying to stay still for two minutes when normally what a fidgeter he could not manage a tenth of a second without scratching his ankle or crossing his leg. This was obvious to me, but I said nothing. I sat, tense, my hands locked underneath my thighs. In a moment the Bishop would ignore our big noses and many other pieces of contradictory evidence, and remark on our resemblance to this pioneer clergyman. We lined up: my mother, my brother, me, my sister. We had red hair, long thin necks like twisted rubber bands. My mother was pleased to imagine she looked like the photograph. I would rather have looked like my father. He was not like us at all. He was short, broad-faced, pigeon-chested. He had crinkled eyes and crooked teeth. He laughed and farted. He was a cunning spin bowler. He could roll a cigarette with one hand. He was not like us, and when my mother told the visiting Bishop the story of how Oscar transported the little church of St John's to Bellingen, my father would peel a match with his broad fingernail and look out through the windows to where the great physical monument to his marriage, the Prince Rupert's Glassworks--the roof painted bright red then, in the 1930s--sat high above the Bellinger River. My mother told the story of the church in a way that always embarrassed me. There was an excess of emotion in her style. There was something false. We must have all known it, but we never spoke about it. I could not have named it anyway. She was the same in church: her responses to the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts) were loud and showy in their reverence. My father made jokes about many things, but never about this. My father was jealous of that church, although if you could see it now, it is hard to imagine why. It sits on a patch of flood-prone land beside Sweet Water Creek at Gleniffera tiny weatherboard building with a corrugated iron roof. For fifty years it was painted various shades of brown, and then, in 1970, it was painted a harsh lime green. Now it has gone chalky and sits in that generous valley like something on which lichen has grown. It tucks in underneath the long line of casuarinas that mark the course of the river. High above, behind this line of river, the mountains rise sharply to three thousand feet--the back wall of the valley, so steep there are no tracks, although they say there is an old tin mine up there where they planned to hide the women and children

from the Japanese during the Second World War. I was away at the time, but it seems unlikely to me.

I learned long ago to distrust local history. Darkwood, for instance, they will tell you at the Historical Society, is called Darkwood because of the darkness of the foliage, but it was not so long ago you could hear people call it Darkies' Point, and not so long before that when Horace Clarke's grandfather went up there with his mates—all the old families should record this when they are arguing about who controls this shire—and pushed an entire tribe of aboriginal men and women and children off the edge. These are the same people who now want St John's removed on a low-loader. They want it taken to Bellingen to be used as a Sunday school. My father, for one, would have been appreciative. He was, as I said, jealous of it. He did not like my mother's proprietorial attitude to it. Perhaps if the church had been in the town of Bellingen itself it would have been different. But Gleniffer is ten miles away. She would not hear of attending service in Bellingen.

They must motor out to Gleniffer. During the war they used their petrol ration just going to church. We were all baptized there, confirmed there. I was married there. When my father died he was carried ten miles to Gleniffer for the funeral service, and then ten miles back into town to be buried. My father did not get drunk, but once, after drinking two beers, he told me that my mother walked around the perimeter of St John's like a dog pissing around a fence. But only once did he ever show my mother the intensity of his feelings. 2 The

Advent Wreath There was no torch available for my father because I had dropped it down the dunny the night before. I had seen it sink, its beam still shining through the murky fascinating sea of urine and faeces. My father did not, as he had on an earlier occasion, come out and retrieve it. So when the lights went off in the storm the following night, he had no torch to examine the fuse-box. Lightning was striking all around us. The phone was giving small pathetic rings in response to strikes further along the line. We thought our fuses were blown by a backsurge in the power system. My father took a candle out on the veranda. The candle blew out. When he came back into the house he did not have the fuse with him. We were sitting in silence at the kitchen table. My father said: "Where is the fuse-wire?" I was ten years old. I sat next to my mother. My

sister was sixteen; she sat next to me. My brother was fourteen; he sat next to my sister. I used it," my mother said. People described her as a tall woman. She was not. She was five foot six, but she had an iron will and a suspicious nature and this, combined with her power as an employer in the glassworks, was a tall combination. I could smell the smoking candle. Although my father held this candle, I knew he could not smell it. He had no sense of smell at all. "How did you use it?" I could not see my father. I waited for the next flash of lightning. "How?" He had a hoarse voice. This was somehow connected with the loss of his sense of smell. He syringed his nasal passages with salt water every morning. Often he would ask: "Does it smell?" "It" was his nose. "I used it, my mother said, "to make the Advent wreath." There was no note of apology in her voice. Lightning sheeted the kitchen. She had her head tilted in the air in that disdainful pose

which, in the family mythology, was said to resemble a camel. I felt very tense. I was the one who had helped my mother make this Advent wreath. There had been no holly or ivy, but I had found camphor laurel leaves, which are shiny and green. I knew she had not only used the fuse-wire but had taken the wire netting from my brother's rabbit hutches. The rabbits were, at this moment in shoe boxes in the linen press. She did not think that they would piddle. It did not occur to her. My father lit the candle. He did not approach the table. He did not go back towards the door. He stood in the middle of the room. "Where is it?" he asked. "At church," my mother said. "Please, David, sit down." "Which church?" "What does it matter?" "It matters to me." I cannot explain how frightening this was. My father did not speak like this. He liked life to be quiet. Even when he was dying, he tried to do it in a way that would not upset my mother. St John's, she said. Of course it was St John's. What else would it have been? But for some reason this announcement seemed to

outrage him. He clasped his head. He put the candle on top of the Kelvinator where it promptly went out again. "Oh, Christ," he said. "Jesus, Joseph and fucking Mary." In the lightning I saw my sister's mouth drop open. My mother stood up. She never made gentle or gradual movements. She stood so quickly her chair fell backwards. It crashed to the floor. The phone rang—two short bleats, then stopped. "Kneel," my mother said. She meant for God to forgive my father his blasphemy. We understood her meaning, but we were outside our normal territory. Only "divorce" could have frightened me more, only "sex" been more embarrassing.

"Kneel," she shrieked. Later we knew she was a bully. But when we were children, we felt too many confusing things. Mostly we wanted her to love us. So we came and knelt beside her, even my brother although he liked to stay up late and talk cricket with my father. Then my father knelt too. We stayed there kneeling on the hard lino floor. My brother was crying softly. Then the lights came on. I looked up and saw

the hard bright triumph in my mother's eyes. She would die believing God had fixed the fuse.