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On the Winding Stair

By Joanna Howard

BOA Editions, Limited. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, On the Winding Stair, Joanna Howard, "Howard (In the Colorless Round) upends some traditional literary conventions in these 14 tales of startling description and beauty. Her settings are bucolic, such as an abandoned farm house, a hilltop mansion and the ruins of a cider mill, each depicted in romantic language ('in a lavender twilight'). In the first story, 'Light Carried on Air Moves Less,' a waiflike beauty stumbles upon an erotic book and apes the illustrations, all the while being watched by a curious 'specter.' In 'Captive Girl for Cobbled Horsemen,' the author plays on the 19th-century captive narrative, while 'Seascape' tinkers with the maritime ghost story by featuring a widow who gradually comes to love the captain depicted in a painting. Many of the stories simply showcase lush, serene description, such as 'The Scent of Apples,' in which a recluse tends to his apple orchard, spied on adoringly by his orphan ward. The last story, 'The Tartan Detective,' features all the necessary accoutrements of detective fiction (even 'the listening mechanism concealed in a potted fern!'). Howard's sensuous prose is to be savored for its own sake." -Publishers Weekly "Joanna Howard's...



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Reviews

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