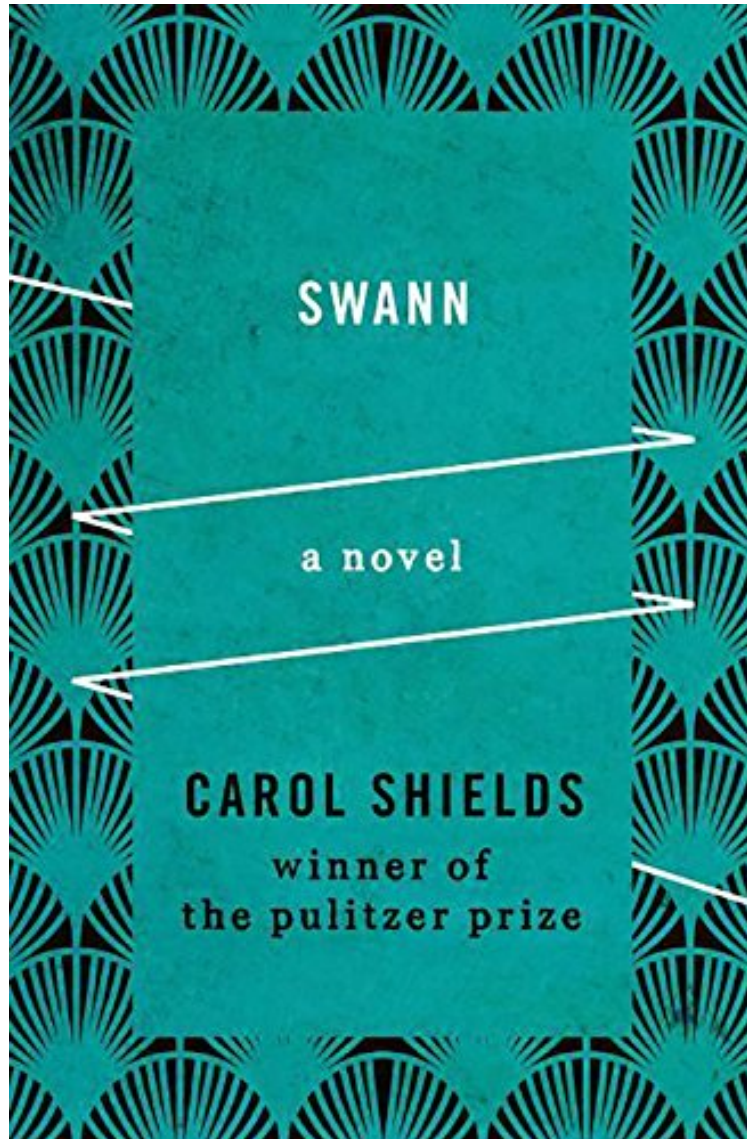


[Download free pdf] Swann: A Novel

## Swann: A Novel

*Carol Shields*

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**Carol Shields : Swann: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Swann: A Novel:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good beginning, going nowhereBy Ethel HicksI did not care for the change from narrative format to a tv script two thirds of the way through.The ending was very predictable. Generally it was disappointing0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy senior tech loverjust an average read.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. An interesting view of writers, publishers, and reviewer, with a

bit of a mystery in the mix. By Alice H. This is an out of the ordinary book--partly a critique on the importance of reviewers and reviews, and partly a glimpse into life in a Canadian small town. The actual "mystery" involved is really not a critical part of the story and the solution of that mystery is swiftly solved at the end of the book with no real shock to the reader. I would recommend the novel as an interesting look into the world of literature as a commercial enterprise.

Arthur Ellis Best Crime Novel Award Winner: A "funny, poignant, surprising" (Margaret Atwood) literary detective story centering around a murdered poet. Who is Mary Swann?

From Publishers Weekly Viking has wisely decided not to publish this fascinating novel as a mystery, as it was designated in Canada, where it earned excellent reviews. While two (rather bland) mysteries animate the plot, the book's considerable impact is as a combination of psychological novel and satirical comedy of manners that wittily dissects the pretensions of academia. The titular Mary Swann was murdered on the very day she had shown her poems to a publisher who recognized her talent. Fifteen years after her death, a symposium is to take place; the story focuses on four people who will attend: a ferociously engaged feminist scholar who "rediscovered" Swann's poetry, a misanthropic biographer committed to writing about Swann, a silly spinster librarian in the tiny town near Swann's home and the gruff but kindly publisher who issued her works in a limited edition. Each commands a section of the narrative and, in cool, witty prose, Shields artfully conveys their personalities, as well as the distortions each has made, for their own reasons, in Swann's life and work. (Meanwhile, however, a thief is systematically stealing every extant copy of her book.) In the end, Swann's life remains unknowable, though by now completely altered by her devotees' speculation and obfuscation. Adroitly illuminating the chasm between appearance and reality, this intelligent, provocative novel is sure to pique readers' interest in Shields's earlier work, *Various Miracles*, just reissued by Penguin. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* Mary Swann, a fictitious poet, was brutally murdered by her husband; her poems were published posthumously. Some years later, as this novel opens, a group of scholars meets for a Swann Symposium. We follow four of the participants as they prepare for the meeting: Sarah Maloney, brilliant young feminist scholar; Morton Jimroy, literary biographer; Rose Hindmarch, librarian; and Frederic Cruzzi, small-town journalist and publisher. Each distorts a different aspect of the life and work of Mary Swann. This novel delightfully satirizes academia and the literary world, wryly exploring the notion of textual criticism. Shields is well known in Canada; Swann should make her better known in her native United States. - Mary Margaret Benson, *Linfield Coll. Lib., McMinnville, Ore.* Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. "One of the best novels I have read. . . . Deft, funny, poignant, surprising and beautifully shaped—in total command of itself and its language." —Margaret Atwood