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O Caledonia: A Novel

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ISBN-13: 9781668004616

In the tradition of Shirley Jacksons We Have Always Lived in the Castle, a darkly humorous modern classic of Scottish literature about a doomed adolescent growing up in the mid-19th centuryfeaturing a new introduction by Maggie OFarrell, award-winning author of Hamnet. Janet lies murdered beneath the castle stairs, attired in her mothers black lace wedding dress, lamented only by her pet jackdaw... Author Elspeth Barker masterfully evokes the harsh climate of Scotland in this atmospheric gothic tale that has been compared to the works of the Bronts, Edgar Allan Poe, and Edward Gorey. Immersed in a world of isolation and loneliness, Barkers ill-fated young heroine Janet turns to literature, nature, and her Aunt Lila, who offers brief flashes of respite in an otherwise foreboding life. People, birds, and beasts move through the background in a tale that is as rich and atmospheric as it is witty and mordant. The familys mottoMoriens sed Invictus (Dying but Unconquered) a well-suited epitaph for wild and courageous Janet, whose fierce determination to remain steadfastly herself makes her one of the most unforgettable protagonists in contemporary literature.

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O Coût 577 EUR (€)			
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