



BNC RESEARCH

Alice Munro, At Home And Abroad: **How The Nobel Prize In Literature Affects Book Sales**



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PREPARED BY BOOKNET CANADA STAFF

ALICE MUNRO, AT HOME AND ABROAD: HOW THE NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE AFFECTS BOOK SALES

With publications dating back to 1968, Alice Munro has long been a Canadian literary sweetheart. Throughout her career she has been no stranger to literary awards; she's taken home the Governor General's Literary Award (1968, 1978, 1986), the Booker (1980), the Man Booker (2009), and the Giller Prize (1998, 2004), among many others.

On October 10, 2013, Canadians were elated to hear that Alice Munro had won the Nobel Prize in Literature. Since the annual award was founded in 1901, it has been awarded to 110 Nobel Laureates, but Munro is the first Canadian—and the 13th woman—ever to win.

In order to help publishers ensure they have enough books to meet demand if one of their titles wins an award, BookNet Canada compiles annual literary award studies examining the sales trends in Canada for shortlisted and winning titles. So as soon as the Munro win was announced, the wheels at BookNet started turning. What happens when a Canadian author receives the Nobel Prize in Literature? How much will the sales of their books increase in Canada? And will their sales also increase internationally?

To answer these questions, BookNet Canada has joined forces with Nielsen Book to analyze Canadian and international sales data for Alice Munro's titles. Nielsen has kindly provided sales information from Australia, India, Italy, New Zealand, Ireland, the United States, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom while BookNet Canada has provided detailed information for Canada.

First, a few details on methodology...

- With ebook data reporting lags and the lack of access to both national and international ebook data, sales are limited to hardcover and paperback print format only.
- Data included is for the eight-week period from the week ending September 21 through to the week ending November 10, 2013, inclusive. We have made a comparison between the time period prior to the announcement of the Nobel Prize in Literature and the three weeks following. This approach allows us to set a benchmark for sales and follow the trending for the period following.
- Analysis is limited to titles that were available and selling two weeks prior to the award announcement.
- While both BNC SalesData (BookNet Canada) and BookScan (Nielsen) are very comprehensive reporting systems, sales numbers are limited to reporting stores only. The percentage of sales coverage will vary from country to country.

WHAT A WIN CAN DO FOR BOOK SALES

In order to analyze the effect of the Nobel Prize in Literature, we have totaled up weekly sales in each country for all Alice Munro hardcover and paperback titles and compared the weekly cumulative sales over an eight-week period. The results are considerable both in Canada and internationally. When comparing sales in the week ending September 21, 2013 to the week ending October 19 (the week after the win), we find that the percent increase was anywhere between 369% in Australia and a staggering 4424% in Canada.

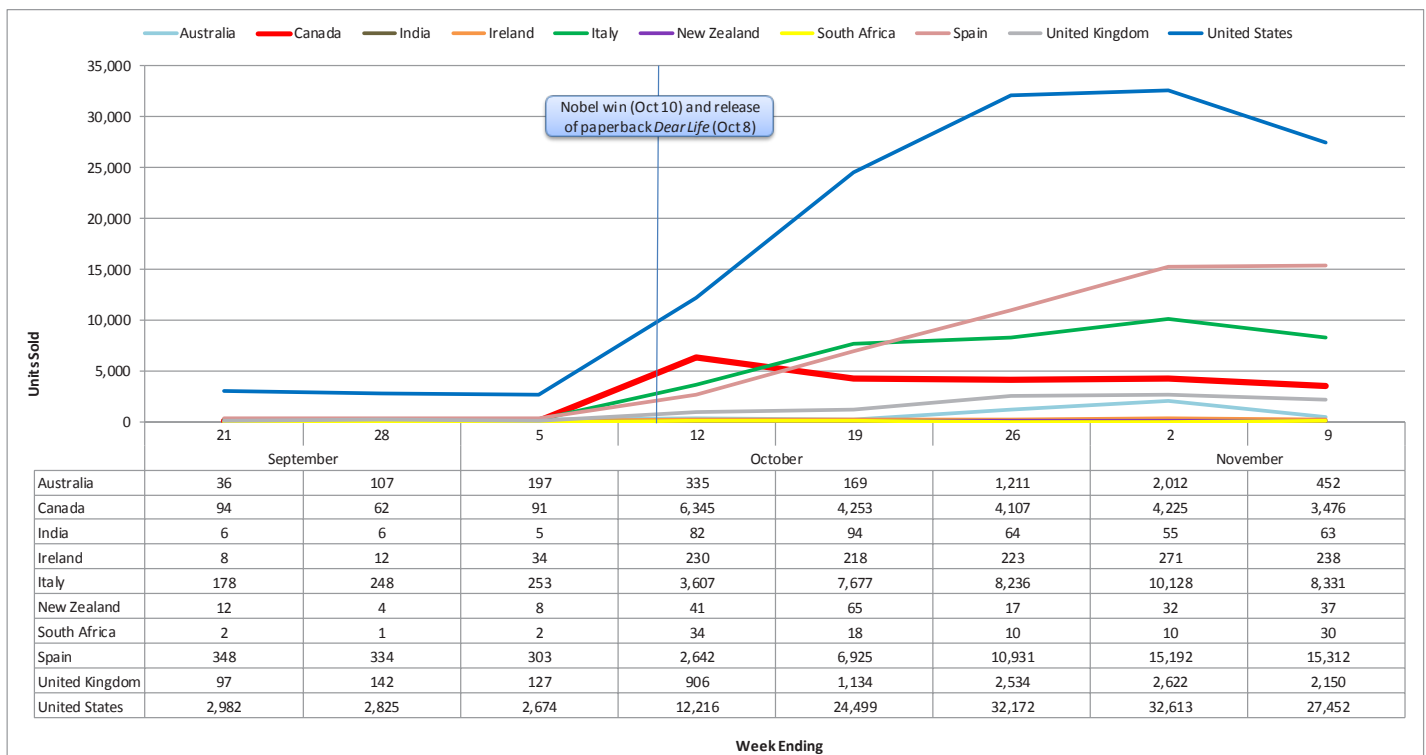
	Australia	Canada	India	Ireland	Italy	New Zealand	South Africa	Spain	United Kingdom	United States
Change between Sept 21 and Oct 19	369%	4424%	1467%	2625%	4213%	442%	800%	1890%	1069%	722%
Change between Sept 21 and Oct 26	3264%	4269%	967%	2688%	4527%	42%	400%	3041%	2512%	979%

The increase in Canadian sales was immediate and substantial, with the largest number of Canadian units sold the week of the award win. During that week, sales increased from 94 units to a height of 6,345 units for all of Munro’s titles, a 6650% increase.

One important consideration is the fact that Alice Munro’s most recent book, *Dear Life*, was released in paperback in early October 2013 — just weeks, if not days, before she was awarded the Nobel Prize on October 10. In the United States and in Canada, *Dear Life* was released on October 8, just two days prior to the announcement. While this likely played a part in exacerbating the increase, it also means that there was likely more stock on hand in bookstores, which only serves to fulfill greater demand.

While Canada saw the largest percent increase for most weeks it is, perhaps unsurprisingly, the United States that saw the biggest spike in units sold, increasing from slightly less than 3,000 units to over 32,600 units in the week ending November 2.

VOLUME SOLD FOR ALL ALICE MUNRO TITLES



One consideration when evaluating sales is stock availability. In countries such as Australia, the increase in sales was delayed by several weeks, likely due to a lack of availability. Similarly in Italy, while we see a continued growth in sales, the highest spike takes place three weeks after the win — again, likely due to availability issues. Even in Canada, there was a flurry of retailers needing to quickly replenish stock. One *Globe and Mail* article outlined that although retailers were caught short, in the case of Alice Munro, it is much easier for Canadian retailers to quickly and easily re-stock titles.¹

Of the reporting countries, all but two are reporting English-language editions of Munro books. Sales in Spain and Italy are primarily (but not entirely) comprised of translations of Alice Munro titles and the results are staggering — between the weeks of September 21 and October 26, Italy saw an increase of 4527% while Spain's was 3041%.

CANADIAN LITERARY AWARD COMPARISON

In comparison to other major national literary fiction awards in Canada, the increase in sales from the Nobel Prize is very significant. As mentioned, the increase for the Nobel Prize was 4424%.

For the 2012 award period, comparing sales during the week of the shortlist announcement to the week of the win for some of the major fiction awards we find:

Canada Reads	4465%
Governor General's Award for Fiction	211%
Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize	1085%
Scotiabank Giller Prize	6731%

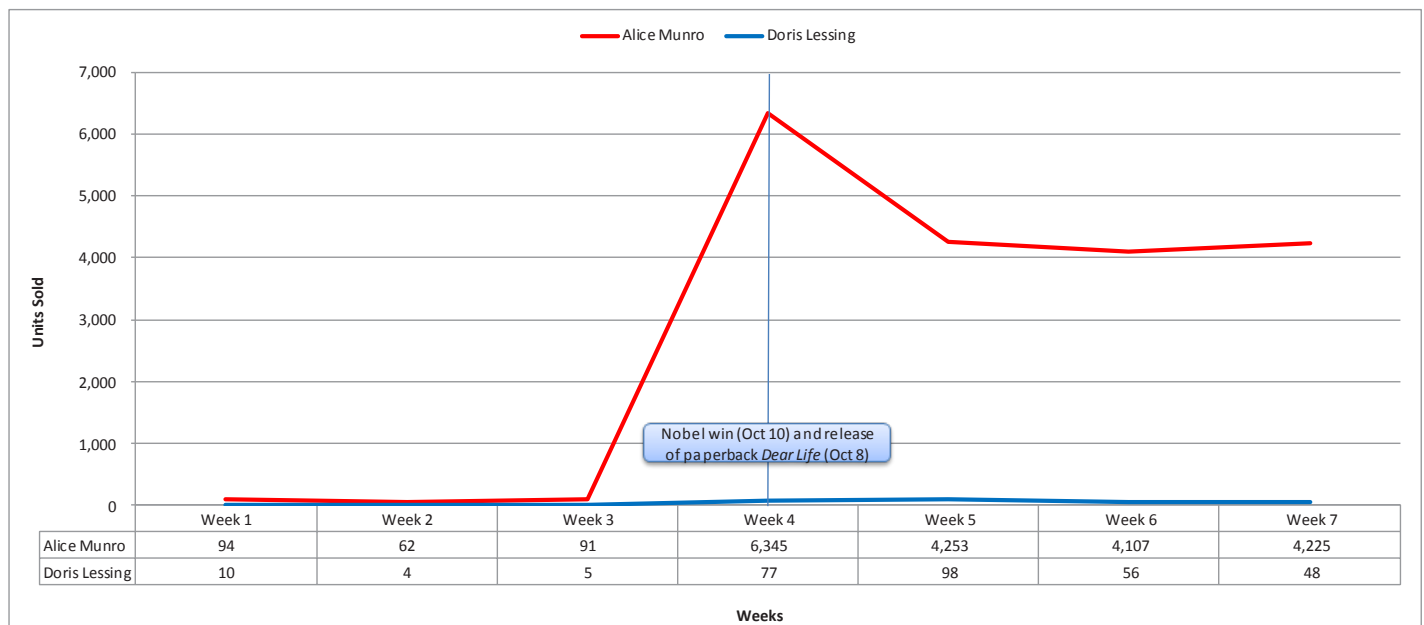
1 Ann Hui, "Book sellers, caught off guard by Alice Munro's Nobel Prize, scramble to stock shelves," *The Globe and Mail*, October 10, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books-and-media/canadian-book-sellers-caught-off-guard-by-alice-munros-nobel-prize-scramble-to-stock-shelves/article14810219/>

BookNet Canada has an agreement with our publishers that we do not publicly release sales information on individual titles, so as a result we present our analysis as a percent increase. When dealing with percent increases we see considerable differences title-by-title and week-by-week. A book selling 5 copies that increases to 50 copies after a win sees an increase of 900%, whereas if it had been selling 10 copies and increased to 50 copies, the increase is only 400%. Percent increase is going to vary considerably depending on a title's availability and position in the market prior to any award win.

PAST NOBEL WINNERS

BNC SalesData has tracked book sales within Canada since late 2005. We found that between 2005 and 2012, there were several Nobel award-winners whose translations were not available in Canada until after the Nobel win. One winning author we are able to track is Doris Lessing, who won in 2007. The sum of Doris Lessing's sales increased 670% in the week of the win and up to 1780% four weeks after the win. The United States also saw significant increases, with sales of *The Golden Notebook* increasing to 1,100 copies per week from less than 50 in prior weeks.²

CANADIAN SALES: LESSING AND MUNRO



2 Motoko Rich, "Nobel prize lifts Lessing sales," *The New York Times*, October 18, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/18/books/18arts-NOBELPRIZELI_BRF.html?_r=0

CONCLUSION

To Alice Munro we would like to send a virtual high five and a bear hug. Your win has not only increased book sales throughout Canada and internationally, but also caused ripple effects throughout the publishing industry. Perhaps this is a sign that Canadian literature has finally come of age alongside the more established canon of English and American literature. It is our hope that Canadian authors and works receive increasing recognition around the world, and that more countries join Italy and Spain in adding translations of Canadian books to their publishing programs. Canadian literature is deserving of a wider audience, both at home and abroad.

In addition, the benefits of winning a Nobel Prize in Literature extend beyond the nationality of the winner. As barriers of distance and language shrink and the global marketplace becomes ever smaller, literary awards play an increasingly significant role in celebrating and supporting literary culture around the world, and in introducing authors to ever-wider audiences.

APPENDIX

AUSTRALIA	
Title	ISBN
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780099458357
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780679732716
Carried Away	9781841593029
Carried Away: A Selection of Stories: Everyman's Library Classics & Cont	9780307264862
Dance of the Happy Shades	9780099273776
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Dear Life	9780307596888
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780307743725
Friend of My Youth	9780099820604
Friend of My Youth: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780679729570
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage: Stories: Vintage Co	9780375727436
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Lives of Girls and Women: King Penguin S.	9780140059960
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780099287865
Love of a Good Woman, The: Stories	9780375703638
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780679732709
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780099458364
New Selected Stories	9780701179885
Open Secrets	9780099459712
Progress of Love, The	9780099741312
Progress of Love, The: Vintage Contemporaries	9780375724701
Runaway	9780099472254
Runaway	9781400077915
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Selected Stories	9780099732419
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You: 13 Stories: Vintage	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
Too Much Happiness: Vintage International	9780307390349
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998
View from Castle Rock, The: Vintage International	9781400077922
Vintage Munro: Vintage Original	9781400033959

CANADA	
Title	ISBN
Dance of the Happy Shades: And Other Stories	9780143051435
Dear Life	9780143180661
Dear Life	9780771064869
Dear Life	9781410455949
Friend of My Youth	9780143055013
Friend of My Youth	9780140143195
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage: Stories	9780143054542
Lives of Girls and Women	9780143051442
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Lives of Girls and Women	9780140256116
Lives of Girls and Women	9780070929326
Love of a Good Woman, The: Stories	9780140281941
Love of a Good Woman, The: Stories	9780375703638
Love of a Good Woman, The: Stories	9780771066856
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780143056058
My Best Stories	9780143170396
No Love Lost	9780771034817
Open Secrets: Stories	9780143054993
Progress of Love, The	9780143054979
Progress of Love, The	9780375724701
Runaway	9780143050711
Runaway	9781400077915
Runaway	9780143177395
Selected Stories	9780679766742
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You: Thirteen Stories	9780143054986
Too Much Happiness	9780143170990
Too Much Happiness	9780143171720
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
View from Castle Rock, The	9780143055631
View from Castle Rock, The	9780143177401
View from Castle Rock, The	9781400077922
Who Do You Think You Are?	9780143054955

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

INDIA	
Title	ISBN
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780099458357
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780679732716
Carried Away	9781841593029
Carried Away: A Selection of Stories: Everyman's Library Classics & Cont	9780307264862
Dance of the Happy Shades	9780099273776
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life	9780307596888
Dear Life: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780307743725
Friend of My Youth	9780099820604
Friend of My Youth: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780679729570
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage: Stories: Vintage Co	9780375727436
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780099287865
Love of a Good Woman, The: Stories	9780375703638
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780099458364
New Selected Stories	9780701179885
Open Secrets	9780099459712
Open Secrets: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780679755623
Progress of Love, The	9780099741312
Queenie	9781781253175
Runaway	9781400077915
Runaway	9780099472254
Runaway: Stories	9781400042814
Selected Stories	9780679446279
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You: 13 Stories: Vintage	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780099552444
Too Much Happiness: Vintage International	9780307390349
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998
View from Castle Rock, The: Stories	9781400042821
View from Castle Rock, The: Stories: Basic	9780786294961
View from Castle Rock, The: Vintage International	9781400077922
Vintage Munro: Vintage Original	9781400033959

IRELAND	
Title	ISBN
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780099458357
Carried Away	9781841593029
Dance of the Happy Shades	9780099273776
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780307743725
Friend of My Youth	9780099820604
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780099287865
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780099458364
New Selected Stories	9780701179885
Open Secrets	9780099459712
Progress of Love, The	9780099741312
Queenie	9781781253175
Runaway	9780099524298
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Selected Stories	9780099732419
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998

ITALY	
Title	ISBN
Beggar Maid, The	9780099458357
Chi ti credi di essere?	9788806183530
Danza delle ombre felici	9788806175948
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life	9780307596888
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
In fuga	9788806180737
In fuga	9788806171834
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780099287865
lune di Giove, Le	9788806204228

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

ITALY (CONTINUED)

Title	ISBN
lune di Giove, Le	9788806183523
Nemico, amico, amante...	9788806174682
Nemico, amico, amante...	9788806165918
percorso dell'amore, Il	9788806186432
percorso dell'amore, Il	9788806175979
Racconti	9788804614012
Runaway	9780099472254
Runaway	9781400077915
Segreti svelati	9788806182410
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Selected Stories	9780099732419
sogno di mia madre, Il	9788806175153
sogno di mia madre, Il	9788806153427
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780099552444
Troppa felicità	9788806217488
Troppa felicità	9788806200787
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998
vista da Castle Rock, La	9788806196431
vista da Castle Rock, La	9788806175955

NEW ZEALAND

Title	ISBN
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
New Selected Stories	9780701179885
Open Secrets	9780099459712
Runaway	9780099472254
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998

SOUTH AFRICA

Title	ISBN
Dance of the Happy Shades: And Other Stories	9780679781516
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life	9780307596888
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Dear Life: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780307743725
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage: Stories: Vintage Co	9780375727436
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780099458364
Progress of Love, The: Vintage Contemporaries	9780375724701
Runaway	9780099472254
Runaway	9781400077915
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Selected Stories	9780099732419
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You: 13 Stories: Vintage	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
Too Much Happiness: Vintage International	9780307390349

SPAIN

Title	ISBN
Amistad de juventud	9788490329344
Amistad de juventud	9788499086675
Amistad de juventud (ebook)	9788499896472
Amor de una mujer generosa, El	9788432310850
Amor de una mujer generosa, El	9788498674637
Away From Her	9780307386694
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life	9780701187842
Demasiada felicidad	9788426418432
Demasiada felicidad	9788499893778
Demasiada felicidad (ebook)	9788426420558
Escapada	9788478714049
Escapada	9788498675825
Estimada vida	9788473291743

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

SPAIN (CONTINUED)	
Title	ISBN
lunas de Jupiter, Las	9788499086668
Massa felicitat	9788473291507
Mi vida querida	9788426421395
Odio, amistad, noviazgo, amor, matrimoni	9788479019655
Odio, amistad, noviazgo, amor, matrimoni	9788489662872
progreso del amor, El	9788474449952
progreso del amor, El	9788490062364
progreso del amor, El	9788498676389
Progress of Love Death By Landscape, The	9788484436799
Runaway	9780099472254
Secretos a voces	9788498670707
Secretos a voces	9788498677683
Secretos abiertos	9788474449761
Secrets De Polichinelle	9782757830819
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
Too Much Happiness	9780307390349
Tricks: Limitierte Sonderausgabe	9783596510474
vida de las mujeres, La	9788499898582
vida de las mujeres, La (ebook)	9788426421517
View From Castle Rock, The	9780307386656
vista desde Castle Rock, La	9788492966028
vista desde Castle Rock, La	9788498670523
Was ich dir schon immer sagen wollte	9783908777564
Zorion Handiegia	9788493761929
Zu viel Glueck	9783596186860

UNITED KINGDOM	
Title	ISBN
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780099458357
Carried Away	9781841593029
Carried Away: A Selection of Stories: Everyman's Library Classics	9780307264862
Dance of the Happy Shades	9780099273776
Dear Life	9780099578635
Dear Life	9780701187842
Dear Life	9780099578642
Dear Life: Stories: Vintage Contemporaries	9780307743725
Friend of My Youth	9780099820604
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780099422747
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Lives of Girls and Women: The Flats Road; Heirs of the Living Body	9780140256116
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780099287865
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780099458364
Nemico, amico, amante...	9788806174682
New Selected Stories	9780701179885
Open Secrets	9780099459712
Progress of Love, The	9780099741312
Queenie	9781781253175
Runaway	9780099472254
Selected Stories	9780099541097
Selected Stories	9780099732419
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You: 13 Stories: Vintage	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780099524298
Too Much Happiness	9780701183059
View from Castle Rock, The	9780099497998
Vintage Munro: Vintage Original	9781400033959

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

UNITED STATES	
Title	ISBN
Alice Munro's Best: Selected Stories	9780771065200
Away From Her	9780307386694
Beggar Maid, The: Stories of Flo and Rose	9780679732716
Carried Away: A Selection of Stories	9780307264862
Dance of the Happy Shades: And Other Stories	9780679781516
Dear Life	9780307596888
Dear Life: Stories	9780307743725
Dear Life: Stories	9781410455949
Friend of My Youth: Stories	9780679729570
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780375413001
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780786242313
Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage	9780375727436
Lives of Girls and Women	9780375707490
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780375703638
Love of a Good Woman, The	9780375403958
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780394529523
Moons of Jupiter, The	9780679732709
Open Secrets: Stories	9780679755623
Open Secrets: Stories	9780679435754
Progress of Love, The	9780140098792
Progress of Love, The	9780375724701
Runaway	9781400077915
Runaway: Stories	9781400042814
Selected Stories	9780679766742
Selected Stories	9780679446279
Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You	9780375707483
Too Much Happiness	9780307390349
Too Much Happiness	9781602856462
Too Much Happiness	9780307269768
Too Much Happiness	9780771065293
View from Castle Rock, The	9781400077922
View from Castle Rock, The: Stories	9781400042821
View from Castle Rock, The: Stories	9780786294961
Vintage Munro	9781400033959

Acknowledgements

ABOUT BOOKNET CANADA

BookNet Canada is the not-for-profit agency created by the Canadian book industry and the Department of Canadian Heritage to facilitate improvements in the book industry supply chain. It provides services and develops standards and certification in areas including electronic commerce via EDI (Electronic Document Interchange), bibliographic data, and analysis of point-of-sales and other supply chain data.

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