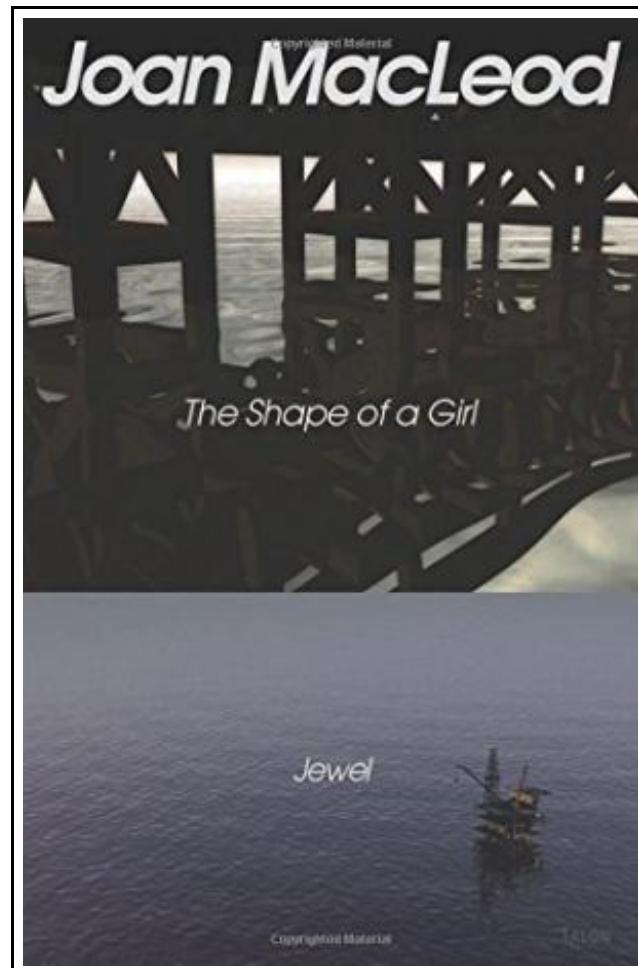


## The Shape of a Girl / Jewel



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### Reviews

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Talon Books, Canada. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Shape of a Girl / Jewel, Joan MacLeod, In an imaginary letter to an absent older brother, Braidie struggles to understand the torture and killing of a teenage girl by a group of her school-mates. MacLeod's young protagonist enters all the bright open avenues of peer-group play and the dark blind alleys of individual and collective terror, as she discovers within herself both the capacity for and the conflict between impulses of good and evil. In thinking back on the history of her own tight-knit group of friends, she begins to see how in the excitement of belonging to a ritualized, secret collective, the self is created by the increasing dehumanization of the other--of both the bully and the victim. The Shape of a Girl goes far beyond a simple dramatization of the seemingly inexplicable code of silence and tacit complicity which surrounded the sensationalized Reena Virk murder in 1997 on which the play is based. It speaks eloquently and compassionately to a world increasingly dominated by all forms of collectivised and ritualized tribalist hatred, and offers the embrace of trust as the only way out of this circle of violence. Jewel is also based on a real-life catastrophe--the sinking of the Ocean Ranger, an oil rig off the coast of Newfoundland, on Valentine's Day, 1982. Three years later, a widow, Marjorie Clifford, at home in her trailer in Fort St. John, British Columbia, begins to take the first step in understanding that the humanity of love, in all of its tentative frailty, uncertainty and promise, can free a life paralyzed and dominated by loss.

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