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30 April 1995

Dear Jeremy Beck,

Thanks so much for the music and the tape. (I've been playing the music, to the extent to which I'm capable--piano is one of my first loves, and what I conspicuously lack in talent I intermittently compensate for in enthusiasm.) The score is fascinating, very dramatically and subtly presented. In the opera, we're beginning at the end-- Kelly in the submerged car. I like the calm inevitability of much of this music and admire the severe editing you've done.

Please give my warmest regards to Jean McDonald, who has a thrillingly beautiful voice, and to Robin Guy, who plays piano as I wish I could. And, again, many thanks for the experience of hearing BLACK WATER in this new, re-imagined mode.

(If you're in the East, and the opera does in fact get performed, at the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia, April or May 1996, I hope you'll attend as my guest.)

Very best wishes,

*Joyce Carol Oates*

(A very long time ago, as an undergraduate at Syracuse University, I was a student of an excellent young philosophy instructor named Debbins, who, I think is on your faculty now. Please give him my warmest regards, too. My exhilarating introduction to Plato, Kant, Nietzsche et al.!)

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"JCO" and I

for Jeremy Beck -  
with much admiration  
for your beautiful and  
haunting composition

Black Water, and  
warmest best wishes -  
Joyce Carol  
Oates

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