



**OLAF OLAFSSON** was born in Reykjavík, Iceland, in 1962. He studied physics as a Wien scholar at Brandeis University. He is the author of five previous novels, *The Journey Home*, *Absolution*, *Walking into the Night*, *Restoration*, and *One Station Away*, and a story collection, *Valentines*. He was an executive vice president of Time Warner and lives in New York City with his wife and three children.

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PRAISE FOR  
*THE SACRAMENT*

*"The Sacrament* is a miraculous novel. A delicate, literary page-turner, narrated by an unforgettable character whose life the reader will long remember after the last page is turned. With austere and beautiful prose, Olafsson has written a novel full of love, mystery, and regret. Fantastic."

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"[A] gripping, masterfully constructed story toward redemption and justice."

—*BOOKLIST*

"A mesmerizing and powerful look at abuse in the Catholic Church... an astounding dénouement, delves into the balance between justice and vengeance, and the power of conviction, absolution, and redemption.

This is an incisive novel." —*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY*

"It's a rare story that marries the suspense of a mystery with depth of thought, but in *The Sacrament*, Olaf Olafsson manages this alliance with a scientist's mind and an artist's eye. The suspense lies in the excavation of a suspicious, twenty-year-old death. The thought, in the examination of memory. Since no one ever remembers anything accurately, memory inevitably becomes an act of faith—a fitting exercise for the nun at the center of this thrilling, gripping tale, and for the young man who seeks the truth from her, returning her to the scene of the crime. The back-and-forth of the narration, references to the present and the past deliberately jumbled, creates a perfect delaying tactic for a story about secrets. One reads this novel both eager and wary of knowing its secret fully, like the meaning of a dream." —*ROGER ROSENBLATT*

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THE  
SACRAMENT

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THE  
SACRAMENT

A NOVEL

OLAF OLAFSSON

AUTHOR OF *ONE STATION AWAY*

THE HAUNTING, VIVID STORY OF A NUN WHOSE PAST RETURNS TO HER IN UNEXPECTED WAYS, WHILE SHE INVESTIGATES A MYSTERIOUS DEATH AND A SERIES OF HARROWING ABUSE CLAIMS

A young nun is sent by the Vatican to explore allegations of misconduct at a Catholic school in Iceland. During her time there, on a gray winter's day, a student at the school witnesses the school's headmaster, Father August Frans, fall to his death from the church tower.

Two decades later, the young student—now a grown man haunted by the past—calls the nun back to the scene of the crime. Seeking peace and calm in her twilight years at a convent in France, she has no choice but to make a trip to Iceland again—a trip that brings her former visit to Iceland, as well as her years as a young woman in Paris, powerfully and sometimes painfully to life. During her time in Paris, she had met an Icelandic girl whom she has not seen since, but whose acquaintance changed her life—a relationship she relives all while reckoning with the mystery of August Frans's death and the abuses of power that may have brought it on.

In *The Sacrament*, critically acclaimed novelist Olaf Olafsson looks deeply at the complexity of our past lives and selves, the faulty nature of memory, and the indelible marks left by the joys and traumas of youth. Affecting and beautifully observed, *The Sacrament* is both suspenseful and poignantly written—tinged with the tragedy of life's regrets and the possibilities of redemption, a new work from a novelist who consistently surprises and challenges.