Natsuo Kirino is a Japanese novelist and a leading figure in the recent boom of female writers of Japanese detective fiction. A prolific writer, she is most famous for her 1997 novel, Out, which received the Mystery Writers of Japan Award, Japan's top mystery award, and was a finalist (in English translation) for the 2004 Edgar Award. In addition, Kirino received the 1993 Edogawa Rampo Award for mystery fiction for her debut novel, Kao ni furikakeru ame (Rain Falling on My Face), and the 1999 Naoki Prize for her novel Yawarakana hoho. So far, three of her novels (Out, Grotesque and Real World) have been translated into English. A fourth novel, What Remains, a violent tale of childhood abuse and sexual degradation, enjoyed a considerable readership in Japan. Kirino, however, has expressed doubts that it will do as well in the U.S. market.

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