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Abstract: This paper argues that Umberto Eco had a sophisticated theory of abductive reasoning and that this theory is fundamentally akin to Peirce's both in the analysis and in the justification of this kind of reasoning. The first section expounds the essentials of Peirce's theory of abduction, and explains how Peirce moved from seeing abduction as a kind of reasoning to seeing it as a stage of the larger process of inquiry. The second section deals with one of Eco's paradigmatic examples of abduction, i.e., William of Baskerville's abduction concerning the horse Brunellus in the overture of *The Name of the Rose*, and shows that, just like in Peirce's three-stages model of inquiry, William's abductions are verified by means of deduction and induction. The third section examines the problem of the justification of abductive reasoning, and argues that both Peirce and Eco solved this problem through the idea that the justification of abduction is itself abductive (meta-abduction in Eco, ur-abduction in Peirce).

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