

The Devil's Larder: A Feast

Jim Crace

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A sumptuous, scintillating stew of sixty four short fictions about appetite, food, and the objects of our desire

All great meals, it has been said, lead to discussions of either sex or death, and *The Devil's Larder*, in typical Cracean fashion, leads to both. Here are sixty four short fictions of at times Joycean beauty--about schoolgirls hunting for razor clams in the strand; or searching for soup-stones to take out the fishiness of fish but to preserve the flavor of the sea; or about a mother and daughter tasting food in one another's mouth to see if people really do taste things differently--and at other times, of Mephistophelean mischief: about the woman who seasoned her food with the remains of her cremated cat, and later, her husband, only to hear a voice singing from her stomach (you can't swallow grief, she was advised); or the restaurant known as "The Air & Light," the place to be in this small coastal town that serves as the backdrop for Crace's gastronomic flights of fancy, but where no food or beverage is actually served, though a 12 percent surcharge is imposed just for just sitting there and being seen.

Food for thought in the best sense of the term, *The Devil's Larder* is another delectable work of fiction by a 2001 winner of The National Book Critics Circle Award.



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