



Night at the Fiestas: Stories

Kirstin Valdez Quade

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Winner of the 2015 National Book Critics Circle John Leonard Prize

"[A] sparkling debut collection...features dreamers and schemers whose lives pulsate with wild hopes, hard luck, stunning secrets, and saving grace." ?*Elle*

With intensity and emotional precision, Kirstin Valdez Quade's unforgettable stories plunge us into the fierce, troubled hearts of characters defined by the desire to escape the past or else to plumb its depths. The deadbeat father of a pregnant teenager tries to transform his life by playing the role of Jesus in a bloody penitential Passion. A young man discovers that his estranged father and a boa constrictor have been squatting in his grandmother's empty house. A lonely retiree new to Santa Fe becomes obsessed with her housekeeper. One girl attempts to uncover the mystery of her cousin's violent past, while another young woman finds herself at an impasse when she is asked to hear her priest's confession.

Always hopeful, these stories chart the passions and obligations of family life, exploring themes of race, class, and coming-of-age, as Quade's characters protect, betray, wound, undermine, bolster, define, and, ultimately, save each other.

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