

Butter Honey Pig Bread

Francesca Ekwuyasi

Arsenal Pulp Press (Nov 3, 2020)

Softcover \$19.95 (368pp)

978-1-55152-823-6

In Francesca Ekwuyasi's *Butter Honey Pig Bread*, a Nigerian woman's homecoming stirs bad memories, old hurts, and a chance for new beginnings.

Kehinde has not seen her mother, Kambirinachi, or twin sister, Taiye, in years. After spending so long stewing in her own trauma and resentment, Kehinde now knows the futility of her misplaced grudge. But neither she nor her sister know how to bridge the divide that has grown steadily between them since childhood. They all learn that reconciliation, no matter how desired, does not always come easy.

The narrative cycles through the three women's perspectives. Each picks her own way along the path to healing, but they all realize that, to understand what is happening now, they must examine how they got to this point. Their stories—of Kambirinachi's troubled youth, Taiye's wild hedonism, and Kehinde's struggle for self-acceptance—are compelling portraits of loneliness, belonging, and identity.

Among the defining moments of the women's lives are the ghosts of lost loves and the effect of Kambirinachi's mental illness on all of them. Their efforts to forget take them far from home: to England, to Canada, even to the edge of oblivion. They have kept their sorrows to themselves for so long that they are reluctant to open up. Silence threatens to suffocate their stunted relationships, but hurt and love are both stronger than anger. By the end, fueled by desperation, Kehinde, Taiye, and Kambirinachi are eager, fighting to have their voices heard. Their saga is heartfelt; they refuse to give up on the power of family love, no matter the obstacles.

Punctuated with mouthwatering recipes and a dash of the mystical, *Butter Honey Pig Bread* is a touching novel about the unbreakable bonds of family.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (November / December 2020)

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