

Antarctica by Claire Keegan

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By: Claire Keegan

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Published to great critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, the iridescent stories in Claire Keegan's debut collection, *Antarctica*, have been acclaimed by *The Observer* to be "among the finest contemporary stories written recently in English." In "Antarctica," a married woman travels out of town to see what it's like to sleep with a man other than her husband. "Love in the Tall Grass" takes Cordelia down a coastal road on the last day of the twentieth century to keep a date with her lover that has been nine years in the waiting. "Stay Close to the Water's Edge" tells of a young Harvard student who is pitilessly humiliated by his homophobic stepfather on his birthday. Keegan's writing has a clear vision of unaffected truths and boldly explores a world where dreams, memory, and chance have crippling consequences for those involved. The stories are often dark and enveloped in a palpable atmosphere, and the reader feels that something "big" is going on in each of these carefully sculpted tales. The award-winning *Antarctica*, a *Los Angeles Times* Best Book of 2001, and recipient of the prestigious Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, the William Trevor Prize, and the Martin Healy Award, is a haunting debut. "These stories are diamonds." Emily Robichaud, *Esquire* "That Keegan has a knack for storytelling is proved many times over..." Caitlin Macy, *The New York Times Book Review* "[These] stories ... show Keegan to be an authentic talent with a gimlet eye and a distinctive voice." Amanda Heller, *The Boston Globe* "Reading these stories is like coming upon work of Ann Beattie or Raymond Carver at the start of their careers." Jerry Griswold, *Los Angeles Times*

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