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The Dinner Party: A Novel



Synopsis

This Passover Seder is not just any Passover Seder. Yes, there will be a quick service and then a festive meal afterwards, but this night is different from all other nights. This will be the night the Golds of Greenwich meet the Rothschilds of New York City. The Rothschilds are the stuff of legends. They control banks, own vineyards in Napa, diamond mines in Africa, and even an organic farm somewhere in the Midwest that produces the most popular Romaine lettuce consumed in this country. And now, Sylvia Gold's daughter is dating one of them. When Sylvia finds out that her youngest of three is going to bring her new boyfriend to the Seder, she's giddy. When she finds out that his parents are coming, too, she darn near faints. Making a good impression is all she thinks about. Well, almost. She still has to consider her other daughter, Sarah, who'll be coming with her less than appropriate beau and his overly dramatic Italian mother. But the drama won't stop there. Because despite the food and the wine, despite the new linen and the fresh flowers, the holidays are about family. Long forgotten memories come to the surface. Old grievances play out. And Sylvia Gold has to learn how to let her family go.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sitting at my own family's Passover seder, I smiled to myself thinking of the novel, "The Dinner Party" by Dani Janowitz. Damn, Janowitz nailed it! She captures not only the essence of Passover tradition, but also the aroma, the ambience, the thick air of family dysfunction wafting right along with the matzoh ball soup. Let's just say, reading the novel, I laughed, teared up, felt it all being the connection. Sylvia Gold is a controlling albeit loving, smothering, all-knowing Jewish mother is not only preparing her home for the beloved annual seder for her family, but the clincher is that her youngest daughter may have snagged a Rothschild, and is bringing him and his parents to dinner. It's a meet-eat-greet between the Golds of Greenwich and the Rothschilds of New York City. Old Money versus New. And Sylvia, pulling out all stops, is on it. In the Jewish World, the name Rothschild is synonymous with Kennedy. The uber-powerful banking family with a royal lineage spanning the globe and Jewish history will now be sitting in Sylvia's house, eating at her table. YES, her Table. Sylvia makes the fundamental mistake of changing up her table and her signature dishes that her family waits for all year "to impress the Rothschilds" in hopes of securing them as future machatonim (in-laws). Not surprising, "seeming and being" is in full-force, and all preparations backfire. Sylvia's three adult children "with their own set of problems and secrets" bring more changes to her seder table than Sylvia and her beloved husband-the-doctor (with no real power in his own house) can handle. In other words: The Rothschilds are coming and Sylvia and her family members are losing it! Janowitz captures all of it "the spirit of love, loss, disappointment, acceptance, desire for approval" with laser-sharp precision.

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