



Solace: A Novel

Belinda McKeon

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An “artfully constructed novel, which the author, a playwright, unfurls in lush streams of consciousness” (*The New Yorker*), about a father and son thrown together by tragedy—from the author of *Tender*, McKeon’s new novel coming in 2016.

Set in an Ireland that catapulted into wealth at the end of the twentieth century and then suffered a swift economic decline, Belinda McKeon’s *Solace* is an extraordinarily accomplished first novel about the conflicting values of the old and young generations and the stubborn, heartbreaking habits that mute the language of love.

Tom and Mark Casey are a father and son on a collision course, two men who have always struggled to be at ease with one another. Tom is a farmer in the Irish midlands, the descendant of men who have farmed the same land for generations. Mark, his only son, is a doctoral student in Dublin, writing his dissertation on the nineteenth-century novelist Maria Edgeworth, who spent her life on her family estate, not far from the Casey farm. To his father, who needs help baling the hay and ploughing the fields, Mark’s academic pursuit isn’t work at all. Then, at a party in Dublin, Mark meets Joanne Lynch, a lawyer in training whom he finds irresistible. She also happens to be the daughter of a man who once spectacularly wronged Mark’s father, and whose betrayal Tom has remembered every single day for twenty years.

After the lightning strike of tragedy, Tom and Mark are left with grief neither can share or fully acknowledge. Not even the magnitude of their mutual loss can alter the habit of silence. “A story told with clear-eyed compassion and quiet intelligence about what it is to grow up and grow away, about the difference between ‘here’ and ‘home.’ This is a lovely debut” (Anne Enright, Man Booker Prize–winning author of *The Gathering*).

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