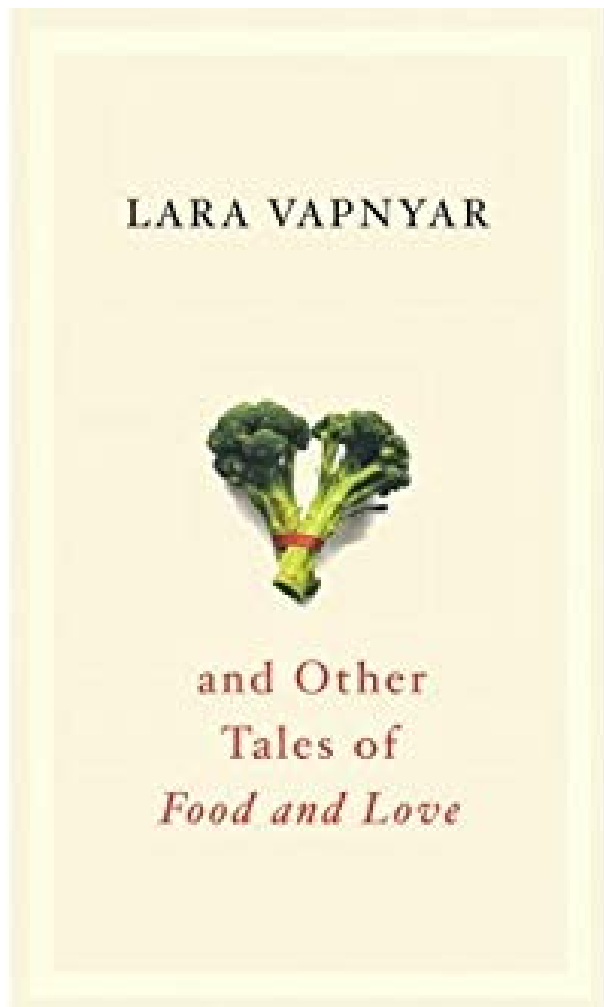


Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love



Author:	Lara Vapnyar
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In a triumphant return to the short story, the form in which she made her extraordinary debut with *There Are Jews in My House*, Lara Vapnyar gives us a delightful new collection in which food and love intersect, along with their overlapping pleasures, frustrations, and deep associations in the lives of her unforgettable characters. From “Broccoli” to “Borscht” to “Puffed Rice and Meatballs,” each of these new stories invites us into the uniquely captivating private worlds of Vapnyar’s Eastern European émigrés. There’s Nina, a recent arrival from Russia, for whom the colorful abundance of the vegetable markets in New York represents her own fresh hopes and dreams.

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Luda and Milena, who battle over a widower in their English class with competing recipes for cheese puffs, spinach pies, and meatballs . . . Sergey, who finds more comfort in the borscht made by a paid female companion than in her sexual ministrations. Each of the women and men who inhabit these witty, tender, and beautifully observed stories needs and longs for the taste and smell of home, wherever--and with

whomever--that may turn out to be. Russian in its wit and in many of its rich details, but American in its insistence on the quest for personal happiness, however provisional and however high the cost, *Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love* masterfully illuminates a very particular facet of desire with entirely charming results.