

The Body of Jonah Boyd: A Novel

David Leavitt



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The brilliant new novel from an author The New York Times has called "one of his generation's most gifted writers."

It's 1969, and Judith "Denny" Denham has just begun an affair with Dr. Ernest Wright, a psychology professor at Wellspring University, who just happens to be her boss. But her position in the Wright household is not merely as a mistress. Ernest's wife, Nancy, has taken Denny under her wing as a four-hand piano partner and general confidante, although Denny can never seem to measure up to Anne, Nancy's best friend from back east. Ernest's eldest son has fled over the Canadian border to escape the draft, while his only daughter has embarked on a secret affair with her father's protégé. The remaining son, Ben, is fifteen, and as delicate and insufferable as only a poetry-writing fifteen-year-old can be.

That autumn, Denny crosses the freeway that separates Wellspring from its less affluent mirror image, Springwell, to spend Thanksgiving with the Wrights and their assortment of strays, including two honored guests: the eagerly anticipated Anne and Anne's new husband, the acclaimed novelist Jonah Boyd. The chain of events set in motion that Thanksgiving will change the lives of everyone involved in ways that none can imagine, and that won't become clear for decades to come.

Hilarious and scorching, David Leavitt's first novel in four years is a tribute to the power of home, the lure of success, the mystery of originality, and, above all, the sisterhood of secretaries. Flawlessly crafted and full of surprises, it is a showcase for Leavitt's considerable skills.

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