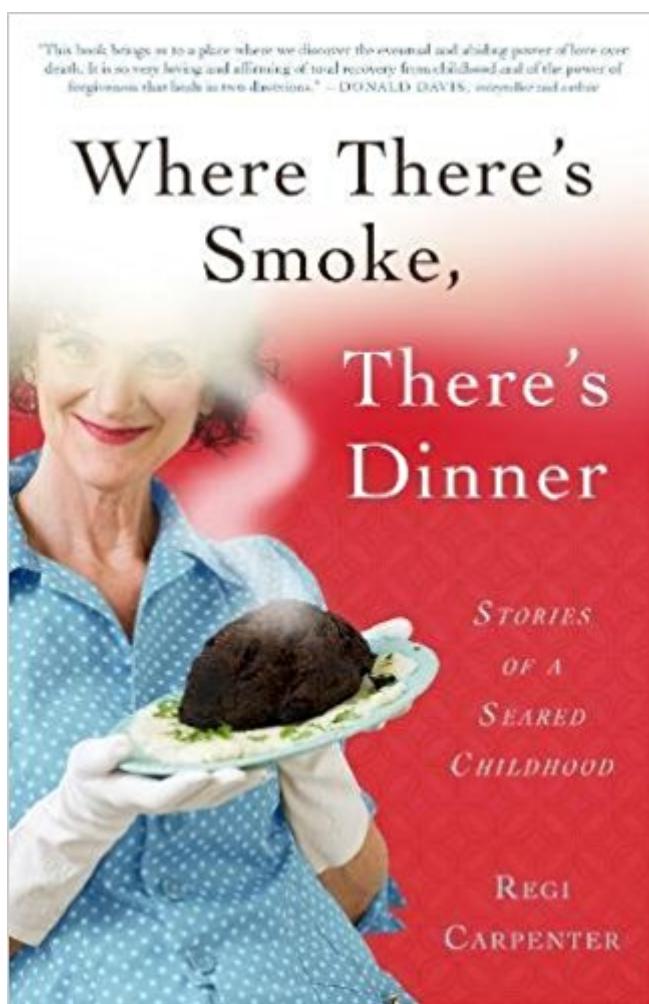


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# Where There's Smoke, There's Dinner: Stories Of A Seared Childhood



## Synopsis

Family: comfort food or a recipe for disaster? Award-winning storyteller and performer Regi Carpenter brings her humor and honesty to print in *Where There's Smoke, There's Dinner*. Regi is the youngest daughter in a family that pulsates with contradictions: religious and raucous, tender but terrible, unfortunate yet irrepressible. These honest tales some hilarious, some heartbreaking celebrate the glorious and gut-wrenching lives of four generations of Carpenters raised on the Saint Lawrence River in Clayton, New York. From teenagers struggling to find their identity to disabled veterans grappling with the aftermath of war and change to the complications and sweetness of love between family members, this collection of linked short stories holds the universal message that life's difficulties are softened by love and fortitude . . . and family."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Regi Carpenter's stories are pure joy. Exquisitely written, funny and deeply moving they are brimming with profound insight into the complex ways families love. I read them over and over and always find something new. Noa Baum, author of *A Land Twice Promised* You don't have to be a St. Lawrence river rat to be mesmerized by Regi Carpenter's work. It transcends time and space to embody the essence of storytelling, connection: with each other, with our histories, and with our own humanity deceptively embedded in flat-out, full-tilt entertainment. She is among the very best of a talent-studded field. Caren Niele, Producer, Adventura Arts and Cultural Center, Adventura, Florida  
--Endorsements

Regi Carpenter is a solo performance artist, author, and performance coach. An award winning performer, Regi has toured her solo shows and workshops in theaters, festivals and schools, nationally and internationally. Regi is the youngest daughter in a family that pulsates with contradictions: religious and raucous, tender but terrible, unfortunate yet irrepressible. These tales celebrate the glorious and gut - wrenching lives of four generations of Carpenter s raised on the Saint Lawrence River in Clayton, New York. Tales of underwater tea parties, drowning lessons and drives to the dump give voice to multi-generations of family life in a small river town with an undercurrent. Swift, unexpected, and powerful as the river itself, Regi's tales are an unexpected gift that promises to leave us longing for more empathic vignettes from this comfortable, compelling voice. Booklist Review of CD Diving and Emerging. Regi is the recipient of the JJ Reneaux Emerging Artist Award, a Leonard Bernstein Teaching Fellowship Award, the Parent's Choice Gold Award, the Parents' Guide to Children's Media Award and the Storytelling World Award. Her performance piece Snap! won the 2012 Boston StorySlam. She teaches storytelling at Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY.

Regi Carpenter, was born in our town, and has been Depauville Free Library's resident storyteller for our children's summer reading program for four years. Lucky us. It would be an understatement to say that she held the children's undivided attention, although, usually, that would be high praise. But the children who eagerly returned each Tuesday morning to hear Regi tell tales were expecting more. They were excited at the prospect of being carried off again and again to wherever Regi was going to take them. With grand gestures, candid expressions, and through the magical voices created for dogs, rabbits, frogs, wicked witches, and beautiful princesses, Regi made the world of her stories real and immediate with characters that howl, kick, and dance. And soon so were the children. It seems to me that the children moved in closer. And leaned in. The longer Regi talked. Her energy and passion were contagious. It was the same when she gave her adult performances, except there were moments when members of the audience were so absorbed in Regi's story that they could not hold back tears. After reading the stories in her book, you, too, will lean in and let her tales carry you off. These are Regi's stories, and with bittersweet humor she connects you to them, to her, and hopefully to others. Regi said once, "I feel kind of like I'm on a mission to show that you don't need anything but yourself, your imagination and your voice to reach people." Sharing her stories so

that others may feel less alone and more connected is her intention. So many people are ostracized, but Regi believes that there is hope for us all. Read her stories; they are riveting.

Great stories. I love the way Carpenter takes you into her hometown on the river, into her home... into her life. I've heard her tell stories on several occasions and she's a great storyteller. Storytellers don't always make good writers. Regi Carpenter blows that statement UP! and scatters the letters of the words all over the place. Great stories, great writing.... humor and tears and love and charm. When a book makes you want to hear more about its subject, the writing is working.

Reading this book made me laugh and gasp at the same time. Regi Carpenter tells stories of Northern New York, and brings wit and wisdom to a difficult life with oh so very real people, making it accessible and understandable to the rest of us. Plus, the writing is exquisite. I love this book!

Loved it! Carpenter captures growing up in the 50's, 60's in a blue collar, Catholic family. The book is rich with detail, the tiny moments making up a childhood, an adolescence and a life. Thoroughly recommend this book..

Made me laugh and cry at the same time. Witty and truthful about the time and place she grew up!

I also grew up on the St Law River and thought this would be an enjoyable book to read, even if parts of it were supposed to be sad. I have not enjoyed this book, the way it is written or the telling of the area.

I loved reading this book, a treasure trove of memories and family history. I am amazed how her childhood memories--from a different time and place than my own, helped me to vividly remember some of the small details of my own childhood, and helped me to change my perspective. These vignettes which describe some seriously challenging hurdles for any family to overcome also clearly point out that in life good comes from the bad. I found her writing engaging and lyrical, and difficult to put down.

Regina Carpenter brings to life a childhood touched by joy, hard times and suffering, and an indescribable magic. Her tales of growing up in her colorful and chaotic family come off the page and transport you to the family living room where she learns the deadly art of self defense, or the St.

Lawrence Seaway where she becomes one with universe. Each story, short but poignant, come together to create a portrait of an incomparable childhood. A moving, life affirming book!

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