



The Three Button Trick: And Other Stories

Nicola Barker

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Nicola Barker, Man Booker Prize–shortlisted author of *Darkmans* and *The Yips* and winner of the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award and Hawthornden Prize, gathers her finest short fiction in this irresistible collection

Audacious, original, clever, poignant—these are just a few words that describe the writing of Nicola Barker, an award-winning author who has been compared to Martin Amis, Julian Barnes, and Margaret Atwood. Now nineteen of her finest short stories have been compiled into one startling, delightfully readable volume.

It takes young Carrie twenty-one years and a chance meeting with an eighty-three-year-old widow to realize she fell victim to her husband’s “three button trick.” The main character in “Wesley” must work through his troubled childhood in a series of episodes involving masses of eels, an imaginary friend named Joy, and an unmentionable incident with an emu-owl. Whether describing erotic encounters behind clothing racks or a kleptomaniac with his organs on the wrong side, these stories never fail to surprise us, entertain us, and make us think.

“Nicola Barker’s is a singular world, a hectic place of uncommon characters and naughty, memorable prose . . . Her style is fast, funny, profound, and sharp.” —*Newsday*

“An astounding writer.” —*Seattle Weekly*

“Barker’s subjects are often raw and irreverently sexy, while her endings are sometimes abrupt, but she never fails to surprise and delight with incisive writing and piercing wit, to say nothing of all the vivid characters inhabiting these rambunctious and witty stories.” —*Publishers Weekly*

Nicola Barker’s eight previous novels include *Darkmans* (short-listed for the 2007 Man Booker and Ondaatje prizes, and winner of the Hawthornden Prize), *Wide Open* (winner of the 2000 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award), and *Clear* (long-listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2004). She has also written two prize-winning collections of short stories, and her work has been translated into more than twenty languages. She lives in East London.

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