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Stand Facing the Stove: The Story of the Women Who Gave America The Joy of Cooking

Anne Mendelson

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In 1931, Irma S. Rombauer, a recent widow, took her life savings and self-published a cookbook that she hoped might support her family. Little did she know that her book would go on to become America's most beloved cooking companion. Thus was born the bestselling *Joy of Cooking*, and with it, a culinary revolution that continues to this day.
In *Stand Facing the Stove*, Anne Mendelson presents a richly detailed biographical portrait of the two remarkable forces behind *Joy* -- Irma S. Rombauer and her daughter, Marion Rombauer Becker -- shedding new light on the classic kitchen mainstay and on the history of American cooking. Mendelson weaves together three fascinating stories: the affectionate though often difficult relationship between *Joy's* original creator, Irma, and her eventual coauthor, Marion; the bitter dealings between the Rombauers and their publisher, Bobbs-Merrill (at whose hands the Rombauers likely lost millions of dollars); and the enormous cultural impact of the beloved book that Irma and Marion devoted their lives to refining, edition after edition. Featuring an accessible new recipe format and an engaging voice that inspired home cooks, *Joy* changed the face of American cookbooks. *Stand Facing the Stove* offers an intimate look at the women behind this culinary bible and provides a marvelous portrait of twentieth-century America as seen through the kitchen window.

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