



Figs of the Imagination: Tales of bairns, wee men, lads and lassies

Alan J. Yates

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The work explores the notion that we are all perceptually branded by the experiences and milieu of early childhood. The author illustrates this with tales set in his native Edinburgh, Scotland during the 1940s and 1950s. Through a series of adventures and misadventures, the young protagonist makes discoveries about life and people, ranging from the inconsistencies and contradictions of adult behavior to learning about mortality. In one episode, the young lad is tricked into having his tonsils removed. As he grows older, he learns about betrayal by adults and authority figures. Poems that reinforce each of these learning themes introduce each chapter and the use of local dialect sharpens the sense of location and social milieu. Exploring the universal themes of the innocence of childhood, "Figs of the Imagination" illustrates how much we are a product of the formative years and how these key life experiences prepare children to become adults.

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