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Sommario/riassunto	A poignant look at empathetic encounters between staunch ideological rivals, all centered around our common need for food. While America's new reality appears to be a deeply divided body politic, many are wondering how we can or should move forward from here. Can political or social divisiveness be healed? Is empathy among people with very little ideological common ground possible? In <i>A Decent Meal</i> , Michael Carolan finds answers to these fundamental questions in a series of unexpected places: around our dinner tables, along the aisles of our supermarkets, and in the fields growing our fruits and vegetables. What is more common, after all, than the simple fact that we all need to eat? This book is the result of Carolan's career-long efforts to create

simulations in which food could be used to build empathy, among even the staunchest of rivals. Though most people assume that presenting facts will sway the way the public behaves, time and again this assumption is proven wrong as we all selectively accept the facts that support our beliefs. Drawing on the data he has collected, Carolan argues that we must, instead, find places and practices where incivility—or worse, hate—is suspended and leverage those opportunities into tools for building social cohesion. Each chapter follows the individuals who participated in a given experiment, ranging from strawberry-picking, attempting to subsist on SNAP benefits, or attending a dinner of wild game. By engaging with participants before, during, and after, Carolan is able to document their remarkable shifts in attitude and opinion. Though this book is framed around food, it is really about the spaces opened up by our need for food, in our communities, in our homes, and, ultimately, in our minds.

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