This paper explores food as a device for magic or realism in the literature of the fantastic. Since Gilgamesh journeyed to find the magical herb of everlasting life in early Mesopotamian mythology, fantasy literature has used settings from the vague to the real. At one end of this spectrum are stories set in an entirely magical world, or in an alternate magical world within a real world. These are the worlds created by Lewis Carroll in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and J.K. Rowling in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone. In these narratives, food may be as magical as the setting. A food label advises Alice to “Eat Me”, and she grows. Harry opens a spell-bound package of candy chocolate frogs that leap onto the window. But not all food is magical in fantasy. In some magical places, food is intentionally real. J.R.R. Tolkien uses food as a method to ground his audience: Hobbits may be fantastical, but the ale and cottage pies are real. Similarly, George R. R. Martin’s Westeros may have dragons, but Sansa eats lemon cakes. At the far end of the setting spectrum is magical realism. Here hints of magic exist in a real world. In Like Water for Chocolate, author Laura Esquivel imbues foods with these magical properties. Tears cried into a wedding cake batter cause mass sickness. This paper argues that food is an important plot device in fantasy literature, either grounding the reader with an aspect of reality, or advancing the magical world.