



The Shoemaker's Wife: A Novel

By Adriana Trigiani

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Beloved *New York Times* bestselling author Adriana Trigiani returns with the most epic and ambitious novel of her career—a breathtaking multigenerational love story that spans two continents, two World Wars, and the quest of two star-crossed lovers to find each other again. *The Shoemaker's Wife* is replete with the all the page-turning adventure, sumptuous detail, and heart-stopping romance that has made Adriana Trigiani, “one of the reigning queens of women’s fiction” (*USA Today*). Fans of Trigiani’s sweeping family dramas like *Big Stone Gap* and *Lucia, Lucia* will love her latest masterpiece, a book Kathryn Stockett, author of *The Help*, calls “totally new and completely wonderful: a rich, sweeping epic which tells the story of the women and men who built America dream by dream.”

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The Shoemaker's Wife: A Novel By Adriana Trigiani Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Kathryn Stockett Interviews Adriana Trigiani



Kathryn Stockett

Photo © Ken Lee

Kathryn Stockett was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. After graduating from the University of Alabama with a degree in English and Creative Writing, she moved to New York City, where she worked in magazine publishing and marketing for nine years. *The Help* is her first novel.

Kathryn Stockett: This is by far your most epic novel to date. How long did it take you to write *The Shoemaker's Wife*?

Adriana Trigiani: I worked on this story for over 20 years as I wrote scripts and novels and had my own family. There are scraps of paper, dinner napkins, and bills with timelines and notes scrawled across them. There are old notebooks filled with my grandmother's musings from 1985. I collected train tickets, copies of ships' manifests, and a silk tag with my grandmother's name from garments she had created. I traveled as far as the Italian Alps and as close as the few blocks it takes me to walk to Little Italy in New York City to capture the historical aspects of the story. All of this went into the novel. It was a delicious gestation period.

Stockett: This is a novel, but it is inspired by a true story—a family story, right?

Trigiani: Yes—my grandparents, Lucia and Carlo. Their love was a dance with fate. It is riddled with near misses against a landscape of such massive world events that it's a wonder they got together at *all*. My challenge was to present their world to the reader so it might feel it was happening in the moment. I wanted the reader to have the experience I had when stories were told to me by the woman who lived them.

Stockett: The novel takes place during the first half of the twentieth century--what is so compelling about this period of time to you?

Trigiani: The cusp of the twentieth century was a time everything was new—cars, phones, planes, electricity, even sportswear, and in each innovation was a kind of explosive potential. No one could predict where all the inventions would lead, people only knew that change was unavoidable.

My grandparents were delighted every time America presented them with something they had never seen before. And my grandparents' sense of wonder never left them, so I tried not to let it leave the page, be it a

cross-country train ride or the first snap of the bobbin on an electric Singer sewing machine.



Adriana Trigiani

Stockett: Through the remarkable story of Enza and Ciro, your novel tells the larger story of the immigrant experience in America.

Trigiani: What a gift immigrants were and are to this country! They bring their talents and loyalty and make our country even greater. My grandparents were proud to be new Americans. Assimilation was not about copying an American ideal, but aspiring to their own version of it. The highest compliment you could pay a fellow immigrant was: he (or she) was a *hard worker*. I hear the phrase *work like an immigrant* said, but really, it's bigger than that—we must also *dream like immigrants*.

Stockett: *The Shoemaker's Wife* seamlessly brings together fictional characters and historical figures—how did the wonderful Caruso enter the novel?

Trigiani: It started with a three-foot stack of vinyl records—my grandmother Lucia's collection of Caruso. Her absolute devotion to The Great Voice lasted her whole life long. I knew, in order to write this novel, I had to fall in love with Caruso too, because he sang the score of my grandparents' love affair.

When Lucia passed, I went to my first opera, seeking understanding and comfort. As the music washed over me, I began to understand why my grandmother was such a fan. The words were Italian, and the emotions were big; nothing was left unexpressed in the music. If only life were that way.

Review

“Within the pages of this novel, Trigiani’s 10th, is a gloriously romantic yet sensible world that seamlessly blends practicality and beauty...built around the staggering cultural and social changes the war years swept in.... Trigiani’s very best...exquisite writing and a story enriched by the power of abiding love.” (*USA Today*)

“I’ve always loved reading Trigiani, but [this] is something totally new and completely wonderful: a rich, sweeping epic which tells the story of the women and men who built America dream by dream. If you’re meeting her work for the first time, get ready for a lifelong love affair. Splendid.” (**Kathryn Stockett, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Help***)

“The breathtaking... historical novel sparkles in exquisite details and vivid descriptions.” (*Huffington Post*)

“[A] great read....Bella.” (*People*)

“Pure pleasure . . . full-bodied and elegantly written.” (*Washington Post Book World*)

“You’ll have trouble putting this novel down.” (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)

“The novel is a sweeping epic, but at its heart, it’s a love story. It speaks to an era of possibilities.”
(Providence Journal)

“Trigiani’s page-turning newest... is a sweeping saga... More than an epic romance, Trigiani’s work pays homage to the tribulations of the immigrant experience, and the love that makes the journey and hardships worthwhile.” *(Publishers Weekly)*

“This expansive epic, which seems tailor-made for a miniseries, manages to feel both old-fashioned and thoroughly contemporary...[an] irresistible love story.” *(Booklist)*

“Trigiani’s gift for using vivid details to create a strong sense of place and her warm affection for her characters will make this a satisfying read for her many fans.” *(Library Journal)*

...an old-fashioned, romantic tale of two star-tangled lovers...but also a paean to artisanal work, food, friendship and family...Trigiani is a master of palpable and visual detail. *(Washington Post)*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christina Bain:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Sure, by reading a guide your ability to survive boost then having chance to stand than other is high. For yourself who want to start reading any book, we give you that The Shoemaker's Wife: A Novel book as starter and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

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Jeannie Brenner:

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Michael Emery:

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