

SHIBBY MAGEE

An Irish Tragicomedy

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Top 50 bestseller in Contemporary British & Irish Literature and a #1 New Release in Sibling Relationships



A vanished mother. A fractured family. A lifetime of choosing the wrong men.

When their bold, brassy mother vanishes into Ireland's Traveller community, Shibby Magee and her twin sister Dorah are left behind in a family already cracking at the seams.

Under the iron rule of their rigidly bigoted grandmother, the girls grow up on opposite tracks: Dorah, bold and arrogant; Shibby, bruised and unmoored.

As an adult, desperate for love, Shibby is drawn to men who damage her, trapped in patterns she can't yet see. She finds a measure of stability in the chaos of a restaurant kitchen—but a question persists: is her future in the settled world, or on the open road to God only knows where?

***Sure, your pipes
are all clogged up
by now!
No more grain in
the ould silo, mo ghrá.***

With the steadfast support of Alice Duffy, a housekeeper turned surrogate mother; Moochie de Barra, a stand-in for an emotionally absent father; and Kitty Dooley, who embodies the fierce pride and harsh realities of Traveller life—Shibby begins to confront hard truths about cultural identity, family, and what it will take to find where she truly belongs.

Rich with texture and lyrical rhythm, this novel traces how early abandonment echoes into midlife, revealing what endures, what shifts, and how the cycle repeats until it finally breaks.

In the tradition of *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan and Donal Ryan's *All We Shall Know* and *The Queen of Dirt Island*, *Shibby Magee* is a warm yet incisive portrait of a woman shaped by loss, grief, and social prejudice as she struggles toward dignity, love, and self-possession.



Carrie Kabak follows the indelible, indefatigable Shibby Magee during two crucial years in her life, one in girlhood and then another at midlife womanhood, as she struggles against prejudice, cruelty, and abandonment in her search to find her true place in an increasingly confounding world, be it in a bustling restaurant—or on the road as an Irish Traveller in an extraordinary, wily community I'd never heard of before and was delighted to encounter.

—Caroline Leavitt, *New York Times* bestselling author

Carrie Kabak has a true gift for descriptive prose—every scene is sensory, textured, and alive. Funny, tender, and completely immersive... I stayed fully invested in Shibby's journey from beginning to end.

—Theresa Von Colln, Reader

Shibby Magee is an emotional, captivating read. Carrie Kabak vividly depicts the harsh rural life endured by Travellers. I felt deep sympathy for Shibby as she's repeatedly hurt by men, which leaves lasting emotional scars—yet she keeps striving for happiness. Her only steadfast bond is with her twin sister, Dorah. Though very different in personality, their connection remains unbreakable to the very end. I was so impressed with the author's ability to convey raw emotion.

—Josephine Treacy, Reader



Carrie Kabak is the author of *Cover the Butter*, published by Penguin Random House, an Independent Booksellers' Pick, AudioFile Magazine Earphones Award winner, and Quill Award nominee, and of *Shibby Magee*. Her work has appeared in multiple anthologies, including publications by North Atlantic Books and Simon & Schuster. She writes character-driven fiction exploring relationships and family dynamics.

