

SHIBBY MAGEE

An Irish Tragicomedy



AVAILABLE FOR BOOKSTORE
ORDERING THROUGH INGRAM
Returnable
Paperback ISBN: 9798992235111
Hardcover ISBN: 9798992235128
www.carriekabak.com

#1 New Release Sibling Relationships	TOP 50 BESTSELLER Sibling Relationships	#7 New Release British & Irish Literary Fiction	TOP 50 BESTSELLER Contemporary British & Irish Literature	READERS' FAVORITE INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARD Honorable Mention Award FOR CULTURAL FICTION	PUBLISHERS WEEKLY Featured in Monthly Spotlight	TOP 100 Audiobook BESTSELLER European Literature
--	---	---	--	--	--	---

Eleven-year-old Shibby and her identical twin, Dorah, are abandoned by their Traveller/Mincéir mother, Vera Coffey, and left at the failing Gilligan's Bakery in Cloonharry under the formidable rule of their bigoted grandma, Nanna Magee. There, they live alongside Benny, their emotionally distant father; Alice Duffy, the housekeeper and surrogate mother; and Moochie de Barra, Benny's ever-present sidekick.

At forty-five, Shibby leaves her sous-chef job in Dublin to live with her motley crew of a family on the island of Burren Droma—only to impulsively marry Traveller Povey O'Brien, with consequences far darker than she could have imagined. After finally finding her old, deranged mother, she makes a devastating discovery about Benny. Can Shibby finally break the pattern of destructive relationships that has followed her through life, or is she destined to repeat the same cycle of toxicity and ruin? Throughout, Shibby's life is colored by her sharp-edged sister Dorah, the ballast to her impulsive and romantically gullible self, and by Kitty Dooley, who embodies the fierce pride and harsh realities of Traveller life.

Against the backdrops of Gilligan's Bakery, the caravans and campfires of Traveller life, and the windswept, craggy cliffs of Burren Droma, *Shibby Magee* reveals a family burdened by secrets and decades of sacrifice and shame, clerical abuse, and blackmail. Inherited trauma, identity, and the settled-Traveller divide run through a story steeped in Irish culture and place, where the dialogue crackles and the prose is alive with sensory detail—from fish and seaweed on the Atlantic air to the buttery scent of caraway seed cake.

In the tradition of *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan, *Trespaces* by Louise Kennedy, *The Queen of Dirt Island* by Donal Ryan, and *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín, *Shibby Magee* is a warm yet incisive work of literary fiction portraying 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

With its brilliant sense of time, place, and setting, and its depiction of prejudiced small-town attitudes towards the Traveller community and homosexuality, this is a novel examining the real meaning of family and love. Lyrical, well observed, and darkly funny, it explores the issues of cultural identity, abandonment, and self acceptance. —Helen Towers, Borderlines Carlisle Book Festival programmer

Carrie Kabak is also the author of *Cover the Butter*, published by Penguin Random House, an Independent Booksellers' Pick, *AudioFile Magazine* Earphones Award winner, and Quill Award nominee. Her work has appeared in multiple anthologies, including those published by Simon & Schuster, Atria Books, She Writes Press, Seal Press, and North Atlantic Books. Upcoming titles: *Effie Jenkins* and *Mali Morgan's Summer*.

