

SHIBBY MAGEE

An Irish Tragicomedy

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Top 50 bestseller in Contemporary British & Irish Literature
#1 New Release in Sibling Relationships
Featured in Publishers Weekly's Monthly Spotlight



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, defiant and arrogant; Shibby, bruised and unmoored.

As an adult, desperate for love, Shibby is drawn to men who wound and discard her, caught 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; Mochie 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, *Trespasses* by Louise Kennedy, and Donal Ryan's *The Queen of Dirt Island*, *Shibby Magee* is a warm yet incisive work of literary fiction with strong book club appeal, 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

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. It is guaranteed to make you laugh and cry and will definitely warm your heart. Highly recommended—especially if you've enjoyed books by Tish Delaney, Fiona Scarlett, and Donal Ryan.

—Helen Towers, Borderlines Carlisle Book Festival programmer



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.

