



The Third Wife: A Novel

By Lisa Jewell

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Fans of Liane Moriarty and Jojo Moyes will be captivated by this riveting family drama with a dark mystery at its core, from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The House We Grew Up In*.

In the early hours of a summer morning, a young woman steps into the path of an oncoming bus. A tragic accident? Or suicide?

At the center of this puzzle is Adrian Wolfe, a successful architect and grief-stricken widower, who, a year after his third wife's death, begins to investigate the cause. As Adrian looks back on their brief but seemingly happy marriage, disturbing secrets begin to surface. The divorces from his two previous wives had been amicable, or so it seemed; his children, all five of them, were resilient as ever, or so he thought. But something, or someone, must have pushed Maya over the edge.

“Jewell’s last few novels have been a revelation—emotionally sophisticated and complex,” says *Kirkus Reviews*. “Like Liane Moriarty, she manages the perfect blend of women’s fiction and nail-biting suspense,” hails *Booklist*. *The Third Wife* is “an emotionally intelligent, brilliantly plotted, and beautifully written examination of a very modern family that will keep you gripped to the end” (*London Daily Mail*).

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *The Third Wife*:

“Lisa Jewell presents us with yet another emotionally intelligent, brilliantly plotted and beautifully written examination of a very modern family that will keep you gripped to the end.... Take this to the beach, or indeed anywhere — I promise you won’t regret it.” (Daily Mail (London))

“Jewell's last few novels have been a revelation—emotionally sophisticated and complex—and this latest, which gradually rewrites the history of a 'perfect' family, is a fine follow-up.... Taut pacing and complicated characters shape this rich examination of the modern family.” (Kirkus Reviews)

“Jewell excels at juggling multiple perspectives to slowly peel back the layers of supposed domestic bliss. Like Liane Moriarty, she manages the perfect blend of women’s fiction and nail-biting suspense, throwing enough red herrings in the reader’s path to keep the pages turning.” (Booklist)

“A gorgeous, powerful, affecting tale of a family both ordinary and extraordinary. Lisa Jewell is a wonderful storyteller, and *The House We Grew Up In* grips you from the first page to the last. I'm afraid to say it made me neglect both my children and my husband. The Bird family might be dysfunctional, but I was strangely sorry to leave it.” (Anna Maxted, author of *Getting Over It* and *Running In Heels*)

“Jewell cleverly frames the destruction of the Bird familyan absolute page-turner.” (Booklist)

“A great choice for readers seeking a mystery with a blended family twist.” (Library Journal)

“...reminded us of Liane Moriarty's *Big Little Lies*.” (Ft. Worth Star-Telegram)

Praise for *The House We Grew Up In*

“Clever, intelligent, and believable on a subject few of us really understand. Lorrie is one of the most vivid—and complex—characters I've read in years. Wonderful.” (Jojo Moyes, author of *Me Before You*)

“You'll be desperate to find out what messed this family up so badly.” (Sophie Kinsella, author of *Shopaholic to the Stars*)

“...prose so beautiful that it glitters on the page. Lisa Jewell lays down piece after piece of mosaic, revealing the heart of the Bird family, filled in equal measure with love and loss. Unforgettable.” (Jo-Ann Mapson, author of *Solomon’s Oak*, *Finding Casey*, and *Owen’s Daughter*)

“*The Third Wife* is a summer gem. The story is complex... the many characters well drawn.... Readers of Donna Tartt and Tana French will recognize Jewell’s pacing for what it is: essential.” (NY Journal of Books)

“*The Third Wife* explores complicated family dynamics in a genuine way that is witty yet realistically nuanced.” (Shelf Awareness)

About the Author

Lisa Jewell was born and raised in north London, where she lives with her husband and two daughters. She is the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA TODAY* bestselling author of twelve novels, including *The House We Grew Up In* and *The Third Wife*. To find out more, visit [Facebook.com/LisaJewellOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/LisaJewellOfficial), or follow her on Twitter @LisaJewellUK.

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The Third Wife

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April 2011

They might have been fireworks, the splashes, bursts, storms of color that exploded in front of her eyes. They might have been the northern lights, her own personal aurora borealis. But they weren't, they were just neon lights and streetlights rendered blurred and prismatic by vodka. Maya blinked, trying to dislodge the colors from her field of vision. But they were stuck, as though someone had been scribbling on her eyeballs. She closed her eyes for a moment, but without vision, her balance went and she could feel herself begin to sway. She grabbed something. She did not realize until the sharp bark and shrug that accompanied her action that it was a human being.

"Shit," Maya said, "I'm really sorry."

The person tutted and backed away from her. "Don't worry about it."

Maya took exaggerated offense to the person's lack of kindness.

"Jesus," she said to the outline of the person, whose gender she had failed to ascertain. "What's your problem?"

"Er," said the person, looking Maya up and down, "I think you'll find you're the one with the problem." Then the person, a woman, yes, in red shoes, tutted again and walked away, her heels issuing a mocking clack-clack against the pavement as she went.

Maya watched her blurred figure recede. She found a lamppost and leaned against it, looking into the oncoming traffic. The headlights turned into more fireworks. Or one of those toys she'd had as a child: tube, full of colored beads, you shook it, looked through the hole, lovely patterns—what was it called? She couldn't remember. Whatever. She didn't know anymore. She didn't know what time it was. She didn't know where she was. Adrian had called. She'd spoken to him. Tried to sound sober. He'd asked her if she needed him to come and get her. She couldn't remember what she'd said. Or how long ago that had been. Lovely Adrian. So lovely. She couldn't go home. Go home and do what she needed to do. He was too nice. She remembered the pub. She'd talked to that woman. Promised her she was going home. That was hours ago. Where had she been since then? Walking. Sitting somewhere, on a bench, with a bottle of vodka, talking to strangers. Hahaha! That bit had been fun. Those people had been fun. They'd said she could come back with them, to their flat, have a party. She'd been tempted, but she was glad now, glad she'd said no.

She closed her eyes, gripped the lamppost tighter as she felt her balance slip away from her. She smiled to herself. This was nice. This was nice. All this color and darkness and noise and all these fascinating people.

She should do this more often, she really should. Get out of it. Live a little. Go a bit nuts. A group of women were walking towards her. She stared at them greedily. She could see each woman in triplicate. They were all so young, so pretty. She closed her eyes again as they passed by, her senses unable to contain their images any longer. Once they'd passed she opened her eyes.

She saw a bus bearing down, bouncy and keen. She squinted into the white light on the front, looking for a number. It slowed as it neared her and she turned and saw that there was a bus stop to her left, with people standing at it.

Dear Bitch. Why can't you just disappear?

The words passed through her mind, clear and concise in their meaning, like a sober person leading her home. And then those other words, the words from earlier.

I hate her too.

She took a step forward.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gertrude Knudsen:

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Homer Simon:

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