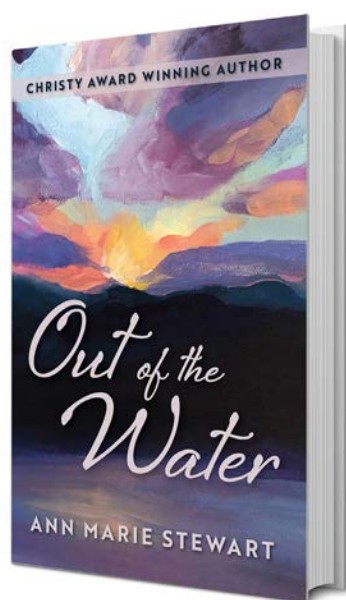


ANN MARIE STEWART

Out of the Water



**The second novel from
Christy Award® winning
author, Ann Marie Stewart.**

Christy Award® winning author, Ann Marie Stewart delivers a poignant and heart-felt novel revealing five generations of secrets. Stories unravel from the stony cliffs of Kilrush, Ireland, to the pandemic grieving Boston 1919, and from a battlefield near St. Denis, France to Seattle 1981 in the search for healing.

Irish immigrant Siobhan Kildea's impetuous flight from a Boston lover in 1919 lands her in the unfamiliar prison town of Deer Lodge, Montana, and with a new family. Her one link to the past is Antonio, who maintains a connection by trading a letter for a book, as their friendship continues through familiar classics. After a horrific tragedy, Siobhan's farm and family threaten to unravel. Meanwhile, nurse Genevieve Marchand's career takes an unusual turn when placed on the French battlefield in 1919. When she returns stateside, she finds the absence of a certain soldier her greatest loss. Music teacher Anna Hanson tucked herself away in the small town of Darrington, Washington, thinking her story and secret were safe. And childless Erin Ellis thought she won the lottery when she and her husband adopted, but even Erin cannot answer all of her daughter's questions about the "other mother." When Claire Ellis sets out to find her biological mother in 1981, she has no idea the generations of stories she will unearth and the ultimate restoration they will bring.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

Publication Date: 10-19-2021

Title: Out of the Water

Author: Ann Marie Stewart

Publisher: Hidden Shelf Publishing House

Distribution: IngramSpark, Kindle Direct Publishing, Amazon, Apple iBooks, Overdrive, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Google Play

Paperback Price: \$16.95 (ISBN: 978-1-955893-90-9)

Ebook Price: \$9.99 (ISBN: 978-1-955893-91-6)

BISAC 1: FIC080000/FICTION/MultipleTimelines

BISAC 2: FIC044000/FICTION/Women

BISAC 3: FIC045000/FICTION/Familylife/General

Page Count: 437

Trim Size: 5.5 x 8.5

Library of Congress control number: 2021911979

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Stewart, Ann Marie, author.

Title: Out of the water / Ann Marie Stewart.

Description: McCall, ID: Hidden Shelf Publishing House, 2021.

Identifiers: LCCN: 2021911979 | ISBN: 978-1-955893-90-9 (paperback) | 978-1-955893-91-6 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH Family--Fiction. | Adoption--Fiction. | Women--Fiction. | Motherhood--Fiction. |

Identity--Fiction. | Historical fiction. | BISAC FICTION / Multiple Timelines | FICTION / Women |

FICTION / Family life / General

Classification: LCC PS3619.T49344 O88 2021 | DDC 813.6--dc23

EXCERPT

Have you ever felt trapped?" She felt Jack's eyes on her.

Siobhan turned away from the baby and studied her husband. He talked so differently. Not like Giovanni, who said very little. Or like Antonio, who connected through the words of others. No, Jack asked her questions to try to marry their experiences. "Like you couldn't breathe?"

Siobhan remembered the moment Brigid told her the truth, and then the moment Giovanni could not or would not, and then falling into the water just now. She nodded.

"It was a coal mining town. I was going to spend the rest of my life underground. One day I went down and knew I could never do it again. There are places where no light can reach. Total darkness." He held his hands out. "You can't even see your fingers." He curled both hands into fists, grimacing as if the memory was painful.

"So, you . . . ?"

"I just left."

"But your family?"

"I don't know. One less mouth to feed." He closed his eyes and lowered his head at the memory.

She couldn't speak. He left his family. He ran away.

"I loved them." His eyes were sad, and his voice was an apology. He traced a line across Samuel's head with his finger and she remembered *rosmarino*.

"And now? Do you wonder about them?"

"I send them letters. I tell them I'm all right. That I have a little farm."

"Are they all right? What do they say?" She rose on one elbow. Would she ever send a letter like that to Ireland?

"I've never put a return address on the envelope."

"Why not?"

"That connection was too strong. The responsibility." He shook his head. "There was another baby every year. Twins one year. My parents weren't much older than me. I had to leave."

She knew that feeling. Completely different but familiar. A life of your own. To feel like you were underground instead of breathing. She had seen the blackness of the Charles River and wondered whether she could be swallowed into its depths.

But today was different. Today she had learned to float and potentially one day she would learn to swim.

"You have family, too." He picked up his son and laid him on his chest. "You left somebody." Now they were laying side by side, the sandy beach was their bed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: ANN MARIE STEWART



Christy Award® winning author Ann Marie Stewart's first novel *Stars in the Grass* won best debut. After that debut, Ann was challenged and inspired for even greater storytelling. She originated AMG's *Preparing My Heart* series and her column "Ann's Lovin' Ewe" is nationwide in *The Country Register*.

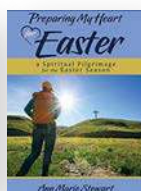
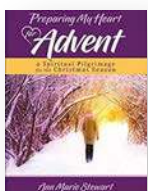
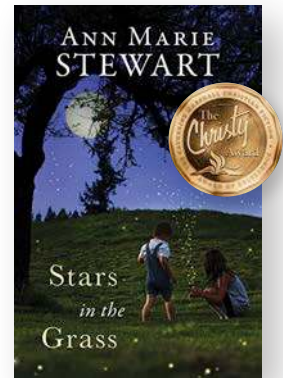
When she's not writing a story, she may be acting it out or telling it through song, as she coaches musical theatre. Waterskiing is her favorite sport, but in the offseason Ann lifts weights and walks eight miles a day on the trail near their home. Ann loves hanging out with her husband and two adult daughters, watching UVA basketball, and shepherding a whole flock of fuzzy sheep on Skymoor Farm, in Virginia.

OTHER BOOKS

***Stars in the Grass* by Ann Marie Stewart** **Christy Award® Best Debut Novel**

Nine-year-old Abby McAndrews has just experienced her greatest loss, and in its wake, her family is unraveling with guilt, grief, and anger. Her father, Reverend McAndrews, cannot return to the pulpit because he has more questions than answers. Her older brother Matt's actions speak louder than the words he needs to confess, as he acts out in dangerous ways. Her mother tries to hold her grieving family together, but when Abby's dad refuses to move on, the family is at a crossroads.

Stars in the Grass, set in a small Midwestern town in 1970, is an uplifting novel that explores a family's relationships and resiliency. Abby's heartbreaking remembrances are balanced by humor and nostalgia as her family struggles with—and ultimately celebrates—life after loss.



***Preparing My Heart for Advent* by Ann Marie Stewart**
***Preparing My Heart for Advent* by Ann Marie Stewart**
***Preparing My Heart for Motherhood* by Ann Marie Stewart**

AUTHOR QUESTIONNAIRE

What inspired you to write *Out of the Water*?

After *Stars in the Grass*, I met up with my agent in Seattle and he prompted me to get going on my next novel. The problem was, I had NO idea what it would be. Driving across the state of Washington with my mother, I thought about what fascinates me: adoption.

My cousin was adopted and I was ALWAYS curious about her parents. She never met her biological mother, though each wanted to – unfortunately at differing times.

Out of the Water includes six mothers and their relationships to adoption. The underlying question came out: Is it always better to know the full truth? If we don't know the full truth does that mean there's a lie? In the process of writing the book, the twists kept coming. They even surprised me! I couldn't believe it when I'd have a realization about the relationship between characters and what the truth really was. I fell in love with the people and the places and the extended family dynamics.

Do you have real-life connections to the places you describe so vividly in this novel?

Deer Lodge, Montana is a real place and really does look like 1919 or 1931 or 1982 as we see it in the novel. The prison stands and can be toured, including the cell of Turkey Pete. If you visit though, make sure you have ice cream at the Prison Cow. Amazing ice cream.

Priest Lake, Idaho is where my family has gathered for over forty years. It is the most beautiful lake in the world but I'm not biased. Why wouldn't I want to partially set the novel somewhere that is easy to write about because it's in my very soul?

Are any of the scenes from *Out of the Water* based on true events?

Out of the Water isn't true, however, there are so many little things in it that prompted scenes. One of my uncles was "given away" to a childless couple after his father died. Lots of questions around that situation.

One horrific scene in NY is unfortunately true, though it happened in Washington state.

When my daughter became a UVA nursing student, I learned all about the UVA nurses who served in WW1.

The more I wrote the more entangled the story became, and I was surprised to learn and discover facts about the characters that I never planned! In the process I learned more about Ireland, and the mothers' homes, Boston, the library, literature, Deer Lodge, WW1 and WW2, the Pandemic of 1918 (interesting especially because of our situation now).



What three words describe you?

Creative, connector, encourager

Where did you grow up?

Seattle, Washington

What was your favorite book as a child?

To Kill a Mockingbird, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* or anything Louisa May Alcott, Laura Ingalls Wilder

Do you have any hidden talents?

I used to sing the National Anthem for the Seattle Mariners games.

What were you like in high school?

I loved high school – I was in marching band, choir, jazz choir, three years of musicals, and I followed football and basketball.

What book is currently on your bedside table?

A tome about Germans trapped in Moscow 1929.

How do you take your coffee?

I love chai – it tastes like everything warm and Christmassy.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Novel by Christy Award® Winning Author, Ann Marie Stewart

JULY 1, 2021

Leesburgh, VIRGINIA – *Out of the Water* by Ann Marie Stewart will officially release to the public on October 19, 2021.

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Out of the Water is published by Hidden Shelf Publishing House.

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ABOUT HIDDEN SHELF PUBLISHING HOUSE

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Hidden Shelf Publishing House is an independent publisher based in Idaho. Founded in 2017, we aim to amplify underrepresented voices through our books and illuminate hidden narratives through innovative stories and unique perspectives. Our broad range of titles includes historical accounts, fiction, women's interest, children's literature, and more.

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