

# The Matchmaker's Gift

by Lynda Cohen Loigman



## About the Book

Lynda Cohen Loigman's **THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT** is a heartwarming story of two extraordinary women from two different eras who defy expectations to realize their unique talent of seeing soulmates in the most unexpected places.

*Is finding true love a calling or a curse?*

Even as a child in 1910, Sara Glikman knows her gift: she is a maker of matches and a seeker of soulmates. But among the pushcart-crowded streets of New York's Lower East Side, Sara's vocation is dominated by devout older men --- men who see a talented female matchmaker as a dangerous threat to their traditions and livelihood. After making matches in secret for more than a decade, Sara must fight to take her rightful place among her peers and to demand the recognition she deserves.

Two generations later, Sara's granddaughter, Abby, is a successful Manhattan divorce attorney, representing the city's wealthiest clients. When her beloved Grandma Sara dies, Abby inherits her collection of handwritten journals recording the details of Sara's matches. But among the faded volumes, Abby finds more questions than answers. Why did Abby's grandmother leave this library to her, and what did she hope Abby would discover within its pages? Why does the work Abby once found so compelling suddenly feel inconsequential and flawed? Is Abby willing to sacrifice the career she's worked so hard for in order to keep her grandmother's mysterious promise to a stranger? And is there really such a thing as love at first sight?

## Discussion Guide

1. *THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT* alternates between Sara's narrative and Abby's narrative. Was there one perspective that you connected with more than the other?
2. Sara is a matchmaker, and Abby is a divorce attorney. How does the juxtaposition of these two careers work to move both the narrative and the two character arcs forward?
3. Discuss Abby's father. How do you think he influenced Abby's life decisions and her opinions on love?
4. Consider the weight of the statement, "Love is not always a straight, shining line. Sometimes, love is a shady path, full of unpredictable turns," on page 161. How does the truth of this come to light throughout the novel? In what specific instances does love feel the most complicated?
5. In *THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT*, there are several unique and strong female characters. Each of these women tells us something important about the two time periods explored in the novel. What qualities and strengths do these women express, and where are they illuminated in the novel? What do these women reveal about the times and places in which the novel occurs?
6. On page 246, Sara says, "If you can't decide what you want to fight for, love is as good a cause as any." Which character in the novel do you believe fought the most for love?
7. Consider the statement on page 231, "Tradition should never be used as an excuse to keep people from reaching their potential." In what ways does tradition work to hold back the characters in the novel? In what ways does it work to benefit them?
8. In your opinion, what is the biggest gift/lesson that Sara leaves Abby with, both from the time she was alive and from Abby's reading of her journals?
9. *THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT* asks the question of whether being able to find true love is a blessing or a curse. When you initially learned of Sara and Abby's ability to sense a true match, what was your opinion on this? Did it evolve over the course of the novel? In what moments does matchmaking seem like a gift, and in what moments does it seem like a curse?
10. Overall, how did the end of the novel make you feel? What do you think comes next for Abby? Do you think she will continue to make matches? Do you think she will find love for herself?

## Author Bio

Lynda Cohen Loigman is the author of *THE LOVE ELIXIR OF AUGUSTA STERN*, *THE MATCHMAKER'S GIFT*, *THE WARTIME SISTERS* and *THE TWO-FAMILY HOUSE*. She received a B.A. in English and American Literature from Harvard College and a J.D. from Columbia Law School. She grew up in Longmeadow, MA, and now lives in New York.

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