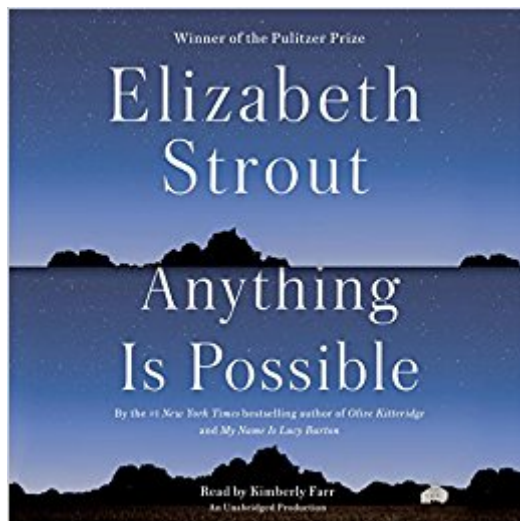


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# Anything Is Possible: A Novel



## Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • An unforgettable cast of small-town characters copes with love and loss in this new work of fiction by #1 bestselling author and Pulitzer Prize winner Elizabeth Strout. One of *Entertainment Weekly*'s 10 Best Books of 2017 So Far. Recalling *Olive Kitteridge* in its richness, structure, and complexity, *Anything Is Possible* explores the whole range of human emotion through the intimate dramas of people struggling to understand themselves and others. Here are two sisters: One trades self-respect for a wealthy husband while the other finds in the pages of a book a kindred spirit who changes her life. The janitor at the local school has his faith tested in an encounter with an isolated man he has come to help; a grown daughter longs for mother love even as she comes to accept her mother's happiness in a foreign country; and the adult Lucy Barton (the heroine of *My Name Is Lucy Barton*, the author's celebrated New York Times bestseller) returns to visit her siblings after seventeen years of absence. Reverberating with the deep bonds of family, and the hope that comes with reconciliation, *Anything Is Possible* again underscores Elizabeth Strout's place as one of America's most respected and cherished authors. Praise for *Anything Is Possible* • "When Elizabeth Strout is on her game, is there anybody better? . . . This is a generous, wry book about everyday lives, and Strout crawls so far inside her characters you feel you inhabit them. . . . This is a book that earns its title. Try reading it without tears, or wonder." • "USA Today (four stars) • Readers who loved *My Name Is Lucy Barton* . . . are in for a real treat. . . . Strout is a master of the story cycle form. . . . She paints cumulative portraits of the heartache and soul of small-town America by giving each of her characters a turn under her sympathetic spotlight." • "NPR • These stories return Strout to the core of what she does more magnanimously than anyone else." • "The Washington Post • In this wise and accomplished book, pain and healing exist in perpetual dependence, like feuding siblings." • "The Wall Street Journal • *Anything Is Possible* confirms Strout as one of our most grace-filled, and graceful, writers." • "The Boston Globe • Stunning . . . Strout, always good, just keeps getting better." • "Vogue • Smart and soulful." • "Elle

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“When Elizabeth Strout is on her game, is there anybody better? . . . This is a generous, wry book about everyday lives, and Strout crawls so far inside her characters you feel you inhabit them. . . . This is a book that earns its title. Try reading it without tears, or wonder.” —USA Today (four stars)

“Readers who loved *My Name Is Lucy Barton* . . . are in for a real treat. . . . Strout is a master of the story cycle form. . . . She paints cumulative portraits of the heartache and soul of small-town America by giving each of her characters a turn under her sympathetic spotlight.” —NPR

“These stories return Strout to the core of what she does more magnanimously than anyone else, which is to render quiet portraits of the indignities and disappointments of normal life, and the moments of grace and kindness we are gifted in response. . . . Strout hits the target yet again.” —The Washington Post

“In this wise and accomplished book, pain and healing exist in perpetual dependence, like feuding siblings.” —The Wall Street Journal

“Anything Is Possible confirms Strout as one of our most grace-filled, and graceful, writers.” —The Boston Globe

“Anything Is Possible keenly draws a portrait of a small town where options are few, where everyone’s business is everyone’s business, and where verdicts rendered while young follow you your whole life. . . . It joins a vast genre, and elevates it.” —Minneapolis Star Tribune

“Neither a novel nor a linked story collection strikes me as adequate terms to describe this book’s ingenious structure. . . . Strout’s sentence style fits these Midwestern folks and tales: straightforward while also seeming effortlessly lyrical, seeded both with humor and bitterness like many of our days.” —Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

“Stunning. . . . Strout, always good, just keeps getting better.” —Vogue

“Full of searing insight into the darkest corners of the human spirit . . . Anything Is Possible is both sweeping in scope and incredibly introspective. That delicate balance is what makes its content so sharp and compulsively readable. . . . Strout’s winning formula . . . has succeeded once again. With assuredness, compassion and utmost grace, her words and characters remind us that in life anything is actually possible.” —San Francisco Chronicle

“While we recommend everything

by the Pulitzer Prize-winning writerâlike, say her recent book *My Name Is Lucy Barton*âthis novel, which explores lifeâs complexities through interconnected stories, stands on its own. . . . Itâs a joy to read a modern master doing her thing.ââMarie Claire âelf you miss the charmingly eccentric and completely relatable characters from Pulitzer Prize winner Elizabeth Stroutâs best-selling *My Name Is Lucy Barton*, youâll be happily reunited with them in Stroutâs smart and soulful *Anything Is Possible*.ââElleâStrout pierces the inner worlds of these charactersâs most private behaviors, illuminating the emotional conflicts and pure joy of being human, of finding oneself in the search for the American dream.ââNYLON

Elizabeth Strout is the Pulitzer Prizeâwinning author of *Olive Kitteridge*;Âthe #1 New York Times bestseller *My Name Is Lucy Barton*;ÂThe Burgess Boys, a New York Times bestseller; *Abide with Me*, a national bestseller and Book Sense pick; and *Amy and Isabelle*, which won the Los Angeles Times Art Seidenbaum Award for First Fiction and the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize. She has also been a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award and the Orange Prize in England. Her short stories have been published in a number of magazines, including *The New Yorker* and *O: The Oprah Magazine*. Elizabeth Strout lives in New York City.

I am an Elizabeth Strout fan. I inhaled "Olive Kitteridge" and was left sobbing after the last chapter. I loved the quiet and soulful pace and message of "Abide With Me." And I reveled in the message and meter of "I Am Lucy Barton." "Anything Is Possible" was, in my estimation, a patchwork of depressed characters going nowhere. I kept reading hoping something would happen or at least Strout would tie all the unhappy, aimless stories together at some point. The what seemed like gratuitous sexual perversions sprinkled throughout the chapters should have had more context. They were slipped into a chapter (more like hinted at) and then abandoned. I felt the entire town was suffering from post traumatic sexual abuse and an withholding of feeling that bordered on psychotic. I was disappointed.

I know that many people hold Elizabeth Strout in high regard but honestly, this book (basically a jumble of short stories) is unpalatable. I couldn't find one thing to like about this novel although everyone else thinks it is literary gold. The stories were overly salacious with some of the grossest concepts in memory & as a reminder, I am a reviewer who LOVED "All The Ugly and Wonderful Things." It's not the sex in this novel but the grossness in which it is told. 1 star and I don't care if anyone disagrees. Now, I'm off for a shower. #reader #books #bookstagram #summerreadinglist

@annebogel #book #novel #sex #lurid #read #summerstooshort

There is no doubt that the author writes wonderfully; the disappointment for me was the lack of cohesion between the chapters. I expected near the end that there would be a tie-in of some sort, linking all the chapters together into a story which made sense, but there wasn't! I'm left speculating what the meaning of the book was? Did I miss something? Perhaps I should have read the author's earlier book firstly? I quite honestly don't understand all the favourable reviews for this book - despite the author's obvious gift for writing.

This book is a series of short stories with a common thread of being about people who knew or are related to Lucy Barton (from Strout's book "My Name is Lucy Barton"). I enjoyed the book and it was a fast read for me. The stories delve into all different types of relationships and secret inner thoughts of the characters.

Very disappointed. I am an admirer of Strout's other novels. Olivia Kitteredge was a masterpiece and Lucy Barton a worthy successor. Anything is Possible was difficult to read. I could not connect to any of the characters. Some of the writing was beautiful but this book went nowhere.

Elizabeth Strout writes stories about characters that one does admire and feel sympathy for. The way the same characters appear in her books from different perspective is intriguing and fun. Sometimes I feel like I am reading about old friends. The first book by Strout that I read was My name is Lucy Barton, then Olive Kitteridge and now Anything is possible. The order the books are read does probably not really matter. She writes about very sad circumstances in a sympathetic but strong way. I just loved this book and was a bit sad when I finished it because I wanted more.

A la Anne Tyler, with less humor, one feels so familiar with Elizabeth Strout's characters. Treated to several short stories that are linked together by Lucy Barton, one doesn't want their sagas to end, while at the same time, hopes for quiet resolution for them. Thoroughly enjoyable, heartbreaking, and true - a must read for those who loved "My Name is Lucy Barton."

How to imagine an unhappy community without getting confused and disheartened? I did not succeed in that. But still was glad to get the back story of Lucy Barton. Pretty complex characters. What's next, Elizabeth Stroud?

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