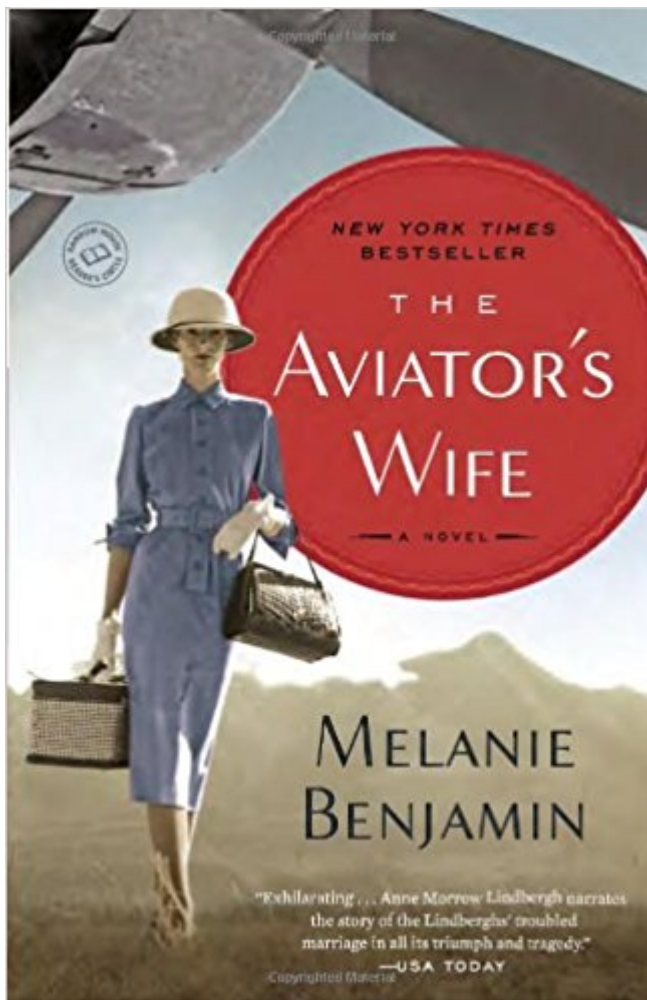


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# The Aviator's Wife: A Novel



## Synopsis

In the spirit of *Loving Frank* and *The Paris Wife*, acclaimed novelist Melanie Benjamin pulls back the curtain on the marriage of one of America's most extraordinary couples: Charles Lindbergh and Anne Morrow Lindbergh. "The history [is] exhilarating. . . . The Aviator's Wife soars." •USA Today •NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

When Anne Morrow, a shy college senior with hidden literary aspirations, travels to Mexico City to spend Christmas with her family, she meets Colonel Charles Lindbergh, fresh off his celebrated 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic. Enthralled by Charles's assurance and fame, Anne is certain the aviator has scarcely noticed her. But she is wrong. Charles sees in Anne a kindred spirit, a fellow adventurer, and her world will be changed forever. The two marry in a headline-making wedding. In the years that follow, Anne becomes the first licensed female glider pilot in the United States. But despite this and other major achievements, she is viewed merely as the aviator's wife. The fairy-tale life she once longed for will bring heartbreak and hardships, ultimately pushing her to reconcile her need for love and her desire for independence, and to embrace, at last, life's infinite possibilities for change and happiness. Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more.

Praise for *The Aviator's Wife* "Remarkable . . . The Aviator's Wife succeeds [in] putting the reader inside Anne Lindbergh's life with her famous husband." •The Denver Post "Anne Morrow Lindbergh narrates the story of the Lindberghs' troubled marriage in all its triumph and tragedy." •USA Today "[This novel] will fascinate history buffs and surprise those who know of her only as the aviator's wife." •People "It's hard to quit reading this intimate historical fiction." •The Dallas Morning News "Fictional biography at its finest." •Booklist (starred review) "Utterly unforgettable." •Publishers Weekly (starred review) "An intimate examination of the life and emotional mettle of Anne Morrow." •The Washington Post "A story of both triumph and pain that will take your breath away." •Kate Alcott, author of *The Dressmaker*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Melanie Benjamin on *The Aviator's Wife* What was I thinking, writing a novel about Anne Morrow Lindbergh? That is a question I asked myself every time I sat down to work on *The Aviator's Wife*. For Anne Morrow Lindbergh guarded her privacy fiercely and, at times, I felt she was eluding me just to make that point! My other heroines • Alice Liddell in *Alice I Have Been* and Lavinia Warren Stratton in *The Autobiography of Mrs. Tom Thumb* gave up their secrets easily, almost eagerly. Anne, however, did not. But that was what attracted me to her story in the first place • because of how elusive Anne remains to this day. She is known in fragments but never completely. Some are aware of her child's horrific kidnapping and murder. Others remember her chiefly as the shy, pretty bride of the most heroic man of his time. Many women revere her as an early feminist writer. But few know her entire story, including her major accomplishments as an aviator in her own right, her grit and determination, her inner strength. Always she seems willing to stand in the tall shadow of her husband, Charles Lindbergh. And it was her marriage that fascinated and obsessed me; this marriage between two extraordinary and very different individuals under the relentless glare of the spotlight. This operatic life they led, through dizzying heights of accomplishment and celebrity to the devastating lows of what Anne always saw as the price they paid for flying too close to the sun. It seemed to me, as I studied her, standing always slightly behind her husband, that there was a sly smile, a gleam in her eyes that she was always suppressing; a secret strength hidden from the world and even, at times, herself. This was the Anne Morrow Lindbergh whose story I wanted to tell. It's time for Anne to step out from behind her husband's shadow once and for all and be the heroine in her own epic story.

Photos from *The Aviator's Wife* Charles A. Lindbergh and Anne Morrow Lindbergh  
Courtesy of SDAM  
Click here for a larger image Anne Morrow Lindbergh with Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr. at Next Day Hill, NJ.  
Copyright: Lindbergh picture collection, 1860-1980 (inclusive). Manuscripts & Archives,

Yale University [Click here for a larger image](#) --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

**\*Starred Review\*** Benjamin, author of the highly acclaimed *Alice I Have Been* (2010) and *The Autobiography of Mrs. Tom Thumb* (2011), delivers another stellar historical novel based on the experiences of an extraordinary woman. In this outing, she spotlights Anne Morrow Lindbergh, wife of wildly famous Charles Lindbergh and pioneering aviatrix and accomplished author in her own right. Though their courtship is the stuff of every girl's romantic fantasy, time and reality combine to reveal a much different story. Plagued by tragedy and often stifled by her domineering husband, she eventually manages to carve out a quasi-independent life and career for herself. Fictional biography at its finest; serious readers may want to pair this with the recently published *Against Wind and Tide*, the sixth and final volume of Anne Morrow Lindbergh's copious letters and journal entries. --Margaret Flanagan --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

If you told me this was an unearthed autobiography, I would have believed you. The writing is so like Anne Morrow Lindbergh's that it could pass for fact, but it is fiction. I am of an age where I received her book, "Gift from the Sea" as a graduation present. But for those of you who are younger, this is a magnificent book on marriage and the compromises some spouses make -- while the other runs the show. Charles Lindbergh's family was, during the 30's and 40's, THE most famous family in the nation. The publicity about them was overwhelming, excruciating, yet Lindbergh himself felt he was somehow worthy of it. He was an odd duck, rigid, demanding, but charismatic. She drank the Kool-Aid ... at the beginning. Then, as the multiple children came along, she realized at some level, she was in over her head. I encourage young women to read this book before they marry. Why? Marriage is never what we think it is going to be. This shows you an extreme example of what can, and does, happen in marriages, especially high-profile ones. It is a cautionary tale that reinforces the Japanese saying, "Know your love through all the seasons." There are no do-over's in life, and one comes to the end of the book with a sigh, a welter of emotions. p.s. One of the first policemen to respond to the call about "the baby", believed to the end of his life that Charles Lindbergh had played a prank on his wife that went terribly awry. The ransom note was someone taking advantage of the situation. This, however, is not in the book.

I loved the book. It was well written and the descriptions of the characters was very complete. It is a shame that Lindbergh who acted like an adolescent in his flying across the ocean and never came out of it. I was pleased that Anne finally became a full fledged success between her family, her

writing and her flying. Pat Rockett

Wow, the reviews are all so great... and I tried to like it, I really did... but I can't. Made it to page 100 and had to give up... Why? I couldn't stand Charles Lindbergh... What a jerk. Perhaps it's true to life but it's just one big downer, reading about how this poor woman let this awful man walk all over her. So happy I did not take this with me on a long long flight... SPOILER ALERT - I really did want to carry on but like I said, it was bad. Then I did a bit of research and found a few inconsistencies in this book - "historical fiction"- that I believe took too much liberty. Was Elizabeth a lesbian? I don't know, I don't care... but why suggest it unless it was fact or implied at the time. And did Charles have something to do with his son's kidnapping/murder? Since there are no facts to prove he did, why even suggest it? For me, this is going too far from the truth and as such, makes me doubt everything else in the book.

It is hard to imagine how descriptive the author is in this book could have been in capturing the emotions and characters of the the protagonist and Lindbergh himself in this very touching book. It is captivating from the beginning and much more readable than a history book. But a history book it is indeed. I learned more about this woman and her "superhero" husband and the evolution of air travel than I ever could have in a history book.

Charles Lindbergh was always referred to as "Lucy Lindy." And indeed he was lucky to have had such an amazing partner and wife. Anne's heartbreaking story of their marriage and her own growth as an accomplished woman in her own rights is a wonderful story well told by Ms. Benjamin. A great read for older women looking back on the trials of their own journeys as well as for young women just beginning theirs.

First off I must say, I am a huge fan of Anne Morrow Lindbergh and have read all that she has written..and all that has been written about her. I grew up in the small Minnesota town where Charles Lindbergh was also raised and the whole town was/is Lindbergh crazed..so I feel I know alot..that said this book is well researched and I feel like I was really there with Anne..feeling her feelings about her life..something that is hard to do from her own writing sometimes...great story I read this in one day!!!

I agree with a comment I saw elsewhere - I never knew I could hate the characters so much while

enjoying the writing. This book is very well written, it flows well, it gives good context, and it has a nice writing style. There are no jumps or gaps in character development or history and no grammatical errors or spelling mistakes. However, I really grew to dislike both Anne and Charles Lindbergh. I never knew how much I could hate Charles Lindbergh and it was hard to deal with Anne sometimes. I know it was a different time and we tend to look at things through a modern lens, but it was hard for me to deal with a character that just swoons every time she looks at a guy who is verbally abusive and neglectful. I am glad she finally found her strength but overall I would not read this book again just because of the characters and their personality traits.

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