

Press Release



Good Women

by Jane Stevenson

- [About the Book](#)
- [About the Author](#)

". . . Social comedy laced with pitiless wit." — *Kirkus Reviews*

A New Collection of Novellas from the Author of *Several Deceptions*

About the Book

Jane Stevenson arrived on the British literary scene with *Several Deceptions* in 2000. A collection of four novellas, it was unashamedly intellectual, marvelously witty, and just a little bit cruel. It revived a neglected form and was highly acclaimed by critics. Houghton Mifflin is proud to offer Stevenson's new novella collection, *Good Women* (Houghton Mifflin/Mariner Original paperback, January 6, 2006), her first since *Several Deceptions*.

What makes a good woman? Stevenson explores this question with her trademark wit and sophisticated prose. Though the three protagonists in *Good Women* lead very different lives, each possesses a quality that has led them to be deemed "good" — and each goes spectacularly "bad" in the course of each story. Stevenson takes on society's various notions of goodness by creating formidable female characters that defy these expectations.

What does being good in bed really mean?

How do you become a good wife and mother?

Is a good woman saintly or spiritual?

Fiery Freda gives in to overwhelming sexual passion, which wreaks havoc on several lives and leads to a disastrous home-owning experience, in the first novella, "Light My Fire." In "Walking with Angels," Wenda, a middle-aged housewife, begins to see angels in her everyday life and comes to believe they are instructing her to carry out a murder. Alice, the recently widowed protagonist of "Garden Guerrillas," must come to terms with her new life and discovers she has become radicalized in her old age. Imaginative, graceful, playfully wicked, *Good Women* is another example of why Stevenson is beloved by readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

About the Author

Jane Stevenson was born in London and brought up in London, Beijing, and Bonn. She teaches literature and history at the University of Aberdeen. She is the author of *Several Deceptions*, a collection of four novellas; a novel, *London Bridges*; and the acclaimed historical trilogy comprising the novels *The Winter Queen*, *The Shadow King*, and *The Empress of the Last Days*. Stevenson lives in Aberdeenshire, Scotland.