

## Vera Mrsvladimir Nabokov Stacy Schiff

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Explores the remarkable literary partnership of the Russian author and his wife of fifty-two years

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**NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** Winner of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for biography and hailed by critics as both “monumental” (The Boston Globe) and “utterly romantic” (New York magazine), Stacy Schiff’s V\u00e9ra (Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov) brings to shimmering life one of the greatest literary love stories of our time. Vladimir Nabokov—the \u00e9migr\u00e9 author of Lolita; Pale Fire; and Speak, Memory—wrote his books first for himself, second for his wife, V\u00e9ra, and third for no one at all. “Without my wife,” he once noted, “I wouldn’t have written a single novel.” Set in prewar Europe and postwar America, spanning much of the century, the story of the Nabokovs’ fifty-two-year marriage reads as vividly as a novel. V\u00e9ra, both beautiful and brilliant, is its outsized heroine—a woman who loves as deeply and intelligently as did the great romantic heroines of Austen and Tolstoy. Stacy Schiff’s V\u00e9ra is a triumph of the biographical form.

In this dazzling work of history, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author follows Benjamin Franklin to France for the crowning achievement of his career In December of 1776 a small boat delivered an old man to France." So begins an enthralling narrative account of how Benjamin Franklin—seventy years old, without any diplomatic training, and possessed of the most rudimentary French—convinced France, an absolute monarchy, to underwrite America's experiment in democracy. When Franklin stepped onto French soil, he well understood he was embarking on the greatest gamble of his career. By virtue of fame, charisma, and ingenuity, Franklin outmaneuvered British spies, French informers, and hostile colleagues; engineered the Franco-American alliance of 1778; and helped to negotiate the peace of 1783. The eight-year French mission stands not only as Franklin's most vital service to his country but as the most revealing of the man. In A Great Improvisation, Stacy Schiff draws from new and little-known sources to illuminate the least-explored part of Franklin's life. Here is an unfamiliar, unforgettable chapter of the Revolution, a rousing tale of American infighting, and the treacherous backroom dealings at Versailles that would propel George Washington from near decimation at Valley Forge to victory at Yorktown. From these pages emerge a particularly human and yet fiercely determined Founding Father, as well as a profound sense of how fragile, improvisational, and international was our country's bid for independence.

From a master biographer, the life story of the daring French aviator who became one of the twentieth century's most beloved authors Antoine de Saint-Exup\u00e9ry disappeared at age forty-four during a reconnaissance flight over southern France. At the time he was best known for a career of daring flights over the Sahara, the Pyrenees, and Patagonia and for his contributions to the science of aviation. But the solitary hours he spent above the earth in open cockpit airplanes gave birth to a more famous legacy, a series of enchanting, autobiographical novels and the classic story The Little Prince, still the most translated book in the French language. An impoverished aristocrat from one of France's oldest families, Saint-Exup\u00e9ry moved at age twenty-seven to the western Sahara Desert, to live alone in a plank shack and manage the way station for the A\u00e9ropostale, the French mail service. His careers as a novelist and an aviator were born here, and his life once he returned to Europe was defined—with brilliant and catastrophic results—by the sense of isolated fascination and curiosity he developed in the desert. In this definitive biography, Pulitzer Prize winner Stacy Schiff reveals an intrepid and unconventional life that rivals the best adventure stories.

"A collection of letters between Vladimir Nabokov and his wife Vera."--

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of Cleopatra, the #1 national bestseller, unpacks the mystery of the Salem Witch Trials. It began in 1692, over an exceptionally raw Massachusetts winter, when a minister's daughter began to scream and convulse. It ended less than a year later, but not before 19 men and women had been hanged and an elderly man crushed to death. The panic spread quickly, involving the most educated men and prominent politicians in the colony. Neighbors accused neighbors, parents and children each other. Aside from suffrage, the Salem Witch Trials represent the only moment when women played the central role in American history. In curious ways, the trials would shape the future republic. As psychologically thrilling as it is historically seminal, THE WITCHES is Stacy Schiff's account of this fantastical story-the first great American mystery unveiled fully for the first time by one of our most acclaimed historians.

In 1925 Vera and Vladimir Nabokov, both Russian refugees, married in Berlin. His family was ruined and hers was about to be. From that year they were inseparable. Friends, colleagues, relatives and publishers all agreed he would have been nowhere without her. Even when the marriage nearly foundered due to another woman, Nabakov wrote to his wife daily.

"As seductive and engaging a book as I have come across in a while . . . Would have brought a gleam of enjoyment even to Nabokov's gimlet eye." --Daphne Merkin, The New York Times Book Review

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