


## The Story of the Lost Child: Neapolitan Novels, Book Four

By Elena Ferrante

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### The Story of the Lost Child: Neapolitan Novels, Book Four By Elena Ferrante

Soon to be an HBO series, book four in the *New York Times* bestselling Neapolitan quartet about two friends in post-war Italy is a rich, intense, and generous-hearted epic by one of today's most beloved and acclaimed writers, Elena Ferrante, "one of the great novelists of our time." (Roxana Robinson, *The New York Times*)

Here is the dazzling saga of two women, the brilliant, bookish Elena and the fiery uncontainable Lila. In this book, life's great discoveries have been made, its vagaries and losses have been suffered. Through it all, the women's friendship, examined in its every detail over the course of four books, remains the gravitational center of their lives. Both women once fought to escape the neighborhood in which they grew up. Elena married, moved to Florence, started a family, and published several well-received books. But now, she has returned to Naples to be with the man she has always loved. Lila, on the other hand, never succeeded in freeing herself from Naples. She has become a successful entrepreneur, but her success draws her into closer proximity with the nepotism, chauvinism, and criminal violence that infect her neighborhood. Yet somehow this proximity to a world she has always rejected only brings her role as unacknowledged leader of that world into relief.

Ferrante is one of the world's great storytellers. With the Neapolitan quartet she has given her readers an abundant, generous, and masterfully plotted page-turner that is also a stylish work of literary fiction destined to delight readers for many generations to come.

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## The Story of the Lost Child: Neapolitan Novels, Book Four By Elena Ferrante Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of September 2015:** Elena Ferrante has been an under-the-radar phenomenon for a couple of years now: the pseudonymous, publicity-shunning Italian author of *Days of Abandonment* – one of my favorite novels of all time – and the three (until now) Neapolitan Novels is the go-to read for thoughtful, analytical women on at least two continents. But if the first three books made her a cult here, *The Story of the Lost Child*, the final volume of the Neapolitan books, is poised to make her a bona fide star.

Such widespread acceptance and popularity is only fitting, since the characters in the Neapolitan novels are not “fancy” women; they’re for the most part not particularly educated, rich or sophisticated. What they are, always, is full of life and self-doubt and self-consciousness and ambition and love and hate and energy and sexuality. The new book, like the others, centers around the lifelong relationship between Elena and Lina – frenemies from long before such a word existed. *The Story of the Lost Child* chronicles what happens when the women renew their friendship after many years of estrangement; “One morning, I woke up and thought of her without hostility for the first time in a long while,” as Elena says. Now they are beginning to face aging together.

That’s the plot here, and it is essentially the plot of all of the Neapolitan novels: how do women grow and age, together and apart, how do they relate, how do motherhood, money and men intervene? But you don’t read Ferrante for the plot; you read her for the sheer accumulation of detailed scenes and conversations, for its comings together and breakings apart, and for the way characters disappear and recur until the city in which they live becomes both a vast jungle and the original too-close small town. (Bonus: while it’s probably best to read all four of these novels in the order in which they were published, you can come to book 4 fresh and get up to speed within pages.) Along the way, you also get a glimpse into the politics of 20th century Italy and some sly understanding of the publishing world. (Elena is a published author of some success.) Reading Ferrante is, in other words, both exhausting and exhilarating. The other day, an acquaintance said she loved these books so much she felt like standing on a street corner and handing them out to every woman she sees. I know the feeling. – *Sara Nelson*

Review

**Longlisted for the 2016 MAN BOOKER INTERNATIONAL PRIZE**

**Named *TIME Magazine's* #1 Book in it's "10 Best Fiction Books of 2015" list**

**Named one of the "10 Best Fiction Books of 2015" by *The New York Times Book Review***

**Named one of the "10 Best Fiction Books of 2015" by *People Magazine***

**Featured in the *Wall Street Journal's* list of "15 Books to Read This Fall"**

**Included as one of “30 blockbuster novels to look out for this fall” by *Entertainment Weekly***

**Listed as one of *Publisher Weekly's* "Most Anticipated Books of Fall 2015"**

**Included in the *Kirkus* list of "21 Must-read Fall books"**

**Featured as one of the *New York Times Book Review's* "100 Notable Books of 2015"**

Praise for *The Story of the Lost Child*

"Dazzling...stunning...an extraordinary epic."

—Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

"It's spectacular, but you will only realize how spectacular *The Story of the Lost Child* is if you do not cheat. You must read the three earlier (also superb) Neapolitan Novels or the perfect devastation wrought by the conclusion of this last novel will be lost on you."

—Maureen Corrigan, NPR *Fresh Air*

"It is the exploration of the women's mental underworld that makes the book so singular an achievement in feminist literature; indeed, in all literature."

—Joan Acocella, *The New Yorker*

"This is Ferrante at the height of her brilliance."

—Elissa Schappell, *Vanity Fair*

"Ms. Ferrante has in fact, for more than 20 years, written about female identity with a heft and sharpness unmatched by anyone since Doris Lessing."

—*The Wall Street Journal*

"What words do you save? Here's your chance to bring them out, like the silver for the wedding of the first-born: genius, tour de force, masterpiece. They apply to the work of Elena Ferrante, whose newly translated novel "The Story of the Lost Child" is the fourth and final one of her magnificent Neapolitan quartet, a sequence which now seems to me, at least within all that I've read, to be the greatest achievement in fiction of the post-war era."

—Charles Finch, *The Chicago Tribune*

"We are dealing with masterpieces here, old-fashioned classics, filled with passion and pathos. [...] The sheer power of her books is a challenge to the chilly, dour craftsmanship of too many 21st century literary novels."

—Joe Klein, *TIME Magazine*

"The saga is both comfortingly traditional and radically fresh, it gives readers not just what they want, but something more than they didn't know they craved...through this fusion of high and low art, Ms. Ferrante emerges as a 21st-century Dickens."

—*The Economist*

"Ferrante's accomplishment in these novels is to extract an enduring masterpiece from dissolving margins, from the commingling of self and other, creator and created, new and old, real and whatever the opposite of real may be. [...] Ferrante's voice is very much her own, but it's force is communal. Perhaps her quartet should be seen as one of the first great works of post-authorial literature."

—Judith Shulevitz, *The Atlantic*

"Ferrante [. . .] adumbrates the mysterious beauty and brutality of personal experience."

—Rachel Cusk, *The New York Times Book Review*

“[. . .] with her new novel, “The Story of the Lost Child,” Ferrante has written what I’d call a “city book,” a knowing and complex tale that encompasses an entire metropolis. The breadth of vision makes this final installment feel like the essential volume.”

—John Domini, *The Washington Post*

“This stunning conclusion further solidifies the Neapolitan novels as Ferrante’s masterpiece.” —*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“Ferrante has created a mythic portrait of a female friendship in the chthonian world of postwar Naples.”

—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

“Word of mouth launched this series, glowing reviews helped, and, eventually, a publishing phenomenon was born. The series’ conclusion is a genuine literary event.”

—*Booklist* (starred review)

### Praise for *The Neapolitan Novels*

“Ferrante’s Naples Quartet is anything but theater. It is the first genuine literary classic of the 21st century.”

—*The Huffington Post*

“One of modern fiction’s richest portraits of a friendship.”

—John Powers, *Fresh Air*, *NPR*

“The Neapolitan Novels tell a single story with the possessive force of an origin myth.”

—Megan O’Grady, *Vogue*

“Elena Ferrante is one of the great novelists of our time... This is a new version of the way we live now – one we need, one told brilliantly, by a woman.”

—Roxana Robinson, *The New York Times Book Review*

“A strong sense of chiaroscuro characterises the tetralogy: the thuggish violence of the Neapolitan stradone, the political activism of the “years of lead”, the corruption at every level of society.”

—Jane Shilling *The Evening Standard* (UK)

### About the Author

**Elena Ferrante** was born in Naples. She is the author of *The Days of Abandonment* (Europa, 2005), *Troubling Love* (Europa, 2007), and *The Lost Daughter* (Europa, 2009). Her Neapolitan novels include *My Brilliant Friend*, *The Story of a New Name*, *Those Who Leave and Those Who Stay*, and the fourth and final book in the series, *The Story of the Lost Child*.

**Ann Goldstein** is an editor at *The New Yorker*. Her translations for Europa Editions include novels by Amara Lakhous, Alessandro Piperno, and Elena Ferrante’s bestselling *My Brilliant Friend*. She lives in New York.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

**June Edwards:**

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. The huge benefits you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book this improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of e-book you read, if you want attract knowledge just go with training books but if you want truly feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. Often the The Story of the Lost Child: Neapolitan Novels, Book Four is kind of publication which is giving the reader unforeseen experience.

**Russell Belcher:**

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**Shirley Williams:**

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**Mary Otter:**

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