

## Strega Nona, Her Story

By Tomie dePaola

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This is the beloved Strega Nona's own story, every detail just as she remembers it, from her childhood with Grandma Concetta, who trained young Nona and her best friend Amelia, to her early days in the little house on the hill and the happy moments when she met Big Anthony and Bambolona. It is the story of a most fascinating life that has influenced and delighted countless children and adults all over the world, and it all starts with the night Strega Nona was born, when the wind was blowing dark storm clouds across the hills . . .

It's no surprise that award-winning author and artist Tomie dePaola was Strega Nona's choice as her biographer and portraitist, for he has put into books many stories that she has shared with him over the years, including *Strega Nona* (a Caldecott Honor Book), *Strega Nona Meets Her Match*, *Strega Nona Takes a Vacation*, *Strega Nona's Harvest*, *Strega Nona's Gift*, and *Strega Nona Does It Again*. Strega Nona's reaction when shown this book was, "Bravissimo, mio caro Tomie!"

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## Strega Nona, Her Story By Tomie dePaola Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #543161 in Books
- Brand: Putnam Juvenile
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- Binding: Hardcover
- 32 pages

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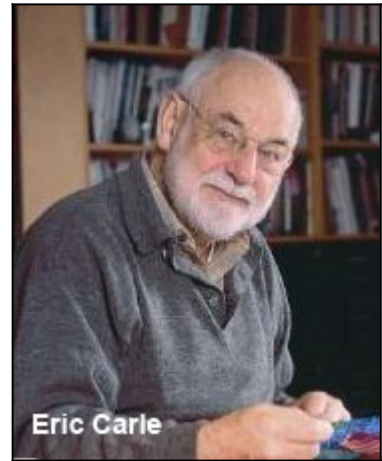
## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

### Eric Carle and Tomie dePaola: Author One-on-One

**Eric Carle** is the creator, author, and illustrator of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and many other children's books. **Tomie dePaola** is the author and illustrator of *Strega Nona: Her Story* and countless other books. They recently had a conversation about their careers as picture book authors.

**Tomie dePaola:** When I was only four years old, I announced to my family in particular and to the world in general that I was going to become an artist, and write stories and draw pictures for books. I never swayed from that early declaration. I've always been curious to know, what inspired you to become a creator and illustrator of picture books?



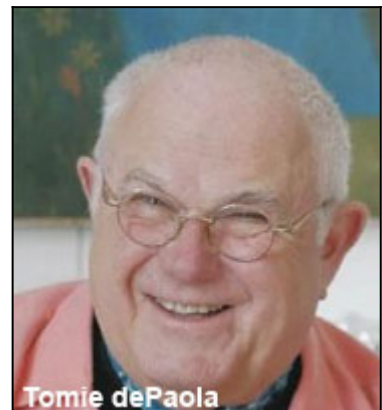
**Eric Carle:** My career began as a graphic designer and for a number of years I worked as an art director for an advertising agency in New York. In the mid 1960's Bill Martin, Jr. saw an ad of a red lobster that I had designed and asked me to illustrate his *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Well, I was set on fire! I was so inspired by this book, and the opportunity to illustrate it changed my life. After that, I started to create my own books, both words and pictures, and really it was then that I had found my true course in life.

Now, I have a question for you, Tomie. How would you describe your artistic style, and has it changed over time?

**Tomie dePaola:** My illustration style is heavily influenced by folk art--strong simple shapes, bold lines, color, color, color and a deceptive simplicity. My style began to develop early in art school, and through the years, it hasn't changed very much, but it has refined itself. How would you describe yours?

**Eric Carle:** My aim with my work is to simplify and refine, be logical and harmonious. I like to use simple shapes, bright colors and a lot of white space. I write for the child inside of me. That is always where I begin.

**Tomie dePaola:** I do, as well. The only audience I keep in mind is that four-year-old in me. People sometimes ask me what advice I would give to young artists. I always think of the wonderful advice I received from my twin cousins when they were in art school in the late '30s. They told me, "Practice, practice, practice and don't copy."



**Eric Carle:** I often tell people about the four magic letters: DO IT. I want to be encouraging but I can only offer the example of my own experience, which is just one approach. There are many wonderful artists to learn about, which is important. But you must use your own imagination. You have to just do it.

**Tomie dePaola:** How do you feel knowing that a copy of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* is sold every 30

seconds, somewhere in the world?

**Eric Carle:** It is hard for me, maybe for others too, to grasp this concept. But I am truly honored that my story is enjoyed by so many and that it is now being shared by a generation of parents who grew up with my book. How about your *Strega Nona*. She is one of your most popular characters. Can you share how she came to be?

**Tomie dePaola:** In the '70s when I was teaching at a college, we were required to attend faculty meetings. I always sat in the back with a yellow legal pad. Everyone thought I was taking notes. At one meeting a doodle appeared of a little lady with a big nose and a big chin. I named her Strega Nona, and the rest is history. Speaking of history, how will you be celebrating the third annual *Very Hungry Caterpillar Day* this year?

**Eric Carle:** On *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Day*, March 20th, I will probably be at home with my wife, Bobbie (I am a bit of a hermit, actually). But I will be saying a little toast to the caterpillar for whom I have a special place in my heart. And speaking of holidays, isn't your favorite holiday Christmas. Do you have a special Christmas memory?

**Tomie dePaola:** Christmas is my favorite holiday. My favorite Christmas was the one when I received tons and tons of art supplies: everything from an easel to paints, pads and pads of paper, and "how to draw" books.

From Publishers Weekly

DePaola executes a clever concept with his trademark charm and humor, offering a prequel to the series that began in 1976 with the Caldecott Honor book *Strega Nona*. Here the author/artist tells how his charismatic character came to become a strega (witch) with a "magic touch." The "biography" begins on a dark and stormy night in the hills of Calabria, where Grandma Concetta authoritatively oversees Nona's birth. Convinced that Nona will be a strega like her, the big-hearted woman teaches her granddaughter how to use herbs and spells to remedy villagers' aches and troubles. Nona, along with her overconfident friend Amelia (who sets herself up as Nona's rival in some of the other books), attends the Academy for Stregas, but soon concludes that its newfangled approach to magic is not for her, and returns home to practice her craft the old-fashioned way. Eventually she discovers Grandma Concetta's all-important secret ingredient: love. With their expressive faces and pertly exaggerated profiles (Strega Nona's signature hooked nose punctuates her face even as a newborn), the classic characters happily cavort in sunnily colored, droll illustrations. And dePaola does a splendid job of working this sparkling tale into the *Strega Nona* canon: on the final page, for example, the aging strega opens her door to the first respondent to her ad for a helper, whom fans will immediately recognize as the gangly and beloved Big Anthony. Ages 4-8.

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From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 3?In this prequel to the five other "Strega Nona" books, dePaola takes readers once again to the quaint hills of old Italy. The story begins with Nona's delivery at the hands of Grandma Concetta and closes as the aging Strega Nona answers her door to a knock-kneed apprentice-hopeful, Big Anthony. Along the way, readers learn how Concetta teaches Nona the mysteries of herbs and potions and, more importantly, her "secret ingredient." They see young Nona befriended by Amelia at convent school; later, they set off together for the modern Academy of Stregas. Proving herself clever and kind as well as skilled in magic, Nona eventually inherits Grandma Concetta's house and practice. All the familiar dePaola elements are here: the homey Italian phrases; appreciation of the old ways; and the characteristically charming, square-bordered scenes with their pink-tiled roofs, noble doves, and goofy goats. Tangerine is added to the usual pastel palette, giving the book a brighter look that stands out at story hour. Children will find many of the paintings

hilarious. Though this book is a mere teaser on its own, it serves as the perfect final installment in any Strega Nona story fest, leaving children wanting still more of that "ingrediente segreto."?Karen MacDonald, East Falmouth Branch Library, MA  
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## **Users Review**

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#### **Serafina Hayes:**

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#### **Dustin Broach:**

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#### **Joshua Allen:**

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to obtain information. The information will make professionals understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of referrals to get information example: internet, magazine, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher which print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended for you is Strega Nona, Her Story this reserve consist a lot of the information with the condition of this world now. That book was represented so why is the world has grown up. The words styles that writer use to explain it is easy to understand. The writer made some analysis when he makes this book. This is why this book suited all of you.

#### **Aracely Schneider:**

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