



The Abandoned

Sharon Thompson

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Peggy Bowden has not had an easy life. As a teenager, her mother was committed to an asylum and then a local priest forced her into an abusive marriage. But when her husband dies in an accident Peggy sees an opportunity to start again and trains as a midwife.

In 1950s Dublin it is not easy for a woman to make a living and Peggy sees a chance to start a business and soon a lucrative maternity home is up and running.

But when Peggy realizes that the lack of birth control is an issue for women, she uses their plight as a way to make more money. Very soon Peggy is on the wrong side of the law.

What makes a woman decide to walk down a dark path? Can Peggy ever get back on the straight and narrow? Or will she have to pay for her crimes?

Set against the backdrop of Ireland in the 1950's The Abandoned tells the story of one woman's fight for survival and her journey into the underbelly of a dangerous criminal world.

The Abandoned is a debut novel not to be missed, it will appeal to fans of authors like Cara Hunter, Joy Ellis and Helen Fields

What everyone is saying about The Abandoned:

"Great fast paced book, great strong characters" *Wendy Haines*

"An engrossing story which is so hard to look back at and think that things like this really happened not that long ago. A superb debut." *Susan Hampson - Books From Dusk Till Dawn*

"I loved how fast-paced and chilling every part of this novel was, as it certainly kept me on my toes from start to finish, keeping my level of intrigued peaked until the very last second." *Kaisha Holloway - The Writing Garnet*

"Brilliant. High expectations are set for future books by Sharon Thompson an author to keep your eye on. A story you won't forget quickly." *Gemma Myers - Between The Pages Book Club*

"The pace throughout is steady with some of the faster-paced parts providing some darker more grittier moments." *Rachel Broughton - Rae Reads*

"The perfect mix of Historical Fiction, Thriller, Suspense, and Crime. I'm excited to read more from Sharon Thompson." *Dash Fan Book Reviews*

"The Abandoned is a fabulous historical thriller and though I disapproved of Peggy's actions, I thoroughly enjoyed her story." *Susan Corcoran - Booksaremycwtches*

"Cannot praise this author highly enough. I will be recommending this to anyone who listens." *Philomena Callan - Cheekypee Reads And Reviews*

"This is a superbly written book with a good heavy plot that keeps on giving and opening more." *Sue Ward -*

Read Along With Sue

"It's gritty, dark, vivid and sometimes very very brutal (see the blurb for her job descriptions, throw in some violence and you're halfway there), but always gripping, with dark laughs in there to keep your head above water." *Bernadette Maycock - BRMaycock's Book Blog*

"A very good read that will appeal to readers of thrillers and crime fiction.

The Abandoned Details

Date : Published January 25th 2018 by Bloodhound Books

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Author : Sharon Thompson

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From Reader Review The Abandoned for online ebook

sue says

I was provided with this copy from Bloodhounds for my own personal reading. My review is my own.

This is a superbly written book with a good heavy plot that keeps on giving and opening more.

Peggy used to be a midwife but circumstances were that she could no longer be an active midwife.

This is based around the 1950's so we need to remember the era back then.

Peggy got herself into some situations where she would "help" women out who were pregnant.

She then got into another lucrative business managing some girls, one of them special to her.

The characters of these women were very quickly brought to life making them very real in your head as you read. The author did a marvellous job at keeping Peggy interesting and her character and personality shone through, wicked, good, humorous or bad, even when You weren't rooting for Peggy you had to admire her self will, self worth and her gutsy nature.

It was very lively, fast paced with no hint of me as a reader getting bored.

I look forward to her next endeavour.

Highly recommended for those who like crime, Thrillers, drama or just a flipping good read.

Philomena Callan Cheekypee says

Wow. What a read. I started this last night and as soon as I got kids to school this morning I was back in bed reading the rest of this story. This is a debut novel and it is written brilliantly.

This book is set in the 1950s. I haven't read books from decades ago in so long, probably my teenage years when I inhaled Catherine Cookson. This book brought me back to those years with a smile on my face. The book is set in Ireland so my smile was even bigger. Familiar names had me in a happy bubble.

The Abandoned is Peggy's story. She's had a real tough start to life. She's a tough cookie and knows how to fight for survival. Any opportunity she sees she grasps with everything she has and tries her best.

While Peggy fights her conscience she finds herself in the middle of the criminal world. Is she strong enough to hold her own??

Cannot praise this author highly enough. I will be recommending this to anyone who listens. Looking forward to reading more from this author.

Kath says

Well, this was a little different to my usual reads. In a good way, I hasten to add. I do have to admit though that it did take me a wee while to get used to the author's style of writing, and get to grips with who and where and when initially but, when I did, it was all plain sailing from there on in.

When we first meet Peggy, in Dublin in the '50s, she is running a brothel. She has two constant girls and others that come and go. She didn't aspire to become a madam, not at all, but being forced into an abusive marriage meant that the path she wanted to take was not available. Once free of her husband though, Peggy becomes a midwife but, again, things happen to cause that venture to go south; via prison. With very limited options available, she sets up as a madam basically to make ends meet. But life still finds a way of making her suffer. There's police to keep on side, hoodlums to keep at bay and her girls to protect. She also has a little side-line and when things go horribly wrong there, she has no other option than to try and flee. Then a letter offers up a sliver of a silver lining. Could she really start again? Or is she just destined never to win in life?

Even having finished this book I am still unsure as to whether I actually liked Peggy. Sure, she's made a few bad life choices, well, maybe more than her fair share, and I am no way projecting my morals and values on her, but I am still a little undecided as to whether things really needed to get quite as out of hand as they did. Maybe with even just a couple of differences fewer people would have got hurt along the way. And people did get hurt both directly and indirectly by her hand. Anyway, they did and that's that. It did make for a really great story all told though; her shenanigans I mean. Notwithstanding all the stuff thrown at her, she never gave in and that in itself has got to be admired. There was always that little glimpse of hope on the horizon, often though, sadly just out of reach. We really had a little bit of everything in this book. Not slung together though, more neatly and seamlessly interwoven by the author. Delivered in quite an emotional way too. Plotting was excellent, especially all the little interconnected things that happen along the way. Small things, some easily missed but most expanded on later. I do love that when it is done well; as it is here.

It was also a rather fascinating glimpse into what was happening around and about Dublin in the 50s. The attitudes, the ways of life, boy how things have changed. But it also depicts the start of something really quite new, and very special. I am not going to spoil it with details here though but it was also fascinating in an historical way.

All in all, a gripping, albeit rather harrowing, story that kept my attention nicely throughout, leaving me satisfied at the end. My thanks go to the Publisher and Netgalley for the chance to read this book.

Linda Strong says

Peggy Bowden had a childhood that was anything but easy. Her mother was committed to an asylum and then Peggy was coerced into a marriage with an abusive man. When that man dies, she takes the opportunity to train as a midwife.

In time, she opens a maternity home and she becomes quite successful. And had she stopped there, her story would have been much different.

Lack of birth control is a big problem for the women on the 1950s .. especially in Ireland. In her desire to help women, she finds herself living the life of a criminal.

The subjects of birth control and abortion were handled as delicately as possible, but it may still be a trigger for some. I had a hard time relating to the topic and the characters within. Regretfully, this book just didn't

do it for me.

Many thanks to the author / Bloodhound Books / Netgalley for the digital copy of THE ABANDONED. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

Bev says

This story is set in 1950's in Dublin Ireland. Peggy Bowden has not had a very good life. But when her husband (who was abusive) dies, she sees this as a way of redemption for herself. She wants to help other women by becoming a midwife and also tackling the lack of birth control. This is not seen as a good thing back then and she finds herself on the wrong side of the law. Can she right her wrong or will she be doomed to pay for her crimes? You will need to read the book to see how this ends. I voluntarily read a copy of this book from Bloodhound Books.

Dash fan says

5? A Gripping historical Thriller you won't be able to put Down.

The Abandoned is deliciously juicy, you delve into the dark world of Ireland in the 1950s, the reader is treated to what it was like to have nothing, the lengths women will go to rid them of their unborn child, the murky world of prostitution and the crime that goes hand in hand with it.

I found the first few chapters a little confusing as it bounced back and forth. But once I got my head around the story I was hooked.

So my advice is stick with it... you won't be disappointed!

We meet Peggy!

Peggy is hard faced, ruthless, yet she has a softer side that screams out her need to be loved.

She is not the easiest Character to like, but that's the whole point you're not meant to like her.

Her character aims to shock, and wow she does it well.

Peggy's character is perfectly unsettling as she toys with your emotions!

You see Peggy doesn't have an easy life and trouble just seems to have a way of following her.

She runs a small brothel and one young girl in particular Molly melts Peggy's hard exterior.

Not only is Peggy a Madame she is also a midwife.

But as you delve into her dark past you see that Peggy is practising abortions behind closed doors. Which is illegal and extremely dangerous!

We follow Peggy on a journey of tragedy, heartbreak, the need to be Loved, crime, danger, torment, as she falls deeper into the darker side.

What I loved most about this book is these things did actually happen in real life,

And still women are unable to have abortions today.

Sharon literally got things spot on!

I love, love, love books that go back in time and delve into the criminal underworld.
It's dangerous, murky, gritty, exhilarating, Thrilling and real!

What Sharon did was to take the reader into the very heart of Dublin, where the only way to survive was to Marry, become a Nun, or runaway and become embroiled into the seedy world of prostitution.
How far will one go to survive!

Within the Book Sharon touches on the following sensitive subjects: illegal abortion, prostitution, murder, crime, criminal racketeering, mental health with much research.

As I said before The Abandoned is deliciously addictive!
It's Dark and utterly Thrilling.
The perfect mix of Historical Fiction, Thriller, Suspense, and Crime.
I'm excited to read more from Sharon Thompson.

Thank you to Bloodhound Books for this copy which I reviewed honestly and voluntarily.

My Review is also on my blog website:
<https://dashfan81.blogspot.com/2018/0...>

Books n All Jill Burkinshaw says

Peggy is a survivor. Her mother had serious mental health issues, she has been abused and imprisoned but she wont be broken. She takes a young girl she meets inside under her wing and moves in to number 34 to run a brothel with an abortion clinic on the side.

Despite everything she has done you have to love her. She is a brilliant character, feisty and sassy as they come. Her 'girls' come in all shapes and sizes. As the story progresses Peggy finds herself entangled with some bad people and is not sure how she is going to untangle herself. When angry people keep turning up on her doorstep she goes in search of the only family she knows of and from there her life takes another drastic turn.

Talk about out of the frying pan and into the fire Peggy is a walking disaster area. As the story progresses we find that she may be down but she definitely isn't out and she finds a way to leave her past behind for good as she takes on a new name and new life but all is not as it seems.

This is a steadily moving story of a woman's struggle to find her way in a cruel world but every turn brings her face to face with another battle in the war that her life has become.

I very good read that will appeal to readers of thrillers and crime fiction.

Thank you to Bloodhound Books for the advance copy.

Janel says

2.5 stars - I can honestly say I've not read a historical crime fiction novel like this one before – there was so

much I enjoyed about this novel and so much that didn't work for me, and even after pondering my thoughts for a few days, I'm still conflicted.

Let's start with what I really enjoyed – the character of Peggy Bowden. She was such an interesting character, she had this hard-outer image that she portrayed to the world because she felt it was necessary for her survival, as a woman, in 1950's Ireland; but I could see this vulnerability in her, and despite some of her horrid actions, it made me warm to her character.

“The back of my hand is wet with my sorrow and shame.”

What Peggy experiences, some will say is karma, but there was one point in this book where my heart broke for her because of what she went through, and she went through it alone.

I really enjoyed the first half of this novel, I liked that the historical fiction setting was the seedy underworld of Ireland as oppose to the “prim and proper” – that gave this novel a dark atmosphere which echoed the themes mentioned in this novel.

Where things started to take a turn for me was when Peggy found herself fully immersed in the criminal underworld. I thought things became a bit too extreme in the sense that this went from being a novel high in believability, a character [Peggy] who's fate I was interested in learning about in a more profound [for want of a better word] way into this novel with a “criminal gangster vibe” – this change in dynamic didn't work for me.

There's no denying The Abandoned is rich in its raw grittiness, and I must mention, it contains themes of back street abortions that some readers may find disturbing, but the overall novel isn't disturbing in it's delivery.

As I mentioned I really enjoyed the first half of this novel, can you recommend a book on only enjoying half of it? Sadly, I don't think you can, but I've seen the potential in this novel and I will read Thompson's next book to see how I find it.

My thanks to the publisher (Bloodhound Books) for granting me access to a digital copy of this novel via Netgalley

Hans says

This is certainly not a thriller. Peggy is doing fine in the first part. After meeting someone it's becoming unreal and farfetched.

Between The Pages Book Club (Gemma M) says

This story is set in Dublin in the 1950s and starts off with a dark and deep prologue to capture the readers appetite fast. This is a brilliant story and different from the every day thrillers we usually read. This is crime, suspense and historical fiction together which has made an amazing story I devoured.

The Abandoned is well written, easy to read, fast paced and contains short chapters. I could easily have finished this in one sitting and was very impressed. I enjoyed every minute reading this story, I was hooked.

I am a big fan of historical fiction and this really is a book I loved and enjoyed.

I awarded a well deserved five stars and would highly recommend this story to you all, a must buy from me. Brilliant. High expectations are set for future books by Sharon Thompson an author to keep your eye on. A story you won't forget quickly.

Rachel says

I have to admit to not quite knowing what to expect when I picked up this book what I will say is that I was pulled straight into Peggy's life. Peggy is a very intriguing character she isn't wholly likeable and does some questionable things however she is resilient and strong and will do what she can to survive. The way her story is told is matter of fact and you really do get a feel for her character both the good and the bad. The pace throughout is steady with some of the faster paced parts providing some darker more grittier moments.

The writing is descriptive and really sets the scene for the reader as if you are right there with Peggy as more and more trouble seems to find her. Along with experiencing all the desperation that the characters feel from that time period. The question is will Peggy learn from her mistakes and end up making the right choices?

Expect a few surprises along the way that definitely make Peggy's life more interesting. There is plenty of family drama, crime and one woman's will to survive doing whatever it takes.

Four stars from me!

With thanks to Sarah at Bloodhound Books for my copy. This is my honest and unbiased opinion.

Livia Sbarbaro says

The Abandoned takes you into some very dark places...

Peggy's mother is taken away to an asylum...and the priest Father Lavelle gives her two choices..marry John Harley or enter a convent...Herley is a brute, vicious ,unkind and selfish..When Harley dies Peggy is imprisoned, becomes a madam at no.34 and has a sideline as an abortionist..This is 1930 Dublin where if you are unmarried or have a mishap...fate can be cruel unkind and horrific..All the while Peggy still holds a candle for her one true love... but years have passed and times ,events and people change..Peggy is one of those women who seem to forever have trouble at their door...Then there is death...And Peggy finds someone from the past...but yet again... Peggy just as she is gaining a name for herself ...Walls come tumbling down..Peggy is a fiesty woman who is just trying to survive...sometimes you feel sorry for her ..and sometimes you wish she would just stay silent...This is a dark story the character I loved most was Peggy's lost love... Father Lavelle is a despicable excuse for a human being...A gripping dark read ...

Alexina Golding says

We are brought in to Peggy's world in 1950's Ireland; this is a crime saga book. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Peggy, once I settled in to the book and found her an amazing

character that made the best of her situations. Even if I didn't always agree with her I could sympathise and understand why she took the route she did.

I do think on the whole her heart was in the right place, even if she wasn't always a warming character to relate to. Not surprising when you read what she has been though in the blurb alone!

This is a high quality debut novel delivered to us by Sharon Thompson, who gave a flavour and reality of a time that isn't that distant in history. I am so relieved to not have lived those times in Ireland or any place. This is has a sense of gritty realism which left me wanting to know more and more about the characters that were linked with Peggy, I was thoroughly engrossed.

The writing style is beautiful even if where the book is set isn't.

Thompson has put much thought in to this novel and it shows with the details and anguish that is within the pages.

I highly recommend The Abandoned and shall definitely be looking out for more by Sharon Thompson.

B.R. Maycock says

I can't even tell you how long I've waited to see Sharon Thompson appear on this blog! Sharon, a member of Carmel Harrington's 'Imagine Write Inspire' Writing group, has to be one of the most inspirational, hard working people I've ever had the privilege of knowing in the writing world. Her work has always been of the standout variety, with characters that are bold and brazen with flaws, quirks and imperfections and yet morals and beauty and an incredible story to tell. And there is always, always a nice layer of dark humour to grab you too! And so here we stand with Peggy Bowden. From the second I met Peggy I was hooked. She is strong with sass and backchat ever present, but with a multitude of worries and fears. The thing is she tries to hide anything that could be seen as a weakness from her girls, the women who work for her in a brothel in number thirty four in Mountjoy Square, Dublin, in the 1950's. (The most special mention for the innocent Molly, who stole my heart and made my stomach ball up with nerves on more than one occasion.)

This is the story of Peggy's journey as she tries to get out of said house and her life as she knows it. We are shown where Peggy came from, via beautiful scenes of her mother, who farmed and tended lands and then thrown into the harsh reality of how hard it was for women of the time and how men were seen as saviours for all women. This was a running theme, which Peggy battled sometimes successfully, sometimes not as we learned and saw some of the things Peggy did to make money, always justifying her actions, even when she doubted her motives.

This is a gritty, rise to power, revolutionary type of book, that shows what men do to keep their strongholds and how women do what they can purely to keep alive. It is filled with sorrow, angst, hope, love and a wealth of characters, some that disgust you, some who make you cheer, some that give you hope and others that disappoint when you least expect it. It's gritty, dark, vivid and sometimes very very brutal (see blurb for her job descriptions, throw in some violence and you're halfway there), but always gripping, with dark laughs in there to keep your head above water. I have to admit I was terrified that this wouldn't be my cup of tea, as to me it looked more like historical fiction, but to be honest I'm not sure that this can be put into any category, it seems different to anything in the charts out there at the moment, and is very much a standout. Ridiculously highly recommended!

Rating: 5/5

Sarah says

Set in the 1950's you really get a sense of what life was like back then. People's attitudes as well as how women were still pretty much pushed into the back ground.

Peggy has been through a lot and is still going through hard times trying to survive. What she has been through has hardened her somewhat which made me unsure with how I felt about her. I certainly had empathy for her but then I can't say I agreed with some of the things she does either. Peggy certainly wants a better life but it is very hard for her to get out of the binds that tie her into a very dangerous world.

There are lots of unsavoury characters in the book. Definitely ones that I would run a mile away from. The attitude of most of the men I have to admit infuriated me. Most had such little respect for women of which really got my back up. I am so glad I live in a world where we live as equals. Like Peggy, I would have found it very hard to keep my mouth closed and not give them what for!

The author certainly doesn't sugar coat anything in the story. She takes us on a dark and disturbing journey into a world of which I was so glad I wasn't part of.

The Abandoned is a raw and gritty read that I couldn't put down. Gripped from the off, Peggy's life is a captivating one that you won't want to miss. A promising debut from a very promising author. Look forward to reading more.

My thanks to Bloodhound Books for an advanced readers copy of this book. All opinions are my own and not biased in anyway.
