



The Mammy

Brendan O'Carroll

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"Mammy" is what Irish children call their mothers and **The Mammy** is Agnes Browne--a widow struggling to raise seven children in a North Dublin neighborhood in the 1960s. Popular Irish comedian **Brendan O'Carroll** chronicles the comic misadventures of this large and lively family with raw humor and great affection. Forced to be mother, father, and referee to her battling clan, the ever-resourceful Agnes Browne occasionally finds a spare moment to trade gossip and quips with her best pal Marion Monks (alias "The Kaiser") and even finds herself pursued by the amorous Frenchman who runs the local pizza parlor. Like the novels of Roddy Doyle, **The Mammy** features pitch-perfect dialogue, lightning wit, and a host of colorful characters. Earthy and exuberant, the novel brilliantly captures the brash energy and cheerful irreverence of working-class Irish life.

The Mammy Details

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Author : Brendan O'Carroll

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Simona says

Agnes Browne mamma è il primo di una serie di libri che comprendono: “I marmocchi di Agnes Browne”, “Agnes Browne nonna”, “Agnes Browne ragazza”.

Siamo nella Dublino proletaria di fine anni Settanta dove si svolgono le vicende di Agnes Browne, una donna arguta, saggia, una donna che affronta le sfide della vita (la morte del marito violento, le ristrettezze economiche) con una grinta e un umorismo unico.

Brendan O' Carroll ci fa conoscere il mondo di questa donna, la sua vita, i suoi sette figli e la sua inseparabile amica Marion con la quale lavora al mercato di El Jarro.

I personaggi sono contraddistinti da una umanità straordinaria e vorresti essere parte, anche tu lettore, del loro mondo tra bevute, pinte di birra, tenerezza e ilarità. Ci si immerge completamente in questo mondo vero, pulito e meravigliosamente umano.

E ora, non vedo l'ora di leggere gli altri e scoprire cosa questa straordinaria donna è pronta a riservarmi.

Savvy says

A humorously quirky tale of life in an Irish family struggling to survive with dignity and humanity.

Mammy is left with seven children to raise alone after her husband's encounter with a Hunter(!?!?)

Her ineffable spirit in the face of constant struggle is told with a witty levity and strong believable characters.

If you are looking for a book that will make you laugh out loud...I highly recommend The Mammy.

She is a highly lovable protagonist with no fear of tackling roadblocks or any adversity along her journey.

Kitty Jay says

A brilliant, hilarious story of a widower, Agnes Browne, and her seven children. Agnes Browne is doing her best, but is outnumbered by her children, who run her ragged with their schemes and adventures, outmaneuvered by life, which takes her best friend, but somehow manages to keep her chin up through all of it. Throughout the series of comical misadventures, such as being arrested for slapping a nun with a cucumber, or her date with a Frenchman, she is loving and stern in equal measures; she is, in short, everyone's mother, told with affection and a cheeky sense of humor by Brendan O'Carroll.

Michael says

Extremely funny and uplifting account of a widow, Agnes, and her 7 kids in Dublin in the early 60's. Lots of little vignettes to demonstrate the triumph of spirit and family bonds over the vicissitudes of poverty. A fast read reckoned in one blurb to be like "Angela's Ashes on Prozac. Nice lead in to a series of four.

Eleonora says

Ho sempre pensato che questo libro fosse gravoso, pesante. Non chiedetemi perché ma ogni tanto ho questi pregiudizi insensati su libri che non conosco.

Passando queste ore in compagnia di Agnes ho scoperto molte cose: ha soli 34 anni ed ha già sette figli (cioè ragazzi, *sette* figli; lei alla mia età aveva già sei figli su sette. Assurdo.), l'autore è un uomo e non una donna (altro pregiudizio); la sua storia drammatica a tratti ma lei è davvero simpatica. E' vedova eppure è 'contenta', e la capisco. Non riesco ad immaginare come sia crescere sette figli.

Che donna.

Leggerò gli altri libri, sono curiosa e la scrittura mi è piaciuta molto.

Deb (Readerbuzz) Nance says

The Mammy has sat here on my bookshelf for almost four years. I finally picked it up and read it today.

What a crazy story! Agnes Browne and her heap of seven children. Her husband dead. Agnes never quite getting it.

A hoot!

Angela G says

Contro: solo 170 pagine da trascorrere insieme ad un personaggio unico come Agnes Browne. Donna forte e genuina, temprata dalle difficoltà di una vita da proletaria nella Dublino popolare di fine anni 70, cuore tenero e scorza rude, sboccata e adorabilmente scurrile quel tanto che basta per formare in coppia con l'amica del cuore Marion un duetto irresistibile...tra il banco di frutta e verdura al mercato del Jarro e i sette marmocchi da crescere a casa, passare del tempo nella vita di Mrs Browne, tra strette al cuore e risate "a voce alta" è stata un'esperienza che non vedo l'ora di ripetere. Pro: Agnes Browne è protagonista di altri tre romanzi di Brendan O'Carroll...il viaggio continua!

Stephanie (Stepping out of the Page) says

I'm a big fan of Mrs Brown's Boys, a very popular comedy here in England with Brendan O'Carroll acting as the lead character, Agnes Brown. It will probably be a surprise for quite a few people that the series is based on a trilogy of books written by O'Carroll himself. It was definitely a (very pleasant) surprise to me when I saw the trilogy in the bookshop. I knew I just had to pick them up!

Agnes Browne (With an e, unlike the TV show) is a loud, funny (though often not intentionally) and caring (in her own way, at least) Irish mother of seven children, struggling but trying her best to get through life after the death of her husband and a loss of income. To be honest, I couldn't tell you what a Northern Dublin neighbourhood would've been like in the 1960's, but it's the place and time period portrayed in this book and it seemed quite realistic. I have been to Dublin a couple of times and it was great to see a lot of popular places referenced - anybody who has been will recognise some of the mentioned locations. I thought that the

atmosphere and the working-class struggle of Dublin was very well described and I really got into the setting.

Mrs Brown's Boys, as I've said, is a comedy and it is guaranteed to make me laugh out loud (often for quite a while afterwards, too!) every time. I was worried that the book wouldn't be as humorous after seeing it acted out, but oh, how wrong was I! I absolutely loved the humour in this book and was laughing nearly throughout each page. I instantly warmed to Agnes Browne and found her absolutely hilarious. Her connection with the other characters was fantastic. I really enjoyed reading about Agnes and her best friend Marion, their relationship was especially touching. Although the book was, for the most part, amusing, it also touched on some rather sensitive subjects, including love and loss. There was a real sense of community as everyone helped each other and even though times were difficult, good relationships and positivity helped to get them through.

I really commend O'Carroll for executing this book so well. This was a very quick read as it was a short book at less than 180 pages, but it felt as though the author packed a lot in during that space. Without being overly descriptive, a very vivid scene was set and the personality of each character shone from the pages. I still have the next books, The Chisellers and The Granny to read and frankly, I can't wait! This is definitely a book that I'll keep hold of and can already see myself wanting to revisit it in the future!

Nancy says

Although the coarse language bothered me at first, I warmed up to the heart of the story—the love between the mother and her children and her relationship with her best friend Marian. It rings of truth, but at the end you detect a fairy-tale quality, perhaps a way of escaping from their poverty and dismal existence. Funny and meaningful at the same time.

Kiwi Begs2Differ \ says

I love the Irish! This is a short and light read: the comic adventures of Agnes Browne, a big hearted widow and mum of seven. The book is hilarious at times, but be prepared for the profusion of four letters words. High brow literature it isn't, but laughs are an excellent stress reliever and this is just what I needed.

Fav. Quote:

Marion sat properly in the car, facing forwards. The instructor walked around the vehicle, clipboard in hand, as if examining the vehicle - and that is exactly what he was doing. The women's heads followed him around the car. 'What's he doin'?' asked Marion. 'Dunno - is he lookin' for a way in?' 'Don't be silly, it's his car! He's probably doin' a safety check.' 'He knows we're from The Jarro, Marion, he's countin' the fuckin' wheels!'

Arwen56 says

Copertina: bellissima.

Contenuto: una cretinata totale.

PS: E ne ho anche altri tre da leggere dello stesso autore, porcaccia la miseria. :-(

Trilby says

Despite recommendations from Roddy Doyle and Malachy McCourt, this book disappointed me. It's funny, but not so nearly as funny as the works of many other Irishmen (e.g., Frank McCourt, James Joyce, Brian Friel, Roddy Doyle). For one, much of the humor is in the working class characters' malapropisms. Over a hundred pages of this is ninety too many.

A personal bete noir for me is the overuse of exclamation points. Shelley scholar Neville Rogers used to tell his composition students that God has ordained that each of us is allotted the use of three exclamation points per year. Go over the allotment, and you will burn in hell for a year per point. At the rate O'Carroll uses the loathsome punctuation marks, he will be shoveling coal for most of eternity.

This is not to say that "The Mammy" is a bad book. I just found it only middling- funny. Compare that to my response to seeing Friel's "Philadephia, Here I Come!" It took over a week for my sore muscles to recover from all the laughing I did. O, "Mammy," you ain't even close. Brian Friel, Paddy Clarke, HaHaHa.

Martina Spinaci says

Agnes è un mito e anche tutti i suoi figli! Non avrei mai letto questo libro se non per errore, per fortuna questo errore l'ho commesso ed ho scoperto una storia divertente che mi ha fatto piegare in due dalle risate ma che mi ha fatto anche tanta tenerezza.

Leslie says

So hilarious and naughty and charming! Best Christmas present I ever bought myself. I am just tickled to death to look over there and see two more books of this box set waiting for me.

Lauren says

Unique, funny, heartbreaking, hilarious...as any good Irish tale should be. I loved this whole series and I wish there were more!

Mysterium says

The Mammy is a brilliant funny tale of an Irish family set in working class Dublin. This is the first novel in O'Carroll's Mrs. Browne Trilogy and a wonderful introduction to his sharp wit and writing skills. As not only

a survivor of the Catholic Church, but growing up on the old mossy rock, the story often brought laughter and tears to my eyes. We are a rare people in how we view the world. Once all of the shite of Irish Spring commercials, Riverdance, and green beer is laid aside, our depth and pathos as a nation is one of a kind. There are two kinds of people in this creation...the Irish, and those that wish they were. (wink)

Granted though the story gets a bit off track now and then and the ending is rather abrupt and silly, The Mammy is a nice trip down memory lane and a glimpse into the struggles of the working class of Ireland and how they lived during the late 1960's. Sharp language and humour surround a family tale of love and devotion. You will understand how the Irish Circle of Friends has become a living legend indeed.

True now, I am biased because I was born and bred in Ireland, but I feel that anyone who likes tales of family and friendship, and appreciates a group that puts the "fun" in dysfunction will find this to be a grand read indeed.

**Those with penguin allergies, please be cautious in reading this book (wink)

Annie says

This trilogy, and the later addition of the Young Wan, is absolutely HILARIOUS, particularly if you enjoy Irish literature. Reminiscent of Angela's Ashes, but much less depressing. You'll love all of them: the Mammy, the Chisellers, and the Granny. I don't remember which one you should read first.

Polly Rosenstein says

This book captures why I love the Irish. In the midst of hardships, Agnes Browne manages to see the humor in life and never feels sorry for herself. It is a laugh out loud book that will keep you laughing as well as shedding a few tears. Thanks to my daughter Jenny for recommending this book, which I in turn recommended to my book club. This is my second read of The Mammy.

Lawyer says

The Mammy: Agnes Materfamilias

Welcome to Jarlath Street, Dublin. 1967. And there lives Agnes Browne. Thirty-four years old. Catholic. The mother of seven children, from Mark, age fourteen, down to Baby Trevor. The tot with the face of an angelic cherub who smiles and greets strangers with a distinctly understood "Fuck off!" Ah, at least he says it with a smile.

Agnes Browne, nee Reddin, is widowed young. Her husband, Redser, is struck down by an errant driver. That is Agnes' lot in life as we meet her. Keeping home and hearth together with the loss of her husband's income will be no easy thing. There's the widow's pension, of course. Then there's the sparse income from Agnes' fruit and vegetable stand she shares with best friend Marion Monk over on Moore Street. But it's a hard life keeping seven children in food, shoes, and clothes.

Though the street on which Agnes lives was named after a Saint, it is not a bit of Heaven, but a maze of

tenement houses. Those who live on Jarlath Street call it the Jarro. There is no easy solace to be found on such a street except in a good pint pulled by the Publican and the degree of faith you find in your Catechism. The reality is it's a rough place, where rough people live, and those who live there are no strangers to violence.

Agnes is accustomed to violence. During her marriage to Redser, she was used to the backhand slap of her husband. Identical to the slap delivered to her by her Father when she was a wee wan. It must be a common school for louts who learn to treat women hard to keep them under control.

There's enough alcohol on the breath of those who live in the Jarro to seemingly allow anyone to escape from the reality of life lived there. Brendan O'Carroll could easily have written a bleak and hopeless look at life had he chosen to do so. But he did not.

Sure there is sorrow and sadness here. There are instances contained within these pages to bring any reader with a heart tears. Yet, there is also great humor here. It is that artful mix of joy and sadness that makes The Mammy the memorable read that it is, just as all life is neither all laughter nor all tears.

O'Carroll is a talented writer with an ear f0r dialog. He has spent many years telling the stories of Agnes Browne and her children. The Mammy was published in 1994. Three other volumes about Mrs. Browne and her children have followed. I will read them all.

One of the highest rated BBC Series is O'Carroll's show, "Mrs. Brown's Boys." It is an enjoyable watch. However, with O'Carroll himself playing Agnes Brown, understand the emphasis on television and in the movies O'Carroll has written is humor. It's in the perfect prose of O'Carroll's writing his true mastery shines. Read this. And join me as I read the remaining volumes. The Mammy is a true gem to be treasured.

Barbara Fistolera says

mi piace molto il modo di scrivere di O'Carroll perchè riesce a rendere piacevoli anche delle situazioni che proprio non lo sono.

La storia in generale è divertente e si legge tutto d'un fiato!

Ora devo leggere, al più presto, il seguito ;)
