



Giving Up On Ordinary

Isla Dewar

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When Megs became a cleaner, she didn't realise that if people looked at her a cleaner would be all they saw. Megs has as full a life as the people she does for, Mrs Terribly-Clean-Pearson or Ms Oh-Just-Keep-It-Above-The-Dysentery-Line McGhee. She's the mother of three children and still mourning the death of a son; she enjoys a constant sparring match with her mother; she drinks away her troubles with Lorraine, her friend since Primary One; and she sings the blues in a local club.

Megs has been getting by. But somehow that's not enough any more. It's time Megs gave up on being ordinary...

Giving Up On Ordinary Details

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Diane says

An very enjoyble read by isla Dewar, a Scottish author who is filling the gap for Maeve Binchy now that she is gone. Megs feels she has been cheated by life and is just an ordinary nobody trying to hold it together as a single mom. Her dreams of stardom as a jazz & blues singer are down the drain and she is delegated to being a house cleaner. But just when life is at it' s lowest she finds love in the form of one of her customers and an opportunity to get a fresh prospective on her life.

Libby Mcainsh says

Read this many years ago but still have a picture of Mr Hundred miles an hour in my head.

Tory says

“I thought I’d take him home. Pour him a glass of malt and give him the best blow-job of his life. Remind him of how good he had things. But, ‘A blow-hob won’t fix everything, Lorraine,” he says. “You think it will. But not this time.” So...’ She flicked as into the plant pot, ‘... there you go. A blow-job doesn’t fix everything. And here’s me thinking it did. More fool me.”

‘Was that it? Where was all the steamy talk of love and death? The bawdy exchanges? Megs couldn’t remember when she’d last been so disappointed. This’ll do for conversation. This’ll do for a cake. This’ll do for life. She left her tea and good and never went back. She walked, hunched against the rain, back to her car, trying not to think that she was the same as the fat-kneed Blue Kettle ladies. She lived a this’ll-do life.’

Good book. Likeable characters. Sweet and entertaining. About appreciating who you are and what you have.

Siti says

funny and hilarious..how someone is thinking that she was living in an ordinary life...

Joan Horkey says

Kind of funny.

Sho says

I pushed on to about half way through this before I realised - meh. Life is too short. So it's on the "given up" shelf.

It is pages and pages of semi-humorous never-ending description of a divorcée's life, her friend's husband leaves her, her kids are lively... *yawn*

Jacinda says

I really enjoyed this book. It was funny, clever and real.

"She did not know what to do. Smile? Look away? Stick out her tongue? Oh no, not that. He had, in the end, denied her. But then he only got there first. How long would it have been before she denied him? He'd been good for her. Perhaps she'd even been good for him. She remembered summer evenings, things they'd done.... she told him some of her secrets. These things she'd done with him were her favorite memories. Pictures she'd keep in her head."

That was a good quote, but I also liked, " A blow job wont fix everything.... you think it will. But not this time."

Cindy says

Truly hated for this book to end. Ordinary describes every character in this book, yet they are just like everyone you already know. A lonely single mom, a gossipy best friend, teenage kids, nerdy neighbors, crappy ex-husbands . . . Intelligently written and situated in Scotland with a wee bit of Scottish verbage and attitude.

Elizabeth Emily Browne says

Okay.. So this is the first one star review I have ever given.

This was so hard to get into.. It took me do long to read compared with others. I should have liked the honest speaking Megs but I just couldn't get the point. All in all I rather disappointing read. One that I should have given up on.

Elizabeth says

Page turner, very well written story about a woman with a family who cleans to support this family and who ends up having an affair with one of the men she cleans for. Different cultures, different backgrounds, but so funny. In the end she is 'giving up on ordinary' and starts her own business together with her best lady friend.

Geraldine says

I came upon this book at a time when I was jaded - no, angry - at the formulaic churn of 'chick lit' books that were prominently displayed in WH Smiths. Fed up with those ghastly women with their socially pointless jobs on the periphery of media, and their obsessions with fashion, appearance & conspicuously consuming a 'lifestyle'. Devoid of intellect (ie thick), hobbies or passion, disconnected from society, they obsessed only about hooking some boring, emotionally-stunted but rich man so they could embark on the lifestyle of discreet whoredom for which they'd been brought up.

And then this book appeared, as a present, and told the story of a woman who resembled the women I knew in my ward, who came to my surgery and to public meetings. Life hadn't dealt them a great hand of cards and they knew they had to fight for everything they needed. And fight they did.

I imagine it feels quite dated now, but at the time it uplifted me more than any book with 'feelgood' in its blurb

Carolyn says

Isla Dewar is an author currently popular in the UK. She was born in Edinburgh and lives in Scotland with her husband, a cartoonist, and two sons. Whether writing about the life of women during World War II or more contemporary times, she is honest, witty, and a keen observer of family life. Her characters are eccentric, and all too human.

Linda L says

This was a wonderful book -- a divorced mom of 3 grieves for a child who was killed, a marriage that was wrong, and a career which never happened. She cleans houses for a while, but eventually believes in herself. She also has a best friend from kindergarten who has her back. Read this.

Teresa D says

Whenever I need a lift any Isla book will do it for me.

Anita says

This book has all the ingredients...a single mom, interfering mother, gossipy best friend, teenage kids, basterdly ex husband... a earlier life drama.. great ingredients, a sharp sense of humor...yet...I couldn't get into it...hard to stay with the book. I must have liked the main character enough..I did finish the book... but not remarkable unfortunately..sigh.
