



## Second-Hand Jane

*Michelle Vernal*

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When footloose and fancy-free Jessica, a thirty-something writer, decides to follow her journalistic instincts and trace the story of a young girl for her weekly column in a Dublin newspaper, she unwittingly embarks on a journey into Northern Ireland's tragic past.

With her love of all things vintage, Jessica Jane Baré is known as Second-hand Jane to her friends. Hailing from New Zealand, these days she's finding the grass is greener in Dublin and not just because of all the rain. In fact, life would be sweet if it weren't for the reason she left home in the first place—her meddling mother. Marian views Jess's life in Dublin as nothing more than a stop-gap until she meets Mr Right and he's taking his time. Things look set to change, however, when Jess meets the delectable Nick, who ticks all of Marian's boxes.

In the meantime, Jess's latest second-hand collectible—a children's book—gives her an idea for her column. Deciding to track down the girl whose name is scribbled inside the cover of that book, she uncovers more than she ever expected. "Amy was in the wrong place at the wrong time," the girl's taciturn brother, Owen, informs her. Intrigued, Jess travels to the family pig farm in County Down and listens to Amy's poignant tale unfold through Owen. With a little help from a rather cute runt of the litter she names Wilbur, Jess is about to help put the past to rest and learn that appearances can be deceptive.

Then Marian announces she is coming to Dublin to sort her daughter's increasingly tangled love life out and Jess's chance of a happy ending like those in the story books she collects looks about as likely as Wilbur flying.

*Librarian's note: See alternate cover editions of ASIN B00INCPYEO here and here.*

## Second-Hand Jane Details

Date : Published November 4th 2014 by Michelle Vernal Publishing Limited (first published 2014)

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Author : Michelle Vernal

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## From Reader Review Second-Hand Jane for online ebook

### Dee-Cee It's all about the books says

First off I'd like to say a huge thank you to TBC on FB for sending me a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Second Hand Jane is a wonderful book, It's easy to read and so easy to get lost in. Jess the main character is a very likeable character, she's quirky and her love of second hand things is really nice. Especially the books, I love buying second hand books and often when I find a name inside I find myself wondering who the person is etc. Jess's two best friends are fab too in the story, Nora and Brianna are two very different characters but all three are fab together.

Marian, Jess's mum is quite funny and it was nice to see the relationship between her and her daughter and you could also feel the dread Jess felt when her mum announced she was coming to Dublin. I was reading and cringing at the thought.

I really enjoyed this book, the writing is lovely and the description through out made me want to jump on a ferry and go and visit Northern Ireland and find out more about the sad history of The Troubles. Also I have fallen head over heels in love with Wilbur the little piglet, I live on a farm so really a little piglet would just fit in ha ha.

A really enjoyable read and I highly recommend this book.

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### Laura says

I also posted this review on my blog. You can check it out [here](#).

**4.5**

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**Disclaimer:** I received a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. I would like to send a big thank you to NetGalley for this book, and also to everyone at Michelle Vernal Publishing, as well as Michelle Vernal herself.

(I am late with my review. Due to health problems, I couldn't write and concentrate properly.)

I was pleasantly surprised by this book. At first I thought it is your average romance/chick lit novel. It is a little bit predictable at times, but that does not ruin the book.

The story is told from Jessica's point of view, and it is a third person narrative.

The chapters are a little bit longer than I expected, and it took me a while to get into the story. I'll be honest:

after I've read the first two chapters, I thought this novel is boring. I decided to finish reading it, so I can review it properly; I'm glad I didn't give up. After the first chapters, the story starts to kick in, and it gets interesting.

Even though she is a romantic, and a sucker for love, Jess is not very successful when it comes to men. She seems to be the type of women that goes after the "bad guys", and try to fix them. Jess confuses troubled men with baby birds: an injured baby duck she can nurture back to health, and help it grow. Yea, no.

Jessica is not the typical beauty, or the type of women (character) that dresses down due to insecurities, but deep down she secretly wants to be like every other pretty girl. Jessica is her own person. She shops at thrift stores, has a funny style, loves antiques, likes to read children's books, and she could care less what others say about her "weirdness".

Her best friends, Nora and Brianna are lovely friends, despite the fact that they're different. Nora likes to be fashionable, while Brianna is a wife and a mum. Brianna is gentle, and subtle, while Nora is blunt and honest. Nevertheless, Jess, Nora and Brianna make quite a nice trio.

Jessica is a Kiwi girl living in Ireland. Her family lives back home, in New Zealand, while she lives by herself in Dublin. I've never read a romance novel about a Kiwi girl, or a love story set in Ireland. It was nice a change.

There is the main plot: Jessica finding a good man (finally). However, there is also an important sub-plot.

|-> It starts with a children's book. Jessica wants to find the girl, Amy, that used to own the book. She wants to hear her story, and how that 6 year old girl changed as she grew up. This leads Jessica to Northern Ireland, where the little girl's brother, Owen, lives. Jessica finds Owen to be handsome, but distant. She also finds out what happened to Amy, which becomes the sub-plot of this book (Northern Ireland problems, and the casualties).

We are also introduced to a little piglet, who steals Jess' heart.

The romance between Jessica and Owen grows as the story unfolds. It is not instant, neither childish. What they have is a normal, adult relationship, with adult conversations. I liked this a lot. I'm a little bit tired of childish romance.

Overall, a nice romance novel.

*Second-Hand Jane* is a perfect read for romance lovers. It is also suitable for those who want to read something light, and relaxing.

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### **Gina says**

They called her Second-Hand Jane because of her affinity for older items. She's in her 30's, is originally from Dublin, and is a writer in New Zealand who is encumbered by an overbearing mother who wants her daughter married already. Her mom thinks Jane will get over New Zealand, find Mr. Right, and settle down in Dublin. Jane, however, is in no hurry and enjoys the freedom being single brings.

In an old children's book, there is scribbled the name of the previous owner. Jane thinks it would be a great idea to track down the little girl who had the book, and write a column about it. However, this sets off a chain of events that takes Jane on quite the adventure.

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### **Christina B says**

\* I won a copy of this book in a Goodreads giveaway in exchange for an honest review.\*

I love this book! The characters (both human and animals), the locations, the love of thrift shops.....everything! I laughed and smiled throughout reading this book. All the situations and banter between friends made for a very enjoyable read. The more sensitive, sad parts of the story were handled very well in a way that flowed nicely with the more humorous parts. I felt the sadness regarding Amy but there was still hope and love surrounding it.

I relate to Jess in her love of thrift shops and used books. That's part of the reason why I wanted to read this book. The other part is that it's set in Ireland. I enjoy reading books set in locations that I'd love to visit. Plus the cover caught my eye, very cute!

I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys humorous, feel good novels with a lot of heart. I will definitely check out the author's other work.

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### **Carlin says**

Loved it. Loved the main character Jess, known as Second Hand Jane because of her love for all things old...including furniture, clothing and books. Jess is a 34 year old unmarried woman from New Zealand who has emigrated to Ireland. She is journalist who writes a weekly column about her adventures in her adopted country and her life in Dublin. She is happy with her single life, but her two best friends in Dublin and her mother in New Zealand want her to find The One.... a true love, a man with no "issues" with whom she can spend the rest of her life.

As a collector of old children's books, Jess finds a book that is inscribed to Amy Ahern, from her brother Owen. Jess decides to find that girl who would now be at least in her 40s. What she finds is the crux of the plot of this marvelous book. It takes her to Northern Ireland and its sad history of The Troubles. The author evokes the beauty and sadness of the country with gentle humor and love.

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### **Sanda says**

When I first started reading this book my first thought revolved around the fact that for some reason most of the chick lit I read takes place either in the US or the UK and how refreshing it is to read about the

adventures of a New Zealander living in Ireland.

The book's heroine Jessica (nicknamed Second Hand Jane because of her love of things vintage and used) is at once quirky and deep, and this duality reflects the overall tone of the book as well. Characters that appear in supporting roles are just as entertaining and interesting - her friends Brianna and Nora helping her create a home away from home in Ireland; her mom Marian, whose motherly meddling ways and persistent interest in Jessica's love life (in the hopes of seeing her daughter married off) will have you laughing out loud; Jessica's potential love suitors and finally one adorable piggy (yes, you did read that right!).

Though the story has all the elements of an easy breezy, beach style read, the subplot of Amy's story (the story which becomes a part of Jessica's column) leads both the heroine and the reader into the land of deeper introspection.

After reading this book I felt like I just took a quick and very much fun trip to Ireland, I thought quite a bit about my own relationship with my mother and I got to immerse myself into (mis)adventures of an interesting character - what's not to love. I recommend this to all chick lit lovers but especially the ones looking for a pleasant departure from the usual chick lit fare.

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### **Nataliya Montgomery says**

#### **Great light reading**

Wonderful book. I enjoyed the premise as I too love thrift shops. It was a good story which kept me engaged until the end.

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### **Fiona McCormick says**

I received a free copy of this book from the facebook book club THE Book Club in exchange for an honest review.

It is the story of Jessica Jane who loves all things vintage hence the nickname Second Hand Jane. She is a thirty something New Zealand journalist living in Dublin who begins to investigate the life of Amy, the original owner of one of her preowned vintage children's ladybird books. In doing so she uncovers a tragic life story of Amy and her family who were affected by the Troubles in Northern Ireland in the 1970s/80s. Whilst carrying out this investigation, she is trying to start a relationship with the 'too smooth' Nick, however, Amy's brother Owen could be another contender for her affections.

I enjoyed this book, it was an easy and enjoyable read, however, one that I found slightly predictable. You could see how the relationships with Nick and Owen were going to pan out way before Jess did. Her mother Marian coming to visit and the relationships with her friends were great, adding humour to the story and the backstory of the Troubles gave the book some depth.

Would certainly recommend this book.

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### **Susan Angela Wallace says**

I received this as an arc in exchange for an honest review.

when footloose and fancy free jessica, a thirty-something writer, decides to follow her journalistic instincts and trace the story of a young girl for her weekly column in a dublin newspaper, she unwittingly embarks on a journey into northern ireland's tragic past.

With her love of all things vintage, jessica jane bare is known as second-hand jane to her friends. Hailing from new zealing, these days she's finding the grass is greener in dublin and not just because of all the rain. In fact, life would be sweet if it weren't for the reason she left home in the first place-her meddling mother marion views jess's life in dublin as nothing more than a stop-gap until she meets mr right and he's taking his time. Things look set to change, however l, when jess meets the delectable Nick, who ticks all of marian's boxes.

in the meantime, jess's latest second-hand collectable-a childrens book- gives her an idea for her column. Deciding to track down the girl whose name is scribbled inside the cover of that book, she uncovers more than ever expected. "Amy was in the wrong place at the wrong time" the girl's taciturn brother, Owen, informs her. Intrigued, jess travels to the family pig farm in county down and listens to amy's poignant tale unfold through Owen. With a little help from a rather cute runt of the litter she names wilbur, jess is about to help put the past to rest and learn that appearances can be deceptive. Then marion announces she's coming to dublin to sort her daughter's increasingly tangled love life out and jess's chance of a happy ending like those in the story books she collects looks about as likely as wilbur flying.

wow. Fantastic read michelle.

I loved this book.

Jess was great and her 2 best friends Brianna and Nora were great as best friends went.

Nick was like a smooth galaxy chocolate bar.

Owen was lovely i loved his humor.

And it has a lovely ending.

Thank you michelle for giving me the chance to read it. 5\* it would have 10 if i could.

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### **Mercedes Prieto says**

#### **Wonderful story**

The language and the people really make you feel you are in Ireland. The author has a sweet grasp of the everyday colloquial language and a good sense of humor. The twist and turns kept me reading all night long. I would definitely read more of Michelle Vernal's books.

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### **Michelle Carlson says**

Big fat DNF! I made it to 67 % before I finally threw in the towel, which I was wanting to do around 20 %.

Let's begin with the title, second hand Jane. It is also mentioned in the first chapter that she is referred to as "second hand Jane " but the only one who called her that was her mother. I am not sure if it qualifies as a nickname if no one calls you that. I also had a hard time understanding why the author went out of the way to describe, in long-winded detail might I add, that our MC is a collector of older things when some simple examples would have done just nicely.

Another problem I had was I don't really understand why Jessica was our main character? She displayed no real connection to me as a reader, she seemed whiny and irrational, a bit of a liar, and definitely a bad friend. C'mon, has everyone forgottwn how to write a strong female lead character? Oh, and don't even get me started on the authors poor attempt at writing a sex scene, if it was a failed attempt.

Literally the only part of the book I enjoyed was where Own was concerned, and the author almost wrote him to death when he did make an appearance that, despite my pleasure at finally getting to his scenes, I was ready to have them over with as soon as possible.

I really hate that I couldn't finish this book, and believe me I tried.... hard, but the last time I tried to pick up my Kindle to read it hated the idea of spending the time it would take to read it. I received a free copy via Netgalley.com.

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### **Michelle says**

It all started with a book but it was Jane's love of all things secondhand which attracted me to this title. I too love a bargain and often choose a pre-loved article with history over something new. Jane, a successful journalist, didn't disappoint and took it to extremes with her preference for vintage clothing and passion for old Ladybird books. It was one of these books that gave her an idea for her weekly column and the decision to locate Amy whose name and address were proudly written in latest find form the pivot to the story.

For all her success in her career Jane is unlucky in love, but then she meets Nick a successful property developer. Throw Owen a pig farmer into the mix and a visit from her mother and life suddenly gets very interesting.

I enjoyed really this story, but the pace felt a little off. I didn't really enjoy the first couple of chapters but then the pace relaxed and it started to get interesting. I loved the bit with her mum and Jane's relationship with her friends was well done. It was her relationship with the men that let the side down. It just wasn't that believable and there didn't seem to be any sustenance to the relationship, but it is a nice story by an author that I will read again.

(Review copy gratefully received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.)

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### **Stephanie says**

I was surprised by this book. I wasn't sure what to think of it at first but in the end I loved it.

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### **Gaele says**

While I'm known to enjoy my women's fiction, there are certain elements that just strike a chord with me, and Michelle Vernal managed to tick every box.

Jane is known as "second hand Jane" by all who know her simply for her love of all things old: clothes, books, furniture and tales. And when a move to Dublin from New Zealand gives her more old to discover

and less of the present (nagging mother) to deal with – the story takes flight.

Having developed an obsession with old children's books, her favorite new find is an inscription with a name of the former owner, and she decides to follow up in a sort of 'where are they now' story for her column.

In her search, Jane meets Amy's brother Owen, a rather close-mouthed and dour (at first) man who explains that Amy was in the 'wrong place at the wrong time', a common euphemism for those involved in the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland in the decades of the 1970's through the 1990's.

From here, Jane heads to the family farm, searches out answers in Northern Ireland, flirts and debates a relationship with Nick while still wondering about Owen, and finding some manner of common ground with her mother. Told in first person, Jane isn't a logical thinker, or even particularly interesting all of the time... BUT, it is the questions, the moments and the minutiae that bring this story to life. I'm sure any one of us, were our every thought catalogued, come up on the 'dull' side more than once, particularly as we wrangle with our own feelings and knowledge, and the pressures felt from near and far.

An interesting story that may not be for all readers, but is sure to please those who want to have a quiet meander through a life of discovery and interest in things that others dismiss simply because they are not new and shiny.

I received an eArc copy of the title from the publisher via NetGalley for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

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### **Mai says**

Not as light a read as I'd hoped. Interesting story, but a bit dragged out with lots of semi-extraneous stuff tossed in. Interesting, but not as focused as it could have been.

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