



The Changing Room: A British Comedy of Love, Loss and Laughter

Jane Turley

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"Today, I am in the changing room of my life and tomorrow, win or lose, I'll move forward a stronger and wiser woman."

Sandy Lovett's confused mother and chaotic life are having an effect on her waistline. She knows she needs to change her life but doesn't know how until she buys a risqué dress which sets in motion a sequence of life-changing events.

After years as a mother, carer and full-time employee, Sandy quits her job and places her mother in a care home, and life seems on the up. But disaster is never far away for the hapless Sandy as her mother's obsessions continue to wreak havoc and her husband's business begins to fail. Short of cash and needing a flexible job, Sandy joins a sex-chat service. At The Beaver Club Sandy discovers a talent for selling telephone sex - a skill she later regrets when she meets unscrupulous local politician and prospective MP, Trewin Thackeray. The Changing Room is a comedy-drama for all those whose glass is half-full. Preferably with gin and a big fat cherry!

The Changing Room: A British Comedy of Love, Loss and Laughter Details

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Author : Jane Turley

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From Reader Review The Changing Room: A British Comedy of Love, Loss and Laughter for online ebook

marlin1 says

The Changing Room is an entertaining novel of a woman on the threshold of a new time in her life. Sandy is happily married to Dave with three children, two of which are on the cusp of adulthood. Her mother has Alzheimers which is gradually getting worse and she is sick of being taken for granted by the furniture store where she works.

I really enjoyed Sandy's journey to her new self. I think I'm at the same stage in life that I can totally identify with Sandy, there were many laugh out loud (or snorts) moments through out the book. I empathised with her dilemma of her mothers care and the love she had for her and yet some of those moments with her Mum are exactly what we giggle about in our family with our parents/in laws. I also admired Dave and the support he gave Sandy for her decisions (or most of them), although he seemed continually randy! This book is about real life and the things that get thrown at us with a humorous take.

Thank you to Netgalley and the Publisher for the opportunity to read and review this book.

Pearl says

The Changing Room: A British Comedy of Love written by Jane Turley for me was one very funny read which I thoroughly enjoyed from page one as we get to know one wonderful lady named Sandy Lovett who we first meet while shopping for clothes in a changing room while her mother tells her with no hidden softness that Sandy indeed was simply too fat for the clothes she desired!

I loved this book from beginning to end, Sandy was a character who it was impossible not to like and as she goes through life's problems she has certain panache of bringing calm to many fiascos along the way. No one could sort out problems like Sandy and everyone loved her as a person who had a heart of gold yet she took no prisoners when those she cared for were getting hurt. Sandy was married to Dave and they were the perfect couple, yet life had a certain way of bringing pain and as she coped with her Mothers Alzheimer's which give her mother many fantasy's which seemed to have one main theme "The Second World War" especially the film The Great Escape, which allowed Steve McQueen to appear throughout the storyline. Yes there was a comedy element to this horrible illness, yet the author understood how much this disease can steal from a family and yet at times the only thing you could do was laugh as you always knew tears were soon going to be following when Alzheimer's stole not only the mind of the loved one but when it steals the person completely which is the most heart-breaking of all.

If you want a book which will bring many laughs, a few tears mixed with a brilliant storyline which entertained throughout The Changing Room is the book for you, it was one book I would be happy to recommend to any readers who loves to read books which are not only well written but filled with loveable characters which brought a few tears along the way.

Jean Vaughan says

Toatally enthralled from the very first page I defy anyone not to enjoy this book. I laughed out loud, I cried, I felt the loss and I wondered about my future. I saw myself and others I knew and cared about as I read. Certainly one of the best books of 2015 and I recommend everyone to read it. My copy, kindly sent by GoodReads is now in the hands of my daughter-in-law who works for Alzheimers Research Uk- her response is that everyone caring for someone with dementia should read this, a great endorsement.

Kathryn Harris says

Jane Turley's "The Changing Room" is a fun read about Sandy Lovett, a saleswoman whose mid-life is being turned upside down by her aging mother with Alzheimer's, a college-age son who blows through money like its candy and a career choice that's...well, I'll leave that spoiler alone.

As someone approaching a similar point in my life, I really connected with Turley's main character. I appreciated her respectful, yet humorous, portrayal of the ailing mother. The opening scene of the book grabbed me and pulled me in. Turley has a lot of talent as a writer, and I will definitely seek out more of her stories.

The only thing that really felt off to me was that it took a long time to really get a sense of where the story was going, but the writing style, the humor and the character kept me interested throughout.

Kendra says

"Parenthood is one long journey of discovery isn't it? I'd better go," I say, snatching a look at Mum. "My mother's keeping a watchful eye on me."

As Sandy Lovett's mother becomes increasingly confused and disoriented due to her Alzheimer's, Sandy has to step up and take on a caring role for her. When, one night, Sandy enters her mother's home to find her huddled underneath the table in the dark, fearing the arrival of German forces—her mind is often stuck in World War 2—Sandy realises her mum needs full time care. Not yet ready to put her mum in a home, Sandy decides to quit her job at Hendersons furniture store to look after her full time, in addition to her responsibilities to her three children.

Unfortunately, the timing couldn't be worse for husband Dave's small scale building business. He's struggling to get by and refuses to lay off any of his workforce in order to increase profits (good on Dave). When Sandy's friend and fellow PTA-member Deidre offers her a part time sales job at The Herald, Sandy jumps at the chance—she can sell anything and working out of the office will mean she can spend more time with her mum. But, despite Sandy's excellent sales record, the job still isn't lucrative enough to support Dave's ailing business. Luckily, phone sales isn't the only line of work Deidre has to offer. What she proposes next will heat things up in more ways than one.

With a colourful cast of well drawn characters and a fantastic sense of humour, Turley's The Changing Room was just the kind of book I'd hoped it would be and more. I admired Sandy's strength and tenacity in choosing the right battles to fight and, sensibly, letting the others go. Of course, I also appreciated her witty reflections on those around her and, indeed, on herself.

Turley's writing is hilariously funny in parts as well as poignant. Her empathy for her characters shines through at all points. I found *The Changing Room* to be both uplifting and refreshing—a story about working families makes for a welcome change. I look forward to reading whatever Jane Turley chooses to write next.

Cathy Beyers says

It's been a very long time since I've read a book that made me laugh out loud. The people at the hairdresser's must have wondered... This is my funniest book so far this year. The writer has done an exceptional job describing the pitfalls of the period in a woman's life where she has to deal at once with growing children, a recession and a parent with Alzheimer's. Yet somehow this is an optimistic book. Through all of her trials and tribulations Sandy manages to keep things in perspective, because like most of us, she has no other choice. In spite of some exaggerations here and there, the book remains believable at all times, although in real life some events would probably have taken a different turn. A book I will wholeheartedly recommend to all my friends and just to everyone who needs a bit of a pick up and a lot of laughs.

Smruti says

A beautiful, well-written story about real life people with their real-world troubles- the daughter who can't let go, the antagonising mother who remembers her daughter at the end of the day, the horny but understanding husband, the unscrupulous child... And the premise is universal. When we are having a hard time, we look for doors that separate the bad times from the good, that say, "Here, this here is where the past will not be repeated again." For the protagonist, that door is the new dress and sandals, which make her think new thoughts and feel good about herself! I have not read many women writers- and bringing gender into a review is bad form- but, I think being a woman and having to multi-task more than the average man shows in Jane's work in her poignant telling of emotions, the realism of her dialogues and meticulous attention to detail. The book has a 'personality' of its own, and this from a very voracious reader. It might not be a fantastic saga, but it is definitely a book you can read and get a feel of a woman who lives a difficult life and does the VERY best she can, and who approaches her situation with humour and patience.

Congratulations, Ms Turley. I have followed your well-written blog for a long time, but you have surpassed yourself. Your work shows your long hours of research. Definitely a must-buy.

[I received a free copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest and impartial review.]

Anne says

There are certain things can change your life. It doesn't have to be a huge thing, it can be a pretty ordinary thing really, but sometimes one little thing can make you stop and take stock.

For Sandy Lovett it was a dress. A blue silky, swishy dress with matching sandals. That dress and those sandals made her stop, look around and decide to take action.

The book opens when Sandy is trying on clothes in one of those awful shop changing rooms, not only does she have the all around mirrors to contend with, but also the painful, to the point (but honest) comments from her mother who is sitting in the corner of the dressing room applying Vicks Vapour Rub to her lips.

Yes, this is Sandy's life. A spare tyre, an elderly mother with Alzheimers, a husband who doesn't earn much but is always up for sex, two children who demand her time and a job in a furniture showroom dealing with obnoxious customers and a useless boss.

So, Sandy makes her move. She changes career completely and discovers that she's pretty good at selling sex on a telephone line! Yes, that's her choice of career move and it makes for some pretty funny reading.

Jane Turley has a wicked way with words, she's funny and Sandy is funny. The author takes the everyday hum drum aspects of life and turns them into scenes that evoke peals of laughter. Whilst doing that, and doing it very well, she manages to deal with some serious issues. Issues that will probably affect all of us, issues that really aren't funny, but issues that can make us laugh.

The Changing Room is a book that makes the reader smile. Every now and again I need a break from crime thrillers, psychological thrillers, and novels with a dark message, and this book was the perfect holiday.

Sarah says

I received a copy of this book through a giveaway over on Goodreads.

I have to admit I hadn't heard of this author before but the description of the novel sounded really good so it was one that I was definitely interested in.

From the cover alone I knew this was going to be an enjoyable read.

Sandy is such a great character that is someone readers can totally relate to. She is a wife, a mother, she works and she also has to take care of her own mother who has Alzheimer's. She really has a lot on her plate and makes the sad decision to leave work to go part time else where so she can spend more time looking after her mother.

Sandy's mother is a wonderful character, she doesn't hold back and even though Alzheimer's is certainly no laughing matter, the author manages to bring light relief to this horrible disease. Even though her mother can be a total pain in the backside at times and quite hurtful in not holding back with the truth, there is still very much a special bond between mother and daughter and at times it does make for an emotional read.

The Changing Room is one of those novels that will have you laughing out loud. Sandy's new job in the sex chat industry is hilarious and I certainly don't think I could stuff a turkey in the same light after reading this book!

The Changing Room is a wonderfully light hearted read that is funny, sweet and a tad emotional. Can't recommend it enough.

Disha Bose O'Shea says

Sandy Lovett seems to lead a relatable life of a working woman in the modern world. She executes her tasks at her 9 to 5 with expertise but is barely appreciated whilst dodging the occasional sexual predator at the workplace-scenario. Her husband is losing work as a contractor due to recession so the family needs to tighten its belt. Her children are loving but give her a hard time and her ageing mother has Alzheimers and is brutally honest about pointing out Sandy's faults, especially her bulging body part which shouldn't be mentioned.

Personally, this is not a genre I take to easily but I can assure you of your enjoyment with it if it is yours. However, I do not entirely regret my decision to pick this up either. In the midst of all the other heavy historical fictions, gut wrenching World War II epics or literature that pose existential questions at the end of every chapter; this was a well deserved relief. One that I could breeze through on two well chosen sunny days in the park.

It isn't the funniest book I've read lately or the most immersive, but it was a light humorous read about more real everyday struggles with none of that soppy-marshmallow-romance business that makes me cringe and gives me stomach ulcers.

Why you should read it:

Lovable characters

Some unexpected turn of events in the plot

A mother figure, whom we all know and love

Why you shouldn't read it:

If you are looking for a literary novel-esque read

Roberta Chai (Lady with so many stories) says

I got a chance to read this book and I have found what I have been looking for. This was it.

I have been looking for a book that consists of humorous and comedic book about dressing room. I have been searching for this for so long and I couldn't find any. Thank goodness for recommendation I found what I was looking for and this was it.

I have been trying to find funny comedy books but nothing on about dressing rooms. And I tried finding books about dressing rooms but none of them are that funny.

This book however was really hilarious and I was able to relate to every single bit. Fun. I extremely could not forget it.

Angie Doane goodson says

In exchange with an honest review, I received a copy of this book from the author. I promise to try to leave out the main points to not spoil the story.

This book is by far one of the funniest books I have ever read. It was definitely a roller coaster of a read, but one that was completely relatable. At a day where Alzheimers is prevalent in more homes than not, it is hard to find someone who is not affected either directly or indirectly, in one way or another.

This story is about Sandy, who is not only a mother of 3 and a wife, she is also taking care of her mother who has Alzheimers. While taking care of her family, volunteering on the PTA, working several jobs including occasionally helping her husband with his construction company, she fights her inner battles and overcomes obstacles by seeing the brighter side. Not once does she lose her nerve, even when facing loss. It is hard, no.. impossible to not love and admire Sandy. Ms. Turley has put the reader in the story. Everything Sandy faces, we face or have faced. Even when she chooses to honor the wishes of a dying friend, she does so with the same gusto and vigor that she faced everything else.

Once I turned the last page, I found myself wishing for more. I hope there will be another story about Sandy and the next phase of her life. Way to go, Ms. Turley!

Els says

I liked the cover of the book and the back cover was promising. It's often the case that the first few lines of a story make or break the book and here it made the story.

It made me laugh but it put tears to my eyes as well because I recognised some situations.

The story is fluently written and it shows how important and supportive love between friends or family can be.

Thank you, netgalley

Nat K says

This was a nice little read, full of "real life" scenarios (juggling of work/home, the sadness of ageing parents and career path changes). It was a good breather of a book.

Stephanie Schmidt says

Before I give my review, I must disclose that I was a recipient of "The Changing Room" via Giveaways. Thank you to everyone who made this possible; it is always a privilege to review an authors' work.

Sandy Lovett is a regular English mother with two children, a husband, and an eccentric mother who tests her patience on a regular basis. Her life could best be described as ordinary, which is part of the problem. She is constantly juggling the demands of family life with her children and a husband who is often without work. She works full-time and cares for a mother who is beginning to suffer the terrible effects of Alzheimer's and speaks her mind far too freely for Sandy's taste.

Sandy, like many ordinary mothers, wives, and caregivers, wishes for something to change in her life. This change begins on the day she buys a blue dress that sparks an inner recollection of the woman she used to be. Slowly, she gains confidence in herself to make changes to her life that she used to only wish and dream about. Quit her ridiculous job? Check. Put mom into extended care? Check. Focus upon her own wants and needs for once? Check. Become a happier Sandy Lovett? Double check.

Of course, nothing goes as smoothly as one dreams it. Sandy's mother is certainly not going anywhere without an acidic comment or two (lucid or not). Sandy's road to self-fulfillment and realization isn't without it's bumps and side streets-new career, phone sex operator? But Sandy perseveres and the girl in the blue dress gets her do-over. Something most people only think about, but cannot manage to put into motion.

"The Changing Room" was an enjoyable book and quite funny in many places. I could certainly understand Sandy's desire to change her life. I think many of us have been in that situation where life seems overwhelming and underwhelming at the same time and a life-change is desirable.

This being said, I found the book the most enjoyable when we were asked to suspend belief about Sandy's ordinary life and could enjoy the circumstances in which she would find herself in. Other times, I felt as if I was listening to an acquaintance drone on about their latest surgery. The book could be too ordinary at times and I just wanted Sandy to get on with it.

Ms. Turley definitely has a knack for creating characters that are vivid and uncannily real in all aspects. In the end, I think Sandy is a character that many women will be able to see themselves in, and will root for.
