



The Workhouse Children: A heartwarming saga

Lindsey Hutchinson

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Tears and tribulations, laughs and heartbreak, from an exciting new talent. Perfect for the fans of Jo Cox and Lyn Andrews.

When **Cara Flowers'** beloved grandmother dies she leaves her not only an enormous fortune but also a huge responsibility – to find their estranged family.

Cara's quest leads her to the doors of the imposing Bilston workhouse where families are torn apart with no hope of a better life.

Shocked by the appalling conditions, **Cara** vows to find a way to close the workhouse and rescue its residents. Fraught by countless hurdles her mission becomes personal when she is left asking why was she raised by her grandmother, and what has her missing mother got to do with the looming workhouse?

What people are saying about THE WORKHOUSE CHILDREN:

'A truly beautiful read, well done to the author for giving me such enjoyment'

'A very poignant, feel good novel'

'I laughed, cried and gasped, such a gripping story line'

'What an amazing story start to finish'

The Workhouse Children: A heartwarming saga Details

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Author : Lindsey Hutchinson

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From Reader Review The Workhouse Children: A heartwarming saga for online ebook

Shirley Revill says

Really enjoyed this story. Very well written. Easy to read and hard to put down.
Recommended.

Akemi says

I enjoyed this book until about the last 4 chapters. It vilified one of my favourite characters, and became overwhelmingly predictable.

Jantine Kampes says

I received a free copy through Netgalley, in return for an honest review.

This book is, unfortunately, a DNF. The writing is what we Dutch call 'houterig'. The sentences are often too long and crammed with information, like it has to be told, even while this background could've been shown in other ways. It read like 'this happened. We are now here. It is called like this because of ... This happens, then this happens. Two weeks later this happens, a week later this happens.' The story read like a flat, emotionless thing, while this part of English history should've been full of emotions.

The book was totally not right somehow, so I couldn't manage to read on.

Jim Sibigtroth says

I liked this but I think it would be best for more mature readers say in high school. The first chapter goes into rather graphic detail about a horrific beating by an abusive husband and it is witnessed by two small children. There is also a murder, a sexual assault, and a sex scene by an unfaithful fiancee. Although these make this inappropriate for young readers, they are not what the book is mostly about.

The main message is about the remarkable accomplishments of a young woman of 17-18 years old, who changes the lives of the poorest people in her town. She outwits public officials, gets the poorest of the poor out of the workhouse, off the bread lines, and into productive jobs, and transforms whole neighborhoods in a depressed town where many collieries and businesses have gone out of business.

Kristina says

The Workhouse Children is a debut novel by Lindsey Hutchinson. It is 1901 in the small town of Bilston

(which is in the industrial West Midlands). Cara Flower's grandmother, Henrietta Selby, has just passed away, and left Cara very well off (house and money). Her grandmother left a letter for Cara giving her the task of looking for any lost relatives and to care for them. This is puzzling to Cara who believed she had no other family. Cara had been raised by her grandmother, and she would never speak about Cara's parents. It turns out that Cara's mother, Elizabeth married someone inappropriate causing an estrangement. Martin Lander, the family solicitor, suggests that Cara check the Bilston workhouse. Cara is shocked by the conditions in the workhouse and how it is managed by the Master and Matron (Fred and Ada Tulley). She does, though, find her thirteen-year-old brother, Charlie. There is a sister, Daisy, but Fred Tulley had sold her as a servant (and pocketed the money). It seems Fred and Ada are doing everything possible to run the workhouse cheaply so they will have extra money (so they can live comfortably). Cara sets out to empty the workhouse and make it obsolete (after finding Daisy). But the local Magistrate of Bilston, Joseph Purcell (as well as the Tulley's) is not happy with Cara's plans. Will Cara succeed with her mission? Will Cara be able to find out what happened to her parents and why they did not raise her?

The Workhouse Children is nicely written and easy to read. I did find The Workhouse Children to be an uplifting, sweet story (unrealistic, but a good read). It would be lovely if there were more people like Cara in this world. I did enjoy reading how Cara tackled the problem of the workhouse and discovered her family history. I give The Workhouse Children 3.5 out of 5 stars. I did find that the author would sometimes go into a little too much detail with her descriptions (it bogs down the story). The Workhouse Children is a British novel so it contains British expressions and slang (most of them can be figured out). I did find some information to be repeated (do authors think we forget things one chapter to the next). The story is told from different viewpoints which can be confusing (I wish the author had stuck with the third person point-of-view). The Workhouse Children could do with a little editing (just a little too long). The Workhouse Children is a good first book and the story will linger in your mind long after you finish it. Ms. Hutchinson's next book *The Wives' Revenge*.

The Badger says

The author lists "reading" as a hobby. Less than two chapters in, I would presume that most of us wish the farthest she'd ever strayed from "reading" was calligraphy.

Sonya Heaney says

I am interested in the subject matter of this book, and have recently been reading a bit about the working classes of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. And so I requested *The Workhouse Children* for review.

While the research was very well done, the story was *tell* instead of *show*, making it hard to care about the characters.

If you are reading this book to get a peek into life a century and a bit ago, there is plenty of information here. There're lots of little details that were researched well. I also appreciated the use of a real place as the setting, and enjoyed doing some research of my own as I read.

I only wish I *cared* about the characters.

Perhaps some of my issues with the story come from the fact different genres focus on different things. Romance is often a more emotional genre than women's or historical fiction (this book is historical women's fiction), and the reader experiences feelings and reactions *alongside* the characters. I found here that I was *watching* people experience things from afar.

I know I tend to go overboard with commas when I type, but the lack of commas in this book sometimes made it a struggle to comprehend. For example:

I had to go with John on the cart until you were born Charlie.

This was an editing issue that should have been dealt with in the publication process.

So, if you're looking for a book that's heavy on the history, you might enjoy this. However, if you're looking to connect with the characters, you might struggle a bit.

Review copy provided by NetGalley.

~lucy~ says

Whilst quite typical of its genre, I found The Workhouse Children well researched in terms of the historical fact and location (it is set in the West Midlands, around the Wolverhampton area)

The story line was a bit far fetched & idealistic in terms of the amounts of money that would have been involved but that didn't stop it being an enjoyable read.

Basically, the story centres around Cara Flowers, who was raised by her grandmother. Grandmother dies, leaving Cara a small fortune, a house & a letter tasking her with finding and then looking after any further relatives. Cara is puzzled but sets about finding out her own background & discovering relatives she was unaware of.

She finds them in the Workhouse where she is appalled by the conditions & the rest of the book tells of how she uses her money to improve the lot of the workhouse inmates through her philanthropy.

I did feel that the solicitor suggesting she checks the workhouse was a bit too "convenient" for the story - surely there should have been some more searching, adverts in the paper etc first - I would have loved to see a bit more of a traditional search for these mysterious long lost relatives before the suggestion of checking the workhouse!

Overall I enjoyed the book, and it kept me wanting to read till the end - I now want to find out "what happened next"

maria seilius says

Oh dear ! I have mixed feelings about this novel . On the one hand the story itself is basically a good one . On the other hand though, it just does not read as believable in any way shape or form . Fiction by its definition does not need to be true , however it does need to read as if it is . Unfortunately this book fails to do this . I did enjoy the storyline but struggled with the actual writing and I will not be reading anything else by this author .

Care says

A simple, one-dimensional novel on an often overlooked aspect of English history.

Cara Flowers inherits a fortune and a mission when her grandmother dies - a mission to find the rest of her family. Along the way she gains more perspective into the local workhouse where conditions are dire and people are struggling with nowhere to go. Guided by a strong sense of justice, Cara starts a crusade to help the poor of the town of Bilston, rescuing and rehousing the homeless and the workhouse's oppressed.

While the topic of the novel is interesting and deserves more attention in literature, *The Workhouse Children* unfortunately fails to stun. The novel spans what seems to be at least a couple years, but fails to realistically portray that passage of time or encourage the reader to believe it. The characters lack depth and nuance - each character seems fitted into a specific personality type with no room for growth, and the decisions characters make sometimes seem to come out of nowhere. They are also not portrayed particularly realistically - it seems unlikely that an heiress, upon her grandmother's death, would immediately become best friends with her maid and cook to the point where they seem to do little work or that it is so simple to rehouse impoverished, starving families in dilapidated houses. Characters' emotional states seem boiled down and simplistic, with reactions being described with no particular finesse.

The novel also seems to gloss over many things, and the premise of Cara having enough money to do everything she does (help several families and individuals subsist for at least a short period, purchase large swaths of land, etc.) without having to worry much about the sustainability of her projects seem infeasible. All in all, I found it particularly difficult to buy into the premise of the novel and truly enjoy the writing.

While covering an interesting topic, not a very engaging or realistic work of historical fiction.

Thanks to the publisher for a digital copy!

Suzanne Furney says

Very sensitive subject matter brought to life with historical context that I can only assume the worst, in that the Victorian era and even later, assume humanity, albeit throwaway humanity should be dealt with. I feel this author did a wonderful job at bringing one family's plight into perspective. Our society should take care not to allow these things to ever happen again.

Edith G Shearer says

This was a wonderful story, quite well written. You sure don't want to put it down!

You will feel every emotion that the main characters feel. It is like you are there. Well written, and you hate to put it down. This author is a great storyteller. I do not remember reading this author before but I sure will read more.

Enjoy the reading!!!!!!

Anne Wilson says

I gave it the minimum 1 star for the premise. It should have been a good story but it was so poorly written it was a waste of my time

Becky says

I have mixed feelings about this book. Overall I liked the story, but much of the story was a bit of a stretch for me. Our protagonist is 19 years old and has been pretty much been taken care of her entire life. When her grandmother dies, she is suddenly very wealthy and tasked with finding family she never knew she had.

One of the most unbelievable parts for me was how everything worked out so well for Cara. She wanted to buy buildings, not only was she able to buy them, but she suddenly had the business acumen to get them for a great deal. She was able to create all these jobs and everyone prospered. I could not fully accept that an area that was so poor, was so easy to build back up in a relatively short time line. I do totally get that most people when given a chance can prosper, but in our story it was almost instant. They get a house, no more problems.

An aspect of the book I did not like was the foreshadowing, little comments at the end to intrigue us, but really unnecessary. There were not any real surprises in the story, even though she did try to put a twist at the end. It became obvious to me what the ending would be early on. It is obviously a happy ending, but not a surprise ending.

Linda Lpp says

I found reading about the strength of Cara Flowers the protagonist refreshing. For the time period with widespread unemployment and poverty Cara rose to the challenge laid out to her by her recently deceased dear grandmother. After all she was a grieving, very young woman left seemingly alone in this world. But all that she accomplished, all the odds she faced and overcame added to the charm of the book. This was one story I was sad to see end.

