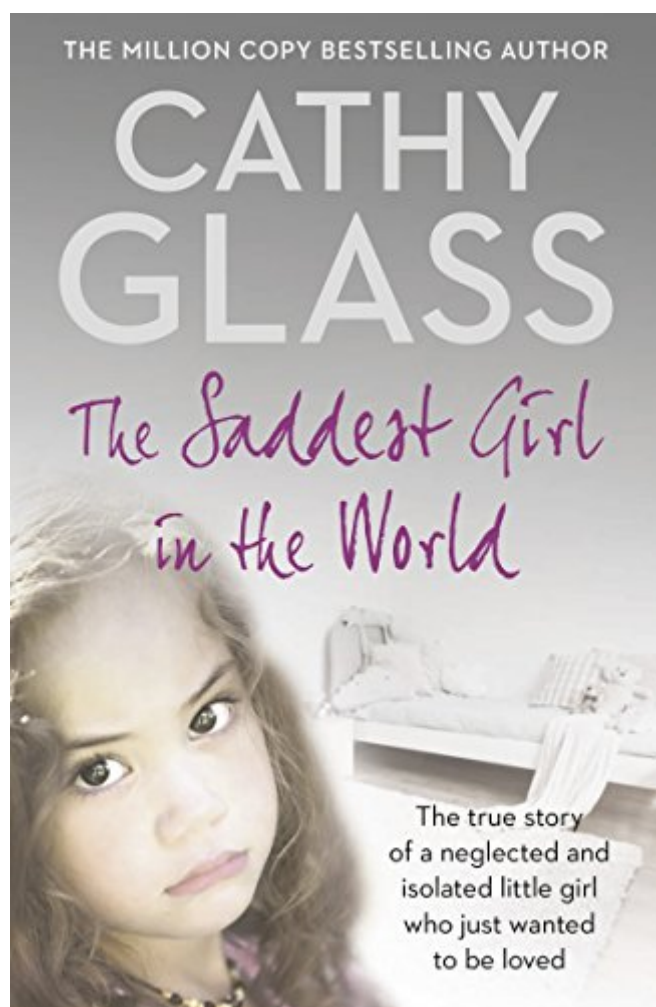


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The Saddest Girl In The World



Synopsis

The Sunday Times and New York Times bestselling author of *Damaged* tells the true story of Donna, who came into foster care aged ten, having been abused, victimised and rejected by her family. Donna had been in foster care with her two young brothers for three weeks when she is abruptly moved to Cathy's. When Donna arrives she is silent, withdrawn and walks with her shoulders hunched forward and her head down. Donna is clearly a very haunted child and refuses to interact with Cathy's children Adrian and Paula. After patience and encouragement from Cathy, Donna slowly starts to talk and tells Cathy that she blames herself for her and her brothers being placed in care. The social services were aware that Donna and her brothers had been neglected by their alcoholic mother, but no one realised the extent of the abuse they were forced to suffer. The truth of the physical torment she was put through slowly emerges, and as Donna grows to trust Cathy she tells her how her mother used to make her wash herself with wire wool so that she could get rid of her skin colour as her mother was so ashamed that Donna was mixed race. The psychological wounds caused by the bullying she received also start to resurface when Donna starts reenacting the ways she was treated at home by hitting and bullying Paula, so much so that Cathy can't let Donna out of her sight. As the pressure begins to mount on Cathy to help this child, things start to get worse and Donna begins behaving in erratic ways, trashing her bedroom and being regularly abusive towards Cathy's children. Cathy begins to wonder if she can find a way to help this child or if Donna's scars run too deep.

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Customer Reviews

Plot/Storyline: 5 Stars This book told an incredibly sad story of a young girl who was taken into foster care along with her two younger brothers. Although it was heart-wrenching, it was also uplifting to know that there are people out there willing to help kids in such a situation. I was impressed with the way Ms. Glass told the story. She did not appear to be trying to embellish it using shock tactics. Instead, she told the story as it happened, only shocking the reader when she was shocked at the time with the child's incredible tales of abuse. Although Ms. Glass did mention when others gave her compliments for her work with "Donna", she never appeared to be bragging about herself. She simply did the work of a mother for a girl whose mother was extremely unfit. I cried a couple of times during this read. The treatment of Donna by her mother was simply appalling. However, I also laughed a few times when the author told of humorous portions of the tale. Ms. Glass certainly has maintained her sense of humor through the atrocities she must hear of in her work.

Character Development: 4 3/4 Stars Although Ms. Glass certainly had no way of knowing the inner workings of Donna's mind and emotions, in her telling of Donna's story, she made me feel as though I knew Donna. She also threw in enough information about her own children to have me engrossed in their interactions with Donna. I did think that more about Ms. Glass and her children could have been revealed to give a more full story. I would have been interested to have more insight into the children's thoughts and feelings. While Ms. Glass revealed much of herself in respect to Donna, she did not tell of her feelings outside of that.

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