



The Skye in June

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"The Skye in June" is a tale about the MacDonalds, a Scottish family and their youngest child, June, who has an uniqueness to attract unusual people. After a tragedy the family emigrate from Glasgow, Scotland to San Francisco, California for a chance of a new life. The family implodes when June is drawn into the world of mysticism and, along with her three sisters, comes of age during the colorful circa 1960's. It is a story of reconciliation and acceptance. Anyone who loves a good read of San Francisco's history during the 1950's and the radical changes in the early days of the '60's, will enjoy this story. Ms. Ahern uses the rich history of Eureka Valley (The Castro) by weaving her story around well-known businesses such as The Castro Theater and Cliffs' Variety Store. The story is also rich with nuances of Scottish culture and language. The sisters are lively, funny and rebellious as they find ways to deter their father from having control over them. The story takes readers through issues of family, their bond and how it changes over the years, religion, as wells as the challenges of immigrants, and the world of mysticism.

The Skye in June Details

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Author : June Ahern

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Ruth says

I had not read about this book so when I started it all I knew was that my aunt loved it. Although I have seen books about Irish immigrants, Polish, Italian and even Russian immigrants to the US it is rare to find a book about Scottish immigrants to the US. Since I am of Scottish ancestry it was extremely interesting to me. As the family moved from Scotland to San Francisco I learned a lot about Scottish legends, the Catholic Church, and mysticism. I was very impressed by the amount of research the author must have done on these subjects in order to have this depth of knowledge. I was reading this on my Kindle and when I read about the author at the end of the book, I found that she moved to San Francisco from Scotland herself and is psychic to boot! Now I am wondering how much of the story is really an autobiography. June must have gone to Catholic School to know all she relates about the girls going to school.

The story takes us into the inner circle of a family that has secrets but there is only one person who knows what those secrets are. Living with an abusive father who wants daughters with strict Catholic values and mores and is willing to beat them into submission to get it. Mom fights dad to get him to allow the girls some normal freedoms as they grow towards adulthood but as things become tough mom retreats to her bedroom where she remains for long periods of time. Themes of abuse, the love of a family, family bonds, resiliency, overcoming odds and forgiveness will keep you turning the pages and wondering what will happen to the MacDonald's.

Megan says

This was a weird book, but in a somewhat entertaining way. When June is little she seems very mature in some ways for her age, I'm not sure if that's because of her ability or not. The story just ended, would have like the story to have been wrapped up better.

Susan says

This book is a most engrossing tale of what it was like to grow up in San Francisco in tumultuous 1960s. Author Ahern has captured the magic of San Francisco perfectly and weaves a tale that is so captivating that it's hard to put the book down. Perhaps having grown up Catholic with all sisters (like the MacDonalds in this book) makes me susceptible to loving this book which is also about sisters experiencing the gamut of what was good and bad about Catholicism, and learning that there is a huge world out there beyond the confines of hell and mortal sin. This story essentially is a story of healing, a healing for a mother who buries her pain and in doing so, effects her daughters in ways she doesn't realize. Her 4 daughters grow up in a time in San Francisco where social and moral boundaries start to break down and blur. In a recent past to be different meant to be condemned, ostracized, disowned. These societal developments are portrayed poignantly by Ahern in a story that revolves around a child, who is born different and acutely sensitive, and who undergoes a profound crisis. She forces her Mother to face a long buried painful past, and in doing so brings a chance for healing to her sisters and family. Hopefully this is the first of a series about these captivating characters, for though the book ends with reconciliation, one gets the sense that many profound journeys for this family are still ahead. I want to read more.

Kristi says

I received this book for free from the author, via Smashwords, in exchange for a review.

The Skye in June is one of those books that will capture your heart and your mind.

Right from the beginning you can't help but feel for Cathy, as the opening scene is of her writhing in labor pains in the backseat of a taxi all alone. This is your introduction to Cathy, June, and the rest of the MacDonald clan.

All families have history, changing relationships with one another, emotions, individual thoughts, beliefs, and traditions. Even more they face changing dynamics that occur as the family grows and future generations step onto their own paths. The MacDonald clan is no different.

Ms. Ahern does a phenomenal job of writing 3 generations of a family, with a story that unfolds over the course of 15 years and 2 continents. Even more impressive is the way she's capable of changing the narration focus from Cathy's eyes to June's, all the while never forgetting that their family plays an integral part of their selves and their lives.

The Skye in June never felt congested with all the topics that face a family over its lifetime. It merely felt like family. You deal with the good and the bad with family. You may not like all of it, but you love it because it's family.

If this review does not make you want to read the book, then please understand that it is the fault of the reviewer not the fault of the book. Highly recommended read.

Sophie Schiller says

"The Skye in June" explores the sometimes incompatible relationship between mysticism and faith. The novel's protagonist, June MacDonald, was born with a rare gift of being able to see and hear what others can't. Is she a gifted psychic or a schizophrenic? Doctors wrestle with the question, her mother senses she knows a higher truth and her father rails against the growing schism in his family's traditional Catholicism. What power is driving June to tarot cards, makeshift altars and seeking out other mystics? What causes June to self-harm? When the MacDonalts reach America, Cathy, the matriarch, announces, "In America the don't fight over religion." Ironically, it is the schism between Catholics and Protestants that has driven June's Catholic family out of Scotland. But in free America it is her family's religious schism that will slowly draw them apart. When it comes to religion, June questions everything, from the place of women in the Church to the use of idols and Catholicism's frowning on spells and witchcraft. While the novel's patriarch, Jimmy, slowly loses control over his family, it is Cathy who comes to embrace her Highland heritage, and marry it to June's special powers that peace finally descends over the troubled MacDonald clan. "The Skye in June" is a treasure-trove of Scottish lore and culture with rich, colorful characters in impossible situations. Will these traditional Catholic Scots be able to survive 1960's America with their kilts intact or will some adjustments have to be made? Only Calleach the mother goddess of Scotland knows for sure.

Steven Arnett says

If you liked City of Redemption you will love The Skye in June!

After reading and enjoying Ahern's City of Redemption, I was glad to read another of her books. I was not disappointed. The story focuses on the life of June MacDonald: How she comes to learn of her special gifts of prescience and being able to communicate with other worlds, and how her family finally comes to accept those special gifts. The story unfolds during a time of enormous change, beginning in Scotland in 1950 and carrying on in San Francisco during the wild times of the 1960s. The story and the characters grab you and don't let go until you have finished the novel. Also, Ahern does a great job of evoking past times and past places. The author's name and background are quite similar to the author's, so the reader can't help but wonder if some of it might be autobiographical. June Ahern is a great writer and story teller: I just wish she had written more novels!

Diane says

Truly a Great Novel to Read!!

Hello June,

Such an awesome story and I had trouble putting it down when I had to go do something else. A great job in describing the characters and your attention to detail was so good. Many times I felt like I was right there in the midst of everything. Definitely a book worth reading!

Rori says

I struggled through this one. The plot had a LOT of potential. The subject matter was appealing: Scottish family which emigrates to the US, conflicts of religion, complicated family relationships, political issues of the '50s & '60s. The development of the story could have been truly intriguing -- perhaps in the hands of a different author or with some [much] stronger editing.

Instead I found the characters to be maddening. Imperfect characters can be fascinating, but they must be developed in a way that helps the reader to understand their flaws. In this book they remained sorely two-dimensional. Even the protagonist was largely unlikeable without having any insight into her own mind. The conflicts that came up in the story were interesting, but again, without strong development felt hollow. The storyline was then hastily tied up in the last chapter. All the strife of the last two decades is neatly resolved in a group hug? Really?

The descriptions were hackneyed, the use of dialect seemed forced, and the story seemed rushed. Maybe because I was reading this as an e-book, I also noticed an astounding number of typographical and spelling errors.

This book made me wish that rewritten stories were as common as redone movies. There's a lot of possibility for a great story here, but it ended up being a huge disappointment.

Stephanie Lindsay Hagen says

J. Ahern's, "The Skye In June", was difficult for me to read at first for two reasons. Firstly, I do not enjoy reading stories with a religious theme and secondly, June's life and my life had similar parallels. We both grew up in strict religious homes and we both questioned what we were taught at an early age to no avail. However, the more I read, the more I learned and became comfortable with the story.

Many emotions were stirred up in me. Anger at the father for his violent abuse towards his family and his closed-mindedness. Disgust towards the mother for neglecting her children and wasting so many years hiding from herself. Frustration towards the people who would not listen to June and accept her for the person she was and at the strict moral codes of the time. I kept reminding myself that this is how people lived and thought back then and things that were shameful then are commonly accepted now.

In my mind, if a story does not cause an emotional response then it is not worth reading. "The Skye In June" is definitely worth reading.

I received "The Skye In June" from the author as a Goodreads Galley Edition.

Laura says

I have never become so completely immersed with the storyline and characters as I have in The Skye in June. At an older age, I am in college for the first time. I received the book on Monday and immediately fell in love with it. I would go to work, school, home to take care of my family, do homework and then I would go back to the book. I found myself up to almost 3am each morning as I hated to put the book down. I just finished it 10 minutes ago and I wish it had never ended. The main character, June, quickly found her way into my heart. I also liked how her sisters were so different in personality, yet still had the binding of love connecting them. I did not realize the strength of Cathy, the mother, till the end of the book. She becomes such a different person in the way you see her and you cannot help but admire her courage. The main character, June, though is one which I will never forget. Throughout the book, I found myself aching for her and how the book ended put me at peace with her as well. Her special abilities made her so special, yet I think it was also her ability to see beyond people and care about their personal griefs and problems which also set her apart. I wish I had the right words to say how much I loved this book and how much it touched my heart. Thank you June Ahern for writing this book and most of all for becoming a writer.

Jessica says

I won a copy of this book through the First Reads program, and am quite glad I did because it was different than any book I have read before, which is such a plus in this day of cookie cutter mass market paperbacks.

This fictional book was the story of June's immigration to San Francisco from Scotland in the early 1950's. It delved into family dynamics - from sibling rivalry issues still common today, to marital hierarchies that are rare in today's society. The book immersed the reader in 1950's and '60's culture, which was just fascinating to me, because my mom was just about June's age throughout the course of the book. It gave me a wonderful

insight into what her generation experienced, felt, and how women were pigeon-holed during this time. The book touched on stereotypes of women attending college; gender preference stereotyping; racial/skin-color stereotyping, and the blacklisting of Catholic school students who did not behave perfectly.

June was one of these children who was "blacklisted" as a pagan for questioning her teachers/nuns, about religion. Her father was perhaps her worst critic. He expected perfection from his daughters and wife, and refused to accept any less. The story follows her father's verbal and physical abuse of his family, and her mother's lack of intervention. Everyone looked at June as a troubled child because she had a special ability to see and hear things others could not. This clairvoyance and clairaudio was a special gift, although during these decades in history, it was not seen as anything other than a severe mental illness.

June was labeled a very disturbed child, a "witch" according to her father. She was so passionate about this gift that she went to any and every length to keep it an active part of her day-to-day life. Try as she did, she could not, at the insistence of her teachers and parents, get rid of the thoughts, visions, and voices that she heard throughout her entire life in America.

I was born and raised a Catholic, and really enjoyed hearing about some of the history behind Catholic education in America in the '50's and '60's...things they certainly didn't teach us in Catechism classes.

Great ending! I will not say more about this because I would not want to spoil the book for anyone. Strongly recommend.

Sheri says

The Skye in June (J. Ahern) is the unique story of June Mac Donald. Born in Scotland in the 50's her mother (Cathy), defiantly named her June. Her father Jimmy, who has strong Catholic beliefs, feels his daughter is fated an ill life due to this pagan Non-Catholic name. The family emigrates to America after a family tragedy, with the hopes of starting a new life.

June soon finds she is not the average girl. She has "visions" and "dreams" that she does not quite understand. When June begins to speak of these events, her father is not happy and feels she is doomed to hell. June and her sisters have a tight family bond. Living under the rule of an abusive father, they try to protect her.

Cathy is aware of June's psychic ability, yet seems haunted by a secret past. A past she does not want to confront. As the MacDonald family's lives start to come "unglued" Cathy must confront this past to save June before it is to late.

Ms. Ahern blends Scottish tradition in Catholicism with a new twist. A challenge to the traditional religious beliefs, with that of psychic ability and a touch of witchcraft. She brings about family loyalty and love in a fascinating memorable story, The Skye in June.

I won this on good reads, and I look forward to more work from this talented Author.

Tony Parsons says

5/31/1950, Glasgow, Scotland. Cathy MacDonald (30, daughter/wife, nee Buchanan, Catholic) was headed to St. Andrew's Infirmary to have another baby.

Jimmy MacDonald (husband) was working 2 jobs so he wouldn't be there.

Nurse Lockhart took her into the birthing room.

It was time Head Nurse Nell Gunn & Dr. MacFadden (45) were in the room.

Nurse Hamilton (Catholic) brought the baby daughter St. June in to see mom.

Next day Jimmy insisted her name would be Elizabeth not June.

Tenement house (12 Dumbarton Road, Partick, Glasgow, Scotland). The other girls are: Anne (eldest), Margaret "Maggie" (7, middle twin), Mary (7, middle twin), Helen (20 months, breathing problems), & Katherine "Kit" (died 2 days).

Granny B helped take care of the girls.

Later, what would happen to Cathy?

Sandy Jordon got Jimmy a job in the shipyards where he worked.

3/16/1954, the MacDonald family would immigrate to San Francisco, CA.

Helen Marie MacDonald had passed away.

Mother Superior kept a very watchful eye on Maggie, Mary, & June.

June had wondered off to the Holy Savior Church.

Later June met Mrs. Lechsinska Gorzalkowski (psychic).

Then she introduced herself to Cathy.

The 3 of them were becoming quite close.

The tarot cards were easy for June & Cathy to understand.

1/1/1955, things would be different in America no more Hogmanay.

Cathy worked PT at Cliff's Variety Store.

1959, Holy Savior. Mother Superior, Sister St. Pius (elderly nun), Sister Noel, & Sister Wilma, watched over Mary (6th. grader), Maggie (6th. grader), & June.

Other students are: Patti, Billy O'Hara, Loretta, Frankie Cunningham, Larry Owens, & Eddie Gallagher.

June was starting to act out so 2 of the nuns went to see Cathy at work.

Annie had been accepted & given a full scholarship to the Girls Convent HS.

The bunch of school kids were going to the Castro Theater to see Darby O' Gill & the Little People.

Then onto The Big Jive coffee shop.

Patti, Mickey, Brian Callaghan, & Dave were there also.

Dwayne Smith was whacked with a baseball bat numerous times & was taken to San Francisco General Hospital where he remains in a coma.

Why was June seeing Dr. Schmidt (f, psychiatry)?

Then later Nurse Carla Morales, & Dr. J. Weissman (retired psychiatrist, chief of psychiatry at Langley Porter, U of California).

How will all of the other MacDonald's lives turn out?

I did not receive any type of compensation for reading & reviewing this book. While I receive free books from publishers & authors, I am under no obligation to write a positive review, only an honest one. All thoughts & opinions are entirely my own.

A very awesome book cover, great font & writing style. A very well written Woman's Fiction book. It was

very easy for me to read/follow from start/finish & never a dull moment. There were no grammar/typo errors, nor any repetitive or out of line sequence sentences. Lots of exciting scenarios, with several twists/turns & a great set of unique characters to keep track of. This could also make another great Woman's Fiction movie, or better yet a mini TV series. There is no doubt in my mind this is a very easy rating of 5 stars.

Thank you for the free Goodreads; Making Connections; Author; PDF book
Tony Parsons MSW (Washburn)

Adam Mahler says

Wasn't sure what to expect

Took a chance on this book and was pleasantly surprised. The family was so relatable and you started to care for them after a few chapters.

Deidre says

She writes about growing up Catholic and a psychic in the fifties in San Francisco. I enjoyed her depiction of the city and related to being an outsider in situation not of one's choosing.
