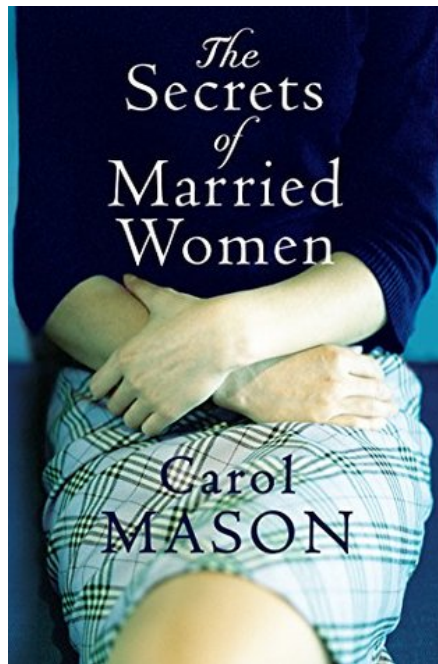




## The Secrets of Married Women

*Carol Mason*

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# The Secrets of Married Women

Carol Mason

## The Secrets of Married Women Carol Mason

When Jill's husband discovers he can never have children, it tears a hole in their marriage that Jill doesn't know how to repair. Frustrated, she seeks comfort in her friends: fierce Leigh, with her high-powered career and doting family, and sweet, uncomplicated Wendy, who has a rock-solid marriage any woman would envy.

Leigh and Wendy's lives seem perfect. But beneath the surface are secrets that could tear their friendship apart.

Leigh has grown tired of her stay-at-home husband and is looking for excitement—outside of the marriage bed. And after seventeen years of marriage, Wendy can't shake the sense that there is something missing in her life.

As Jill is drawn deeper into her friends' relationships, she is confronted by a temptation of her own: an intriguing stranger whose good looks and charm spark an instant connection.

Full of the realities of modern-day marriage, *The Secrets of Married Women* asks the question: how well can we ever know our husbands, our friends, or even ourselves?

**Revised edition: This edition of *Secrets Of Married Women* includes editorial revisions.**

## The Secrets of Married Women Details

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## From Reader Review The Secrets of Married Women for online ebook

### ?? Carmen the Bootyshaker Temptress ?? says

This was such an enjoyable book. It makes you think of how some things change just from.... not sure what like a thought, an act or just plain getting lost in things and loss yourself and what you want and need for yourself. It makes you think about how much work you put into a marriage and to have someone cheat is just a poor excuse of not having the balls to confront their partner and either try and work it out or to even say that there's nothing there anymore. Even though marriage takes a lot of work, I believe that you have to remember not to give up who you are to make someone else happy because then your not happy and there isn't any amount of money to help you through your misery.

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### Mystica says

A book full of twists and turns in three very ordinary marriages and the cliché is very right. No one actually knows what goes on in a marriage.

Three friends Wendy, Jill and Leigh. Friends for a long while. All married with families except Jill who has no children. Each one with a career (of sorts) and life seems to be fine. Cracks appear with one - infidelity but Leigh is determined to keep it to a fling and nothing else. Six weeks, and then it becomes the length of summer and then she is out and back to Lawrence and Molly. The heart does not work quite like that and Leigh becomes besotted. She cannot cut the tie and in not doing so involves her friends as well.

Wendy seems staid and set in her ways. Husband and two young boys. Jill and Rob - the sad fact of not having children has created such a rift in their marriage. The elephant in the room which cannot be spoken about or discussed at least by Rob. Ignoring the issue and being careless of his feelings have left Jill very vulnerable. This leads to a crisis in her marriage.

More would be spoilers!

Friendship taxed beyond endurance, revenge, maliciousness, despair, unrequited love all strands of the story or rather stories here. Very commonplace tales, meticulously told and things that happen to all.

A very good book which was a relief from me from my diet of continuous murders and very gory happenings.

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### Jeanniehay64 says

I Recommend This Book

This novel explored female friendship, loyalty, family's and infidelity among other topics . I found myself relating to all the female characters and was rooting for Jill who I felt was punished harshly

for one mistake. I personally have encountered some of the issues explored in the book and could relate to how the characters particularly Wendy and Rob behaved. I think the author portrayed emotions very well. The end of the book was great put a smile on my face. Overall I felt the book a bit slow at first but definitely enjoyed it as I got into it and would recommend it highly.

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## Saarah Niña says

**Wow!**

I'm not a married woman, I've never been married but of course it's natural (at least I think so) to think about marriage. At least when the topic comes up, even if it's not for you. There are often the questions about age and whether you are ready.... What you rarely get asked is the commitment. Not many dare to ask whether you plan to stick by your partner through it all- as companions for life. That's the dangerous territory, not appropriate small talk. But that's what this book subtly explores: what if you aren't happy with your husband of ten years? What if there is a man more interested in you? What if there is a new life for you to live? What if this is the end of the line?

**This is a book that will get people talking. Think: a bucket load of gossip, closeted lives and powerful secrets.**

You get the 'good' wife, the 'bad' wife and the wife 'easily led astray'. Three best friends and their respective husbands. They share the shortcomings of their marriages and they decide they want things to change. This book is about women taking control, putting themselves first, making their own discoveries- even if that means subjecting themselves to scandal and possibly, guilt. Men, be careful.

But more than that, **this novel is an intricate exploration of serious, personal, relationships: the web of entanglements we create and the way they mould us and carve their way into our lives. A delicate book but very much a must read. This is the kind of book that would once have been on the list of banned books. The fact that this is too close to reality would once have been interpreted as a threat to the framework of most societies. We've come a long way since then, for better or for worse.**

I received this book through NetGalley.

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## Sarah Joint says

If you're interested in this one, I wouldn't read too many reviews. I saw a few that included some pretty major spoilers. I'll be careful not to include any. While this book isn't a thriller or mystery, I still prefer not to know the twists and turns before going into any kind of fiction. I found this book to be engrossing but a bit ridiculous at times, with an unbelievable ending. I'm glad I read it, but a little less of the drama would have led to a higher rating from me. If you're in the mood for some high drama women's fiction having to do with marriage, infidelity, and friendship, with some sexual moments... this would probably be a good choice for you.

*At it's heart, this book is about three women, their marriages, and their friendships with each other. We have Jill the main character, who is in a bit of a rut with her husband. She didn't think she wanted children and at first thought he was content without as well... but she was wrong. Now that having children is no longer on the table, she's starting to think perhaps she always wanted one after all... and he's feeling guilty. Their sex*

life has come to a complete stop, much to Jill's dismay. She tries to re-ignite that spark, but he seems uninterested. Friend **Wendy** seems to have a very happy marriage with her husband, who is a police officer. She's a happy wife and mother who has recently returned to the workforce. Though she's had tragedy in her past, she's making the best of her life. **Leigh** is restless. She's beyond bored with her husband, and embarks on a steamy secret affair with a client. She insists it won't last long, just a dalliance... it might even make her marriage stronger.

**Having become Leigh's confidante, Jill is forced to deal with her disappointment in her husband and their sexual relationship, and even consider what would happen if she had a dalliance of her own.** Each character is complicated and has a lot going on. Full of drama, it will appeal to a lot of fans of women's fiction.

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### **Karen says**

Not sure where I came across this title, but it was a cheap or possibly even free from the Amazon Kindle Store. I will start by saying its not normally the kind of story I read so take that into consideration when you see my review of 2 stars. 2 stars seems a little harsh but 2 stars states the story "is okay" and for me that is what it was. I did read it all the way to the end but will admit to skimming over parts because I just wanted to know how everyone ended up.

When I was reading this story I could picture it in my head like a tv drama. I think it was the infidelity that bothered me a bit (but I knew that is what this book was centre around before I read it), and the betrayal of friendship. It was quite a sad tale really and therefore I didn't really feel that the HEA for one of the ladies at the end was consistent with the rest of the book.

I think because I read so many romance novels I have my head in the clouds a little and found it difficult to turn that around.

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### **Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says**

I truly enjoyed immersing myself into this great piece of women's fiction set in my own area of the North East of England. 4.5 stars and full review on way.

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### **Michael says**

Is it possible to have a favorite author after only reading two books? I fell in love with Jill,her sensitive personality appealed to me in more ways than one. While I did think that her husband Rob treated her more like a roommate,ultimately he loved her through the end. Leigh was a nutcase,but I sympathized with her flaws. Wendy was a goody two shoes with a heart of gold.

Not your typical review,but if I said too much,I will spoil it! Just know this book is full of drama,suspense and sexual undertones.

Lively redemptive characters,touching and vulnerable,The Secrets Of Married Women will have you on an emotional ride.

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Highly recommended!

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## Albert says

The Secrets of Married Women by Carol Mason is a sordid glimpse into the minds and hearts of today's modern woman in an ever changing landscape. The three women in this novel are beautifully developed and deal individually with heartache and betrayal in their own way. There is a little of all of them in all of us.

"...I start walking in the direction of my car now, aware of the clack of my heels on the cobblestones, as light reflections from the Sage Centre bob on the river and cars drum noisily over the Tyne Bridge.

The lovely silver Mercedes SL 500, whose alarm I may have set off, is still parked behind me. I'm about to get into my car when I notice something under my wiper.

It doesn't look like a parking ticket or a flyer. I pull out the somewhat soggy piece of paper and read: I saw you scratch my car. So instead of compensation, how about a drink? And under that is the name Andrey and a phone number.

When a motorbike whizzes past me and I feel the draught from it, I'm aware that I'm standing there, a little baffled. How strange! I read it again, the words sitting there in my hand.

An invitation to wrong-doing, from a complete stranger...."

Jill's marriage is falling apart. On the outside everything looks fine but on the inside, it is slowly being ripped apart. Ever since her husband discovered that he can never have children, there has been a widening rift between them. Jill tries to be understanding but her husband Rob keeps putting a distance between them. His sense of inadequacy is like an ocean she cannot cross. Jill seeks comfort in her friends and tells them about her marriage and the secret of her husband he wants kept hidden.

Career minded Leigh is married to Lawrence, a doting and caring husband who obeys her every wish. She belittles him in front of others and is an outrageous flirt, none of this does he object to. His lack of masculinity that attracted her and her controlling nature, is leaving her frustrated and unsatisfied.

Wendy is the steady one of the trio. A beautiful husband and children, with a rock solid marriage and she always seems to have the sensible answer.

The secrets of these friends and their marriages will cross and threatened not only their marriages and friendships, but their own families as well.

"....In the sauna, we lie on opposite benches in our towels, our heads turned to one another. 'Tell me something bad about it,' I say to her. 'Tell me a downside.'

She seems to try hard. 'I can't. There isn't one. Doing this just makes me wonder why I was faithful all these years. And the funny thing is, Jill,' she sits up, her towel falling from her small breasts. 'You know, since I've had a lover, I pick on Lawrence so much less. And you can tell that he's more relaxed because of it. Even his OCD is better.' She wipes her running mascara. 'In a peculiar way this affair is saving my marriage. Fucking another man is actually doing Lawrence a favour..."

Though Jill is the main character, the actions and thoughts of her friends Wendy and Leigh drive this book and impact it more than Jill actually does. In fact it is the influence of her friends that finally cause Jill to make the one move that destroys her own marriage and the eventual discovery of all of their hidden secrets that will implode on the women and their friendship. This is something the reader will pick up on early in this novel; no marriage will get out of this book intact. But the marriages and their dissoluteness is not the issue here. In fact it is treated as something of collateral damage. An acceptable result of the growth and

experimentation of unhappy women as they try to become happy. Only the happiness they are after is not really happiness but what other women tell them it is. And when they figure that, and some never do, it is too late. This is a theme I find in too many novels of the genre and time. A sad by product of modern feminism? I hope not. To have come to this point in society where betraying your lover, spouse or not, is not only the norm but something to be valued over actually sustaining a loving relationship; somehow this is the answer?

No, the marriages are not what matter here. It is the friendship and the betrayal between the three women. That is the relationship that is the focus. A cautionary tale perhaps, that some secrets should not be shared and perhaps the sisterhood is not all it says it should be. Not that the husbands are without blame. Jill's husband Rob is so wrapped up in his own inadequacies that he cannot see the damage he is doing to his wife and his marriage. His foolish pride keeps him from seeking help and looking into other options even when Jill is open to them. Leigh's husband Lawrence really just needs to find a pair. Just because you married a strong willed, career minded woman, does not mean she wants a lapdog to roll over. In fact most career minded women I have met seek out even stronger men. As for Wendy and her husband, the facade of their perfect marriage is something they are both to blame for.

So, for all that is written before, I will say this.

I really liked this book! I loved the characters, though I times I found them annoying enough to drive a truck over, and I loved the plot and its twists. The inherit betrayal by one of the women and her lack of self awareness remind me of an ex-wife I try to forget. Absolutely brilliant characters. Terrific plotting and insightful and tender writing sold this story to me over and over again.

I really liked it except....

Except for the cutesy, Harlequin Romance ending. Seriously, did someone change me over to the Hallmark Channel, yes even too saccharine to be called the Lifetime channel. This book needed to end ten pages before it did,

But even so, a really good read.

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## Shalini says

This is the story of three friends Jill, Leigh and Wendy, who seem to there for each other, supporting each other during the trials and tribulations of married life.

Jill, the sensible of the three, is married to Rob and they are happily coursing through life, till they find out Rob is infertile. This affects their married life, their intimacy, especially, when Rob, refuses to talk about it and Jill wants to communicate and find an alternative. Rob is unable to reconcile to the idea of adoption and diverts his grief inwards. This refusal to deal with the situation, tempts Jill to think about another man, Andrey. Whom will she choose Rob or Andrey??

Leigh, the damaged of the three, with husband, Lawrence and daughter, Molly, is bored with his OCD and stay at home dad concept. So, to find new adventure, she embarks on an affair with Nick with disastrous consequences. Will she stay with good old Lawrence or the exciting Nick???

Wendy, the quiet of the three, is married to cop, Neil and has two boys but has lost a daughter. This affects her deeply still and her life seems to have stopped. Will she remain the calm mom /wife or will she take charge???

This entire story is told from Jill's point of view. Each of these women are going through roller-coaster of emotions, Jill with her parental problems and infertility, Leigh, with her convoluted past, and Wendy with

her personal loss and betrayal.

The author, Carol Mason, deals with the dynamics of friendship, sometimes with brashness and sometimes with sensitivity. The last fifty pages or so is brilliant. It describes the pain, the angst, the fear, the betrayal so beautifully. Each emotion comes off the page, hitting us with its rawness. Friendship also has boundaries depending on what we reveal and what we hide from each other. Carol brings home the fact that life is all about choices and the consequences of those choices and each phase has to be lived, with its pitfalls and mistakes, before we go onto the next..

There are many beautiful lines written by Carol on love and life, practical ones too. The line which touched me is...

"You are born you, and you go through life, buffered by other people, but first and foremost, you are just yourself. And then you die just being you. So the sooner you get used to yourself, the better it is"

TRUE HAPPINESS IS WITHIN US...

So true, Ms. Mason, so true...

(I received a revised ARC from netgalley and this is my honest and unbiased review)

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## Michelle says

More like 3.5 stars.

Call me weird, but I like reading stories about women in close friendships who deal with infidelity. But the stories that interest me are the ones where the women are the unfaithful ones. Part of this is because I wrote a book on the same subject and I'm curious to see how similar their reactions are and their motivations, etc. as the character in my novel. In this case I found the characterization very believable. Unfortunately, I've known a number of people in situations like this where a good friend finds out her other friend is sleeping with the good friend's husband and the agony of how to deal with it is rough, to say the least. I also know of several situations where husbands came around and things worked out despite the woman's cheating. It even happened to a good friend of mine. I ran into her husband, a chronic cheater, a year after their divorce only to find out they'd gotten remarried. I didn't see that coming. I think the difference is in how the affair happened and who the woman loved. Leigh's motivation was entirely different than Jill's. So were their feelings toward their husbands, and that made all the difference to me. I totally identified with Jill's situation and the horror she went through in more ways than one. I do believe if her friend hadn't talked about her affair so much she may not have gone down that road herself.

An aside... there is a lot of cursing in this book, but a lot of witty dialog as well. Honestly, I could hear these characters saying angry things like "you bitch" when furious, so it didn't bother me, though I prefer not to read cursing in novels. Most of the time the words fit the scenes. Just sayin'. I also find the way English people curse a little bit amusing. Call me weird, but to me bloody simply means blood coming out of something like a cut. And shag is a type of carpet people had in their homes in the early 1970s. There are a number of other words that I'm sure were meant as bad words, but I didn't know what they meant, so I just kept reading. This book and the characters reminded me a bit of the language and characters in the movie, *Sliding Doors*, with Gwyneth Paltrow. That story contained a lot of British slang, too, most of which went over my head. Anyway, I liked the resolution at the end and found it plausible. This kind of stuff does happen. I've seen it where a bad situation turns out to have good elements despite how messed up it began. I applaud the author for her dramatic storytelling and her ability to pull me into the characters's lives. This story felt pretty realistic to me. I have to say I felt a bit sorry for these three ladies because they all suffered in different ways. I especially hurt for Wendy. That said, would I recommend this book to people with sensitive ears and minds? No. But for people who like the deep psychology of getting into characters' heads and examining their motivations? I'd definitely recommend it because this dramatic story was well done.

## Petra says

Somewhere between 4 and 5 stars all the way through until the ending spoilt it. Loved the narration.

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## Laura says

My this book really made you think..... Im 30 been with my hubby 12 years, 2 kids... and the ups and downs of marriage..... My Nan always told me she could fall out of love with my granddad for weeks on end but would always fall back in love with him again.... And that statement rings so true!!! But i can understand where moments of cheating could be some peoples answer and this Author unwraps the horrifying guilt and emotions with such ferocity it made me have a lump in my throat... I don't know how i would or could even cope .... I really felt for Jill and in her position i can see why she did what she did (not that its not wrong... But the husband could have been more understanding in the first place and not pushed her so away!!!).

Young women all just want to be married to a good man, and they've no idea how fast the novelty of that wears off. And those of us who are married to good men all want to be married to somebody else's good man....

Not necessarily someone else's Good man.... But i think we all have moments of of speculation, especially after years of marriage and still being young, when the relationship hits its to be expected rocks and i always wonder how the men must think, do they over analyze everything too?

The book really made me look at my own relationship and appreciate what i have, that quote stuck with me.

(view spoiler)

Brilliant 5 star read!

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## Terry says

I was lucky enough to win a Kindle edition of The Secrets of Married Women from Goodreads, and boy did I love this. I'm normally more of a historical fiction reader, I'm glad I gave this a chance.

So much of what Jill went through, I could relate to. I imagine many could. Especially when it came to her friendships with Leigh and Wendy, the baby drama (to a point), and her ailing parents. I've been in that friendship dilemma, I've been in that family dilemma, those parts of the story I was so engaged in. What I liked best of all was, even though some characters were shady, you could sympathize and understand all of their actions, their motivations. While I didn't agree with the decisions that some of these characters made, I understood why. Even though this is a fictional tale, there's a lot of realism woven throughout. Sometimes friendships last, sometimes they don't, same goes for relationships. I never thought any of those beats were fantastical, like that would never happen in real life. I kept reading and I kept thinking I know someone that happened to, yep this happened once to me, I was in that situation once with a friend. I bought it all. There

came a point, a little more then half way through the story, that a revel was dropped that I did not see coming. I should of seen it coming but I didn't, and I couldn't put down my kindle after that.

I just have one tiny minor issue with the overall story, the ending. By the start of the last chapter, I was shaking my head with approval. That's the way it'd be in real life, but this isn't real life. I'm hopefully not giving away the ending, but it was a little to neat for me. It's a self contained story, the ending is satisfying, but I just did not buy it. That said, I really enjoyed The Secrets of Married Women, and highly recommend it.

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### **Renita D'Silva says**

A story of friendship and relationships, betrayal and love. Beautiful.

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