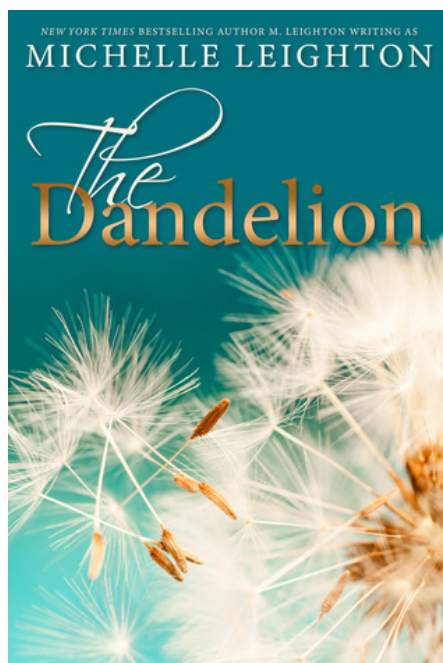




The Dandelion

Michelle Leighton

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At thirty-five, Abigail Simmons has mastered only one thing—running. When tragedy strikes, she runs. This time her urge to flee brings Abi back to her hometown, where she hopes she can find the peace she’s always searched for. That hope is dashed when Abi’s ex, Sam Forrester, bumps his way back into her life.

Sam has flourished in ways Abi hasn’t. From the outside, he has it all—a successful medical practice, a beautiful daughter, and a charming wife.

Who is dying.

Sara Forrester is dying and her final wish is for Sam to find love again so she can meet the woman who will finish raising her daughter and grow old with her husband. Abi seems like the perfect fit, but what Sara doesn’t know is that Abi has a secret, a secret no one could guess.

And it’s a deal breaker.

The Dandelion Details

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Author : Michelle Leighton

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From Reader Review The Dandelion for online ebook

Lo Bookfrantic says

4.5stars

This was a great read, I loved the chemistry, the story itself was different, sad and I was able to connect with the characters. I didn't ugly cried a lot but I definitely had my ugly cry moment ??

I most definitely will be checking out more of this author's books.

Rebecca Woodward says

This author is one hell of a story teller. I enjoy reading when an author talks about the scenery and gives us the reader a visual of the story. This way I can get the whole picture.

A second chance love story with angst and heartbreak. Little blonde girl takes the whole story to a different level. Noelle is her name and she is three with a mind of a grown up. Sam Forrester and his wife Sara are heading into the most painful goodbyes. Before she dies she is determined to find a new love for her husband and child. This is their story.

warhawke says

Genre: Women's Fiction

Type: Standalone

POV: First Person – Female, partially dual

Rating:

Abigail (Abi) Simmons was desperate for a break. To find the peace she needed she decided to go back to her hometown for the first time since she left years ago. But what greeted her was not serenity but a ghost from her past that threatened her well laid plan.

Sam Forrester was once the love of her life. Now as a doctor, he became the love of the small town with his beautiful wife and daughter. However, what seemed perfect on the outside was just an illusion that hid an inevitable pain that could either mend them or annihilate them.

He is rain. And thunder. Rain for my parched soul. Thunder in my veins.

Right from the very beginning I couldn't help but to fall in love with Sam. Throughout all his suffering, he

still put others first before his own needs.

I'm like a black widow of the heart. My kiss is deadly. My love is life threatening.

I understood Abi's reasons for choosing the path she set. I felt her hopelessness and her pain. But at the same time I was also angry with her selfishness especially after she realized it herself.

This book is not about romance, but it is about love and how it could both hurt and heal broken souls. I like how the author set the characters dynamic. On the surface, their agreement might seem irrational but their situation justified their actions. You wouldn't understand the dynamic unless you read the book.

Our misery binds us, like stitches that draw us close but have no hope of mending our broken hearts.

The Dandelion is a story of love and life. It would appeal to readers looking for an engaging and emotional read with elements of romance.

???. . . (F)BR With Loyda . . . ???

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Paige says

4 "Timing" Stars

The Dandelion is a story of true love, second chances, and life's unexpected twists and turns. This heartbreaking yet hopeful romance was a slow burn that made me question myself and life in general. Sam, Abigail and Sara have a story that defies the norm yet was beautifully haunting.

Over two decades ago Abigail moved away from her high school sweetheart her junior year of school. Though she and Sam had a connection few do at such a young age, timing was not on their side. Years later Abigail returns to the sleepy town she left so long ago with her life in tatters only to find Sam with the life she dreamed of. But perception is everything and she learns that Sam's wife is dying. When Sara asks the world Abigail she realizes that timing is again her enemy. With relationships that defy status quo, Abigail realizes her secrets are again going to fail her.

This story was a quiet, slowly building second chance romance that was totally unique. It was emotional and eye opening with twists and turns I never saw coming. This was the first M. leighton book I've read in a while and it reminded why I like her writing so much. If you're looking for something different that will pull on your heartstrings and make you believe in love again, this is it.

I voluntarily read an ARC of this book. A is for Alpha B is for Books.

The Hopeless Romantics Book Blog says

This is only the second book I have read by Michelle Leighton but once again, I have been blown away by this emotionally charged story she has written. From reading the synopsis, I knew "The Dandelion" was going to be a heart breaker of a read and I wasn't wrong. Abi, Sam and Sara's story absolutely devastated me. From start to finish, I read this book with a such heavy heart, a lump in my throat and the threat of tears never far away because of the impossible situation these characters found themselves in. It was tragic with a sense of despair at the forefront of every page I read. Each of these characters was going through so much and I felt every ounce of their pain and suffering.

"The Dandelion" (very much like "The Empty Jar") was one of those books I know I'll remember for a long time, the storyline definitely leaving its mark on me. Why? Well because so much of it felt so real. The situation the characters found themselves in, their actions, their sacrifices and their selflessness really made me think and question, "what would I do in their shoes?" Would I have the strength and courage to do as they did? Would I be brave enough? I honestly don't know but for me, the story definitely toyed with my conscience. For me, the best kind of books are the thought provoking ones and this was 100% that!

Michelle Leighton bought this heart breaking tale to life two fold. Firstly, the emotionally charged writing that ensured I felt every single thing the characters went through and secondly, because of her excellent use of imagery that ensured I was able to quite literally live this story right alongside the characters. I was a part of the small town. I was a resident at the lake. I felt the beautiful sun on my face and I watched the world go by as I sat on my adirondack chair on my porch. I loved the sense of family and nostalgia that came with the setting too. For the few hours it took me to read this book, I felt like I was home.

"The Dandelion" was a story about love, loss, atonement and second chances that weaved itself into my emotions right from the get go. A job well done to this author for writing a story so was just so heart felt. I rated it ♥️♥️♥️♥️

Jennifer Kyle says

3-3.5 Stars

Karen Mc says

I have wanted to meet a Michelle Leighton story for YEARS, as I've hoarded a couple of paperback pretties on my shelf of hers but never met them. When offered an opportunity to read The Dandelion, I was so THRILLED to finally meet this author's words. Finally, I'd soak up a story from an author who's been on my TBR for a long time.

The cover of The Dandelion is STUNNING with an ethereal beauty that didn't quite reach the story. With an emotionally-wielding blurb, small town setting, and allure of the nostalgic second-chance romance trope, I was excited to read The Dandelion. I expected to feel this story hard based on the emotional roller coaster of a blurb.

The plot concept is on point and so compelling with so much potential, but the story failed to deliver for me. I failed to feel anything from a story where I expected to feel EVERYTHING. I'm a crier who typically feels every word I read but I didn't shed a tear here and I should have needed all the tissues. I loved the family bond and ties woven throughout this story, the way the hero and heroine would risk so much to protect and help their families, but I never felt that bond.

While elements of the characters endeared me, I neither forged a connection to the characters nor the storyline. I could not feel the chemistry between the hero and heroine. The characters lacked strength and compatibility. I think if this story entailed more dialogue and showed more rather than described what happened, painting a picture in my head, I would have developed that connection and those feelings that, sadly, were missing. While The Dandelion's premise is a beautiful concept, I just could not feel this story as much as I wanted to badly. I WANTED to love this book that ended up OKAY but I expected greatness based on the stunning synopsis, I really did.

Desirae (Dee) says

arc provided by the author for an honest, unbiased review

im just sitting here, in public, trying not to cry. im trying. I will not do it. ladies, its not working. I just feel so emotionally raw right now. like if people look too close, they'll see how my broken heart is justflayed open from reading this.

this whole story has felt like one huge heart crushing story. in one way or another, this story is going to break your heart in two . Whether it's Sara's story or Abi's, you are going to ache for these characters. not only for what they've been through, their separation, but also what they're going through and the plans involved.

on one hand I'm reeling from Sara's plans. I want to not understand, I want to not like her idea, I want to hate that that is how she wants her family life to go on without her. but sitting here and thinking about this, I kind of do understand. I understand wanting to know the person who's going to take your place and wanting to make sure it's the right person. as a mother, I can understand that you do want the best for your kid and this is a way of making sure it happens.

I loved Sam. I loved how he handled Sara, everything he had to do with all that responsibility of his own practice, his family and all the issues that they're dealing with daily. but then Abi comes back into his life and it's bringing back all his feelings for her. his heartbreak, his love..and it's her saving grace. just as much as she's his.

Jessica (Angie & Jessica's Dreamy Reads) says

I had such high hopes for this book after reading the blurb. It had me pumped for what I thought would be a profoundly emotional story full of depth and second chances. I was geared up for heartache, for angst, for...

something. Unfortunately I struggled with connecting much to the story at all. There's a lot more telling than showing in this book, and because of that, I never felt the chemistry between Sam and Abi, I never felt grief or loss or heartache. It existed, the characters say they're heartbroken, but that was never conveyed to the reader in a meaningful way that I believed in.

I honestly didn't feel much at all as I read to be honest. The main plot point, Sam's wife's illness, really should've been delved into a bit deeper. It was held right at the surface and her wishes and her fears should've been a kick right to the gut to the reader but it never got there. And with all the other things going on in Abi's life, her history and her plans for the future, it took away from Sara's situation. Truthfully, there was too much going on and not enough dimension. It was a lot of throwing everything against the wall to see what would stick rather than really cultivating the more meaningful aspects of this storyline.

It's never fun to be so overly critical about a book but I just had a really hard time finding anything I could hold onto with this story. I was a spectator hearing the details but was never invited in to really feel all the things a reader should feel when they pick up a book. This is the first book I've read from Michelle Leighton who formerly wrote under M Leighton and I'm just not sure this author's writing is my cup of tea.

Libby Harrison says

There was something about this which reminded me of 'sister-wives'

Jo - *.★Reading Is My Bliss★.*** says**

I don't even know where to begin my review of this highly emotionally charged book. I guess I can start by saying that it was a really sad story but one filled with so much love, hope and second chances.

Abi has returned to her lakeside hometown after leaving the boy she promised she would love forever behind 20 years ago. When she sees Sam again she is glad to see that he is happily married and they have a beautiful wee daughter. She is also left with a sense of sadness too, of the life she could have had with him. You never forget your first love and they will always carry a small piece of your heart with them.

'In the wreckage that is my life, seeing Sam is like a life raft from the past, a bright dot of salvation floating on the otherwise bleak horizon. I didn't realise how much I needed this place. Or to see kind, familiar faces.'

Over the past 20 years Abi has had her fair share of tragedy and has never felt more alone in her life. She is a broken shadow of the girl she used to be and with no hope of ever finding that peace she craves, she thinks that a few months back in the place she was last truly happy will give her just what she needs.

'This is where I'll find peace from the pain. And maybe redemption for what I've done. If I'm even redeemable.'

Sam is such an amazing person, an incredibly strong, loyal and loving man. He is deeply in love with his wife and is living with the knowledge that their time is limited. She is dying and there is nothing he can do about it. He absolutely adores his daughter Noelle and completely dotes on her. He is trying to keep things as normal as he can with the time they have left.

'That's the consequence of living – dying. Life leads to death. It's unavoidable. It's an inarguable fact.'

Sam's wife Sara is someone that I hoped I could be like if I was faced with the same things she was. She is compassionate, beautiful and selfless. She may be faced with the confronting truth that her time is nearly up but her focus is not on herself but on Sam and Noelle. She needs to leave this earth knowing that they are being looked after and loved when she goes.

When Sara hears about Abi's return she makes it her business to meet her and get to know her. And when she does, she knows, she just knows that this is the woman she can count to fulfil her dying wish. A beautiful friendship begins between them and Abi is torn between doing what is being asked of her and the consequences of making promises she may not be able to keep.

'I shouldn't like the woman who married the man I loved. I shouldn't help the woman who has made such a wonderful life with the guy who should've been mine.'

'Yet I do. I do like her. I do want to help her.'

And that is all I will say about this, all of the above is covered off in the book blurb so I won't go into any further plot details. This book had a very thought provoking subject and it had me thinking about what if that was happening in my life what would I do if I was faced with the same situation? A very unique story that I am still thinking about....

'We can't avoid living because we want to avoid pain. Life without pain is life without living. Like you just said, the pain let's us know we're alive.'

☆ Bianca ☆ BJ's Book Blog ☆ says

another Dandelion gif ↓ - it doesn't have anything to do with the book, but it's sooo adorable - I just had to add it to my review?

Abi left her home town in South Carolina with her mom when she was 17 years old.

Now, 18 years later, she's back.

She's 'running' from something. From pain that happened to her, but also pain that she caused. But we don't know any details.

She just wants a few nice summer months back home where she was happy as a kid and teenager. To find some peace and quiet.

And maybe to see what happened to the love of her life Sam.
He was already saving to buy a ring back then, but then she had to leave.

But now ... now he's married and has an adorable little daughter.
But he doesn't seem happy. There's a huge sadness in his eyes.

Abi vows to help him with whatever is happening in his life.

And Sam's wife ... she's right there with her. She wants Abi to help Sam.
But what Sara wants Abi to do might be too much. Or rather too late.
Abi didn't come back home to stay - she thinks she doesn't deserve a happy ending.

What is happening to Abi & Sam?
Will there be a HEA?
READ THE BOOK TO FIND OUT! ?

????????????????????

Grrr, Michelle. Another one of those super-moving and heartbreakingly sad books.
About a love story that seems so hopeless before we even start reading! Stupid blurb almost making me cry already! ?

BUT I LOVED THE BOOK!!!! Duh!

I almost didn't start reading - I was too afraid of a non-happy-end thing!!!
But of course I started reading - and I kept on reading. I just couldn't stop.

It was all so heartbreakingly sad and beautiful and a bit mysterious and sweet and adorable and frustrating and I just could. Not. Stop. Reading. But I also didn't want to pick the kindle up again when I came back from doing something else. I was too afraid that it was all too hopeless for our darlings. But of course I kept on reading.

I'm not gonna spoil anything for you.

Just know that I loved it and that it's a beautiful and heartbreakingly moving second-chance love story.

BEAUTIFUL BOOK! Beautiful characters. A lot of heartache and sadness. Lots of pain and healing. Lots of adorable little Noelle & Daddy moments and **ALL THE FEELS!**

But we also hope so very hard for a happily ever after ... but will there be one??? It doesn't look very promising if we listen to the blurb ... **BUT KEEP ON READING!!! DON'T GIVE UP! ?**

THE DANDELION was such a heartbreakingly beautiful & adorable & moving second-chance love story! Please run to your nearest amazon for some tissue boxes and for your own Sam!
This one is MINE!!!!!!

And now for all those **I NEED TO KNOW IF THERE'S A HAPPY END** readers. I'll put it in a spoiler thingy! (view spoiler)

???

Anne OK says

FULL REVIEW NOW POSTED

With its eye-catching cover that is indicative of the story inside and a book blurb assured to grab and hold the attention of readers, I won't be giving away much more of this plot. I would only be spoiling the overall effect and the unexpected revelations you should encounter on your own. Not a story that's always easy on the heart, this is a soul-searching journey and one that won't soon be forgotten. *The Dandelion* was a lot different from what I expected – and so much more in every way.

This is where I'll find peace from the pain. And maybe redemption for what I've done. If I'm even redeemable.

Into every life a little rain must fall – but Abigail Simmons, a weary soul, has clearly suffered more than her fair share of downpours. Starting at age seventeen with what seemed to be a target on her back, her dreams are lost and she has weathered repeated devastating tragedies and the accompanying heartache, pain and sadness and guilt that never seems to end. For a girl whose name means “joy,” she's lost the joy and the light has gone out of her life. With a return to the last place where Abi felt at peace, she begins her quest for redemption.

This is a second chance romance about a love lost – but the feelings remained even after a separation of almost two decades. Told from dual points of view by Sam and Abi in a “then” and “now” timeframe. Life hasn't exactly gone according to plan for the three main characters. This book is a fair measure of human nature and really makes you stop and consider the choices you've made to get to the point you are now and the lengths people will go to in securing the care and happiness for our loved ones. But it embraces so much more. Although it's a deep and tragic story, there's also a nice blend of humor and camaraderie that helps to lighten things up.

In the wreckage that is my life, seeing Sam is like a life raft from the past, a bright dot of salvation floating on the otherwise bleak horizon. I didn't realize how much I needed this place. Or to see kind, familiar faces.

Abi, Sam and Sara are each appealing, inspiring and sympathetic lead characters that are sure to capture the hearts of readers. But they are not perfect – then again, maybe Sara is. There is so much about these characters that drew me in and kept me captivated and in awe. I fell completely in love with each one. Leighton doesn't stop there though – she does a great job peppering this story with secondary characters that add dimension to the book as well. *Every bit of darkness needs some sunshine. To brighten up the gloom.* Just when you think you can't possibly smile amid the tragedy of this story, there's a delightful and adorable

little bee named Noelle who provides a welcomed respite and proves you wrong. There's always light at the end of the tunnel.

Michelle Leighton's story carries inspiration, along with hope, which had a profound influence upon my heart. This story grabbed me by the heartstrings and wouldn't let go—and there were several places in the story where I openly wept at its beauty and depth.

Leighton's uses well-learned techniques for mixing emotions that take readers up and down and then up again. Otherwise there would be zero effect on keeping readers engaged and those much-relished feelings stirring on all levels for a satisfying read.

But most importantly, *The Dandelion* is well-written with a thought-provoking plotline that tackles some really tough issues. Even though I knew these well-developed and expressive characters are fictional and the events aren't real, my reactions and emotions were. I really felt the sadness and grief, laughter and tears, the joy and love. And through it all, I could only hope for a happily-ever-after - even though bittersweet -- for characters who deserved it so very much.

I can't recommend this stunning book highly enough. There just aren't words – at least I don't have them. In my opinion, this is the best yet from Michelle Leighton.

Dilek VT says

A dying woman wants to find someone who will love her child and husband after she has gone... And who is a better option than his ex? The one with a secret... (hmm, it sounds like a secret baby but I don't know for sure.)

So far from my type of romance... So not my cuppa!

Rejane says

With a blurb like that I just can't read it. And don't think it's because of the supposed sadness. It's more for the silliness. I may sound cold, what I really am, but this kind of situation just annoys me. And I don't think any dying person would be on the hunt for another love for their partner and a parent for their kid. Just one situation this worked for me: it was an episode of *GOLDEN GIRLS* and a woman who was dying was trying to get Sophia to date her husband so she could look after him when she really passed. And this was comedy. So that's that.
