



Little Lamb Lost

Margaret Fenton

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Social worker Claire Conover honestly believed she could make a difference in the world until she gets the phone call she's dreaded her entire career. One of her young clients, Michael, has been found dead and his mother, Ashley, has been arrested for his murder. And who made the decision to return Michael to Ashley? Claire Conover.

Ashley had seemingly done everything right-gotten clean, found a place to live, worked two jobs, and earned back custody of her son. Devastated but determined to discover where her instincts failed her, Claire vows to find the truth about what really happened to Michael.

What Claire finds is no shortage of suspects. Ashley's boyfriend made no secret that he didn't want children. And Ashley's stepfather, an alcoholic and chronic gambler, has a shady past. And what about Michael's mysterious father and his family? Or Ashley herself? Was she really using again? Amidst a heap of unanswered questions, one thing is for certain: Claire Conover is about to uncover secrets that could ruin lives-or end her own.

Little Lamb Lost Details

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Author : Margaret Fenton

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From Reader Review Little Lamb Lost for online ebook

Lynda Kelly says

Loved this story.....some formatting ebook errors again where words lose spaces, a few apostrophe errors too but I still gave this 5 stars since it was so well written and kept me gripped. A little boy dies while under the care of social workers and there of course is a full investigation. His mother takes the blame but Claire, her personal caseworker, doesn't believe she reverted back to her old way of life after working so hard to get her little boy back.

I'd highly recommend this. I couldn't source other books by this author so perhaps it's her first which is even more impressive.

joy says

Ranged from believable characters to really likable characters. Claire Conover's point of view lead to an overly detailed narrative for my taste. I did not always feel the need to know what outfit she was changing into after work or what style of beer her co-worker's boyfriend insisted upon. These were interesting additions, but I found the real surprise was after 220 pages of these details, the last 20 pages or so were too hurried, too rushed to reach the ending. Great characters, though I needed more of an ending...

DE ANN ALLEN says

Wow drugs controlling the characters lives

Ashley had been a drug user but quit after her son was born. With the help of her social worker, she was working for an agency that cleaned businesses. The death of her son shocked everyone. The social worker was relentless in solving the mystery. Great read.

Agnes (BeaderBubbe) says

Claire, a social worker, finds herself involved in the death of a client's child. Little Mikey only 3 dies and when they found out it was because of a drug overdose his mom, -a long time addict gone clean - gets sent to jail. But nothing is quite like it seems because Claire does not give up until she finds out the truth --even if it puts her life in danger. Finished this book in 2 days. Could not put it down.

Amy says

I've been getting a lot of free books on my Kindle lately, and this was one I thought sounded interesting. I'm usually hesitant to read the free books (even though I'm staring to become a free ebook hoarder) because I find that they're free for a reason.

No spoilers. I recommend you read this for yourself. It was well-written with enough mystery to keep my attention. I'd give it 4.5 stars if I could.

Cheryl Landmark says

This was a well-written, easy flowing, thrilling, edgy and fast-paced story that kept me on the edge of my seat as I read it. I found Claire to be a wonderful character--dedicated, determined, conscientious and compassionate, and I sympathized greatly with her need to seek justice for poor little two-year old Michael and his mom, Ashley.

The drug culture was dealt with in a very realistic, serious way and depicted how it can destroy people and families, but not to the point where Ms. Fenton clobbered the reader over the head with overly preachy sermonizing on the subject.

I really liked the nerdy Grant but his relationship with Claire felt more like that of a good, solid friend than a passionate romantic interest. Kirk, while a bit too bold and pushy for my taste, nevertheless seemed like a decent guy. Even though he and Claire started off on the wrong foot, I think he redeemed himself later and he might have actually been a better choice for Claire in the romance department. Oh, well, it was still kind of nice to see the quiet, smart, nerdy guy get the beautiful woman for a change! :) At first, I was afraid the dreaded love triangle would rear its ugly head and dominate the plot, and, while there was indeed a touch of it, it thankfully didn't overshadow the rest of the story.

The one issue I did have with the book was the rather rushed ending, which seemed a little out of step with the rest of the story. (view spoiler)

Overall, this was a decent, well-written debut novel by this author, and I would definitely read more of her work.

J&B Reviews says

Very good.

Nice start to a new series told from the perspective of Claire Conover, a social worker who really cares. We hear so much negative stuff when something goes horribly wrong and I found it quite refreshing to read a story like this one. I suspect that the vast majority of social workers are much like Claire and put their hearts on the line on a daily basis but we seldom hear about all of the families they help.

I've heard there is a sequel and plan to go directly to the bookstore on my kindle to buy it as soon as I hit Submit on this review. Well done and definitely recommended!

Sarah says

I could not put this book down and found myself reading it in one sitting it was so good. Excellent story, great characters, and it kept me guessing to the end. The subject what tough, the death of a child and who

was at fault but it was told wonderfully and the writer kept the reader cheering Claire to get to the heart of who killed the child and why. Great story, well told, would tell anyone who wanted a book they could not put down to pick it up and be ready to be reading for awhile!

Klaudyna Z. says

This book surprised me in that it definitely kept me interested throughout. It was a mystery that kept me guessing until the end. I thought the author did a good job with keeping things easy to understand as there were many characters involved. I thought that it was going to get confusing and I would get lost, but it was very easy to follow.

I only wish that Claire had kind of ended up with Kirk. I feel like there was a spark between them that she didn't have with Grant, and I felt like Grant was a little boring, even though he was a good person and a good friend to Claire.

Overall, the book was well written and I really enjoyed reading it.

Jared Millet says

This is a strong, polished debut novel from a writer who is obviously making use her own life experience to add some gritty realism to her writing. DHS social worker Claire Conover is horrified when one of her clients, a two-year-old boy who was recently returned to his recovering drug-addict mother, is found dead of a drug overdose. The mother, Ashley, assumes all responsibility and pleads guilty to negligent homicide, but Claire doesn't believe it. Ashley had been well on the road to recovery and had shown no signs of a relapse. Defying orders to drop the case, Claire digs deeper and discovers that there were more than a few people, including prominent pillars of the community, who had reason to want Ashley and her son out of the way.

I normally follow sci-fi, so I've rarely had the experience of reading a book set in a place I'm personally familiar with. Fenton makes use of so many Birmingham landmarks in her story that I almost found it distracting (but that's probably just me). Let me tell you, it's a weird feeling to read a scene in a fiction novel set in the *actual building where you work* and to have it accurately described.

Corky says

Claire Conover is a very conscientious social worker. She has always beleived that she could, and would, make a difference in the lives of her young clients. Her world is thus shattered when little Michael Hennessey is found dead by his mother. Michael's mother, Ashley, is one of Claire's stellar rehabilitation efforts yet she will not deny that she is responsible for Mikey's death. Convinced of Ashley's innocence, Claire insists on investigating the case.

This is a debut novel for Margaret Fenton, herself a social worker. The plot got a bit long in places but the story was well crafted and Claire, a believable character.

Jennifer Powell Bowling says

I read this story pretty quickly being in a hurry to find out who done it. I had many guesses along the way and was surprised to find out that I was wrong every time. I'm not real sure why the reasoning behind it left a bad taste in my mouth. I guess it could have been that they weren't front and center in the story until much later. I guess I was waiting for that moment when I realized who it was and was like "OMG, of course", but that never happened because I never really felt like I got to know them on that level.(but I didn't let this take credit from the story) On the other hand, It was a great story that went into detail of how DHS can get involved in their work and put their necks on the line to fight for families and what they think is right, and the degree to which drugs destroys families. It really is a very interesting book that keeps moving right along and sucking you in. Fast paced, heartbreaking, who done it that you won't stop reading until you finish it.

Sahar Sabati says

I have taken great care in the last little while to be picky when it comes to choosing a book to read. After all, there are only 24 hours in a day, I only have 90 years to live, and there are too many books that exist for me to be sure to finish them all. Hence the triaging process.

I'm happy to report that this triaging process has yielded yet another great reading experience. Margaret Fenton's *Little Lamb Lost* is a story about justice on a smaller yet just as important scale, as Claire Conover, a social worker, works on getting justice served for the murder of one of the children in her charge, adorable little two-year-old Michael.

His mother, 23-year-old Ashley, had been using drugs pretty heavily before, to the point that, after Claire was assigned her case, she had to remove then baby Michael from the house. Ashley, who loves her son dearly, decided to turn her fortunes around. This was, for Claire, the case that gave her hope, the case that kept her going in the midst of other less stellar situations – and, ultimately, the case that, shockingly, went horribly wrong.

Unable to let go, Claire launches her own investigation to figure out what went wrong. She cannot accept either Ashley's 'confession' nor the police's willingness to accept it without further digging.

While I love a good mystery, I prefer those with substance, and *Little Lamb Lost* delivers substance. Yes, we are wondering throughout who killed an innocent young boy and why the mother, clearly innocent, would admit guilt, but this sad story isn't narrowed only to a whodunit. After all, drugs are not just about the actual smoking/shooting up, but rather a symptom of other, more severe problems, and these problems are visible throughout the plot.

Don't worry, Margaret Fenton isn't using *Little Lamb Lost* as a way to beat us over the head patronizingly in the hopes of increasing awareness. Rather, it's an indirect consequence of a plot well written, that takes these factors into consideration without unnecessarily focusing on them. After all, Claire Conover has been working in her field for some time now, and she doesn't need to be lectured (and neither do we).

In short, *Little Lamb Lost* is not your typical thriller, and this is what makes it all the more thrilling. What

happened to Claire is something that could happen to anyone working in the same field. And Margaret Fenton should know – she has worked in a parallel field, child and family therapy, for most of her life.

For a debut novel, the writing is tight, flows well and the rhythm of the action is held throughout the entire book. There was no single moment where you can take a breather (so don't drink coffee while reading this; you might dearly regret it). The plot is, scarily enough, pretty realistic and tight, with no loose ends. Only one small thing stuck out a little: Jimmy. He was just so odd, sticking out like a sore thumb. Then again, such people exist in real life, and at the end of the day, it didn't ruin the story.

Don't expect to be eased into the story; Margaret Fenton throws you right into it. And right from the beginning you are clutching the book tightly (mine has permanent grooves in the shape of my fingers etched forever in its cover). While I don't want to ruin the story for you, let me tell you: justice is served, although tragically, since an innocent life is lost.

If you're travelling during the Christmas holidays, Little Lamb Lost will definitely help you get through the sometimes dreadfully long waits and inevitable delays.

(First published on Blogcritics and on <http://saharsreviews.wordpress.com>)

Ann says

I have to admit a prejudice about this book. One of my Sisters in Crime friends wrote it. But she did such a good job that I can highly recommend it. And her main character Claire is delightful--just like Margaret (the author).

Michelle Jones says

I really enjoyed this mystery, especially how it has a different angle with a social worker investigating the death of one of her charges. I really liked Claire and the other characters and the writing was good. The ending did seem a bit abrupt, but overall this was a thoroughly enjoyable story.
