



Everything We Left Behind

Kerry Lonsdale

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From the Wall Street Journal bestselling author of *Everything We Keep* comes the highly anticipated sequel. Told from one man's two perspectives, *Everything We Left Behind* effortlessly blends suspense, mystery, and romance in an exploration of loss, resilience, and the compelling need to protect the ones we love at all cost.

Two months before his wedding, financial executive James Donato chased his trade-laundering brother Phil to Mexico, only to be lost at sea and presumed dead. Six and a half years later, he emerges from a dissociative fugue state to find he's been living in Oaxaca as artist Carlos Dominguez, widower and father of two sons, with his sister-in-law Natalya Hayes, a retired professional surfer, helping to keep his life afloat. But his fiancée, Aimee Tierney, the love of his life, has moved on. She's married and has a child of her own.

Devastated, James and his sons return to California. But Phil is scheduled for release from prison, and he's determined to find James, who witnessed something in Mexico that could land Phil back in confinement. Under mounting family pressure, James flees with his sons to Kauai, seeking refuge with Natalya. As James begins to unravel the mystery of his fractured identity, danger is never far behind, and Natalya may be the only person he can trust.

(This book is the sequel to *Everything We Keep*)

Everything We Left Behind Details

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From Reader Review Everything We Left Behind for online ebook

Susan Peterson says

Everything We Left Behind is compelling suspense, a riveting story about making peace with your past, a story about a man trying to find his true family. James has been living in a fugue state after being traumatized at the hands of his brother; for the past seven years, James has been living in Mexico as Carlos, father of two young sons and in love with Natalya. When James emerges from the fugue, he is confused and heartbroken, the family he'd loved are now strangers to him, and he's still in love with his former fiancée Aimee. How does James move on with his life...can he overcome his past and build a loving relationship with his sons again? And where will he find his true home? It was fascinating to watch James deal with both the past and the future; his struggle, his emotions, his angst are so clear. The story is told partly in flashbacks as we follow Carlos' journey for the previous 6 years, and partly in the present as James finds love and peace in his life. Both Carlos' and James' stories are equally gripping and emotional. It was fascinating to watch their stories converge, and I felt a deep emotional connection to James, to his sons, and to Natalya. This is suspense with heart...a page-turner that will reach readers' hearts, a story of relationships and love. This book is the sequel to the equally compelling Everything We Keep; after finishing that book, I couldn't wait to read this one! I highly encourage readers to read EWK, which is the story of James' fiancée, Aimee, and will take readers back to the beginning of James' story.

Chelsea Humphrey says

***If you haven't read the first book in the series yet then proceed with caution. There will be minor spoilers from Everything We Keep below and I'd hate to ruin anything for you!**

Once again, Kerry Lonsdale has created characters that dance off the page and into our hearts, solely for the purpose of making us feel all of the things. I wasn't quite sure where she was going to take this next book after finishing Everything We Keep last year. Would we continue to follow Aimee and Ian's story, or would we finally hear from James/Carlos himself on his current state of awareness after rousing from his fugue? I was pleased once I saw we would be getting all the details on the latter; while I loved Aimee and Ian and was rooting for them to end up together, I really wanted to know more behind what happened to James and what caused him to become Carlos. Lonsdale decided to fill us in from various points of view and even included narrative from James/Carlos as both identities. I cannot imagine how challenging it was for her to do this but she pulled it off beautifully and had me fully invested from beginning to end!

The previous book ended with James exiting his fugue state and finding a letter addressed to himself from Carlos stating what had happened, so the present day narrative does continue from this point, but I was impressed that we get to jump back and forth in time as well to things that were in play before James returns to his senses and well after. The format of storytelling here was complex and intriguing; I didn't have a moment to get bored because I was constantly pressing forward. Where Everything We Keep felt suspenseful and intriguing due to the pending mystery we were trying to solve, Everything We Left Behind had a more steady pace filled with emotion and deeper character development. The two books had a completely different feel yet complimented each other quite nicely. Again, this showed me the exponential growth that Lonsdale has achieved as a writer and has me hooked to see where she takes us next. *Speaking of...*

At the end of my ARC I was pleased to spy that there will be another book in the series! *HAPPY DANCE!* Book #3 is slated to be titled *EVERYTHING WE GIVE* (expected JULY 2018) and after the three (yes three) epilogues from this book I'm interested to see if the Donato matriarch will be a central focus of the book. Just speculations at this point, but I'm eagerly anticipating whatever Lonsdale chooses to write about in the next installment. This is a must read for fans of *Everything We Keep* and I think will please those readers who were looking for more character depth and raw feeling in the previous novel. Well done and looking forward to getting my paws on *EVERYTHING WE GIVE*!

***Many thanks to the author for providing my copy; it was a pleasure to provide my honest thoughts here.**

Barbara White says

The moment I finished reading *EVERYTHING WE KEEP*, I was desperate to know what happened to James. In this stunning sequel, we find out. Deftly told through two points of view--from what appears initially to be two different characters--this is a unique story about one man trying to find himself. As with *EVERYTHING WE KEEP*, this is part suspense, part romance, part family drama, but underneath the intrigue and the twists of how and why the hero lived in a fugue state for six years, is a simple theme about the overwhelming need to protect family. We hear from the hero in the past as Carlos, the artist, and in the present as James, the former finance executive, and as the two timelines creep toward merging, they are connected through his young sons. In one timeline they're happy and carefree, in the other, their confused and frightened, but throughout their wellbeing and safety is his priority. This compelling page-turning is perfect for book clubs. I loved it!

Daria Zeoli says

I liked this one less than *Everything We Keep*, the first in the series, and I doubt I'll be back for the third installment next year.

I'm still not a fan of rounded eyes, ducking heads, or dipped chins.

I found James & Carlos difficult, and the story dragged as it flashed back and forth in time and tense. While I accepted the need for suspension of disbelief in the first book, that need was harder to accept this time around. I found myself less patient with the Donato family than I was with Aimee and Ian last time around.

Thank you to NetGalley for the ARC.

Christine Moore says

I have wanted to read *Everything We Left Behind* since the last page of *Everything We Keep*. To say I was impatiently waiting for this book is an understatement! This book is everything I hoped for and more. In *Everything We Keep*, James Donato was presumed dead right before his wedding to Aimee. Aimee had to learn to live her life without James. In *Everything We Left Behind*, James has to learn to live after being in a

fugue state for over 6 years. It tells the story from alternating chapters of James's life after waking from the fugue and during his fugue state living his life as Carlos. It is a beautiful story of love, loss, and family. It is a story of acceptance and learning what is truly important. I loved every single word, paragraph, and chapter. Thank you so very much to Kerry Lonsdale, NetGalley, and Lake Union Publishing for an ARC in return for an honest review.

Michael says

I know what you are thinking, Michael you just praise this book! I have grown more picky over the years, usually I like to see where the story is going, just in case I may miss something. However, when the story did not pull me in as it progressed then I lost interest. Now don't get me wrong, I really loved the first book of the series, that was one of the best books I read. However, this failed to match the predecessor, it was too much fluff but not enough meat. Have you ever had a cake that had so much icing to cover up the nasty bread inside? That is how this book read, I felt that the icing was knowing about what happened to James but the bread was the boring characters that I never cared about.

Why start off so strong only to go on a tangent? I call them like I see them, regardless if I enjoyed the initial pages, you either interest me to get me to continue reading or bore me to tears. It was just not that interesting, yes I spoke too soon (I tend to do that a lot nowadays), but oh well I really read too much to waste time on duds.

I do plan on reading her other novel, All the Breaking Waves but not anytime soon.

Too picky I know, but it is in my nature.

Jules says

After the way *Everything We Keep* finished, I just had to go straight into *Everything We Left Behind*.

I really enjoyed this, but not quite as much as book one. I felt it had much less suspense than the first book, as large parts of this book covered Carlos and James' point of view on things that happened in book one, that were experienced through Aimee in the first book, so there were less shocks and surprises. Some of it may just be that I naturally connected more with a female character, and therefore preferred book one for that reason. I felt so emotionally involved in book one, I think it would always have been hard to connect as well in book two, unless the story had just continued where it had left off, rather than going back into the past and being told from a different point of view.

However, the character development is very impressive and you do get to find out more about what happened to James, so if you loved the first book, enjoy character led stories and want to find out more about the things that weren't fully answered in the first book, I definitely recommend you give this book a read.

I borrowed this in audiobook format through Kindle Unlimited.

Sarah Joint says

Do not read this book without reading the first. Just don't. You'll be lost. I got confused on occasion having read the first one just because it's been some time. This book was a little too heavy on the romance and back and forth between lovers for my personal taste, a little too heavy-handed. I did enjoy finding out more details about James and Carlos though, and learning more family secrets. I didn't find it very suspenseful, more an outlandish family drama. **If you like soap operas, you'll probably love this book!**

James Donato spent years in a fugue state. Going by Carlos and living in Mexico, he's lived a lot in those years. He married and adopted a son and fathered another. He lost his wife and forged a connection with her sister. **He remembered nothing about his previous life as James... until the memories and trauma that caused him to lose his mind come rushing back.** Now he remembers nothing that happened to him as Carlos... including the woman he came to love or his two sons, who are terrified. This book goes back and forth from James as he attempts to figure out his life and Carlos as he learns of his memory loss and makes preparations for when it happens again.

Complicated? Yes. And a good reason to make sure you start with the first book. James longs for his old love Aimee, but it's been years and she's moved on and will soon be a mother. **He feels some kind of connection with the woman Carlos loved, but she's wary of the man with the different mind and the same face.** The children are lost and confused at best, and just want their old dad back. More family secrets come to light as James attempts to fix his life and put the pieces of his mind back together.

I was given an ARC of this book from Net Galley and Lake Union Publishing, thank you! My review is honest and unbiased.

Letty says

Wow!!! What a book!! Can this story get any better? It sure did! This picks up right where Everything We Keep left off, and once again Kerry Lonsdale's writing kept me captivated from the very beginning. I loved James'/Carlos' story. I felt the torment, rage, confusion that he was going through. This page-turner is a must read this summer!! Now I must be patient for the next one coming July 2018. Cannot wait!

A big thank you to Kerry Lonsdale and Lake Union Publishing for an advanced copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. So very grateful.

Lisa Aiello says

I was provided an ARC of this book through NetGalley for my honest review

What a phenomenal, heart-wrenching, incredible story. Imagine you wake up not knowing who are. The people around you assure you that you belong to them, and you happily rebuild your life. Years later, you find out that you were someone else entirely who you don't remember because of some psychological trauma that caused you to live the life you are currently living in a fugue state. And at some point, that fugue will lift, and you will go back to who you were and won't remember who you are now. And the life you are living now has a wife (who died in childbirth), two young boys, and someone you love very much. How do you

prepare yourself and your children for the day you wake up and you won't remember who they are. I know it sounds complicated, and it is...but the story is so mesmerizing to watch unfold. My gut physically ached for this man and everything he, and those around him, went through. There are secrets and twists and such emotion. This story was incredibly and masterfully done...and it looks like there is a third book coming.

Melissa says

Do NOT read this review (or even the synopsis of the book), until you've read *Everything We Keep*. This novel contains major SPOILERS for its predecessor. If you're not planning to read *Everything We Keep* (even though you totally should because it was incredible and an instant favorite of mine in 2016), then, by all means, go ahead with this one. However, it will definitely make more sense if you read *Everything We Keep* first.

SPOILERS ahead.... (Come back after you've read *Everything We Keep*)

If you've read *Everything We Keep* or don't care about spoilers, it is now safe to proceed.

I had been looking forward to this novel ever since I put *Everything We Keep* down last summer. And now I can't stop thinking about it and am thrilled there will be a third story coming out next year. (Hurry up, summer of 2018!)

What I found interesting was that Kerry moved between James in the present and Carlos over the past seven years. Carlos' narrative was in first person and James' was in third person. That was surprising, since Carlos was technically invented to go along with James' dissociative fugue. So he only existed for a short time, yet he had all these thoughts and feelings that should have belonged to James. It sounds a bit confusing when you read about it this way, but it works for the story and is totally chilling at times....especially when Carlos realizes he doesn't have much time left before he reverts to being James, which could be disastrous for him.

The complications in this situation are Aimee, who loved James but had to move on and got remarried, as well as Natalya, the woman who loved Carlos and now has to get used to a new reality. I can't even imagine being in either of their shoes and how difficult that would be when James resurfaced after seven years.

I love that this story was told from a male perspective and how all the pieces came together. I don't want to spoil this story by saying anything further than that. I felt like the resolution itself was a bit anticlimactic after all we've been through, but I am glad to know that the story will be explored further. I still have questions and there are some people I don't quite trust.

Seeing you've read *Everything We Keep* (or you don't care about spoilers), I definitely recommend this novel, as well!

Some casting I did for *Everything We Keep*,* plus some more for this novel, which would make an even more incredible movie, even on its own.

James/Carlos: Skylar Astin*

Thomas: James Wolk*

Natalya: Amanda Righetti
Claire: Christine Baranski
Phil: Aaron Paul
Aimee: Hallee Hirsh*
Ian: Emile Hirsch *

Debra says

3.5 stars

Everything We Left Behind is the sequel to Everything we Keep. In Everything we Keep, we hear Aimee's story of love and loss. How she was informed her finance was dead to then have doubts and eventually find him alive but living in a fugue state. Her finance James, does not remember her and believes himself to be Carlos. He has married, adopted his wife's son and fathered another son with her. Although his wife is dead, he has no recollection of Aimee who is heartbroken and feels as though she has lost him for a second time. She is left with no choice but to leave him behind with his two sons and move on with her life.

In Everything We Left Behind, James/Carlos has come out of his fugue state. He has no idea where he is or who the two children are who are speaking to him in Spanish and calling him father. He eventually learns of his brother's deceit and the life he led as Carlos. He is also devastated to learn that his life long love, Aimee is now happily married and the Mother of a young daughter. He is obviously angry about the deceit and betrayal of various family members and is attempting to move on with his life.

This book is told in the past and in the present day. We see Carlos living with his son's and falling in love with his deceased wife's sister, Natalya. We see him trying to hold on to who he is in the past, while also seeing him as James in the present day. James has a lot of his plate: he has two son's, his finance is married, various members of his family have lied to him, he has lost 6 years of his life, and feels he can trust no one except for Natalya.

Like it's predecessor, this book is about love, loss, family, betrayal, starting over and the search for the truth. I did enjoy Everything we Keep more than this book, but it was interesting seeing things from James/Carlos' point of view. Lonsdale kept the pace moving and the story interesting. I was hoping for more Aimee in this book, but enjoyed the back and forth between the past and present of James/Carlos life. This book is well written and kept my attention. It did not pull me in quite as much as the first in the series but I enjoyed seeing how things evolved for James.

I received a copy of this book from Lake Union Publishing and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

See more of my reviews at www.openbookpost.com

Sue says

I have been anxious to read this book since I finished the last page of Everything we Keep last summer. Thanks to the author for an early copy to read and review. Everything we Left Behind was all I hoped for and more. Once I started it and I was back in the lives of these characters I didn't want to put it down until

the end. Warning: you really need to read *Everything We Keep* BEFORE you read *Everything we Left Behind*.

This book was mainly about James/Carlos life and how he coped after waking up from a fugue state and found out that he had basically lost over 6 years of his life. After 6 years living in Mexico as Carlos, an artist with 2 young sons, he had no idea that he was really James a rich young American who had been engaged to be married. When he woke up from his fugue state, he had no memory of his life as Carlos and didn't even remember his sons. As he struggles to connect his lives, James has to learn who he can trust and who it is safe to love.

This novel is told in alternating chapters with one chapter being present day James and the next chapter bring 6 years earlier with him being Carlos. The author handles this very well and it fills in all of the information in the story line.

I definitely enjoyed this book and will read anything that Kerry Lonsdale writes in the future.

Asheley says

4.5/5

As soon as I finished *Everything We Keep*, I started reading this book. I loved the first one, but when I realized the second book would be featuring James/Carlos, I was all in. His story seemed so mysterious and after the first book had that crazy ending, I just had to know more about...what happened in Mexico.

You need to know that Everything We Left Behind is a true sequel to Everything We Keep, which means that you shouldn't read it without reading the previous book first. Otherwise: spoilers! Also, you if you haven't read the first book and you proceed with this review, you may be spoiled a little. But I've tried to avoid that. You've been warned, okay?

Everything We Left Behind picks up with the epilogue of the first book and moves at a steady pace throughout. I really think the pacing is much better in this book than the first one, which is awesome. I never felt like I wanted to put the book down, not even once. It actually drove me crazy that I had to stop reading to go to sleep; as soon as I got up this morning, I picked it right back up and finished while I drank my coffee. I HAD TO KNOW THE ENDING. I just had to know.

I want to try to avoid discussing plot, because spoilers, but:

This book did a great job addressing many of the questions that I had after finishing the first book and it also answered a bunch of questions that I didn't really know that I had. Some of it was a little bit painful to read because I know how I wanted things to be with these characters. But when I go back and think about it, I don't really think my way would have worked! The way things ended up is so much better than I could have chosen.

I really felt torn at the ending of the first book [about how things were left], but I'm feeling really solid now.

In this book, there are dual perspectives: James and Carlos both tell the story. This helped me feel the confusion and anxiety that they both must have experienced along the way with their lost memories, with

rebuilding their lives, when they found out about various betrayals, when they were trying to comfort the people they loved, etc etc etc. I think it made it easier to connect with them as characters and I love that. **I felt a sense of being surrounded by the story, and I'm attributing this to having both James and Carlos tell it.**

Also, sidenote, but I just want to say that I loved Natalya Hayes as a character. She shows up in both perspectives and is so seamlessly written that she never changes from the vantage point of the narrator. I'm not sure if that means a great deal here, since I'm trying not to spoil the plot for you all, but she is basically the only unchanging character in this book. The author excels at crafting and developing her characters, and it sticks out to me especially in the case of Natalya being written so well in this book.

Conversely, I really cannot stand Claire. I didn't like her in the first book, and I like her so much less after finishing this second book. I never could find it in myself to connect with her in any way, and you know what? Sometimes it feels good to *not like* a character so much. So be it.

Now that I've read two of Ms. Lonsdale's books, I think I can safely say that I'm really into her writing style. She has this easy fiction with a slower, easier suspense and some mystery thrown in, and I love it. It kept me turning the pages until my eyes were burning and begging for me to stop.

So I think it's fair to say that I'm definitely a fan of this author and I'm now DYING for more of this story. I was thrilled when I saw the note at the end of my copy of the book stating that there will be a third book, publishing in 2018. But oh the wait! I know it'll be here before I know it, but right now it feels like forever.

See this review and many others on my book blog, Into the Hall of Books!

I received this book for free from Lake Union Publishing in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review. Many thanks to the publisher!

Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on www.novलगossip.com

4.5/5

I've been dying to read this book since the first one ended in a massive cliffhanger, it's easily one of my most anticipated books of the year and I've become a huge fan of Lonsdale's work. Knowing I would finally get to hear James side of the story had such a strong appeal to me as I just knew it would be utterly fascinating. The entire idea of a dissociative fugue is crazy interesting to me, can you even imagine waking up one day and having no earthly idea who you are? Not knowing your kids or your significant other?! Insanity and such a compelling premise for a book.

There is something about Lonsdale's writing style that completely captivates me. It's smooth, polished and just has a really easy feel to it. You know how sometimes when you're reading a really good book by a talented author and you're startled when you realize how many pages you've turned or how much time has passed as you've been caught up in a fictional world? That's what happens to me every time I read one of her books, it's awesome!

The dual timelines here are highly unique as they're told from James as he snaps out of his fugue and Carlos in the months/years beforehand. Essentially they're the same person, but not really. That may sound confusing, but it's not at all and it really helped to answer all the lingering questions that have been running through my mind for months now.

I'm not going to discuss the plot too much, but in her true fashion Lonsdale managed to pull off several surprises. It was an emotional read as James/Carlos worked through a wide range of feelings, everything from loss and heartbreak to new love and hope. I wasn't quite as connected to him as I was to Aimee, but I still really enjoyed this one. It's the perfect light mystery for this summer, it's not violent or graphic, more of an emotional mystery than anything. And book three in the series is out next summer!!
