



The Lazarus Child

Robert Mawson

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It takes just a moment for a family's life to be changed forever. For a twelve-year-old boy to dash across the street for a pack of peppermints. For his seven-year-old sister to follow him into traffic. For a bus to swerve out of control. And with that terrible moment, a family's search begins for the unlikely miracle that will put together their shattered lives--and bring their daughter back to life....

In a small hospital room, little Frankie Heywood lies in a coma so deep, no one--not even those who love her the most--can reach her. It is a parent's worst nightmare. For months the Heywoods have kept an uneasy vigil at their daughter's bedside, waiting in vain for the least sign of hope. There they watch helplessly as doctors come and go, unable to do anything for Frankie but keep her body functioning.

Now the experts are telling them that prolonging Frankie's existence may be damaging to their son Ben, who is slipping deeper and deeper into a dangerous emotional isolation. Their marriage already strained to the breaking point, the Heywoods are desperate as only a family can be. Against the expert judgment of all around them, they grasp at their last chance: the brilliant neurologist Elizabeth Chase.

Lizzie Chase knows what it's like to lose a loved one to the darkness. She has dedicated her life to coaxing children back from the brink of oblivion. Her revolutionary work offers the only hope to families like the Heywoods. It has also drawn the unwanted attention of those who through ignorance, greed, or fear would do anything to stop her.

But Lizzie and the Heywoods refuse to be stopped. They are certain that somewhere, just beyond their reach, Frankie is waiting for the lifeline that will lead her back to them. Together this passionate healer and this courageous family will take any risk, make any sacrifice, and defy all odds to turn the ultimate tragedy into the ultimate triumph...but not even miracles occur without a price.

The Lazarus Child is that rare novel that touches you in a way you didn't know you could be touched. It is an unforgettable testament to the power of love, hope, faith--and the inexplicable magic of family.

The Lazarus Child Details

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From Reader Review The Lazarus Child for online ebook

Elise Milkshakes says

I am not much of a fast reader, this book started out really good in the first few chapters but i struggled to get through the rest it took me a year to finish.

Shayne says

It was a very interesting book and i enjoyed it a lot. It had a huge pull on me in the beginning and kept it going. It slowly lost its effect in the end, as the ending was dull. It was packed full of emotions and almost made me cry at points. Overall it was a good book, and i will r

Peter says

“Sometimes you have to kind of die inside in order to rise from your own ashes and believe in yourself and love yourself to become a new person.”

? Gerard Way

Robert Mawson is a pen name of the author Robert Radcliffe whose historical novels I have largely enjoyed so I was curious as to how he would handle a very different subject matter.

This book weaves two stories together. The first takes the Heywood family through the consequences of a near-fatal accident to their youngest child Frankie which was witnessed by her 12-year-old brother Ben. Frankie is hit by a bus on the way to school and knocked into a deep coma.

Rather than a fairly conventional treatment of right to life and euthanasia issues or perhaps the locked-in syndrome from the point of view of the patient as in Dalton Trumbo's "Johnny Got his Gun", Mawson takes a very different path. Exploring the consequences of trying to bring Frankie back - Lazarus-like - from what doctors clinically describe as a persistent vegetative state.

Brilliant young American psychiatrist Lizzie, who herself lost a younger sibling when a child, has established the Perlman Clinic specifically to rescue children in Frankie's condition believes that she can bring Frankie back. However, a sizeable part of the American medical establishment are against Lizzie and her methods despite the fact that she has had some limited success. This is the second thread of this book.

On the whole Mawson is compelling, even daring, and the story rattles on at a fairly good pace. At times you feel for Frankie's parents, Jack and Alison, and the unenviable situation they find themselves in, not to mention the difficult decisions they are faced with. However, what lets the book down generally is that some parts seem to work better than others. This seems apparent in the first chapter alone. The placement of the innocent image of the rag doll at the scene of the accident is wonderful. Then it swiftly switches to the father Jack waking up on the office settee because he slept with his secretary and has been banished from the family home meaning Ben must walk Frankie to school. This turns to why Ben witnesses and blames himself for Frankie's accident. However, although we know why Jack is unable to walk the kids to school we are none the wiser why Alison did not fill the void.

Character development is generally poor as was treatment of the protest at the clinic IMHO which quite frankly I'm not sure was totally necessary. However, what really let me down was the psychic journey that culminates with the end of the book. The title itself gives the ending away so is fairly predictable and did Mawson really need so detailed description and to take so long to get there?

On the whole I found the book OK running along at a quick enough pace to keep me interested but a little more care with the characterisation and a little judicious editing would have made it more thought provoking. However, on a plus side Mawson did at least keep it plausible which perhaps was no mean feat in itself.

Helenlouise66 says

If you're willing to suspend your disbelief for most of this novel, sit back, relax, and marvel at the wonderful imagination of Mr. Mawson you'll enjoy this book. I found it fascinating, exciting, and a wonderful escape from day to day chores Mr. Mawson takes the reader into the unknown world of the coma victim as various interesting characters attempt to bring an innocent child back to the conscious world. There are plot twists and enough surprises to keep one guessing.

the ending confused me a little and I may need to reread to see if I missed something, if I haven't then I hope he writes a follow up.

Excellent read

Peggy Ferrell says

This book was difficult for me as I have worked for many years with people with Traumatic Brain Injuries. I put my understanding of how the body works and what progresses the medical field have made aside and tried to take this book as the pure fantasy that it is.

I was enjoying the book and wishing that medical breakthroughs in the field of Traumatic Brain Injury could be obtained as it was written but the author make a sharp change about 60 pages from the end and was a disappointment.

The story is about a young boy in London who had to walk his little sister to school. One morning the little sister is hit by a car and is in a very deep coma due to Traumatic Brain Injury. Doctors consider her to be in a vegetative state and the parents begin looking for alternative therapies to bring Frankie out of it.

At the same time her brother Ben is having difficulties with feelings of guilt and is withdrawing into his own world and even becomes suicidal at one point. The family find a doctor in the United States that will treat both Frankie and Ben and to try to reunite the family.

I wish that the author had not changed course near the end. Had he stuck with the original plan I think this book had the potential of being very good.

Hieronique Wentink says

Loved the Spiritual hook Fourth dimensial, bummer it was left unexplained...Read Dutch version

Benedetta Marinetti says

Difficile non perdersi dentro ad un sogno.

Difficile risalire l'oscuro baratro del torpore del coma.

Dispersivo, bello, emblematico, interessante, odioso, irrazionale, sessuale...

Ci sono tanti aggettivi che descrivono questo libro ed i suoi personaggi.

Di certo è una storia bellissima riguardo il legame di due fratelli. E tutto ciò che gira attorno è una scienza medica che cerca di spingersi oltre i confini consentiti dalla legge dell'uomo e dalla legge religiosa, perché non c'è alcuna mano di un dio dietro ai bambini che cadono in coma, ma solo quella degli uomini.

E troppe conseguenze. Ma studiare il sonno ed i suoi livelli è per chi non ha paura.

María Paz Greene F says

Aunque el tema de las enfermedades, sobre todo en niños, siempre es controversial... este libro a mí me gustó mucho. Desafió mi imaginación. Me hizo sentir que el plano de los sueños era más amplio de lo que creímos, lo que quizá es cierto. Hubo una belleza en la historia completa.

El final, eso sí, quizá sea exagerado. No me gustó mucho. Uno siempre quiere que todos sean felices a lo Hollywood, jaja, y en la vida real no ocurre siempre así. O sea, si estamos inventando un mundo de a mentirillas en una novela, al menos hagamos uno bueno, en que todos terminen comiendo algodones de azúcar mientras se suben a una rueda de Chicago, ¿cierto?

Bueno, quizá ocurra así en el mundo de los sueños, y quizá ese mundo sea, al final, más real. Quién sabe.

Kim says

I first "read" this book in 2000 on my way back from a wedding in Atlanta - I was driving alone and it was my first book on tape. I was mesmerized. I found the book at the Green Valley Book Fair a few years ago and snatched it up. I read it this week and found it to be just as mesmerizing. Some of the sequences with the kids who are in deep comas are a bit disturbing, but the book as a whole just entangles my mind. I think about all the what ifs and the moral choices and the psychology and it is just fascinating.

Atiqah says

This book tosses family drama and suspense into the mix. Robert Mawson was unrelenting and unsympathetic to readers' emotions, basically assaulting it with his introduction, which is little Frances

(Frankie) Heywood's accident. The accident happened when Ben Heywood, her brother, was walking her and her friend Isabelle to the school and rushes ahead only a moment too quickly buy himself a treat at a newsagent's shop. Only a few pages in and we have a horrible accident and a guilt-ridden 12-year-old boy. We are then further dismayed by Alison and Jack Heywood's rocky marriage, which was a result of Jack's infidelity.

This is a wonderful read where family and friends come through. It's always nice to have that in a book, isn't it? You've also got ethics, morality, and the law to ponder about when you put it down. I didn't see the ending coming - well I guessed part of it from the title so that's no secret - and wouldn't have it written any other way. Kudos to Robert Mawson.

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Victoria says

Absolutely riveting! From the very first chapter, the story pulled me right in! The characters really came to life as well and Mawson revealed their histories, flaws and traits in an interesting style that kept me turning the pages well into the night. And while the ending felt a bit rushed and chaotic, with a few too many outside forces pressuring down on them from every side imaginable, it did end well - with a very cinematic flair. I am curious to read his first book now!

Atiqah says

This book tosses family drama and suspense into the mix. Robert Mawson was unrelenting and unsympathetic to readers' emotions, basically assaulting it with his introduction, which is little Frances (Frankie) Heywood's accident. The accident happened when Ben Heywood, her brother, was walking her and her friend Isabelle to the school and rushes ahead only a moment too quickly buy himself a treat at a newsagent's shop. Only a few pages in and we have a horrible accident and a guilt-ridden 12-year-old boy. We are then further dismayed by Alison and Jack Heywood's rocky marriage, which was a result of Jack's infidelity.

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Lyndsay Byrne says

An extremely moving and deep book, it really gave me food for thought, and I really enjoyed the writers perspective, the idea and concept. Very interesting and emotional book.

I see people rating this book low for personal reasons, and although I can fully understand it touching close

to home for you, myself included, you should really rate the book for what it is, how it was written, how it made you feel. If it moved you due to personal difficulties in relation to the story, then isn't that a good thing that a book and a story could do that? Deserving a higher rating in my humble opinion.

Diane says

Good read! an intriguing medical drama that was filled with twists and enough surprises that will keep many guessing (paperback!)

Carmen8094 says

Anni fa sentii molto parlare di questo libro, così, quando l'ho visto, spinta dalla curiosità mi sono decisa a prenderlo.

Beh, non rientrerà certo nel novero dei libri che ho apprezzato di più...

in breve, una dottoressa ventiseienne, Lizzie, ha trovato il modo per "riportare indietro" i ragazzi e i bambini caduti in coma profondo in seguito ad incidenti di vario tipo.

La ragazza è infatti convinta che, più o meno in profondità, anche i pazienti dichiarati irrecuperabili ci siano, e che grazie a innovativi macchinari e stimolazioni di vario tipo, possano essere recuperati.

Ciò però non si rivela sempre la scelta giusta: alcuni ragazzi muoiono durante il trattamento; altri "riemergono", ma profondamente limitati e con una qualità di vita ai minimi livelli.

E' a Lizzie che si rivolgono gli Heywood, genitori -e nonna- di una bimba investita da un autobus mentre il fratellino più grande, Ben, assisteva impotente alla scena e che, insieme alla sorellina, ha perso anche la voglia di vivere.

Lizzie si dedica con tutto il cuore a questo caso, anche perchè, da piccola, assistette con altrettanta impotenza alla morte di suo fratello minore, ed il suo impegno per far "risorgere" la piccola e Ben la porterà proprio in quella profonda oscurità da cui ha sempre cercato di salvare gli altri...

la prima parte della storia è interessante, mi sono piaciute le dinamiche familiari degli Heywood, molto verosimili, e la figura della nonna dei bambini è stata quasi da subito la mia preferita, per la sua simpatia, il suo coraggio, la sua bontà; a lungo andare però la storia si fa noiosa, la piccola storia d'amore che nasce tra la dottoressa e l'agente Boyd è prevedibile, la questione del recupero dei bambini troppo inverosimile. Ed il finale lascia l'amaro in bocca.

<http://iltesorodicarta.blogspot.it/>
