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Last Night in Montreal

By Emily St. John Mandel



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When Lilia Albert was a child, her father appeared on the doorstep of her mother's house and took her away. Now, haunted by an inability to remember much about her early childhood, Lilia moves restlessly from city to city, abandoning lovers and eluding the private detective who has dedicated a career to following close behind.

Then comes Eli. When Lilia goes out for a paper and fails to return to their Brooklyn apartment, he follows her to Montreal, not knowing whether he wants to disappear, too, or help her find her way home. But what he discovers is a deeper mystery, one that will set past and present spinning toward collision.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A young woman with a habit of running away runs away yet again in Mandel's competent if unremarkable debut. As Eli finishes another grim day of work on his thesis (its topic: dead and dying languages) in his Brooklyn apartment, he realizes his girlfriend, Lilia, never returned after going out for the newspaper that morning. About a month later, Eli gets a postcard from someone named Michaela in Montreal telling him that Lilia is there, so he heads north, leaving (thankfully) his insufferable friends behind to natter on about art without him. His quest is interspersed with flashbacks to Lilia's childhood: her father kidnaps her at age seven from her mother's house, and the two go on the lam. Back in present-day Montreal, Eli meets Michaela, who happens to be the daughter of the detective who years ago worked on Lilia's abduction case, and together they try to fill in the blanks of Lilia's past. While the plot is interesting enough, the prose often feels forced and the characters sometimes amount to accumulations of quirks, whimsies and neuroses. An intriguing idea, but the delivery isn't quite there. (*June*)

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From School Library Journal

When Lilia Albert is seven, the father she has not seen in more than a year suddenly appears in the middle of the night and steals her away from her rural Canadian home. She is never again seen by her mother or brother. Instead, her independently wealthy dad moves her from one U.S. city to another, along the way educating her in matters both practical and not. Is he a spurned ex-husband who refuses to accept the court's custody decision? Or is he Lilia's savior, taking her away from something awful? When the novel opens, Lilia is a twentysomething Brooklyn dishwasher living with a disgruntled grad student named Eli Jacobs. When Lilia unceremoniously leaves him—a pattern she's perfected—Eli is bereft. As he obsessively searches for her, the story integrates the viewpoints of private investigator Christopher Graydon and Graydon's neglected daughter, Michaela, who has long resented Lilia's looming presence in her family's life. While the plot is occasionally contrived, the fast pacing and unusual characters make this a compelling first novel.

Highly recommended for all contemporary fiction collections.—Eleanor J. Bader, Brooklyn, NY

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Review

"I knew it belonged with all those other books on my bookshelves that make me happy just knowing that they're there ... The story is important (and the ending is breathtaking), but the plot details are not — to me — the most important aspect of Mandel's novel. For me, that would be the characters and the writing. Each of the characters — major and minor — is wholly alive, three-dimensional in all their complexity, bad choices, general quirkiness and flawed decisions... And the writing simply blew me away."—Nancy Pearl on NPR's Morning Edition

"[A] taut, gripping debut ... elegantly compelling."—Booklist

"The pages fly, and the final period leaves a palpable sense of loss."—Paste Magazine

"Mandel chooses her words with careful love and arranges them to exquisite effect. At its heart this book is a mystery, a few mysteries; we wait and we wonder while being charmed by Mandel's intricate narrative dance which threads three different moving plot lines together into a perfectly tangled tapestry. Like a tightrope walker's steps above a cobblestoned alley, her lines follow each other with near breathless

precision and echo delicately long after the final page has been turned.” —ForeWord Magazine

"Mandel tells an utterly absorbing story, pulling readers down the rabbit hole and keeping them racing through its long, strange warrens. The writing is vibrant, and Lilia is a vivid and haunting character. ... Last Night in Montreal is an exciting debut: a thriller, a love story, and a quiet ballad about life's fleeting connections."—Quill & Quire

"What carries the tale are the finely wrought characterizations of Eli and Lilia and, unexpectedly, Christopher, the detective, who becomes an essential cog in the expanding machinery of Mandel's plot - yet the book remains far from a whodunit. "What we're made to ponder is the mystery of human connection: how it is born, how it fades and dies and revives, how love defines us or leaves us undone."—The Globe and Mail

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Paul Henson:

Hey guys, do you wish to find a new book to read? Maybe the book with the name Last Night in Montreal suitable to you? The book was written by renowned writer in this era. Typically the book untitled Last Night in Montreal is the one of several books which everyone reads now. This kind of book was inspired many men and women in the world. When you read this e-book you will enter the new age that you ever know previous to. The author explained their strategy in the simple way, and so all of people can easily to understand the core of this reserve. This book will give you a great deal of information about this world now. So that you can see the represented of the world with this book.

George Lehman:

Last Night in Montreal can be one of your nice books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary which could increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort that will put every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Last Night in Montreal but doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource details that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can easily draw you into brand-new stage of crucial considering.

Jill Goulet:

The book untitled Last Night in Montreal contains a lot of information on this. The writer explains your girlfriend idea with easy way. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not worry, you can easily read this. The book was compiled by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site and order it. Have a nice study.

Peggy Mitchum:

This Last Night in Montreal is fresh way for you who has fascination to look for some information as it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you in it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this Last Night in Montreal can be the light food for you personally because the information inside this specific book is easy to get simply by anyone. These books produce itself in the form that is reachable by anyone, that's why I mean in the e-book application form. People who think that in e-book form make them feel sleepy even dizzy this publication is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for you actually. So , don't miss the item! Just read this e-book type for your better life and also knowledge.

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