



A Lily in the Light

Written by Kristin Fields

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A Lily in the Light

By Kristin Fields

A Lily In The Light

A harrowing debut novel of a tragic disappearance and one sister's journey through the trauma that has shaped her life. For eleven-year-old Esme, ballet is everything—until her four-year-old sister, Lily, vanishes without a trace and nothing is certain anymore. People Esme has known her whole life suddenly become suspects, each new one hitting closer to home than the last. Unable to cope, Esme escapes the nightmare that is her new reality when she receives an invitation to join an elite ballet academy in San Francisco. Desperate to leave behind her chaotic, broken family and the mystery surrounding Lily's disappearance, Esme accepts. Eight years later, Esme is up for her big break: her first principal role in Paris. But a call from her older sister shatters the protective world she has built for herself, forcing her to revisit the tragedy she's run from for so long. Will her family finally have the answers they've been waiting for? And can Esme confront the pain that shaped her childhood, or will the darkness follow her into the spotlight?

Beautifully told, elegantly executed... this was an emotional story about the aftermath of tragedy.

Kristin Feild's debut was evocative and heart wrenching. A unique take on the missing child trope. This is not a dark twisted thriller with wild secrets, it is a tender story Full of heart and hope. This book really captures the essence of Esme, and how her sister Lily's disappearance impacted her life.

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Esme is 11 years old, she loves ballet and her biggest concern in life is getting on point. She has a loving family: hard-working parents, an aloof big brother, an impatient big sister, and an adorable little sister named Lily. One day mom is at church, dad just got home, brother is on the balcony, sister is in her room, Esme is making dinner, and Lily disappears. Just like that, while watching "Full House". No sign of foul play Lily is just gone along with her coat and shoes. Esme is devastated not quite sure how to function in the shell of the family that remains. With some help from her ballet instructor and the urging of her father she finds herself at her dream ballet school in San Francisco all the way across the country from her shattered family. years pass and Esme dances on, using her art to process her grief. Eight years after the disappearance Esme is dancing in Paris when she receives a phone call from her big sister, a phone call that will change everything.

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There was an air of grace to the story that was magnified by the ballet. Esme was such a likable and sympathetic character. Miss Fields did a wonderful job of grasping a Childs perspective, a child's grief and guilt over a sibling going missing. Esme's guilt and grief were palpable and present on every page. There was an authenticity to the story that made it shine. How does a family move on when their light is gone? Compelling and moving, absolutely recommend!

*** Many thanks to Lake Union for my copy of this book *** ...more

A Lily In The Light Goodreads

Bear with me a moment, folks. When I looked over this month's First Reads, I didn't see much of interest. At all. I almost decided to read something else on my towering TBR pile instead, but then, I spotted this book in the category "Book Club Fiction." What is that, exactly? A book replete with all sorts of sentimental and sugary pablum, family and romantic relationships hitting rocks the size of pebbles, eventual maturity with an obligatory dollop of forgiveness, and a neatly tied-up happily-ever-after finale that calls for lace handkerchiefs to come out and dab delicately at eyes?

I don't know a thing about book clubs. I suspect they would read books I'd hate, and because I rarely temper my dissenting opinions, I'd be tossed out of any book club on my denim-clad posterior.

So I took a chance, mentally giving this book a big eye roll for what seemed like the all-too-clichéd trope of a child who vanishes mysteriously, a fractured family, a main character carting buckets of guilt, and then spending years of wondering what happened. The twist was the inclusion of ballet, and as a genetically clumsy person who couldn't plié if my life depended on it, I have always adored ballet.

Being initially wrong about a book's premise and the likelihood that I'll hate it is always a surprise, and refreshing. So I was wrong, and I really liked this book.

The protagonist, Esme [I really like that name!] is eleven, an aspiring ballerina with sweaty, smelly feet, a detail you rarely encounter but one that is amazingly accurate. Lily is her four-year-old sister who waits for Esme's dance classes to end, accompanied by their mother, the improbably named Cerise, who is not quite as bad as those awful women in *Dance Moms*, but close enough. So by the first five or six pages, these three characters have been deftly described; they have strong skeletons that the author will continue to flesh out, little detail by little detail. Then the rest of the family appears, the older sister Madeline, tense, impatient, self-centered, Nick, seventeen, slovenly, rebellious, and sullen, and Andre, the father who drives a taxi and seems at a loss in the midst of his loud, squabbling family. What could be banal in the hands of an average writer is saved by quirky, unobtrusive details of two parents and four children on the edge of Port Washington, a considerable remove from the glitter of New York City.

Speaking in a child's voice is difficult, and I've read a few books that manage to get it right. Oddly enough, Stephen King is probably the best with authentic kidspeak. Yet Esme, who tells the story from the beginning, is a perfectly believable pre-teen worrying about dancing en pointe, and expressing that worry and all the other bits and pieces of her ordinary life "except for ballet" as a child her age

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would. If it seemed to be a little more telling than showing, I didn't mind because the story's flow was neither hampered nor slowed.

The pivotal point of Lily's disappearance also missed the usual Lifetime Movie scenario because it was Esme who experienced it from her still childish point of view. And the years that passed after this moment showed a mature dancer, but one with a hole in her heart. That too could have been a Hallmark Moment, again saved by the author's refusal to use stock material. Fortunately the world of ballet survived, and danced on. I'm grateful for that. And the ending? That "Who knew?" revelation we've all seen before countless times in print and on cable, but this time, well, I won't spoil it.

At the end here, I must say I haven't encountered a done-to-death trope rescued so adroitly from further inanity with such cleverness, and such maturity. Rather ruined LMN for me, though.

If I'd been invited to join a book club, and the club chose to read this book, I would have kept my membership intact, behaving myself, offering deserved praise, and not spilling my wine. Who knew, indeed?

...more

1.5 STARS

Eleven-year-old aspiring ballerina Esme's life changes the day her little sister Lily disappears. Eight years later, older sister Madeline calls Esme in Paris with startling news.

Either I have terrible luck choosing Amazon Prime Read First Books, or those books aren't very good. I enjoy books about child abductions and stories about ballerinas, so I was excited to start reading A LILY IN THE LIGHT. Kristin Fields came up with a great premise, but the execution lacked both tension and emotion. 1.5 STARS

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Esme was an easy character to embrace. I wanted to be able to feel her heart.

The writing was fine., though lacked a distinct voice. I kept wanting more from the story. I wanted to care and just didn't.

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I bumped by rating up to 2 stars, because I did care enough to finish. ...more

A Lily In The Light Book Review

This well told debut takes a look into a family caught in a maelstrom of sorrow,grief and recrimination when a four year old goes missing. Told from the perspective of then eleven year old Esme, overwhelmed with sadness not just for her missing sister but for the family that she sees disintegrating before her eyes.

Esme is able to escape to her ballet classes where she can temporarily put aside her grief and the new toxicity of her family. Given a chance to live with her ballet instructor, she This well told debut takes a look into a family caught in a maelstrom of sorrow,grief and recrimination when a four year old goes missing. Told from the perspective of then eleven year old Esme, overwhelmed with sadness not just for her missing sister but for the family that she sees disintegrating before her eyes.

Esme is able to escape to her ballet classes where she can temporarily put aside her grief and the new toxicity of her family. Given a chance to live with her ballet instructor, she is able to pick up the pieces and shape a new better life.

Over the years, Esme finds that her better life is not necessarily a happier life but a tolerable one. One in which she can make a living in dance but is still haunted by the sister's disappearance. But a phone call changes everything.

This is not a happily every after, tie it all up in a bow kind of story. And I appreciated that. Well done!
...more

A sad story about a girl whose sister goes missing. Took me a little while to get into but the characters are likeable enough. Very little tension, which deterred me a little, but the writing was eloquent.

A Lily In The Valley

“What happens when a four-year-old vanishes without a trace, when a family is unshaped and long held dreams begin to unspool” when you don’t even know what to hope for anymore? These are the questions Kristin Fields deftly explores in her beautifully written debut, *A Lily in the Light*. Honest, heartfelt, and at times wrenching, Fields’ novel exposes every heartache and raw nerve of her compellingly flawed characters, touching on the many ways we punish ourselves and those we love when life leaves us feeling powerless and how we must ultimately learn to forgive. ~ Barbara Davis, bestselling author of *When Never Comes* ...more

I'm obsessed with books with a ballet backdrop. So when I saw this for free on Kindle first reads, I was very excited to read it.

Interesting story; the youngest child of a NYC family disappears, leaving them all somewhat adrift. The book concentrates on one character, middle child Esme, who is an aspiring ballerina, age 11. The story is mainly about how the disappearance of Lily, their 4 year old sister/daughter, affects their family in various debilitating ways.

The book started off well, but I'm obsessed with books with a ballet backdrop. So when I saw this for free on Kindle first reads, I was very excited to read it.

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The book started off well, but really seemed to get repetitive toward the end. I kept feeling like I was reading the same page over and over again, like the author had a difficult time wrapping up the storyline.

End result, although I liked the book, I didn't LOVE the book. ...more

A Lily In The Light Book

11 year old Esme lives and breathes ballet. One night, her 4 year old sister Lily disappears without a trace and life as she knows it is altered forever. Her family starts to fall apart, everyone is a suspect, and Lily throws herself into ballet as a way of forgetting. She is given the chance to escape when she receives an invitation to join an elite ballet company across the country. Fast forward 8 years later and Esme is a rising ballerina and dancing in Paris. She gets a call from her older sister, in tears, explaining that something has changed. A girl has been found that matches Lily's description. Could this be Lily?

This is a heart-wrenching story that I flew through in a day. This is not a thriller but an exploration into the affect of trauma on a family. This is beautifully told from an 11 year olds viewpoint and I think the author did a fabulous job writing from this perspective. I am impressed by this debut author and look forward to more from her in the future. For me, a Lily in the Light was 4.5 /5 stars. Thank you @amazonpublishing for this advance reader in exchange for my honest review.

...more

My Kindle First choice for March....it's the only choice this particular month for me whereas sometimes I could pick 2 or 3.....and then I opt for the one with most pages as a rule. However, none really jumped out at me this time, even this one, but this is the closest to my type of story. It's very well written but probably a little too flowery and deep for my liking. I almost gave up around a quarter of the way in but was pleased I persevered as it got better as it went along. Passages like "Cerise had rolled into the room as quietly as a dropped Chapstick forgotten on the floor" or ".....imagined Lily was tucked into the space beside Esme, warm as a potato in her slipper-feet pajamas" just make me roll my eyes in exasperation !! The scenes with Andre and Esme in San Francisco were some of my favourites, though, and I raced through the final sitting as I was just dying to know how things ended up for them all.

It was horribly sad to see how fractured this family became after Lily disappeared-the stuff of nightmares. This story mainly sticks with Esme, who I liked a great deal, though I'm not a ballet fan and clearly the author must be, as I think we had way too much dance detail where it really wasn't required.

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However, I did look up Anna Pavlova as I compiled this review to see the photo of her that Esme liked so much (with Jack) and there's a whole set and they're just lovely.

She spelt Tabu like this when it should be Taboo and had the apostrophe wrong in cardinal's and didn't capitalise French but no other errors whatsoever so presentation is terrific and very impressive indeed for a debut. I'd read her again. ...more

A Lily In The Light Spoilers

Lily

My First Reads choice for March, an easy choice- the synopsis spoke of an interesting, emotional story about a missing four year old and the destruction of a family. The first half of the book is told from the point of view of Lily's eleven year old sister- an aspiring ballet dancer.

Esme, eight years later is in Paris, when Madeline calls her with news of a girl found locked in a basement. I won't put any spoilers in my review, you need to read it yourself. But the continuing havoc on Esme and Lily

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Esme, eight years later is in Paris, when Madeline calls her with news of a girl found locked in a basement. I won't put any spoilers in my review, you need to read it yourself. But the continuing havoc on Esme and her family is heart wrenching. It's a good book, gets you emotionally involved from the beginning. ...more

Really good story with very relatable characters. Didn't want to stop reading

A Lily In The Light Synopsis

I've written this review for Really Into This

Check out all of our reviews at <https://reallyintothis.com>

Happy Reading, friends!

BOOK REVIEW: A LILY IN THE LIGHT BY KRISTIN FIELDS

We meet a ballet prodigy with her whole life ahead of her. When her little sister goes missing, her life, along with her family is thrown into a tailspin.

FAMILY DRAMA

One thing I really enjoy about A Lily in the Light is this imperfect family. Well, let me be clear. I don't particularly like this family, but I appreciate Kr I've written this review for Really Into This

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FAMILY DRAMA

One thing I really enjoy about A Lily in the Light is this imperfect family. Well, let me be clear. I don't particularly like this family, but I appreciate Kristin Fields writing about a dysfunctional family in a way that resonates with authenticity. As she paints this picture of a family struggling, readers really champion Esme. We want her to make it out of this hell hole & go on to live an amazing life, right?

Everything derails when Lily goes missing. Esme moves on & moves away from her family. In effect, they are stuck searching for Lily, while she attempts to distance herself from her childhood in every way. Years later, news arrives about Lily's disappearance. In an instant, the news yanks Esme back into her dysfunctional family filled with secrets & despair.

As secrets come to light, I kept turning the pages. While I wouldn't necessarily classify A Lily in the Light as suspense, I finished it one day. Although I found the plot to be a little slow in places, it kind of fit with the theme of the book. Lily's disappearance is drawn out over the course of the novel & everything revolves around it.

Kristin Fields does a great job reeling in readers with this family's realistic situation. It's about impossible not to feel for this family. I also really enjoy ballet as a supporting character in the novel.

THE VERDICT

I am Into This book. While at times haunting & heartbreaking, this novel is about resilience, love & family.

Special thanks to Kristin Fields, Lake Union Publishing & Kathleen Carter for providing my copy in exchange for an honest & fair review. ...more

Linda's Book Obsession Reviews "A Lily in the Light" by Kristin Fields, Lake Union Publishing, April 1, 2019

Kristin Fields, Author of "A Lily in the Light" writes an intense, intriguing, suspenseful family drama. The Genres for this Novel are Fiction, Mystery, and Suspense. This is also a coming of age novel. The timeline for this story starts in Queens, New York, in 1997, and goes to the past and future when it pertains to the characters or events in the story. The author describes her character Linda's Book Obsession Reviews "A Lily in the Light" by Kristin Fields, Lake Union Publishing, April 1, 2019

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When a terrible tragedy occurs in any family, I don't think the members of the family realize what feelings, and how the dynamics of a family can change. When Esme is 11 years old, a terrible tragedy happens to her family. Esme sees light in a dark world through ballet dancing. Her dancing is a way of coping with reality. Esme is able to escape through her dance. Esme's dance takes her away from her familial home and some of the problems there. But, can you really escape your problems and your past? Esme loves the feelings of the music and dance, and being in the spotlight.

The other members of the family deal with this tragedy in different and possibly dysfunctional ways. How does one cope with pain and loss?

I appreciate that the author discusses the importance of a support system, family, friends, home, forgiveness, love and hope. I would highly recommend this thought-provoking novel to readers who enjoy reading an intense and suspenseful story. ...more

A Lily In The Valley Lyrics

I chose this book as my March Kindle First Reads book and it did not disappoint. I initially chose it because it sounded like a good mystery but I was pretty surprised by how it was more about what happens in the wake of a horrific family event and the grief that follows the characters around, years afterwards. It was very moving to read about the day to day struggles that the characters had as a result of this incident and I truly cannot imagine going through that myself. The way that Kristin writes is very forward and tangible. The emotions were raw and also incredibly vibrant at the same time. I would recommend this to a friend in a heartbeat. ...more

Not too bad

This book had me stumbling about midway through it. Hard to understand was all but the general idea was great, the research was spot on and you could tell the author was passionate about what she wrote which is the whole point, or part of it at least, to me.

A Lily In Little India

This was my Amazon First read for March and I absolutely loved it. I was not sure about it when I read the description because I am more into crime novels. This is a really cute book and I highly enjoyed it. It is a story of a missing little girl and how her sister uses dance to overcome her grief.

Will Please Readers

I think this book will please readers who are drawn to it. It has all of the elements of a good story. For me, I can't put my finger on it, but it was missing that something that would make it a special standout novel. Maybe it was too sweet and tied up so nicely and that took away some of its authenticity? I'm not sure. It was a good book, certainly. I just wanted more once I'd finished.