

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin white lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is modern and digital.

# Little Darlings

Written by Melanie Golding

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Published by sanmarco-sf

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Little Darlings

# Little Darlings

By Melanie Golding

## Little Darlings Sf

“Mother knows best” takes on a sinister new meaning in this unsettling thriller perfect for fans of Neil Gaiman and Grimms’ Fairy Tales.

## Little Darlings Las Vegas

Everyone says Lauren Tranter is exhausted, that she needs rest. And they're right; with newborn twins, Morgan and Riley, she's never been more tired in her life. But she knows what she saw: that night, in her hospital room, a woman tried to take her babies and replace them with her own creatures. Yet when the police arrived, they saw no one. Everyone, from her doctor to her husband, thinks she's imagining things.

## Little Darlings Cast

A month passes. And one bright summer morning, the babies disappear from Lauren's side in a park. But when they're found, something is different about them. The infants look like Morgan and Riley to everyone else. But to Lauren, something is off. As everyone around her celebrates their return, Lauren begins to scream, These are not my babies.

## Little Darlings 1980

Determined to bring her true infant sons home, Lauren will risk the unthinkable. But if she's wrong about what she saw, she'll be making the biggest mistake of her life.

## Little Darlings Dvd

Compulsive, creepy, and inspired by some of our darkest fairy tales, Little Darlings will have you checking—and rechecking—your own little ones. Just to be sure. Just to be safe.

How could her brain conjure something that seemed so real, something laden with so much horrifying detail, and yet there be nothing at all?

This book is seriously creepy, creative and sad. I think it's a bit misleading that it has found its way to the mystery/thriller section when it is mostly a contemporary with elements (or suggestions) of magical realism. But either way, it's a moving, frightening, psychological portrait of new motherhood, set in the Peak District.

Little Darlings is inspired     How could her brain conjure something that seemed so real, something laden with so much horrifying detail, and yet there be nothing at all?

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Little Darlings is inspired by the Welsh fairy tale *A Brewery of Eggshells*, about a woman with newborn twins who are swapped with changelings. Lauren Tranter has just given birth to two beautiful twin boys who quickly become her whole world. When a disheveled woman appears on the maternity ward and threatens to swap them with her own sons, she is rightfully terrified and will do anything to protect her babies.

Lauren is tired and stressed like all new mothers, but she knows the woman is real. Even though the doctors and the police and her husband keep telling her that she is seeing things, that she needs help, she knows the truth. When her babies go missing one day, a frantic search begins and they are quickly found, seemingly unharmed. But Lauren knows the truth about that, too - these babies are not the children she lost.

Everyone wants to dismiss her as mentally ill except Detective Sergeant Joanna Harper, who has her own reasons for believing Lauren. Against the wishes of her superiors, Harper opens her own investigation into what really happened.

I think the police procedural aspects are the weakest part of the novel. Little Darlings is at its strongest when hovering somewhere between a portrait of postpartum depression and a dark, sinister fairy tale. I can speak from experience when I say depression can be terrifying. And just like in this novel, you can never quite be sure what is a legitimate feeling and what is an exaggerated response brought on by your mental state; these two often overlap.

## Little Darlings

After the birth of my first child, I found myself crying uncontrollably. I was exhausted, confused and afraid of absolutely everything. On top of the hormonal crash that comes after giving birth, for most people there's also the pure terror of being wholly responsible for someone else's wellbeing for the first time in your life. Unless you were previously a carer, the emotional shift that comes with knowing the responsibility falls entirely on you changes you beyond belief.

I think this book captures all that. Maybe the woman is real and this is a dark fairy tale, and maybe she is not and this is just a book about a woman struggling with mental illness. But it actually doesn't matter that much. The fear - of getting it wrong, messing up, of losing your baby, of not being a good mother - all of that is very real either way. I found it highly effective.

CW: Depression.

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## Little Darlings Okc

Oh boy, this was one scary scenario. With echoes of Grimms Fairy Tales, "Little Darlings" will probably give you sleepless nights along with the protagonist!

It's the wee small hours of the morning on the maternity ward, and even though she's exhausted, Lauren Tranter lies awake, already worrying about the responsibility of looking after her newborn twins Riley and Morgan - like any new mum she has concerns about her new role in life, keeping these little ones safe and well. Little does she know Oh boy, this was one scary scenario. With echoes of Grimms Fairy Tales, "Little Darlings" will probably give you sleepless nights along with the protagonist!

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After a panicked phone call from Lauren to the police reporting the attempted abduction, hospital security guards are soon on the scene, but find Lauren locked in the bathroom with her babies and no sign of an intruder. She couldn't have imagined it could she?

Eventually the case comes to the attention of Detective Jo Harper who starts to see some truth in what Lauren is saying, but this won't be an easy case to crack, venturing off as it does into the realms of the supernatural!

This was a well written, though unsettling read, as it relies heavily on folklore and fairy tales of the darker kind. The author did an excellent job of portraying a post natal woman on the edge - very little sleep, a husband who shows no inclination to share responsibilities, and appears to care little about her well being. Add to that her fear that someone is out to steal her babies, and it's not difficult to feel deep empathy with her. Though there was something of a slow start, it soon picks up pace and let me just say, it doesn't get much creepier than this! Not something I'm likely to forget in a hurry!

\* Thank you to Netgalley and HQ for my ARC, I have given an honest unbiased review in exchange \*  
...more

Have you ever found yourself writing a review for a book that you didn't particularly enjoy, but found important and/or necessary? Little Darlings was just that read for me, and if you'll bear with me, I'll do

## Little Darlings

my best in unpacking these complicated feelings I have below.

"The child is not mine as the first was,

I cannot sing it to rest,

I cannot lift it up fatherly

And bliss it upon my breast:

Yet it lies in my little one's cradle

And it sits in my little one's chair,

And the light of the heaven she's   Have you ever found yourself writing a review for a book that you didn't particularly enjoy, but found important and/or necessary? Little Darlings was just that read for me, and if you'll bear with me, I'll do my best in unpacking these complicated feelings I have below.

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And the light of the heaven she's gone to

Transfigures its golden hair."

-From The Changeling, by James Russell Lowell

I feel the need to say up front that my review will be covering this book from two standpoints: 1) as a genre read and 2) as a fictional exposition and, dare I say allegory, of postpartum depression/anxiety and the overall grief some new mothers find themselves enduring as they enter this new stage of life. I'm going to tackle the less glowing of the two first and save what I found empowering for the grand finale.

As a mystery/thriller/horror/whatever genre you want to market this as, I found it ok. My intense love of all things involving Welsh folklore should have sealed this as a 5 star read, but I think my expectations were not on par for what this book is meant to offer. That's not a bad thing, just simply a form of miscommunication and overeagerness on this reader's part. Obviously, (and keeping this spoiler free) you are made aware that Little Darlings is considered a paranormal thriller, due to the plot engaging in a tango of "have Lauren's babies been swapped with changelings or is she suffering some form of postpartum psychosis?" I think the reason I was a little let down in this aspect is due to a number of influences. Could it be that, because I have read so many incredible mysteries lately indulging in Welsh folklore that I'm oversaturated at the moment? Could it be that I've just read so many mysteries that I've come to demand an unfair level of "confound me, dammit!" in my reads? It's quite possible. I'm clearly in the minority that I found the pacing to be slow and drawn out, and that could be because of point two.

"She was still waiting for the rush of love. That one you feel, all at once the second they're born, like

## Little Darlings

nothing you've ever experienced before. The rush of love that people with children always go on about. She'd been looking forward to it. It worried her that she hadn't felt it yet."

Now to the part I've been itching to write about. This is a bloody well-done depiction, albeit fictional, of the terrifying and lonely spiral into PPD. As someone who has suffered twice with PPD/PPA, I found Golding's writing and comparisons to be so spot on, it was as if she had crawled into my brain and taken my greatest fears and weaknesses and put them on paper. I'm in awe of how accurately she portrayed this mental battle, and wondered as I read if she herself had suffered with this, or was close to someone who had in the past. That said, it was a difficult read that had me fighting to block out some of those horrible memories; I think it's worth noting that this may be a triggering read for others who have suffered with PPD and you may want to assure you're in the proper mental state before devouring this novel. I have a huge respect for the author in bringing attention to a disorder that, while common and affecting numerous women each year, is still considered very taboo and kept quiet. This is an important read and a story that needed to be written, and for that fact alone I hope this novel gets the worldwide attention and success that it deserves.

\*Many thanks to the publisher for providing my review copy. ...more

## Little Darlings Book

### "Mother Knows Best"

Lauren Tranter has just given birth to twin boys, Morgan and Riley. Naturally she is exhausted and in need of sleep. But she knows what she saw in her room in the maternity ward - a woman attempting to take her twins and replace them with her own, "it's only fair". However, when hospital security and the police arrive, they find no evidence of the possible kidnapper. Furthermore, no one believes Lauren, but Detective Harper, a police officer feels that there might be something "Mother Knows Best"

Lauren Tranter has just given birth to twin boys, Morgan and Riley. Naturally she is exhausted and in need of sleep. But she knows what she saw in her room in the maternity ward - a woman attempting to take her twins and replace them with her own, "it's only fair". However, when hospital security and the police arrive, they find no evidence of the possible kidnapper. Furthermore, no one believes Lauren, but Detective Harper, a police officer feels that there might be something to Lauren's story.

Lauren continues to feel unease and doesn't want to leave her home. Her mission is to protect her babies. On a rare outing to the park, the twins disappear from her side, and once found, Lauren is convinced that something is not right, and Lauren declares "these are not my babies"

Little Darlings is inspired by dark fairy tales and folklore. This book is sprinkled with quotes and passages referring to "changelings". The folklore and fairy tales fit seamlessly into this tale and further add to the feeling of dread and provide for an eerie atmosphere. The entire book I was guessing just what was going on. Was Lauren correct, was there some sinister woman attempting to swap babies with her, was Lauren experiencing symptoms of postpartum psychosis. I love trying to figure things out in books, and this one had me guessing!

This is a well written psychological thriller which is atmospheric with a dark creepy feel. My only complaint is that I wanted this book to be darker, to be even creepier, and more suspenseful. I also thought there were "romances" and "possible romances" in this book which really did not add to the story and in fact detracted from the story to a small degree. I wanted more menacing and heart pounding moments.

Overall, an enjoyable read. It is easy to feel for Lauren as she struggles with caring for two newborns, sleep deprivation, recovering from childbirth and having very little assistance at home. She is struggling with so many things while also being hyper-vigilant attempting to keep her children safe. A creepy tale to read late at night with the lights out! Plus, it just might inspire you to pick up some fairy tales and folklore as the passages used were quite brilliant!

Thank you to Melanie Golding, Crooked Lane books and NetGalley who provided me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. All the thoughts and opinions expressed in this review are my

Little Darlings

own.

Read more of my reviews at [www.openbookpost.com](http://www.openbookpost.com) ...more

Let me begin this review with saying that I have absolutely no business reviewing an ARC that doesn't even publish until April 2019 when I have so many ARC's pending soon or better yet the ones I'm behind on BUT the synopsis for this is beyond intriguing and it's October when it's time for all things creepy and spooky and this one seemed a perfect choice for the season.

And I was right! &lt;--- it does happen once in awhile! ;)

Whoa! Little Darlings was an absolute delight to read.

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"The child is not mine as the first was, I cannot sing it to rest, I cannot lift it up fatherly and bliss it upon my breast; Yet it lies in my little one's cradle, And sits in my little one's chair, And the light of the heaven she's gone to transfigures its golden hair." ~ From The Changeling by James Russell Lowell

Imagine giving birth to a set of lovely twin boys. Imagine in the middle of the night on the very day of their birth a vile woman invades your hospital room and insists on swapping your babies for hers. Imagine that no one, not even your own husband, believes you.

Now you've returned home with your babies and the mother in you wants to protect them fiercely from the outside evil you know exists. After spending a month locked behind closed doors your husband decides it's time you venture out for a walk. Get some fresh air. So you take his advice to avoid an argument and think to yourself maybe he's right. Maybe it is all in my head.

You stroll through the park, the sun on your shoulders and crisp leaves crunching underfoot, when a coming bench is all too tempting to take a little rest with your boys.

Now imagine this: you awake, startled on the bench, not knowing how long you've been asleep only to see that the stroller and your precious babies are no longer there.

Not all is lost though and after a brief search the beautiful babies are found and returned to you. You

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Little Darlings

look upon the lovely boys only to realize they aren't your babies at all.

"I told you, that wasn't them," said Lauren, "whatever was in that stroller. They've been swapped. They're evil those things, they're not my babies."

I could not put this one down! If you want a creepy read then this is a MUST READ! On a side note, this has been optioned to film and I hope with all my heart that this happens. This would be perfect on the big screen. An easy 5 Stars!

Thank you to NetGalley and Crooked Lane Books for providing me with a digital ARC in exchange for my honest review. ...more

## Little Darlings Soundtrack

Creepy, gripping, & atmospheric!

The story is inspired by some deliciously creepy dark fairy tales that adds an extra layer to the sinister, menacing and eerie feel of the book. I absolutely love these types of tales and found myself devouring this one!

LITTLE DARLINGS by MELANIE GOLDING is an unsettling, compulsive and mysterious tale that had me constantly wavering between believing Lauren's story and thinking maybe she really is just imagining it all. The feelings that I had for Lauren thro

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LITTLE DARLINGS by MELANIE GOLDING is an unsettling, compulsive and mysterious tale that had me constantly wavering between believing Lauren's story and thinking maybe she really is just imagining it all. The feelings that I had for Lauren throughout were quite intense and had me feeling her fear. I wanted to believe her!

MELANIE GOLDING delivers an atmospheric and well-written read here and does a great job with slowly building up the tension and making me believe in those dark folktales. I absolutely loved how the folklore was integrated into the storyline and how plot points were addressed quickly and flowed nicely into the next chapter. Not having to wait and leaving us hanging added some suspense to the actual storyline for me, that I really appreciated.

I think there were some characters and scenes that weren't necessary though but all in all I thought this was a very good, entertaining and enjoyable read.

Expected Publishing Date: April 30, 2019

\*Traveling Sisters Read\*

Norma's Stats:

Cover: I got a chance to vote on this cover and mine wasn't chosen. To be honest I didn't really care for any of the covers.

Title: A fitting and good representation to storyline.

Writing/Prose: Well-written, impressive debut, descriptive and absorbing.

Plot: Gripping, intriguing, engrossing, fascinating, sinister, steadily-paced, and entertaining.

Ending: An ending that left us with a little bit of mystery to ponder that I was totally satisfied with

interpreting on my own.

Overall: Dare I say, just a little more creepy though! Would recommend!

Thank you so much to Sarah at Crooked Lane Books for providing me with an Advanced Reader's E-Proof in exchange for a review!

Review can also be found on our Two Sisters Lost in a Coulee Reading book blog:

<https://twosisterslostinacoulee.com/> ...more

Well this one is going to be difficult to write. I would have to classify this as a psychological thriller with the addition of folklore or the supernatural. At any rate it was a truly creepy, turn the pages quickly read. While at first I thought it would be something that wouldn't be believable, by the first third of the book I was truly scared at what the outcome of this story would be.

As a mom of four I remember the sleep deprived feelings, forgetting what day it even is, never having time for a shower or to read even a magazine or newspaper and the constant needs of a newborn. I can't even imagine the exhaustion of this new mother of twins. Well this one is going to be difficult to write. I would have to classify this as a psychological thriller with the addition of folklore or the supernatural. At any rate it was a truly creepy, turn the pages quickly read. While at first I thought it would be something that wouldn't be believable, by the first third of the book I was truly scared at what the outcome of this story would be.

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The story begins shortly after a very traumatic delivery of twin boys to Lauren Tranter. During her hospitalization Lauren is sure that she sees and hears a dirty, rag covered woman showing her a basket of what looked like baby rats and singing an unusual song. After a bit of talk the woman says, "Let's deal, Let's change one for another". "Give me one of yours and I'll take care of it, You have one of mine and treat it like your own". The woman grasps Lauren's arm and she struggles to get away, Choose one, said the woman, "choose one of I'll take them both. You'll never know the difference, I can make sure they look just the same". What could be more horrific, she grabs the twins trolley and locks herself in the bathroom and calls the police. The hospital security and police arrive only to find just a very scared woman locked in the bathroom with her babies.

Well that is the set up for the rest of the story which I found to be engrossing. No one believes Lauren, they just chalk it up to exhaustion and sleep deprivation, plus the difficult delivery and medications. After she returns home, she refuses to leave the babies alone for even a few minutes. Finally her husband urges her to go outside. She is finally out in the park with the babies and falls asleep on a bench only to have someone or something take the twins. When they are found and returned to her she is certain that they are not her babies but something other, more sinister, a changeling perhaps?

There is only one person, DS Jo Harper, who believes her and even goes so far as to look up the history



Little Darlings

of the small town and folklore attached to another incident which sounds a lot like what is happening to Lauren.

To quote the publisher of Crooked Lane Books "bet you'll delight in this sinister supernatural thriller that challenges our understanding of modern motherhood and the myths that shape our lives. Folktales do not spring from whimsy, they serve as a warning."

I had so many ideas of what was truly happening, who was behind the kidnapping, etc. but in the end I was wrong. At least I think I was wrong, because the ending leaves one guessing!

It's amazing that this is a debut novel. While thinking about this book again and realizing how much of the story has stuck with me over the last few days I've decided to change my rating to 4 ½ rounded up to a 5. This was a Traveling Sister read with Mary Beth and Heidi.

I received an ARC of this novel from the publisher through Edelweiss. ...more

## Little Darlings Lemon Grove Twitter

### FOUR STARS

Little Darlings has caused quite a buzz in the literary world. I read where the UK publisher snatched up the manuscript within 48 hours of submission! A six-figure sum for the book and now news of the movie rights being sold—wowzah, great news for a debut author.

So, what’s the big deal, you say?

As in most psyche suspense novels, we have the requisite unreliable female narrator, her highly sketch husband and an instinctual police detective as the main characters. Lauren wakes up in the **FOUR STARS**

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So, what’s the big deal, you say?

As in most psyche suspense novels, we have the requisite unreliable female narrator, her highly sketch husband and an instinctual police detective as the main characters. Lauren wakes up in the hospital after a traumatic childbirth and finds an old woman trying to snatch her newborn twins. While most everyone in Lauren’s life writes off this attempted abduction as some sort of postpartum psychosis, our intrepid detective has a gut feeling this may be a real-life crime.

Where Little Darlings breaks away from the same old/same old is in the gorgeously stylized horror factor. At one point in the story, Lauren believes the babies have been switched and are not hers. I promise-- you will never look at anyone’s baby the same again after reading the passages about these changelings! Golding’s vivid descriptions of the babies singing eerie songs at night or talking to each other is SOOOO SCARY!!! Movie? Yes, please. (Insert creepy CG faces onto little baby bundles here).

Heavily borrowed from fables and fairy tales, Little Darlings skillfully walks the line between psychological and supernatural horror. Ingeniously, the reader is left to decide how much to believe when it comes to the ghost stuff. I’m not a big supernatural fan, but little bits injected into a familiar story is perfect and adds a great deal to the already tense atmosphere.

Despite a slow start, I enjoyed this novel very much. I especially liked the police procedural part of the story. I was always questioning how many of the events had actually happened or were just imagined by Lauren. Detective Sergeant Harper brought a welcome dose of earthy realism.

A true modern nightmareâ€”creepy and compelling. WARNING: New mothers should NOT read it!

Thanks to Netgalley and the author for my advanced copy. All opinions are my own. The novel is due to be released on April 30, 2019. ...more

4 stars!

Creepy, haunting, addictive and atmospheric!

Lauren Tranter is a new mother to twin boys. As many new moms do, Lauren struggles upon her return home from the hospital after giving birth. She is exhausted, she is constantly feeding her babies, she canâ€™t find time for a shower, she canâ€™t possibly think of finding a way to venture out of the house with the boys to get groceries. Her husband works a lot and pushes Lauren to get out of the house with the twins to refresh and reacquaint herself. 4 stars!

Creepy, haunting, addictive and atmospheric!

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I was immediately drawn into this story and felt a strong connection throughout. The author, Melanie Golding, does a brilliant job building suspense, keeping the intensity of the intrigue engrossing throughout the entire story. The characters were fantastic â€” I loved the two main characters, Lauren and DS Jo Harper. I could strongly relate to Lauren â€” Golding did an exceptional job capturing the chaos and exhaustion of a new mom.

This novel has supernatural aspects that were handled skillfully and believably. Supernatural elements are usually a turn-off for me, but they were presented in such an intriguing and fascinating way, that I was completely drawn into the plot and invested in the characters.

This was a Traveling Sister read that we enjoyed discussing. A big thank you to Brenda and Norma for offering the Traveling Sisters the exciting opportunity to read this title. It is not a book that I would have been drawn to on my own but am so happy I tried it out! To find this review, along with the other Traveling Sister reviews, please visit our blog at:

<https://twosisterslostinacoulee.com/2...>

Little Darlings

Thank you to Sarah at Crooked Lane Books and Melanie Golding for providing me with an ARC in exchange for an honest review! ...more