

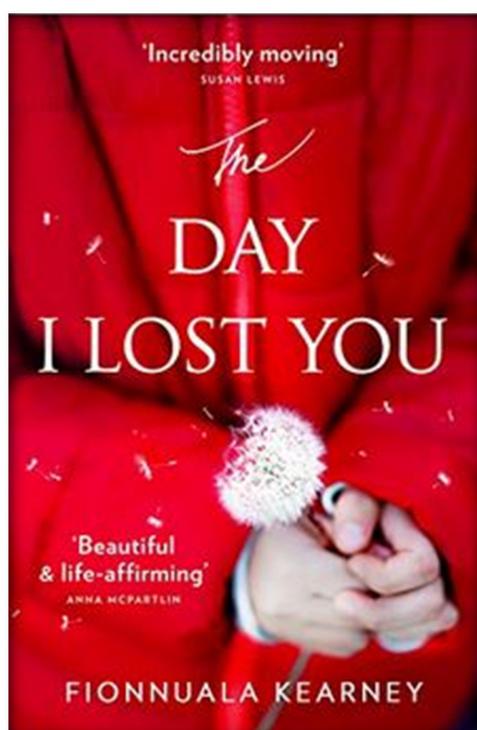


Helping you choose  
your next book

**HARPER**

## LoveReading Reader reviews of **The Day I Lost You** by Fionnuala Kearney

**Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.**



**Phylippa Smithson**

***An absolutely engaging (not-a-murder) mystery. A heart-breaking and comforting revealing of families and their secrets.***

*Jess's 25-year-old daughter, Anna and single-mum to 5 year old Rose is missing having been caught up in an avalanche when skiing weeks before Xmas. Jess refuses to admit the likelihood that her daughter will not be found alive. It is a personality trait that has haunted her adult life – hiding from the truth rather than facing up to it and moving on.*

*Jess has a few but extremely supportive people around her to help her in the whirlwind that is her's and Rose's lives – they had all 3 been very close having lived together. There is Leah, who is in a childless marriage having given in to her husband's request that his single teenager daughter from a previous marriage is enough. Her best-friend Theo, whose own marriage has ended with his wife leaving him and their 11-year-old son for another man. Her ex-husband who had left her and Anna 13 years previously, claiming Jess's love was too stifling.*

*It is when the snow starts to melt and Anna's body is found that life takes an even more distressing turn when Jess is exposed to the secrets that have literally been hidden from her on very own doorstep. The revealing of these secrets are what makes this such a very different mystery and maybe I am wrong to suggest it is not a murder-mystery, it's just it's the murder of memories and who Jess thought was her daughter. Anna has wreaked devastation that has far*

*reaching impact beyond her mother and her daughter.*

***Totally excellent.***

### **Victoria Emerson**

***I sat down to read the first page and four hours later I had finished the whole book. I just couldn't put it down.***

*This book was brilliant. There were difficult issues in this book but they were dealt with care. It is a very emotional book but one that I would highly recommend.*

### **Michelle McKernan**

***A brilliant, beautifully-written story about love and loss and the issues that stop people moving on. The characters are believable and I found it a tough one to put down.***

*This is a beautifully written book about love and loss and the things that complicate them. The characters are well-rounded and 'real'. I felt so much for all of them but none more so than the main character, Jess. The author weaves intrigue throughout the plot and just when you think you know what the truth is, another element is revealed and you start thinking all over again.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed this book and will look for others by the same author. I read it in only a few days, as I was so desperate to know what was coming next.*

*The style was brilliant, using blog entries to get the thoughts and feelings of the character who had died, but never giving away too much.*

*A brilliant read.*

### **Emma Barton**

***This is a slow paced book about a mother's grief process after losing a daughter she thought she knew well.***

*The story follows Jess, whose grown up daughter Anna has been lost in an avalanche while on holiday with friends. Jess has to come to terms with the pain of not knowing what has happened, along with caring for her young granddaughter. As the story unfolds, Jess begins to discover things about Anna's life that she was completely unaware of.*

*I found the synopsis of this book to be intriguing; unfortunately the novel did not live up to my expectations. Any twists that should have brought more excitement to the bland storyline were blatantly obvious from very early on, and the main character, Jess, was quite hard to relate to, or even like, at times. More pace and revelations about Anna's life would bring much-needed spark to this depressing read.*

### **Edel Waugh**

*When a young woman called Anna goes missing during a skiing holiday Avalanche it quickly becomes clear that hope is minimal. For Anna's mum it is heartbreaking; waiting to hear news about her daughter is taking everything out of her. Anna has a young daughter who is now being cared for by her mum, but her mum needs huge support too. The longer Anna is missing the more her mum begins to learn about her and worry, her eyes are opened by the things she learns as she begins to realise that she really did not know her at all. **This is a story about secrets and lies and just how well we really do know those around us and closest to us.***

### **Emily Curnow**

*This novel encapsulates a parent's worst imagined nightmare, the loss of a child. Throughout the novel we witness extreme grief, pain, loss, love and deception. It is not only the death of a daughter that makes this novel so hard and yet so brilliant to read, but also the developing mystery. The book makes a point very clearly- that we don't really ever know someone completely. Throughout we watch our main character Jess discover a new side to her daughter Anna, and she destroys others lives in the process. **It was compulsive, and I had to race to the end to find a conclusion. A very enjoyable novel to devour.***

### **Hannah Ward**

*Wow! What a page turner, I started to think as I was getting into this book that I knew what was coming and then bam!! Something else happens instead that I least expected. The story is an emotional roller coaster where each chapter is spoken from Jess's side or Theo, the local doctor's, side but also added to that is the blog that Jess's daughter Anna wrote before she died. I won't tell you anymore as I don't want to spoil it. I didn't want to get off this roller-coaster as*

*I felt so involved with the characters. **This is one book I will remember for a long time.** Thank you to Lovereading for sending me an advanced copy of this book.*

<https://echoesinanemptyroom.com/2016/07/08/the-day-i-lost-you-by-fionnuala-kearney/>

### **Angie Rhodes**

*Anna, Jess's daughter has been, lost, in an Avalanche, leaving in her mother's care Rose, her young daughter, Trying to keep it together as well as she can. Not only for Rose's sake but hers as well, is not as easy as she thought it would be. Then a body is found, and Anna's secret life, the one that nobody else knew about, is going to bring Jess and Rose's world crashing down. A secret that will tear the family apart, friends and family life will never be the same again. **'The Day I Lost You', leaves you with that question, "What if?" playing in your head.** What would you do if you knew a secret that would change everyone's life you cared about? Would you share or keep silent? I for one don't know the answer, and hopefully never will.*

### **Kathy Howell**

***I really enjoyed reading this book and will look for more by this author,***

*The book begins with a visit from Jess's ex-husband and a phone call telling her that her daughter, Anna, has been caught in an avalanche while on a skiing holiday with friends. Anna is a single mother to Rose, and Jess has opened her house to them and changed her job to help with childcare. Jess is now left to bring Rose up by herself. Jess is supported by her sister Leah, and her husband, Gus, as well as her friend Theo, who was Anna's doctor.*

*The story follows Jess as she copes with her grief and the anger she feels as she discovers the Anna she never knew. Rose's father, Sean, wants to take Rose with him when he moves nearer his family and Jess's actions result in more questions and heartache for everyone involved.*

*The use of Anna's blog as part of the narrative means that Anna is "alive" for the reader who uncovers the secrets alongside Jess. Jess's healing process is well written and the reader can really sympathise with everything she endures.*

***I have no hesitation in recommending this book.***

## **Cheryl Kinney**

### ***An emotional read.***

*This is a sad read. That's not a bad thing! The subject of the book is the death of the main character's daughter and how the people in her life cope with the aftermath.*

*The main theme is do you ever really know a person and all that goes on in their life, no matter how close you are to them? The answer is no, that's not possible however the hurt that the secrets cause once they are revealed can be far reaching.*

*The book is well written and you certainly feel for the main character. There are hints at what is to be revealed via a blog written by the deceased, these give a good insight into what she was thinking and how she felt about it.*

*I really enjoyed this book and the emotional rollercoaster it took me on, I felt the ending summed up the plot nicely.*

***Definitely recommend this book, will be looking forward to further books!***

Follow Cheryl on Twitter: @cheryl\_bookworm

## **Linda Hill**

***An emotional roller coaster I don't think I'll get over in a hurry, just perfect for readers of JoJo Moyes and Amanda Prowse.***

*Oh dear. I honestly don't think I am going to recover from reading 'The Day I Lost You'. My heart was broken within a few pages and I basically sobbed my way through the rest of the story. This is such an emotional read. Given that the premise is based on mother and child relationships and I have no maternal feeling at all, Fionnuala Kearney has managed to reduce me to an emotional wreck, which just goes to show the power of the writing.*

*The characterisation is outstanding. Anna is the lynch pin to the plot, and we get to know her at the same time as the rest of the characters, including those who thought they knew her best, so that we feel we are a part of the story. I empathised with Jess completely and mirrored her suspicions as the story went on. Even the most minor characters, including Pug, feel real and human.*

*But what is so clever about The Day I Lost You is that whilst it is the most perfect embodiment of raw grief and unconditional love, it is also a compelling mystery from wondering what happened to Anna in the avalanche, given her*

body hasn't been found, to several more aspects that I can't write about for fear of spoiling the plot. This isn't a thriller, but at times I felt the same sensation in my stomach as you get when going over a fast drop. Just when I thought I knew Anna as much as Jess did, something else pulled that truth away so that I had to read more.

[www.lindasbookbag.com](http://www.lindasbookbag.com)

Follow Linda on Twitter: @Lindahill50Hill

### **Christine Waddington**

*This book was a real page-turner with many strands to the story and information gradually revealed with separate stories running side by side. Jess' loss of her daughter was devastating but more was to follow. I got really involved with this book and couldn't wait to pick it up again (always a sign of a good book) - the characters were well-defined and you got really involved with them. **I must confess I had never heard of Fionnula Kearney before, but I will be following her with interest now - she has the knack of telling a really good story.***

### **Mary Gibson**

*'The Day I Lost You' by Fionnuala Kearney is a contemporary drama about loss, grief and love. Anna, a young, single mother is reported lost on a skiing holiday following an avalanche. Presumed dead, her loss impacts on her mother, Jess, her small daughter, Rose and their extended family and friends. Jess discovers that the daughter she cherished hid secrets from her and lied about the identity of her little girl. The novel questions do we ever truly know another person and explores the terrible nature of bereavement. **One person's death can alter many lives, often in unpredictable ways. Thought provoking and honest.***

### **Beth Winsor**

***An easy and compulsive read, with believable characters and an interesting story. Easy to predict, but I enjoyed it anyway!***

*Because of the details given on the cover and the limited cast list, it was easy to predict what was going to happen.*

## **Vicky-Leigh Sayer**

***A gripping tale full of wonderful characters that will leave you questioning how well you know your own family. Fionnuala Kearney has done it again*** and written a glorious novel full of wonderful characters (some loveable, some not so) that will keep you gripped throughout and really care what happens to them.

*When Jess's Twenty-Five year old daughter, Anna is reported missing from a skiing trip, presumed to be caught up in an avalanche, her world is shattered. Not wanting to believe that her daughter is dead she throws herself into taking care of Anna's daughter and her beloved Granddaughter Rose.*

*Just when Jess thinks thing couldn't possibly get any worse, Anna's disappearance begins to throw up questions, subtle things at first, which grow bigger and bigger, until soon Jess is questioning whether she ever really knew her daughter at all.*

*As those around Jess come forward to help and Jess slowly uncovers more about Anna's seemingly secret life, Jess begins to question just who she can trust. Because if she didn't even know her own daughter, then she's hardly the best judge of character.*

*As she begins to push away those who love her, one final truth is uncovered about Anna. One that will have devastating consequences for all concerned. Can Jess rally around her those who will love, help and protect her? Or has she already pushed them too far away?"*

<http://thewelshlibrarian.blogspot.co.uk>

## **Victoria Halliday**

**A page-turner of a novel, which you just can't stop reading.**

*The Day I Lost You, by Fionnuala Kearney, is a novel following a mother in the months after her daughter's death. After Anna is killed in an avalanche while skiing, Jess accidentally discovers that Anna is not the person she thought she was. The implications for Jess - and for Anna's daughter - reverberate through their lives and the lives of those around them. This is a page-turner of a novel, one of those books where you keep telling yourself you'll only read a few more pages and suddenly it's 4am and you've got 10 pages to go! A perfect beach-read for the holiday season!*

## **Sarah Harper**

***A small but strong cast of characters and a mystery which kept me puzzling over what really happened until the very end, this has much more substance than your average beach read.***

*Jess is devastated by the loss of her daughter but it's the revelations that slowly come to light after her disappearance which completely tear Jess' world apart. As a single mum, her daughter Anna and beautiful granddaughter Rose are the centre of Jess' universe and when Anna is caught in an avalanche, her body unrecovered, Jess finds it hard to accept that she has gone. She keeps going for Rose's sake, continues to eat, sleep and breathe as she pours all of her love and energy into raising Rose in Anna's absence. Her good friend Theo and sister Leah are there to support her but the devastating effects of losing a child make normal life almost impossible. However Anna's side of the story is somewhat different. In her online blog she reveals how she felt strangled by her mother's love, suffocated and unable to escape. She understood that she and Rose were Jess' whole reason for living and that's a big responsibility for a young girl. Anna couldn't confide in her mum and consequently, when the truth eventually comes to light, Jess is completely blindsided. Amidst the turmoil of emotion that she's already struggling with, Jess must now try to establish who her daughter really was and why she did what she did. And as Anna's secrets come to light, Jess is forced to fight to hold her family together.*

*With a small but strong cast of characters this has much more substance than your average beach read. Jess' grief was utterly believable and the underlying mystery, teased out in Anna's blogs, kept me puzzling over what really happened until the very end. A thoroughly enjoyable read.*

## **Jayne Burton**

***An absorbing read – I couldn't put it down until I found out the answers to Anna's secrets. One of the best books I have read this year – if not the best.***

*I loved this disjointed family and their secrets, and unravelling their lives within the pages of this extremely well written book.*

*Although the main character appears to be the 'missing' Anna, I found Rose to be the strongest one, drawing everyone together and also tearing them apart.*

*I found this a very powerful story, written with great feeling and insight. Lots of sadness and tears (on my part!) and laughter too; mainly brought by Rose*

*who I feel grounds the story and bring everyone back down to earth.*

*I cannot recommend it highly enough. Can't wait for her next book.*

### **Carrie Jones**

***A powerful novel of love, loss and lies, written from the heart.***

*A hot day in the New Forest was the perfect setting to read this powerful novel of love, loss & lies, as I raced through it, the ice cubes in my Pimms melted, forgotten, and symbolic of the snow that is the catalyst for this tragedy. Mrs Kearney declares that she likes to 'peel away the layers and see what's going on beneath', and in doing this she creates totally believable characters.*

*The pain of losing an adult daughter is tackled sensitively, and the accompanying illogicality that grief brings. It is written from the heart, and time & again, as a mother, I could identify with those terrible emotions.*

*There is also a strong storyline running through, with twists and shocks. Who do we really know? What is the truth?*

*I liked the structure of the book, told in different voices but easy to follow and a good way of releasing more information to the reader, whilst keeping the mystery tantalisingly just out of reach.*

***I thoroughly 'enjoyed' this book. Closed it feeling sad & thoughtful, and am now looking forward to this author's next novel.***

[www.boozybookworm.com](http://www.boozybookworm.com)

Follow Carrie on TwitterL @boozy\_bookworm

### **Sarah Tilley**

***A gentle but very absorbing read, with lots of surprises along the way as the secrets unravel.***

*You really feel for Jess, the main character, and her grief, and as the plot develops you start to see that she has to let go.*

*The whole argument over custody of Rose is very thought provoking.*

*Plenty of different characters to muddy the waters, each one well thought out.*

*I really enjoyed this and found that the way it deals with children's views on death and marriage breakdown very well written.*

*Definitely one for the beach!*

### **Jane Macleod**

*Jess lives a somewhat idyllic life, but when she hears the tragic news that her daughter is lost following an avalanche, her world comes crashing around her just like the snow that has buried her daughter. With family being paramount to her life, she needs to look after Anna's daughter to make her life carry on as normally as possible. The story twists and gets more complex at every moment and a chance blog opens a real can of worms and the secret that Anna has kept from her mother. Just when you think all has been solved and the complexities of family life can't continue, Jess is delivered another shock that she doesn't know how she will ever recover from. **The story is eventful, gradual and complex but at the heart of it is a woman trying to care for her family.***

### **Shriya Khambhaita**

***Good read. The characters are believable and very much present although I, for some reason, did not have much of a connection to them.***

Follow Shriya on Twitter: @Shriya\_Kham

### **Marjorie Lacy**

***I think this book was very well written. It was a good original story and I did not anticipate the 'reveal'.***

*I enjoyed the book to about half way through, where I thought it became a bit drawn out and too slow moving. I did not find clues as to what period of time it was taking, 6 month, a year, or more? Knowing the effort that goes into writing a book, the blood, sweat and tears, I don't like saying 'I didn't like it'. There was no one thing to base it on, the detail of bringing up a small granddaughter was exact. All the emotional upheaval was what you would feel in the circumstances experienced. But it took so long to say it all. The story could only end in acceptance, there was a hint that happiness would appear over the horizon. I hope other readers appreciate the whole book more than I did.*