



The Lost Daughter

By Elena Ferrante

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"Elena Ferrante will blow you away."-Alice Sebold, author of *The Lovely Bones*

From the author of *The Days of Abandonment*, *The Lost Daughter* is Elena Ferrante's most compelling and perceptive meditation on womanhood and motherhood yet. Leda, a middle-aged divorcee, is alone for the first time in years when her daughters leave home to live with their father. Her initial, unexpected sense of liberty turns to ferocious introspection following a seemingly trivial occurrence. Ferrante's language is as finely tuned and intense as ever, and she treats her theme with a fierce, candid tenacity.

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The Lost Daughter By Elena Ferrante Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The arresting third novel from pseudonymous Italian novelist Ferrante (*Troubling Love*) pursues a divorced, 47-year-old academic's deeply conflicted feelings about motherhood to their frightening core. While on vacation by herself on the Ionian coast, Leda feels contentedly disburdened of her two 20-something daughters, who have moved to their father's city of Toronto. She's soon engrossed in watching the daily drama of Nina, a young mother, with her young daughter, Elena (along with Elena's doll, Nani), at the seashore. Surrounded by proprietary Neapolitan relatives and absorbed in her daughter's care, Nina at first strikes Leda as the perfect mother, reminding herself of when she was a new and hopeful parent. Leda's eventual acquaintance with Nina yields a disturbing confession and sets in motion a series of events that threatens to wreck, or save, the integrity of Nina's family. Ferrante's prose is stunningly candid, direct and unforgettable. From simple elements, she builds a powerful tale of hope and regret. (*May*)

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From [The New Yorker](#)

In this brutally frank novel of maternal ambivalence, the narrator, a forty-seven-year-old divorcée summering alone on the Ionian coast, becomes obsessed with a beautiful young mother who seems ill at ease with her husband's rowdy, slightly menacing Neapolitan clan. When this woman's daughter loses her doll, the older woman commits a small crime that she can't explain even to herself. Although much of the drama takes place in her head, Ferrante's gift for psychological horror renders it immediate and visceral, as when the narrator recalls the "animal opacity" with which she first longed for a child, before she was devoured by pregnancy.

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From [Booklist](#)

Forty-five-year-old Delia returns to her childhood home of Naples, Italy, to discover the truth behind the drowning death of her mother, Amalia. Suspicious circumstances surround Amalia's last days; the humble seamstress, who never flaunted her beauty for fear of her jealous husband's wrath, was wearing nothing but an expensive designer brassiere at the time of her death. As Delia wanders the vibrant streets of Naples, she ponders three dubious men who figured prominently in her mother's past: Amalia's irascible brother, known for hurling insults at acquaintances and strangers alike; her husband, a mediocre painter with no qualms about slapping Amalia in public; and his lascivious agent, whose marriage never precluded him from propositioning other women. Ironically, it is her mother's death that enables Delia to make better sense of her own life. "I realized . . . that in fact I had Amalia under my skin, like a hot liquid that had been injected into me at some unknown time." Pseudonymous Italian novelist Ferrante (*The Days of Abandonment*, 2005) delivers a brutally frank tale about the dangerous intersection of rage and desire. *Allison Block*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer Walker:

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