



The Weight of Lies

Emily Carpenter

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In this gripping, atmospheric family drama, a young woman investigates the forty-year-old murder that inspired her mother's bestselling novel, and uncovers devastating truths—and dangerous lies.

Reformed party girl Meg Ashley leads a life of privilege, thanks to a bestselling horror novel her mother wrote decades ago. But Meg knows that the glow of their very public life hides a darker reality of lies, manipulation, and the heartbreak of her own solitary childhood. Desperate to break free of her mother, Meg accepts a proposal to write a scandalous, tell-all memoir.

Digging into the past—and her mother's cult classic—draws Meg to Bonny Island, Georgia, and an unusual woman said to be the inspiration for the book. At first island life seems idyllic, but as Meg starts to ask tough questions, disturbing revelations come to light...including some about her mother.

Soon Meg's search leads her to question the facts of a decades-old murder. She's warned to leave it alone, but as the lies pile up, Meg knows she's getting close to finding a murderer. When her own life is threatened, Meg realizes the darkness found in her mother's book is nothing compared to the chilling truth that lurks off the page.

The Weight of Lies Details

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Author : Emily Carpenter

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From Reader Review The Weight of Lies for online ebook

Norma * Traveling Sister says

3.5 stars rounded up to 4 stars!

A unique read with a book within a book.

Why I wanted to read this one.....I was really intrigued by the title and cover of this book which had me wanting to read it right away. I have also seen so many great reviews for this novel that had me curious enough to see if I would love it as much as some of my other friends did. I didn't love it but it was an enjoyable read though.

Thoughts & what it's all about...(Since Brenda's thoughts and review is once again very similar to mine some of her wonderful review is intertwined into mine.)

THE WEIGHT OF LIES by EMILY CARPENTER is an atmospheric, interesting, engaging, and entertaining read here that was uniquely told with a story within a story. A mystery from the past was interwoven with excerpts from a horror novel which added some suspense and tension to the story. There is some family drama, complicated relationships, hidden lies, and unexpected truths with plenty of twists and turns that did keep me interested in seeing how this story was going to all play out.

The story is told from the perspective of our main character, Megan (Meg) who is estranged from her Mother who has written a famous novel that has many cult followers. At first to spite her mother Meg agrees to write her own novel based on her Mother and her relationship with her. Revenge turns dangerous as she is drawn into the mystery of the past that is inspired by her Mother's novel "Kitten" as Meg goes on a truth seeking mission to uncover the truth behind Kitten. As she digs up the past, things start to get dark and creepy as she uncovers lies and begins to question who she can trust and not trust.

What I liked....I loved the creepy atmosphere of Bonny Island and the old mansion turned hotel which added to the creepiness and brought some edge to the story. I also really enjoyed the Native American mythology that was interwoven into the story.

What I didn't like.....There was so much going on throughout this story that I did find somewhat distracting to figure out if it was in the past or the present.

To sum it all up it was a gripping, steady-paced, and an enjoyable read with a neat and satisfying ending. Would recommend!!

Thank you so much to NetGalley, Lake Union Publishing and Emily Carpenter for the opportunity to read an advance copy of this book for a fair and honest review.

All of Brenda and my reviews can be found on our sister blog:
<http://www.twosisterslostinanacouleerea...>

Jill Croce-McGill says

Betrayal, Secrets, and Lies... The perfect summer read!

The Weight of Lies by *Emily Carpenter* is a solid psychological thriller that is gripping, suspenseful and loaded with twists and turns that will keep you guessing until the end. The cast of characters are complex, disturbing, and questionable - and some are just downright creepy. This novel is part southern gothic and part "whodunit" murder mystery that begins on the road to revenge but ends in a way so unexpected, your jaw will drop! This is the most unique, well-written, book-within-a-book, thriller I have read in a long time, add in that stunning cover and you have the perfect novel!

I want to thank NetGalley and Lake Union Publishing for the ARC of this novel.

Brenda - Traveling Sister says

I really enjoyed the book within the book here with *The Weight of Lies* and found this to be an interesting, engaging, and entertaining read. A mystery from the past is interwoven with excerpts from a horror novel, revealing the stories in parallel timing adding suspense and tension to the story. There is some family drama, complicated relationships, hidden lies, unexpected truths with plenty of twists and turns that kept me interested in this unique story right to the end.

The story is told from the perspective of resentful and neglected Meg who is estranged from her Mother who has written a famous novel that has many cult followers. At first to spite her mother Meg agrees to write her own novel based on her Mother and her relationship with her. Revenge turns dangerous as she is drawn into the mystery of the past that is based on her Mother's novel "Kitten" Meg goes on a truth seeking mission to uncover the truth behind Kitten. As she digs up the past, things start to get dark and creepy as she uncovers lies, and begins to question who she can trust and not trust.

I loved the southern gothic feel here with the isolated island and the old mansion turned hotel that added to the creepiness and danger to the story. I highly recommend for thriller lovers who might like to change things up with a little drama to the story.

Thank you NetGalley, Lake Union Publishing and Emily Carpenter for a copy to read and review.

All of Norma's and my reviews can be found on our sister blog:
<http://www.twogirlslostinacouleereadi...>

Meredith says

***The Weight of Lies* is a gripping mystery/suspense about a wronged daughter determined to investigate the truth behind her mother's "success."**

Meg Ashley, daughter of famous horror novelist Frances Ashley, has a tumultuous relationship with her mother. While her mother is happy to play up their relationship for the camera, their relationship behind

closed doors is close to nonexistent.

After three years of not speaking, Meg returns home and gets lured into a revenge plot: She can sell the story of her troubled childhood, make lots of money, and rid herself of her mother in her life for good. In order to make this book as appealing as possible, Meg sets off to the coastal Georgia islands to investigate the child, now woman, who served as inspiration for her mother's famous horror novel, Kitten.

On Bonny island, Meg finally feels like she has found a home. She feels an instant connection with Doro, the inspiration for Kitten and Bonny island. As Meg finds herself growing closer to Doro, the truth behind her mother's lies slowly start to come to light and Meg realizes that all is not all that she thought it to be. Meg's life is put in danger, and she must decide whether or not to trust Frances.

There's a lot going on in *The Weight of Lies*. In addition to the mother/daughter drama and the mystery behind Kitten, there's also romance, and a lot of Native American mythology. At times, there's almost too much going on. However, I couldn't put this book down!! The creepy atmosphere of Bonny Island adds a layer of creepiness. I loved trying to solve the mystery behind Kitten. The ending is jam packed and wrapped up a little too neatly. Overall, I would definitely recommend.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Tooter says

3.75 Stars. Overall, this book was very suspenseful. I did not enjoy the alternating chapters of the "book within the book". They were a distraction and IMO did not add anything to the book's storyline. However, I did enjoy the writing and will definitely read more by Emily Carpenter.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Erin says

Four put this on your summer reading list ASAP stars

I selected this book on NetGalley purely because of the cover and ended up getting sucked in by the characters, the island setting, and the constant lies that spilled out from the pages. The Goodreads description is so good that I won't rehash the plot, but I will say that this story makes "Mommie Dearest" and "Flowers in the Attic" appear like Disney classics.

I do believe one of my Goodreads friends mentioned in their review that they hadn't liked Megan Ashley in the beginning. Neither did I! But as the mystery deepened I could certainly empathize with Megan's desire to get to the truth.

A truly awesome read!

Thanks to NetGalley for an uncorrected digital galley in exchange for an honest review.

Chelsea Humphrey says

Oh, excuse me. I was busy staring at that gorgeous cover. I've actually been eyeballing that cover ever since we posted the reveal on this blog a few months back; it's what initially drew me into wanting to read the book. This is most certainly a book you can judge by the cover because it's brilliant! Be prepared for a gushing, swooning, fangirling review of the most exciting sense. This was a very structured, complex book, so I'm going to break it down below for you, spoiler free of course. If you choose not to read the full review, just note that this book comes highly recommended from me and is in the running for one of my top reads of 2017!

First let's touch on the plot. Yes, I know, I hardly ever discuss the plot points of the stories I review, but this one needs a small discussion to prepare the reader for what they are in for, a large dose of exciting and unique storytelling. If you read the blurb above then you realize that the main plot involves protagonist Meg, daughter to mega superstar and horror writer Frances Ashley (think fame level of Stephen King but hyped up a bit more). Bonus points as our main character is a person of color and issues of racism/sexism are incorporated into the plot, so this is no sugar coated "white person saves the day" ordeal. **hand clap** The main plot in its most basic sense involves Meg trying to uncover secrets about her mother and the book she wrote in relation to real life crimes that occurred at the "real life" hotel that is a setting in her book. Still with me? Great. Next comes the alternating chapters; these are excerpts from Frances Ashley's book titled *Kitten* and correspond with the main plot chapters in a way that you'll pick up on as you read the book. While we're on the subject of *Kitten*, I must say that I found myself so intrigued in this inception like book-within-a-book ordeal that I feel a companion novel of the entire *Kitten* story would be something I'd devour in an instant. Yes, most of the mystery is revealed in *The Weight of Lies: A Novel*, but I think it would be a mind blowing read even knowing what I already know about the book. To sum it up, these two components, along with a handful of blog posts from fan sites, are what comprise TWOL. I know it sounds confusing, but I promise as you read it makes complete sense and flows well.

This was a wonderfully diverse book that touched on a good bit of tough issues that are comprised in a fictional account, yet examples of real world problems we currently face. Much of the story focuses on various Native American tribes and the atrocities that were committed against them and what was stolen from them. I absolutely love how Emily has written a story that slaps you in the face with reality; here you will not find hand holding and you must check your white privilege at the door, yet on the flip side there is also not a sense of white shaming here. This was simply a story stating how things are without apology and I find it encouraging. It is always refreshing for me to read about the struggles faced by people of different backgrounds and races than my own; I think it's important to be consistently reminded that, while I didn't have a say in my DNA, I can choose to use my voice to make other's heard.

The thing that stood out most to me in regards to the plot is it's simultaneous complexity and compulsiveness. There are quite literally no words I have to describe what I just read; I simply want to hand a book to all fans of psychological suspense and say "Read this so we can talk about it and use all the words I can't in my spoiler free review". I've not read a book anywhere close to this before; it has the creepy vibe and unique formatting of *Night Film*, the in depth characterization of a Gillian Flynn novel, all while somehow seeming more intelligent than either of those with a flare of its own pizazz. *You caught me, I've been waiting to use the word pizazz for months now in a review*. My point is, this book gives you the satiety of a book that is layered with robust characters and a growing sense of dread all while having the quick pace and laid back air of a book that isn't pretentious or pompous. I flew through the pages, and when I wasn't reading the book

I was thinking about it, donning my detective cap and trying to solve multiple mysteries at once. *I may have contemplated using our basement as one of those crime scene rooms at the police station with all the pictures on the wall and red yarn. Mr. Humphrey said no. :(*

I think I've rambled long enough, but my main point is **READ THE DANG BOOK!** I know, it doesn't come out for a few months, but pre-order it! This is one that is worth purchasing, trust me. I can't sing praises highly enough for this novel; I truly loved Carpenter's Burying the Honeysuckle Girls last year and was so pleased to have found that her books just get better (if that's possible) with each one she writes. My brain can't comprehend how she kept everything straight to formulate the structure for this book, but let's just say I'm glad it was her and not me. I truly didn't have the ending figured out and was very pleased with the entire plot, beginning to end. Well done and I'm so excited to read more reviews on this one as it's let loose into the wild!

***Many thanks to Emily for my early copy; it was a delight and a privilege to read it so early and I can't wait to see what your brilliant brain dreams up next! <3**

Stacey says

4.5 If you like your summer reading on the edgier side, then look no further than The Weight of Lies.

Meg is the daughter of the famous author Frances Ashley and like many mother daughter relationships, there is plenty of friction. Frances has written a successful book about a murder that has attracted a cult like following over the years with many conspiracy theories. As Meg learns more about the book and her mother's past she begins to wonder if the book is more fact than fiction. The book really heats up when Meg starts digging for answers.

This is a book with in a book and that format works well here. It adds to the suspense as we're given little details along the way.

Lindsay - Traveling Sister says

2 stars. I had to push myself to finish this book.

After seeing so many great reviews, I had high hopes for this book and unfortunately it fell completely flat for me. I just couldn't get into the storyline or the characters' lives whatsoever. I didn't like the main character Meg. She was spoiled, selfish, immature and grew to be quite annoying! I also found she did things that didn't fit with her persona – her character was inconsistent for me. Even though her childhood was not a happy one, I could not sympathize with her.

The novel started off well. I liked the idea of the storyline and how it was a book about a book. I also liked the old manor house on the island and the atmosphere that was created. However, quite quickly the story became unrealistic and somewhat absurd. The love story seemed forced and awkward – it didn't fit for me - I felt it was added to simply include some romance in the book.

I figured out one of the big twists early on in the book which NEVER happens for me (my GR friend Brenda would have been so proud of me – maybe Norma is rubbing off on me?? Haha!). This ended up taking away from the dramatic and implausible ending which fell completely flat for me.

I know I am in the minority with my feelings on this book, so please read other reviews before deciding on this one.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Lake Union Publishing and Emily Carpenter for providing me with an ARC of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Sarah Joint says

When I started this story, I didn't like the main character. **It's due to the skill of the writer that she can make a character I have nothing in common with and initially found irritating into someone who was likeable and relatable.**

I was getting the "poor little rich girl" vibe at first. She claims to be estranged from her mother, but lives off her money and continues to enjoy a cushy lifestyle. She wouldn't have that without Frances Ashley... famous author and celebrity. **Skilled in weaving a tale, Frances lacks that mothering instinct and Meg has always felt it.** Their relationship has been tremulous to say the least, and after a final blow-out, they haven't spoken in years. Until Meg receives her usual invitation to her mother's birthday party. Planning to ignore it, an added note gives her pause: Edgar, her mother's agent and the only person Meg considers family, isn't well.

She rushes to be by his side and see her mother, but Frances isn't there. Spurned by her mother yet again, this is the straw that breaks the camel's back. **She accepts a proposal to write her version of Mommie Dearest, a tell-all about her famous mother and her various issues.** That won't be all of the book, however. Her mother's most famous book, Kitten, is nearing its 40th anniversary. Still popular, it boasts many devoted fans. **Rumors have swirled about the story of murder being based on truth for years,** which has effected the lives of those thought to be characters in the book in major ways. **The truth about Kitten and Frances Ashley is sure to be a bestseller... and with the help of others exposed by Frances, Meg is going to write it.**

Meg heads to an island where the former hotel Kitten takes place at sits, slowly crumbling. Closed to guests, only a few staff members and the owner is left behind. **She's determined to get to the bottom of the story behind the book that made her mother a celebrity, but there may be people out there unwilling to let those secrets see the light of day.**

Some light romance, mostly suspense and family drama. Very enjoyable. If you figure out this book before the last third or so, I commend you because I had no idea where it was going. **I found it extremely hard to put down.** If it weren't for some niggles I had with the ending, it would be a five star read for me. As it is, it's a 4.5.

My thanks to Net Galley and Lake Union Publishing for granting my wish to read an ARC of this novel! My opinion is honest and unbiased.

Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on www.novelgossip.com

I found another gem of a book that y'all need to add to your summer reading lists ASAP! This was such a compelling read, I simply devoured it and it could be the ultimate definition of a page turner. It has a totally unique and fascinating premise, characters that ranged from the relatable to the odd and scary, and a stunning atmosphere that was creepy and gorgeous at the same time. Don't forget a crazy, multilayered mystery that goes back forty years and a hint of romance, what more could you want?!

This was a book within a book, what I like to call bookception, don't be hesitant and assume it's confusing because it's not at all. Meg is the daughter of a super famous author best known for her cult classic, Kitten. It's a classic seventies horror novel (think Carrie) and has a huge fan base. The formatting was genius and really gripped me, in between each chapter from Meg in present day you get excerpts from Kitten as well. I loved the kitschy vibe of these sections and if Mrs. Carpenter could go ahead and make Kitten a full length novel that would be great! The similarities between Kitten and what was actually happening in Meg's life were eerie and awesome.

The atmosphere had me completely absorbed, Meg travels to the hotel Kitten was based on and it's now a ramshackle pit with only a handful of people working there. It was simultaneously spooky and beautiful and I fell right down the rabbit hole alongside Meg as she tried to untangle a massive web of lies her mother wove. Doro is the hotel's owner and part of the inspiration behind the book and was such a complex and interesting character as well.

This was a total binge read despite the complicated structure, it made me turn the pages faster as I grew desperate to know not only what Meg would uncover but also how Kitten ended. I'm blown away by how flawlessly Carpenter plotted this, it's truly impressive. There is a lot of diversity here as the island has ties to Native American history which was a totally appreciated addition by me. I think it's safe to say that Carpenter is the queen of Southern Gothic fiction, this book was a marvel.

Jennifer Blankfein says

For all reviews and recommendations please visit
<https://booknationbyjen.wordpress.com>
and follow my Book Nation by Jen Facebook page.

How well do you really know someone? After reading The Weight of Lies you may ask yourself that question! Meg Ashley, daughter of Frances Ashley, the cult classic horror novelist, is fed up with the neglect and lack of interest her mother has had in her for so many years. For revenge, she agrees to write a tell-all book, the truth about her mom, the famous author, and about her troubled childhood as she prepares to rid her life completely of her self-centered mother. While conducting research and digging into the past, Meg begins to uncover some information that has to do with a murder her mother had written about in her best-seller, Kitten, several decades ago. The fictional novel was based on a real murder and actual people, and the cult followers had their theories about who committed the crime in real life. Arriving on Bonny Island, where the murder took place, Meg meets some of the people who appeared as characters in her mother's book, and while digging deeper she begins to uncover information that leads her to believe she had been told some lies

about her younger years. As Meg is trying to understand crucial details about her own past she is also learning particulars about the murder. Everybody is telling lies and Meg is unsure of who to trust, if anyone. When she receives warnings to back off she knew she was getting close to solving the murder mystery and learning the truth about her past but she was in danger.

The Weight of Lies keeps you on the edge of your seat, guessing every step of the way!

Linda says

Manipulators. Deceivers. Stone Liars.

Meg Ashley has stared into their eyes up close and personal. She's learned from the very best and carries her own calling card in deception. Funny how one has a tendency to recognize the dark corners in someone else's uneven life.....

Frances Ashley, Meg's mother, is a well known author living the high life in New York City after her blockbuster horror novel, Kitten. Ol' Kitten has led to a series of other successful novels that have made Frances rich. Very rich, indeed.

But Meg and Frances' relationship has always been like a lit match near a canister of gasoline. Meg hasn't had many interactions with Frances for years, but her palm has been turned upward while receiving money into her bank account. Strange how principles can take a hit when it comes to dollar signs. Stranger in fact, Meg has decided to write a tell all book about the famous Frances and heads down to Bonny Island, Georgia where the story of Kitten all began.

"Here be dragons." Here be actual murders that took place forty years ago with the Kitten based character, Doro Kitchens, residing in a now closed bed and breakfast. Meg wants the lowdown on Frances who worked there as a young woman. What did Frances know about the young girls who died on this forsaken island? And who is the mysterious Susan Doucette who reigns as the queen bee of the Kitten fan club on overkill? (Oh, pardon the pun!)

Whoa! There are many oddities here with characters who seem doomed to destroy one another. There's the tang of a saltwater marsh, wild horses running the island, Guale people with a Caddo history, and the reality that this isle can only be accessed by boat. But there's also the suffocating humidity in the air that hangs heavy like the Spanish moss. Who can you actually trust in this dark, isolated existence?

Emily Carpenter presents a storyline that exists on a very sharp edge. It's not for everyone. My own take, initially, was that this was to be a Mommy Dearest novel with the usual spoiled daughter raging and ranting. Oh, but no. Meg's feet will sink a bit into that squooshy marsh. Carpenter lines her story with snappy dialogue: "I flipped him a mental bird." This one is deeply character driven and atmospheric. Carpenter uses insets of the book, Kitten, interlaced within her storyline that sets a dire tone. My only concern was the slow pace of the final moments of the wrap-up in the finale. Give serious consideration to this one, dear readers.

I received a copy of The Weight of Lies through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to Lake Union Publishing and to Emily Carpenter for the opportunity.

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: <https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com>...

3.5 stars

The description of this book had me wanting to read it right away. There are also many positive reviews for this book right now. I wondered if I would love it as much as everyone else.

Megan (Meg) is partying with friends in Las Vegas. Celebrating a friend's recent divorce. Sitting around the pool relaxing when someone brings her an envelope. Right away she knows what the elegant envelope is.

"A bomb. The kind that explodes without making a sound. The kind that destroys".

As soon as she sees it she starts feeling the needles and pinpricks, what feels like stinging wasps on her fingers and toes, aching, eventually most of her extremities would go numb. She's done some online searches about this neuropathy but hasn't yet sought out medical attention. Her mother favored doctors but she doesn't. Meg says she's an otherwise perfectly healthy twenty-four year old. Usually it only happens when she's stressed.

The envelope = stress

It's on her mother's favorite stationary. To say her relationship with her mother, Frances is strained is putting it mildly. They clash, always have. After a particularly brutal verbal altercation, they haven't spoken in three years.

So she's more than surprised to open the envelope and find an invitation to her mother's birthday. It's for the next day.

"Darling I miss you and love you. Please do come. Edgar isn't well".

Those words set Meg into motion.

Edgar...

She's also been waiting to find out if she's been hired by a company she has been volunteering with. She really wants the position she applied for. It's the most fulfilling work she's ever done. But mainly it offers INDEPENDENCE...something she's never experienced.

A story within a story...a book within a book - which may or may not be based on real events.

Before each chapter is an excerpt from the book "Kitten".

Kitten was an odd child.

"The child had some oddities - a few secretive tendencies and strange habits"

KITTEN is the book that haunted Meg's childhood. When she's given the option to challenge her mother AND the book....will she take it? Will she write the tell-all exposing her mother, her childhood, and only god knows what else?

I'm still not sure exactly how I feel about this book. I was definitely gripped by the story and quite often didn't want to put the book down. But I also found myself getting distracted with so much going on at once and I wasn't always sure if something was happening in the present or the past.

Overall, I did think this was an entertaining and unique story and I look forward to reading more from Emily Carpenter.

Thank you NetGalley and Lake Union Publishing for providing an advanced copy of this book for me to read in exchange for my honest review.

Reading.Between.Wines says

????????? / 5

4.5 Stars rounded down to 4 for Goodreads.

My reviews and (maybe) some other random thoughts can also be seen at

<https://readingbetweenwinessite.wordpress.com>...

The Weight of Lies by Emily Carpenter is one masterly woven tale, let me tell you! Besides the fact that I am totally in love with this cover, I loved the story as well.

I was really immersed in this read although it did take me a bit to get into it. It started off a little slow for me, but became a real page turner by the time I hit page 70 or so. I say that because I was on page 60 something and got to the end of 369 pages in one day. It ended up being quite the fast read and I didn't want to put it down once I got into it (so I really didn't!).

At first the vibe I got from Meg was spoiled rich kid with a "poor me I have a celebrity mom" complex. BUT that is not how this story goes. I loved the depth you end up seeing out of her character and learning about what she has been through with her mom, Frances.

There were a few moments in the book that I actually said "oh shit!" out loud, it was that good. There was also some good sexual tension in this book that I just loved (and I'm not talking about Frances and her new beau). It didn't detract from the main plot at all, it was just a little bit of romance -- if you would even call it that -- splashed in.

I LOVED the excerpts from "Kitten" throughout the book. Nothing beats a book within a book, especially when they are both entertaining to read (and creepy at that)! The Weight of Lies also had my heart racing a couple of times. Not just because of spooky/creepy/romance either. Even when Meg is fighting with Frances over the phone was enough to get my heart rate up. I love when an author can do that through prose.

The last chapter was pretty much an epilogue and I loved the style in which it was written. It reminded me of what you'd see scrolling at the end of a movie based on a true story. It had such a great feel to it and it really was the perfect ending to this book.

Final Thought: If you haven't read this yet you need to! I will definitely be going back and reading Burying the Honeysuckle Girls now, I am actually kind of sad I haven't read that yet knowing how good this one is now. Loved this book and highly recommend it for the lover of a good mystery. In this book the mystery kind of sneaks up on you though, so keep your eyes open! ;)
