



# Lost Dogs and Lonely Hearts

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Thirty-nine year old Rachel is having a really bad year. After losing her job and breaking up with her boyfriend, Rachel has inherited her late aunt's house, her beloved border collie, and a crowded rescue kennel, despite the fact that she knows almost nothing about dogs. Still, considering her limited options, she gamely takes up the challenge of running the kennel. And as Rachel starts finding new homes for the abandoned strays, it turns out that it might not just be the dogs that need rescuing.

## **Lost Dogs and Lonely Hearts Details**

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# From Reader Review Lost Dogs and Lonely Hearts for online ebook

## Linda says

[Ultimately, the aunt rejects marriage to the "perfect man" becau

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## Valen says

I L.O.V.E. this book!!! It's cute, it's quirky, it's funny, it's real; it's the kind of book that tugs at your heartstrings and with all the D.O.G.S. involve, it's just plain amazing!

First character we meet is Rachel. She just inherited her Aunt Dot's estate where a kennel is included along with rescued dogs. She just got out from a bad relationship and lost her job at the same time.

Rachel had a 10-year relationship with her married boss, Oliver, who in my opinion tricked her into having a relationship with him. At first, I was a bit put off with her because I can't help but think that she's a bad person being in a relationship with a married guy. But then I realize, reading more, that maybe she was a "victim" here. Being lied at by her boss-lover that he was no longer sleeping with his wife and that he feels unloved. But then I also have this argument with myself that she should've known better to saddle off with a married man. Anyway, it took her a while to realize that she didn't deserve that kind of treatment and that it wasn't right what she was doing. And am happy for her that she's the one who broke it off.

There was this heartbreaking scene where the wife, Kath, visited her at the kennels and she made it seem like Rachel was just a distraction to her husband nothing more nothing less. I can't say that Rachel deserve that but I guess that was punishment enough for her. I felt sorry for Rachel and it felt as if she got the bad end of the whole situation. Here, I came to the conclusion that people make bad choices and some way or the other we have to face the consequences of the choices we make, move on, and hope that you could forget and try to continue with your life provided that you won't make the same mistake again. Which in this story was what Rachel was trying to do. And there was Gem, the collie, I think somehow he helped Rachel figure out everything in the end being her companion and a loyal friend.

There's also this situation in the end involving George the vet. How glad I was that Rachel chose him and not that no-good boss of hers. She wavered a bit in the end but she realized what she really wanted and that's not with Oliver. And I got this feeling that even if she did go back with Oliver, she would have realized sooner or later that it's not going to work out and that she'll eventually go back to Longhampton.

We also met Natalie and Johnny who were trying to have a baby. They've been trying for years but nothing has come of it and at some point Natalie became desperate. Always checking her temperatures, doing all sorts of tests for herself. At some point, Natalie and Johnny came to an agreement that they're going have to have tests to see if they both were capable of having a baby. Something went wrong with Johnny's test and it all seemed to fall apart from that moment on.

I can't even imagine how sad it must've been for the both of them after the doctor told them the test results, especially Johnny's. It's not anybody's fault but there was a point in the story that they both don't know how to cope with the fact that maybe they can never have a baby. And maybe, they didn't communicate well enough to tell each other what they want and what they're feeling. It's not until the end that they realize that

whatever happens, as long as they have each other, everything will be okay. And it's not like they really can't have a baby. They are options out there to choose from. (view spoiler) I think it was cute of him to not want that and be all possessive of Natalie. I like that scene and until the end, he was still thinking of Nat. And then there's Bertie, the basset hound, who I think gave them that extra push to hold on to each other and not give up. How glad I am that they all worked it out in the end.

Next one is Zoe, single mother of two adorable little boys, Spencer and Leo. Her story definitely tugged at my heartstrings. Left by her husband to be with his colleague from work, she's been raising her sons for a year now. Can't help but think that this kind of situation happens a lot nowadays and it's nothing new. But the way that she handles everything and being a strong mother for her two children is just admirable. And with everything that's happened especially with the way Spencer is reacting with the whole situation. I guess that's a normal reaction from a seven-year-old.

She faltered a bit and there was that time that she got a little hysterical after having Toffee, the labrador pup, but she never gave up. She got through with all of it, no thanks to her self-centered husband. And she had help too of course, which shows that nobody gets through life without a little help. And how could I forget the blooming romance between her and Dr. Bill. It was sweet and I'm glad that she came to an understanding with her children in the end.

There was also a secret involving Rachel's Aunt Dot and what a shock it was for me actually; it was totally unexpected. But this little bit of information was maybe one of the reason that Rachel realized that there's something more from taking care of abandoned dogs. She learned acceptance and how to move one with her life despite the fact of having a bad past. I guess you could say that there's some similarities with Rachel's situation to the dogs'. In the end, they're given a chance to start over and be happy.

I hoped that Megan had a bit of romance going on for her. I like her and let's face it, Rachel couldn't do it without Megan. There's also Freda and Ted who helped work the kennels as well. They all came together made this book as animated as it can be. I actually thought that with all the characters involve, it was hard to keep track of the story. How wrong was I in that front. The friendship formed between this characters was what made the story believable and real.

In the end, I was very happy to have read this book. This was the first Lucy Dillon that I've read and I'm happy to say that I'll be reading more from her in the future. ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ :D

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## **Melanie Mole says**

What a genuinely lovely book this is.

I hadn't read any of Lucy Dillon's books before, but I will now!

The story centres around Rachel who inherits a large house, kennels, friends, and the responsibility for her rescue dogs from Dot, her unusual aunt.

Prior to this Rachel had only know the trendy London scene where her job in PR, her interest in fashion, and hours spent networking left little room for anything else, except the odd evening spent with a man who turns out to be married.

After her move to the country, and not being a dog person, Rachel finds it all a bit daunting. But with Megan, the kennel manager's help, she settles into the daily task list, eventually even seeming to enjoy it.

One dog in particular takes to her her. Not really surprising as it was Gem her aunt Dot's dog. Their relationship grows alongside Rachel's confidence. She finds abilities she never new that she has. Even daring to look start looking forward instead of back.

An unexpected turn in the story sees Rachel with a new man entering her life, as well as a new challenge.

Rachel gets the chance to start to make her relationship with her mother better because of her new challenges. She also finds out a family secret along the way.

As soon as I started reading this book I loved it. I didn't want to put it down. Snatching little moments for a few more pages as I went through my day. Splendid!

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### **Tanja (Tanychy) St. Delphi/James says**

This is one really sweet and readable story, so 4 stars from me. Just for the record I'm not chick-lit fan at all, so when I give it 4 stars it's really good. Besides I'm dog-lover so I couldn't give it any less. I guess people who like sweet, chick-lit stories will love this one.

This is story about people who try to live their everyday life, but they still don't know that their lives will be changed. It's about women, Rachel, in here late 30's who loses everything and gets everything in the same time. She just need to realize that. After her aunt dies she inherits her house and dog shelter. Rachel moves form London and tries to take care about everything. There he'll meet Natalie and Johnny, young couple who are trying to have a child and Zoe also, young divorced women, mother of two sons, who is still struggling after divorce. Although, Rachel thinks he is not right person for this and she tries to find a way to leave all that and find herself, she slowly gets into routine. Where she finds answers on some of the questions.

From the blurb you can see how this story will goes, not everything but most of the things. Even though this story is predictable, I can say that I enjoyed. Really, nice read.

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### **Melodie says**

The world of canine rescue is the foundation for this sweet story. There are three main vignettes with some minor characters revolving around them. A couple dealing with infertility, a divorced mom of two with the ex from hell and all the attendant heartache and a single career woman, suddenly finding herself without a job.

All find each other when they become involved with a local rescue kennel. Friendships aren't immediate but start slowly, with each so absorbed with their issues that they can't see what is just beyond their noses. Of course, the dogs do the heavy lifting in getting the characters to start seeing and resolving their issues.

As is usual with animal based stories, the dogs steal the show, especially (for me) Bertie the Basset Hound. And there is plenty of good information about the benefits of rescuing versus buying a dog and some training tips. And there was a twist or two that keep the reader guessing. A quick and sweet read.

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## Rosie says

**\*\* 3,5 estrelas \*\***

Por vezes uma situação drástica na nossa vida é que nos salva e afinal aquilo que temos como certo acaba por ser demasiado redutor, insípido, insuficiente e superficial, a ponto de se tornar gritante a mudança. Há que ter o arrojo para deixar de se apiedar de si próprio e ir ao encontro de algo mais substancial, mais honesto, mais rico em emoções que nos encham e preenchem a alma.

**O livro trata disso mesmo, de recomeços, tendo como pano de fundo os ditos corações sem dono, cães abandonados, negligenciados, que tudo dão, em troca de tão pouco.**

**A leitura é fluida, ternurenta e agradável. Quem gosta de animais (sobretudo de cães, como eu), gostará certamente e a componente de voluntariado, de espírito de comunidade, de relações de boa vontade entre pessoas e animais é uma dádiva neste nosso mundo tão material e asoberbado de subterfúgios que nos escravizam.**

Nota: é lamentável ser cada vez mais comum falhas nas traduções dos livros, e apesar de no caso em particular não ser grave, também não é de todo expectável.

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## Monika says

I hur många år som helst nu (känns det som) har jag hört talas om denna Lucy Dillon och om hur mysiga hennes böcker är. Av någon anledning så har jag ändå inte läst den här boken, som stått i hyllan i nästan tre år. Nu blev det äntligen dags, efter att jag satt upp den på boktolvan. Läs mer på min blogg.

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## Tânia says

*“Until one has loved an animal a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.” - Anatole France*

What a pleasant, nostalgic read! These lost dogs were the perfect companionship to my lonely heart and they totally stole the show. Don’t get me wrong, I love’em crazy, independent felines, but I’ll always be a dog person at heart.

Oh yes, it’s a slow burner but those are often the best because somewhere along the line you get caught up in the story and you don’t let go till it’s finished. For me it was when these three different stories started to connect through dog whispering. All the characters are so likable you can’t help but to feel empathy towards them and their dilemmas. Plus, the portrayal of the animals is so genuine it pulls at your heart strings... and how could it not?

Rachel & George – Rachel's growth was noteworthy throughout the story and I really enjoyed the way their romance unfolded even though it was anything but conventional. They were both mature and pondered people. Plus Gem.

Nat & Johnny –I admit at first I wasn't that into the whole getting pregnant obsession of Nat's. And Johnny didn't seem that into it either. But then things took a turn and I felt for them. I'm so glad the author didn't go all cliché on them in the end, though. Plus Bertie.

Zoe & Bill – The couple who made me smile the most from the way they met till the inevitable *I'm a single mother* talk. Plus Toffee and Lulu.

The only thing I thought could've been handled better was Dot's mystery which wasn't that shocking. Honestly I was expecting something in the lines of (view spoiler)

But to be honest, that was minor. I was much more invested in lost dogs warming up lonely hearts and vice versa.

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## Cata says

*Corações Sem dono* é o meu livro de estreia com Lucy Dillon.

Apesar de não me ter deixado fã, foi um livro muito agradável de se ler. É um livro que contém várias histórias pessoais que se interligam por causa dos cães e que enfatiza o quão bons companheiros estes podem ser em troca de um pouco de amor, carinho e atenção. É bastante interessante ver acompanhar a evolução das personagens e a maneira como enfrentam os dissabores da vida na companhia do 'melhor amigo do homem'. Além disso Lucy Dillon tem um estilo muito leve e fluido que me conseguiu envolver.

Contudo, existiram quatro aspectos negativos que não consegui ignorar. Para começar, o livro é demasiado previsível. Quero com isto dizer que à medida que lia, conseguia antecipar o que iria acontecer com as personagens e quais os rumos que estas seguiriam e só uma das minhas previsões falhou.

O segredo de Dot foi outro dos aspectos que me desagradou. Pela maneira como a autora iniciou o mistério, esperei uma revelação bombástica. Um *dirty secret* tão grande que iria chocar as alminhas dos leitores... ou pelo menos representar um grande *twist* no decorrer da acção. Escusado será dizer que não foi isso que a autora nos deu, mas sim um segredo desenhado que me deixou indiferente.

O terceiro aspecto que não gostei foi o final. Quem me segue sabe que **odeio** finais apressados e com pontas soltas. Não quero praguejar, mas se o/a autor(a) se dá ao trabalho de escrever livros com 400 e tal páginas, pode muito bem escrever mais umas quantas páginas e terminá-lo em condições. Compreendo que se sintam excitados pelo facto de estarem quase no fim, mas refriem-se por favor! Neste caso em particular, o livro tem um ritmo relativamente constante e depois *pumba!* todas as decisões importantes ocorrem em cerca de dois capítulos seguido de um epílogo que ocorre alguns meses depois. Além disso deixou-me questões importantes em aberto: Zoe e Billy não tiveram um final decente e não sei como ficaram as coisas entre Zoe e David [esperava que eles chegassem à situação "ou vai ou racha" e que essa situação culminasse com Zoe a dar um grande pontapé no traseiro do David... de preferência literalmente... apesar de ser traumatizante para as crianças]

E por último, mas não menos importante, a troca de nomes que ocorreu em duas situações. Vai uma pessoa lançada na leitura e depois tem de travar de repente porque não percebe porque é que X veio ao barulho, quando se estava a falar de Y (*Whaaaat?*). Seria bom que tivessem cuidado com estas situações antes de editarem o livro, mas enfim...

Livro lido no Blog Ring, cedido pela Filipa Monteiro. Obrigada!

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## Chloe says

Rachel is a bit horrified when she finds out that her Aunt Dot has died and left her entire estate to her. Dot's legacy is a boarding kennels in the middle of nowhere, a huge house and a lot of debts to go with it, and Rachel doesn't much fancy moving and becoming at one with the dogs and their owners. However, when she arrives, she finds the people are nice folk with hearts of gold, and that the dogs quickly grow on you as well. Rachel soon begins to make friends with George, the dishy local vet; Zoe, a single mum of 2 young boys struggling to cope with them and new puppy Toffee; Natalie and Johnny, a couple who substitute a baby for a dog for the time-being whilst they hide a painful secret, and of course Megan who helped Dot run the whole show. Will Rachel be able to settle down and mend her lonely heart once and for all?

I read and adored Lucy's debut novel *The Ballroom Class* when it was released last year, and I've been really eager for her to bring a second book out! When I found it was about dogs, I was a bit unsure as I'm not the biggest dog lover in the world, but the cover won me over with its lovely winter setting, and I think it's going to be a big seller in the run up to Christmas. The book is published on 26th November, and it's one that will be worth the wait and is perfect for the cold winter nights... the book made it onto our Winter Warmers list even before we had reviewed it!

Anyway, back to the book. It begins with a narrative by a dog, which was interesting and not at all what I had expected. Soon after though, the book begins with Rachel at the solicitor's office finding out that she's inherited the kennels from her Aunt. If I'm honest, I did find the start of the book to be a little bit slow-going and I did wonder how it was going to pan out for the rest of the book. I did of course stick with it and I'm glad I did because it definitely picks up as it gathers momentum, and by the end I was hooked once more. I do wonder if I didn't get into it at first because as I say, I don't especially love dogs and therefore the subject matter wasn't one I was too fussed about reading about, but either way, it did get better for me.

The characterisation in the book was fantastic. Rachel was a great character and I liked her very much, but for some reason I kept thinking of her as a twenty-something rather than the 40 year old she was! She doesn't come across in that way, but it doesn't make it too problematic for me when I was reading it. However, it was the other characters in the book that I liked best. Zoe, the single mum of 2 was my favourite – her ex-husband was written so horribly you can't help but feel sorry for her and I liked her progression as the book moved forward. Natalie and Johnny were also such a likeable couple, and the storyline between them was so touching and emotional, it was so well done by Lucy and I congratulate her for tackling such a difficult storyline with real compassion for her characters. Their friend Bill was a good male character although I would have liked to have seen more from him, and the other man in the book is George the vet who I also really liked.

One thing that I really enjoyed about this book was how I could picture in my mind the village they lived in, the kennels, Zoe's house and all the other places mentioned in the book. Dillon has a real knack for

descriptive writing – not the sort that goes on and on and ends up boring the reader a little bit, but she weaves it effortlessly through the story so you're imagining it with every word you read and it unfolds perfectly as the book progresses. I loved her descriptions of the dogs, and the little letters "written" by the dogs to prospective owners were very emotional and well done. You can tell Dillon has a passion for dogs, and this really comes across throughout the whole book.

It is a wonderful read, and definitely a nice one for the winter nights if only for that glorious cover but I still find that the beginning really did hinder my enjoyment towards the start which was a shame. It did drag on a little bit and took a while for me to get into the characters but once I did, I thoroughly enjoyed. There are a lot of complex issues wrapped up in the book which are written very emotively, and all of them relevant to society today and I enjoyed how everything felt realistic and didn't feel like it was going to be rushed to the typical happy ending. I loved the characters, and think Dillon did a great job of making the reader care not only about the humans in the book but the canine ones too :) Definitely one to pick up if you can, I really enjoyed it – it's gentle, charming and a lovely read.

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### **Tania says**

Um livro apaixonante que junta a história de uma londrina solteirona, a recente divorciada e mãe de 2 filhos, um casal desesperado por ter um bebê, um veterinário grosseirão e o médico giraço da aldeia, em volta de uma herança que inclui um canil de boxes cheias e cofres vazios.

Todas estas personagens, e muitas outras, vão-se unir em prol de fazer os pares mais perfeitos: o cão abandonado e o seu novo humano ideal, com muita emoção e romance à mistura.

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### **Blodeuedd Finland says**

I am a bit torn. I liked it, but at the same time it felt...well I just did not really connect. Maybe the book was just ok after all. Or ok bordering on good.

Rachel is the main character as it is she who inherits a house and a kennel. And she does not like dogs. And she spent her 30s on a man who dumped her. But as we get to know her the book becomes about 2 other women too.

Zoe who has an idiot ex husband, who gives the boy a puppy and leaves it to Zoe to care for it.

Natalie and Johnny who is trying for a kid, but falls for a dog.

Maybe, yes maybe it was the preachy part, not preachy that way! Just preachy about how to care for dogs. Srsly, it made me feel bad that I left our then kitten alone while I worked. I should have put him in daycare? Really? Ok I know that kittens and puppies are not the same. Cats are better \*whistles\* It was just too do this and that, or else you suck.

And then everyone met someone or something like that and lived happily ever after.

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## Nessa says

I absolutely love this author, as I always know that when I read one of Lucy's books, I know that I'm in for a treat.

I loved getting to know all of the different characters and their own individual stories which you get to discover as you progress through the book.

If you haven't read her books before, then I highly recommend that you do.

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## Maria says

Um livro fofinho tal como demonstra a capa. Com muitos cãezinhos e muitos momentos amorosos, ideais para sonhar com finais felizes. Não é o meu favorito de todos os tempos mas é uma leitura agradável e descontraída

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## Mafi says

Desde que este livro saiu no ano passado que tive curiosidade em lê-lo! Adoro animais domésticos e gosto principalmente de ler sobre relações entre humanos e animais e lendo a sinopse este livro pareceu-me o ideal. Digo já que a sinopse engana um bocado pois eu estava à espera de o livro se focar apenas na Rachel, uma mulher trintona que se vê sozinha a gerir um canil e uma casa cheia de dívidas, ambos deixados pela sua tia Dorothy, uma grande admiradora de cães. O livro não é apenas isto, é muito mais do que aparenta. Neste livro temos um retrato fiel de como os animais são os melhores amigos do Homem e de como estes seres de quatro patas, sempre adeptos a brincadeiras podem dar grandes lições de vida.

De todas as histórias se entreligam em si, a que mais me tocou foi a do casal Johnny e Natalie, no seu desespero por engravidar, nas tentativas falhadas, na máscara de felicidade que tinham de mostrar quando alguém lhes contava que estava grávida, e isso aconteceu quando Rachel engravida inesperadamente de George, o veterinário do canil. Foi de partir o coração quando as duas se encontram e a Rachel simplesmente não consegue esconder que está à espera de um filho. A chegada de um cão, Bertie irá deixar o casal mais animado neste momento tão difícil. Também simpatizei com Zoe mas apenas em vários momentos, houve alturas em que me irritou pois deixava-se levar por tudo e por nada não se sabendo impor! Refiro-me às atimanhas do ex-marido. Não obstante isto, gostei do seu retrato como mãe e de tentar perceber como os filhos estavam abalados com o divórcio dos pais. Claro que o labrador Toffee irá ser uma companhia para Zoe, nos fins de semana em que os filhos estão com o pai. Quanto a Rachel, gostei dela! Vê-se abalada por ter terminado um relacionamento de dez anos com um homem casado e pela morte da sua tia mas irá encontrar em Gem, um simpático cão a companhia e lealdade que precisa neste momento de solidão.

Não há que enganar: neste livro os verdadeiros protagonistas são Gem, Bertie e Toffee que têm uma nova esperança de serem amados e irmãos ajudar as três mulheres a encontrarem o caminho para a felicidade!

Foi uma leitura bastante agradável, amorosa e ternurenta. Não tenham medo de ler pois ninguém morre no

fim do livro ;)

Obrigada à Filipa Monteiro pelo empréstimo!

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