



Letter from Alabama: The Inspiring True Story of Strangers Who Saved a Child and Changed a Family Forever

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David's life could turn out very, very badly. His mother dies suddenly when he is an infant. Then at age two, he is gone. Vanished, with his father, and abandoned in a far-away place.

His future hangs on a Letter from Alabama, a piece of paper that must travel hundreds of miles in an envelope. Then it must land in exactly the right place in a busy office where nobody is under any obligation to read it or pay any attention to it. This is the true story of that letter, and all that will transpire because of it.

It's the story of human failure, and human triumph. Forgiveness and redemption. It is a testament to, and a prayer of thanks for, good and decent people everywhere who stand up for a child when they don't have to—when they have nothing to gain and perhaps much to lose.

It's a tribute to those who see the potential in a young person and give that person a chance to be the best that he or she can be. They are the heroes for whom this story is now committed to writing.

Letter from Alabama: The Inspiring True Story of Strangers Who Saved a Child and Changed a Family Forever Details

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Margaret says

I received this book as part of a Goodreads giveaway. While the story is interesting and has a lot of potential, I was turned off by the clinical, detached nature of the narrative. As a memoir, I'd expect something a little more personal. My copy also had a couple of typos, so as much as I wanted to give this book more stars, since writing it clearly meant a lot to the author, I just couldn't.

Sharlyn Zimmerman-Tollefson says

I was intrigued by the title and how it would play out. Written in third person, I did find it challenging at times. There is a lot of specific facts of history and geography included in this book which I don't usually find in the genre of books that I read. Overall I was disappointed that there was not more of an emotional telling of the story. I'm sure that there was much heartbreak through the different generations, but I didn't feel emotionally drawn into the story like I had hoped that I would be. It seemed sort of like more of a history book than a story of a person's real life.

Lori says

David Workman writes about his family. He gives a history of his mother who during her first marriage has three boys. When her first husband leaves her she remarries and has two babies one year apart. David was one of those babies. When his mother dies after giving birth to his one year younger sister, the family is broken apart. His oldest brother Ralph who is about 22 or 23 years older than him places a letter to find David and bring him home. This is a very loving tribute to family and how they stick together during tough times and be there for each other. I will not give too many details of what happened to David's family. I would give this sweet tribute to family a 3.5.

Alexandra Engellmann says

I got my heart broken by David Workman. Seriously. This heart-wrenching memoir is a dangerous weapon! Set in the 1950's, Letter from Alabama tells the story of a letter sent by a woman to a newspaper in Dayton with a weighty mission – to return a boy to his family. Without any guarantees, she hopes that someone will recognize the boy from her description and get back to her about it. And so David's adventure begins. This skillfully written biography covers a lot of subjects, including history, parenting, adoption, and most importantly, the heroism of ordinary people. It tells the story of unconditional love, care, and forgiveness, and of those who aren't afraid to take a chance for somebody else's sake. Every page filled me with thrill, and the cry-baby that I am, I had to make a pause sometimes to distract myself from the avalanche of emotions that followed. But there's another reason why I called this book a weapon – it also has a great

inspirational side to it, the side that reminds the reader of what's important, and that teaches a lot of life lessons.

The tone of the book reminded me of some of my favorite movies: Chocolate, Malena, and Life is Beautiful. Though they have almost nothing in common, plot-wise, they follow the lives of ordinary people – and still result in miracles.

It's a beautiful, beautiful story, and I recommend it to anyone who doesn't shy away from simple stories because they often have the most incredible meaning!

I received a copy of the book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Nick Rossi says

Reading a novel based on a true story could turn out either really amazingly well (Into the Wild) or very, very bad (well, I don't want to get into trouble so let's leave this one to your imagination). David Workman's richly detailed "Letter From Alabama" fortunately falls into the former type of novelization, and I was very thankful for that discovery.

"Letter From Alabama" is a timeless piece of fiction. Telling the true story of a letter published in a small town newspaper in May 1952, Workman successfully manages to keep a neutral point of view in the often myriad of plot developments that can sometimes be difficult to endure. Tackling the overarching and weighty themes that often are depicted in many modern literary masterpieces, Workman's weaving of the power of forgiveness and unconditional love of family demonstrates his clear talent of storytelling.

For a story that takes place in the 1950's the plot is strangely modern in its tone and subject matter. Topical themes such as blended families, broken families, and inspiration are not entirely out of place of the recent best sellers that are based in present-day. Workman's depiction of a small child who is coming of age is relevant, timely, and timeless. Have you ever gotten tired of reading Catcher in the Rye? Didn't think so.

There's always something soothing about hearing and reading about stories that portray a characters maturation into adulthood. Workman cleverly demonstrates the fatalistic and randomness of life. He delves into the chances people sometimes take to help others and further them along on their journey, whatever that may be. We have all known a child like David. In "Letter From Alabama" Mr. Workman does not shy away from articulating in impressive prosaic style that the power of the human soul will always prevail, and there will invariably be that person willing to take a risk to make someone's life just a little bit better.

Fiona says

An incredibly well researched memoir, not only about the life of little David but his ancestry stretching back several generations.

The abandonment of the small boy with a paid child minder and the letter she writes to a newspaper in the hope someone will claim the child is heartbreak. While this event clearly had a profound effect on the child and his family it only takes up a section of the book. As well as getting to know the large extended family the book gave me a great insight into daily life in America in the 1940s - 1960s. As a UK reader about a decade younger than the author I found this very interesting. I really appreciated the inclusion of old family

photographs in the text. Elements of the book arguably are of interest only to family and friends but as time marches on this type of memoir does record a slice of life probably very typical of the time and it can be said all families are the same in some respects but at the same time all families are uniquely different.

I didn't always feel comfortable with the style of writing which felt quite distant especially as this is a very personal story. That being said it enabled the author to include a great deal of family history in a concise way. As the author has had a career in journalism I did wonder if the style was a deliberate ploy to distance himself? Either way by the end of the book I did have a sense of the author's personality and why tracing his roots was so important to him.

Donna says

Letter from Alabama: A true story of the personal life and upbringing of Mr David L. Workman and his extended family. He wrote his story in the third person, which at first made me think he was writing about someone else in his family. Then, I realized it was his life I was actually reading about.

This is a story of a family that struggled through many hardships and challenges. They did and still do continue to love each other deeply through all.

David worked himself up into becoming a writer and worked for many newspapers, etc. He is an exceptional person. He put lots of research and history of his family and the years growing up with family near and far.

This book was very inspiring to me. The love of family is just wonderful throughout, whether there was a misunderstanding between others at a time or not. Learned a lot from Mr. Workman.

The author sent me a copy of this book and I am grateful that I got to read it. I am also thankful for him sending me a copy.

Shaun says

I received a copy of this book for free through a Goodreads First Reads Giveaway.

Letter from Alabama is a very personal story of the author's upbringing. There are a few small twists in the book, but overall it's a pretty straightforward story of circumstances that come together at just the right times. The tale is engaging and interesting.

Mr. Workman chose to write about himself in the third person, which took a bit of getting used to. It's a unique approach to a memoir, I think. I also think the writing is similar to a long news story, which makes sense given the author's background in journalism. This is not a negative, it's a bit different, which I enjoyed.

Overall, if you like a unique personal story about one man and his family, this is one you shouldn't miss.

Jamie says

I'm very thankful for receiving a signed copy from David. His story is heartwarming and appears very well

researched. I loved that photos were interspersed at important junctures. I look forward to sharing his third person story in our Little Free Library.

Gail says

A true story about the life of the author David L. Workman and his extended family. His is an unusual story. I don't know why I continued to read it after the first few pages as it became very confusing to me. To me it's a list of names, dates and places that I never could keep straight. It is interesting to see what the ramifications of A Letter From Alabama are.

Jan says

While interesting I found some parts filled with information that would only be interesting to family members. I just could not relate.

Nancy says

This book called to me. I worked as a Child Welfare Worker in Alabama, and I often wonder what has happened to children that were part of my case load. I wanted to learn how David's life was changed.

David Workman is the author, and also the subject of this book, but the author writes the book as the journalist he became. I wish he had written it as David the rescued child. That part starts coming in more as the book evolves. He gets into the genealogy of his family at the end of the book. I wish he had put a family group sheet in the back, which would have helped follow this complicated family.

David had older siblings, who ended up being parents in two different families, to him and his sister. I wondered how the family handled telling the children about all the relationships in the family. David thought of his older brother, as his dad, and his sister-in-law as his mother.

The book reminded me of reading case histories, and I felt it needed more organization. It was an interesting story of how a child was rescued and loved by his extended family.

Barbara cardana says

it was an interesting story, but i didnt think it was told very well

Rebecca McNutt says

Letter From Alabama is the kind of book that works like a time machine, grounded in history and capturing truly amazing moments. Inspirational, incredible and deeply unforgettable, this is the kind of uplifting story that's in short supply these days.

Mark says

I struggled somewhat with this book, but I'd be the first to say that likely has more to do with me than with the writer. The biographical account favors those with a mind for names and dates and faces spanning great periods of time. And people who can hold all that information in their heads as they wait for the various story threads to come together. I can remember no small amount of history books that were force fed me in college that similarly went in one ear and out the next because I couldn't hold on to information when it was presented like this. But for the right reader, this is clearly a very well-researched, well-organized, and thoroughly thought out exploration of key figures from the author's past. Figures that were worth knowing.
