



The Most Fun We Ever Had

Claire Lombardo

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"A gripping and poignant ode to a messy, loving family in all its glory."

--Madeline Miller

A dazzling, multigenerational novel in which the four adult daughters of a Chicago couple--still madly in love after forty years--recklessly ignite old rivalries until a long-buried secret threatens to shatter the lives they've built.

When Marilyn Connolly and David Sorenson fall in love in the 1970s, they are blithely ignorant of all that's to come. By 2016, their four radically different daughters are each in a state of unrest: Wendy, widowed young, soothes herself with booze and younger men; Violet, a litigator-turned-stay-at-home-mom, battles anxiety and self-doubt when the darkest part of her past resurfaces; Liza, a neurotic and newly tenured professor, finds herself pregnant with a baby she's not sure she wants by a man she's not sure she loves; and Grace, the dawdling youngest daughter, begins living a lie that no one in her family even suspects. Above it all, the daughters share the lingering fear that they will never find a love quite like their parents'.

As the novel moves through the tumultuous year following the arrival of Jonah Bendt--given up by one of the daughters in a closed adoption fifteen years before--we are shown the rich and varied tapestry of the Sorensens' past: years marred by adolescence, infidelity, and resentment, but also the transcendent moments of joy that make everything else worthwhile.

Spanning nearly half a century, and set against the quintessential American backdrop of Chicago and its prospering suburbs, Lombardo's debut explores the triumphs and burdens of love, the fraught tethers of parenthood and sisterhood, and the baffling mixture of affection, abhorrence, resistance, and submission we feel for those closest to us. In painting this luminous portrait of a family's becoming, Lombardo joins the ranks of writers such as Celeste Ng, Elizabeth Strout, and Jonathan Franzen as visionary chroniclers of our modern lives.

The Most Fun We Ever Had Details

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Author : Claire Lombardo

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From Reader Review The Most Fun We Ever Had for online ebook

Cynthia says

Terrific debut novel about family dynamics, particularly relationships among sisters. This book is to be published in June 2019. Thank you to the publisher Doubleday. I feel sure this will be a top read for me in 2019.

Elysse says

This is one of the best reads of 2019, bar none. I am calling it... this book will win all of the awards. Claire Lombardo is the next Kingsolver. Here it is in writing, in January of 2019, and I can't wait to look back on this and know how right I was.

Lombardo's debut novel is truly a work of art. It follows the Sorenson family, consisting of Marilyn and David (the parents), and their four daughters, Wendy, Violet, Liza, and Grace. Each character has their own personality, truly distinct and yet somehow envelopes that of all families. It felt in a way as if my own family were being described, in how different we all are but yet how we come together and find ourselves bound together by blood.

The story is told in flashbacks, as well as present day, chapters alternating. We witness the story unraveling, how the characters got to the point that they are now, almost as if a coming-of-age story for every single character individually and as a family unit. Marilyn and David have an unparalleled love story that engulfed me, and gave me hope that my fiancé and I have found what those two have. And, it reminded me of my own parents, married now for 35 years and still as in love as they were the day that they met.

Despite the privilege in which these characters are bread into, they have their own struggles. No one is immune from mental illness, no one is immune from ill-fated hardships, and it felt as though reading this book was seeing a very realistic and relatable family through a very raw, magnifying lens.

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed this book. I am heartbroken that I have finished it, and wish I could read it again with the same lack of awareness as the first time. I think a LOT of readers will resonate with one or more characters in the novel, and the thematic elements that emerge through Lombardo's writing. Lovers of Kingsolver's Unsheltered will love this piece of writing. I know I did!

Ilyssa Wesche says

If you liked The Nest, this is the book for you. A big family drama filled with flawed characters I loved to - at times - hate. Even though I understood, and could empathize with their situations, that didn't make them any more lovable, but it did make for a great read.

Jamckean says

THE MOST FUN WE EVER HAD is simply marvelous. I am awed by this author's ability to create characters who have soaked into my pores. Lombardo's impressive debut is poignant, tender and wise. I was wholly engrossed in the lives of the David Sorenson and Marilyn Connolly and their four daughters, a tight tribe who compete, resent and love each other fiercely. Lombardo's ability to capture the day to day anxieties, revelations and joys we face as parents is simply astounding. Truly a remarkable novel.

Mary says

Claire Lombardo has given readers an epic family saga in *The Most Fun We Ever Had*. For anyone who wonders if the "perfect marriage" exists, this book is for you. Following a family back and forth through the decades, *The Most Fun We Ever Had* is about relationships on every level: sisters, parents, lovers, children; and the love, hurt, and pain we inflict on each other. This will be the perfect book for my readers who love to dig into a meaty read.

Cindy says

This book was incredibly fun to read all the way through its 520 pages. I am going to miss the Sorenson family!. I don't think that I've read another book that so well captured regular life - spousal, parental and sibling thoughts and dialogue were spot on throughout all of this families ups and downs. It felt so real yet was still very entertaining! What a great reminder that there are always two ways to look at everything and that often self talk - the ideas that we work up in our heads leading up to an encounter or dialogue - are encased with negativity that doesn't reflect reality. I will admit I got Wendy and Violet, two of the four sisters, mixed up for the first 20% of the book which made me a bit confused but it eventually became clear which sister was which! Of course it is also always fun to read a book that is set in your own town. If you liked the TV show *Parenthood* you will definitely love this book.

Thank you to NetGalley for providing me an early version in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Natalie says

I initially opened up the book to ensure it had downloaded correctly, but as I glanced at the first page, I was magnetically drawn towards it and soon found myself unable to put the book down. It is simply mesmerizing, beautifully written with many characters, each well developed.

Lombardo has created a family, one with myriad issues, but tied together by love, kindness and loyalty. The Sorensons have four daughters, each dealing with personal crises, and remarkable parents whose love for each other and their daughters never wavers.

The catalyst for the story is the reappearance of Jonah, the child who had been given up for adoption by Violet, a now comfortable, upwardly striving matron, who finds her life radically changed by his appearance. The reader sees the reaction of all the characters to this innocent, lovable teenager.

Lombardo skillfully weaves in the backstories of the other family members, each of whom is likable and engaging. I felt involved with each of the sisters and I loved reading about their histories. I simply loved this

novel and thank Netgalley for the absolute joy I had reading this grand family saga. I hope Lombardo continues to write such brilliant novels in the future.
