



Farthest House

Margaret Lukas

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When Willow is born and her mother dies moments later, only the narrator of this spellbinding, debut novel knows the death isn't from complications of childbirth. Amelie-Anaïs, buried on the Nebraska hilltop where the family home resides, tells this story of deceit, survival, and love from beyond the grave. Following Willow's life and Willow's incredible passion to paint despite loneliness, a physical handicap, and being raised by a father plagued with secrets, Amelie-Anaïs weaves together the lives of four enigmatic generations.

"Not since 'The Lovely Bones' have we experienced such a moving tale of love, suspense, and family secrets narrated by a ghost. Lukas creates a complex, moving story with brilliant lyricism and hard won realism. She is a rare writer who makes you devour her words. Readers of Alice Hoffman and Anita Shreve will love this novel...and stay up all night to finish it!" -Jonis Agee, author of "The River Wife"

"Margaret Lukas has written a page-turner of a novel. 'Farthest House,' boldly narrated by an unsettled spirit, is part-ghost story and a full-out love story of a family coming to terms with its mysterious past, much of it lived in an ancestral home set within a gorgeously rendered Nebraska landscape. Above all, Farthest House is the story of Willow, a bewildered little girl who grows into a passionate painter. I can't remember the last time I rooted so enthusiastically for a heroine." –Anna Monardo, author of "The Courtyard of Dreams" and "Falling in Love with Natassia"

"Haunting and eerily beautiful, Margaret Lukas' 'Farthest House' is like the family treasure chest one finds in the attic. It may seem inviting at first, but open at your own risk. An ode to both what we should and should never know about the generations that preceded us, 'Farthest House' is an unsettling, unforgettable book." Holiday Reinhorn, author of "Big Cats: Stories"

Farthest House Details

Date : Published January 14th 2014 by WriteLife, LLC (first published January 10th 2014)

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From Reader Review Farthest House for online ebook

Katie Wernz says

Life has never been easy for Willow Starmore. She was born with a physical handicap, her mother died during Willow's birth, her father spends most of his time grieving over the mother she doesn't remember, and she is an outcast at school. But she is able to find happiness on the weekends when her father takes her back to his childhood home, Farthest House, to spend time with her grandmother Luessy, her aunt Tory, and their groundskeeper, Jonah. Here, Willow feels she fits in. She helps Jonah tend to his bees, paints with her grandmother, and visits the family cemetery where her ancestors and her mother are laid to rest.

Things are wonderful until her grandmother dies of an unexpected illness. After the funeral, her father becomes a different man. He stops working, starts drinking, and abandons parenting almost altogether. The remainder of Willow's adolescence is full of loneliness, heartbreak, and disappointment, but she manages to escape reality through her artwork, using the paints and easel her grandmother left to her. Years later, once life becomes too much to bear alone, Aunt Tory invites Willow to return to Farthest House to try to rebuild her life, but she soon finds things are not quite as she remembers at the old family home, and secrets begin to seep out of the woodwork.

This story is narrated by Amelie-Anais, Willow's long-dead great aunt and keeper of many of the family secrets. She knows the Starmores aren't dying of natural causes and she knows the decades-old reasons behind the deaths. She is watching over Willow in the hopes that she will break the horrible cycle and regain her life before it's too late.

This is a really good story with lots of ups and downs (although the downs come along far more often than the ups) and great characters the reader wants to root for. Willow is a brave, strong young girl, despite her setbacks and her hope, determination, and love for her family help to keep the story moving along. I recommend this to anyone who likes their novels full of dysfunction, with just a hint of dark and twisted.

Emily Lukas wettengel says

I know you probably think i am biased but I have read a TON of books in my day and I still think about this one. Best book I've ever read.

Tracy says

A much better book than I expected. For most of this book I was thinking Wow! this is a five star read! But towards the end it began to drag a little bit and honestly I got a little bit sick of the main character making bad decisions. Of course the plot would not have been as tragic without those bad decisions, so I suppose they were right for this story. If you enjoy well-written novels that tend to be a bit depressing in nature, but also very descriptive and imaginative, this should be right up your alley. Pick it up and read it, you will not regret it.

Thank you to Goodreads for a copy of this book.

Joan Berney says

I recieved an advance copy of Farthest House which I finished reading this morning. It is one of the best books I've ever read! The plot is a masterpiece and the characterization is incredible. I loved, loved, loved it! I wanted to read fast to see what happened, and I wanted to read slow to make it last longer.

Diane says

I won this uncorrected proof in the November LibraryThing Giveaway and very glad that I did! This book makes me wish I was retired so I could read as late into the night as I wanted! I would have finished this book in one sitting if I had started earlier. This story is told by Amelie-Anais who tells us the story of four enigmatic generations. This narrator is buried where the family home is located in Nebraska. So many secrets and too many deaths. We're following Willow's life and how it is impacted by a birth defect and being raised by a father drowning in sorrow over the loss of his wife during the birth of Willow. Just a wonderful book! It's being published January 28, 2014...mark your calendars!

Hazel says

This book gripped me from the first chapter until the last. A definite page-turner that had my mind turning with it's twisting plot. Reminds me of the style of V.C. Andrews but with much more connection to the characters. I hate to give any of it away as every part of this book was a clue of what was to come or what had already passed. Plenty of "aha" moments to awaken your senses and keep you turning the page!! Cannot wait until she releases her next story! A fan for life... highly recommend!

Juliene says

Farthest House is a wonderful story. It reminds me of White Oleander and Cane River - tales of young women with strength beyond their years building a happy life out of tragedy. Highly recommend!

Melanie Moreau says

I am now a huge fan of Margaret Lukas. I won a copy of Farthest House via Goodreads giveaways and I am so glad that I did.

There are those rare times when you read an outstanding book and when you finish, it feels as if you have watched a movie. It's that good.

Mrs. Lukas' ability to bring the characters and the setting to life is one of the best I have encountered.

I look forward to her next release.

**This would be an amazing read for a book club or group reading.

Geoff Merrill says

I received a copy of this book on Monday and finished it on Wednesday. This was a page turner from the first to the last. There is a lot to connect to in regards to Nebraska, France, Native America, Catholicism and religion in general. You just want to root for all the victims, and have hope for family. I have to hand it to Margaret who not only kept me interested, but made me search my memories for the timeframe of the novel, starting in 1960 as I was born in 1961. Growing up in a very small town, the house and her description of its origins are not too dissimilar from stories of some houses from my town's history. Though different stories altogether, it's the fact that it has history is what makes the similarity. As a man and a father, you just want to protect the female characters. However, as history has revealed over and over again, women are quite capable of protecting themselves. What I have had is the privilege of discovering through 20 years of wonderful marriage, women don't want protection (some do but this is not appropriate discussion for the review of this book). They want to be supported for who they are and who they can become in my humble opinion. I considered it an honor to read this before the book signing and have discussed it with many of my friends and coworkers. Read this book, it's just that good.

Geoff

Felicity Gibson says

The Farthest House
Margaret Lukas
Read September 30th 2014

There are times in life when you read an unforgettable book – in fact to such an extent that the narrative sits like a movie script in your mind. Beautifully realistic and touching. The story is narrated by Amerlie-Anais, Willow's long dead great aunt who is 'keeper of the family secrets.' The opening lines, when she mutters the word 'murder' chill the reader to the bone and questions keep on tumbling out. Only her aunt knows the secrets of the past and the cycle which Willow will inherit. There is so much packed into this book that you never fail to be surprised from the beginning to the end. It is like sorting out a giant puzzle with so much suspense and fear packed within the pages. This is a novel brimming over with dysfunction, with a touch of something sinister, dark and hidden. Farthest House is an epic, spanning four generations of women. Secrets are revealed layer by layer and by the end of the novel, the reader has a deep understanding of the women who lived in Farthest House.

This novel deserves 5 stars.

Barb Zoucha says

I was fascinated by the depth of the characters in this book right away and continually surprised at what happened next. I had to keep reading to see how it would all turn out. I would love to see a mini series. Well

written and loved the ending.

Kendra says

I received this book through Early Readers on Library Thing. It will be released January 2014, and I recommend this book to everyone who likes mysteries/suspense. I mean I REALLY recommend it! If I could give it 10 stars I would. This book grabbed me from the very beginning...A baby girl is born in her grandmother's house and her mother dies immediately after - but not from complications of childbirth. She was murdered. We are told this right at the beginning, but not by who, why, or how. The story is narrated by the baby's great aunt Amelie-Anais, or actually her great aunt's spirit. The rest of the story follows the girl until she's 20. I really can't tell more about the story in this short space, and wouldn't want to try - there is too much! What I can say is that it is filled with suspense from the beginning to end. I feel like I've been holding my breath from start to finish. The characters are so well-drawn that I really felt that I knew them, and certainly developed specific feelings about each of them. The story is so well written, I can't think of any point at which I felt it was dragging. In fact, I started the book yesterday afternoon, had to force myself to put it down and go to sleep last night, then read through the day today, finally finishing the 504 pages just a few minutes ago. You will NOT be disappointed by this book!!

Renie Rutten says

This is the best book I've read my entire life. The scenes and the characters just came to life, I felt like I was part of each scene.

Before I knew it I was drawn into the lives of the families and living a part of their experiences.

An amazing book, a must read!

Kathy says

Bravo to Ms. Margie Lukas on her debut novel, *Farthest House*, that tells the tale of four generations of the main character, Willow, and her family. While a little long (502 pages), I found myself staying up later and later each night as I became caught up in all of the family secrets and engrossed in this well-written, entertaining murder/mystery /suspense. If you like reading Mary Higgins Clark and Belva Plain, I believe you will enjoy the writing of Margie Lukas.

I received a complimentary copy of *Farthest House* from LibraryThing Early Reviewer.

Sandi says

I just couldn't put this book down. So many twists and turns that keep you guessing until the very end. Love that it's by a Nebraska author!
