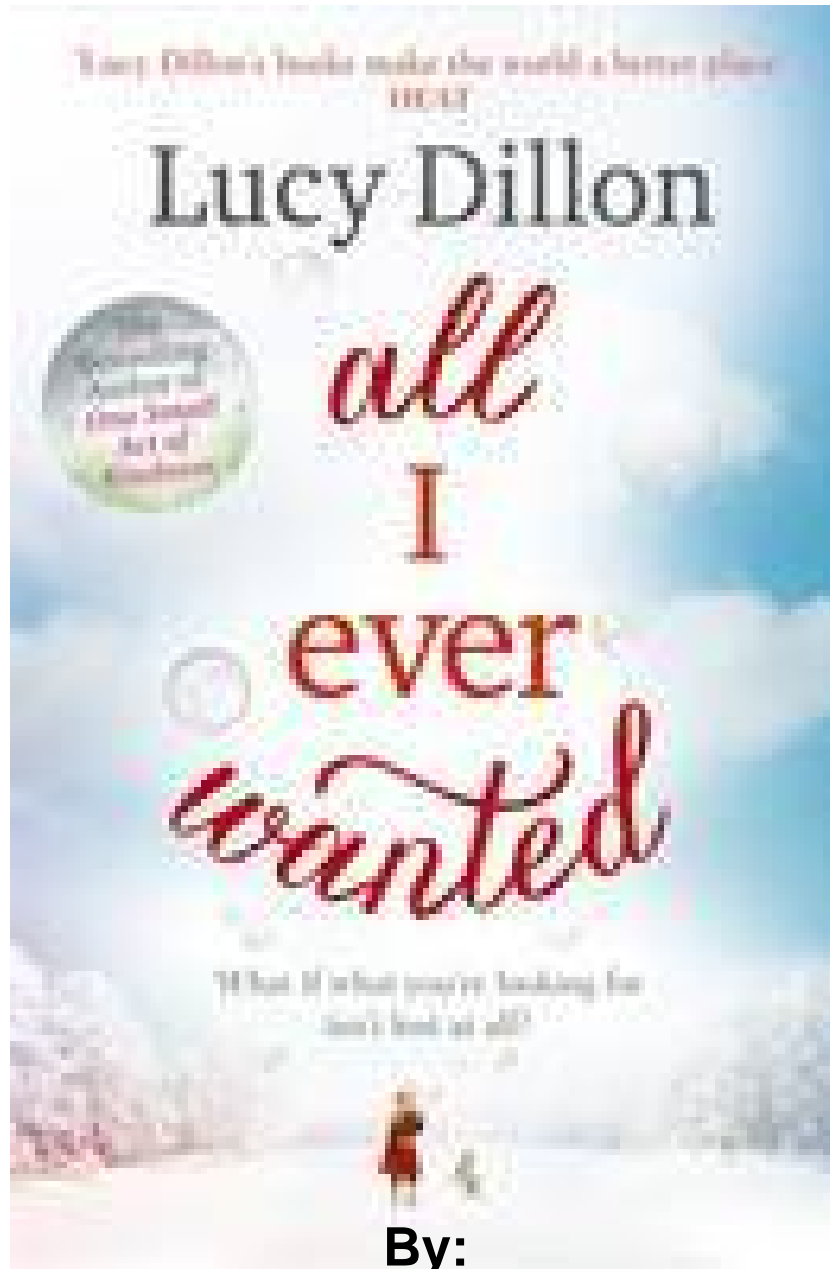


All I Ever Wanted Book PDF Download



By:
Lucy Dillon

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What people Say:

Lynn Mccarthy

This is the first book I have read by this Author but not the last.

The book is about family issues and relationships there are two separate stories that intertwine in the story plus two cute children.

Its a beautiful book with a heart warming story.

Thank you netgalley the Publisher and Author for letting me review this book.

Katherine

Lucy Dillon is one of my 'go to' books for when I need a 'comfort read'. So this week on a wet, dark, cold morning when I was not feeling my brightest or my best, this book really was 'all I ever wanted' and actually 'all I ever needed' to unwind with. I was happy to settle into a story where I knew, despite the ups and downs that would inevitably test the characters, Dillon would deliver a satisfying read in which to escape for a few hours.

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This novel has two story lines centred around one family. Caitlin and Patrick, parents of Nancy and Joel, find their marriage has come to an end. Patrick moves away to Newcastle. Caitlin tries to hold the family together. Nancy, a bubbly four year old, suddenly stops speaking. Joel, more extroverted, struggles as he tries to help Nancy survive without her own voice. The second story line is about Patrick's sister Eva who is recently widowed. Eva's house is to become the neutral space where the children can see their father. But Eva has never had children and even though they are her niece and nephew, she is inexperienced in looking after them, particularly as they are all trying to come to terms with such huge life changing situations. Dillon then explores both women's journey's as they come to terms with their relationships, needs, wishes and pasts, interweaving their narratives as they each start to realise what parenting, marriage, love and families means to them.

I liked both the chapters about Caitlin and the chapters about Eva. I liked that I was involved in two quite different stories about women at very different points in their marriages, yet they were linked - through themes as well as more physically through the children and Patrick. I found it really interesting and engaging how Dillon knitted them all together.

Caitlin was easy to like. She has a very honest and blunt voice and her comment in the opening pages that it was "the little things you fall in love with that make you want to stab your partner to death with a fork in the end" felt very well observed! The way Patrick opened his "notebook of issues to raise in mediation" were incredibly visual and immediately created an image of his practical, focussed, workaholic character.

Their story is sad. Patrick has always put work first; to him, this is the best way to be a father by earning money to allow Caitlin to be at home with the children everyday. He knows he misses the "magical stuff" but he does so because he is working. He has a very clear, perhaps inflexible, outlook which is largely based on a misinformed image of his own parents. His view of them is based on photos and selective memories rather than the truth. Through the daily pressure of having a young family and working hard, Caitlin and Patrick have simply fallen out of love with each other.

Initially I was more sympathetic towards Caitlin and found her reflections about parenting very moving and real:

"the types of pain she most wanted to protect them from were invisible, out of her control, and these are the things that kept her awake at night."

But then, as the novel progress there are moments when I felt more sympathy towards Patrick. His explanations about why he thought he was doing the right thing and why he has put work first reveal his naivety and there was also something that made me feel pity for this man who was so desperately trying to do the right thing but in fact getting it so wrong. I like that we roll from one character to the other, realigning our feelings as we watch how they behave and react to various situations. Dillon never quite lets us side with only one character, she wants us to feel sympathy for them all in different ways.

Louise

Nancy is four, nearly five. She talks all the time: in the car, on the way to nursery, to her extrovert older brother, to her collection of bears. But then, one February morning, everything changes. Nancy's mum and dad split up. Her father Patrick moves away from their Bristol home to Newcastle. And Nancy stops talking.

Eva is forty-four, nearly forty-five. She didn't expect to be the third wife of a much-loved household name, but eight years ago, she and semi-retired bad boy Michael Quinn fell i

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Eva is forty-four, nearly forty-five. She didn't expect to be the third wife of a much-loved household name, but eight years ago, she and semi-retired bad boy Michael Quinn fell in love. Eva knew marrying a much older man meant compromises, but it was the love of a lifetime for them both - until Mickey dies suddenly, leaving Eva alone with his gossipy diaries, their two pugs, and a distressing voice in the back of her mind, wondering if perhaps she's sacrificed more than she meant to.

While Nancy's parents negotiate their separation, the question of weekend contact is solved when Patrick volunteers his sister Eva's house. It's in Longhampton, an hour out of Bristol, with plenty of room for her to get to know a niece and nephew she's barely met - even if Nancy continues to refuse to speak. Patrick is sure it's just a phase but his soon-to-be-ex-wife is worried that something more traumatic lies at the heart of their daughter's selective mutism.

Meanwhile, Eva begins to read through Mickey's diaries, and with every page she's forced to confront a view of her marriage that turns everything she believed about her late husband, her self - and her own heart - on its head. The fortnightly presence of two children in her peaceful, grown-up home - one constantly singing and performing, the other wordless and sad - initially drives Eva and the two pugs, Bumble and Bee, to exhaustion, but as spring turns into summer, a trust slowly begins to form between an anxious little girl with a heartbreaking secret, and a woman who has realised too late that what her soul yearns for is the love of a child.

4 stars****

All I ever wanted isn't the usual kind of book I go for, however I came across this one and thought I'd give it a go. I struggled at first. Nothing really seemed to be happening and I like my fast paced books. I quickly came to the realisation that this wasn't a fast paced book, it was so much more.

As I said, it took me a while to get into it but when I did, I thought it was brilliant. It always amazes me when a book takes you by surprise.

I really enjoyed the way the author touched on very real issues about very real family problems such as, divorce or separation and the impact it can have on the children. Of the way that grief can turn into isolation and loneliness. I can imagine what it's like to go through something like this and how they are dealt with.

Nicola Clough

I always look forward to Lucy Dillon's books and she certainly didn't disappoint at all very moving story and follows the lives of number of people and makes you think. Caitlin is going through a split from her husband and her daughter Nancy stops talking but she use to be so talkative so comes as a shock her brother speaks for her but their auntie Eva lost her husband a number of years ago but is suddenly given his diaries and she starts to read them can she cope with what she hears but she als

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Emma Rogers

I'm not notorious for reading books outside of the young adult genre on this blog but I thought I would widen my horizons when I requested this novel on Netgalley from well know author, Lucy Dillon. All I Ever Wanted explores the lives of two women going through separations for different reasons and delves into the life on one special little girl.

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The two protagonists of the novel are sister-in-laws Caitlin and Eva. They've never spent much time together before but Caitlin's divorce means their paths cross once again and Eva begins to spend more time getting to know her niece and nephew. I fell in love with Eva's character. She is suffering from her husband's death and struggling to move on when her family come back into her life. Although cautious at first, Eva quickly becomes a mother-figure and we see her change from reserved and composed to affectionate and lively. I felt deeply for Eva as she reads through her late husband's diaries and discovers she didn't know as much about him as she originally thought. Despite this, their love was strong and their marriage one I dream of having myself. They were a unit and Mick's death affects not only Eva, but the reader too.

'Fierce love coursed through her, along with roaring guilt that she'd let this happen.'

I can't say that I was as big a fan of Caitlin as I was of her sister-in-law. Following her separation from her husband, Caitlin embarks on a relationship with Lee, a personal trainer and band member she has been mesmerized by for a number of years. Although Lee was charming enough, I found Caitlin to be very selfish when she started this relationship because her children were left in danger on a number of occasions as a result, even if not directly because of their mother. Caitlin's need to feel young again beats her need to be a mother and I think this is the reason I didn't warm to her as much. Undoubtedly, however, Caitlin does love her children and you can see the close relationship she has with both of her children throughout the novel.

The main focus of the novel is 4 year old Nancy, daughter of Caitlin and niece of Eva. Over the course of the novel, Nancy begins to talk less and less until but the end she can't speak at all, communicating only to her auntie's pet pugs and through non-verbal actions. Nancy is possibly the cutest child I have ever come across in fiction. She was absolutely adorable in everything she did and her triumph at the end is heartbreaking. I also loved her relationship with her older brother, Joel, who acted as her savior, stepping in when she physically couldn't let her feelings be known and making his parents aware of his sister's situation. They were a team, getting through their parent's

divorce together.

'Nancy smiled inside. And she smiled on the outside.'

As a whole the novel dealt with divorce and separation incredibly well. As a child from a 'broken home', I have very strong opinions on divorce and separation and as a result I found it interesting to see divorce from an adult's perspective, although I think this is one of the reasons I didn't warm to Caitlin so much. Eva's story stood out for me, however, when she realises that she will never be a mother after the death of her husband. I found this to be the saddest aspect of the novel. Eva has to decide whether to use fertility treatment to bring up a child or choose to live a life on her own. One of these decisions, however, means letting go of her husband.

I am also going to note what a great Christmas novel this is. All I Ever Wanted is not centered around Christmas, but the opening chapter gives it a Christmas feel and it will be released in December so it's perfect to read in the winter months. As well as this, I think you may appreciate the novel more if you're British. I have mentioned before how much I love British novels because I understand the humour more, and this novel had some great British references, which were both up to date and funny.