



INDIENEXT PICK FOR JUNE 2009

Last Night in Montreal

A Novel

By Emily St. John Mandel

ISBN: 978-1-932961-68-3; Hardcover Fiction; \$24.95; 6X9; 256 pages

"[A] taut, gripping debut ... **elegantly compelling.**"—*Booklist*

"The fast pacing and unusual characters make this **a compelling first novel. Highly recommended.**"—*Library Journal*

"The pages fly, and the final period leaves a palpable sense of loss."—*Paste Magazine*

"**Mandel chooses her words with careful love and arranges them to exquisite effect. At its heart this book is a mystery, a few mysteries;** we wait and we wonder while being charmed by Mandel's intricate narrative dance which threads three different moving plot lines together into a perfectly tangled tapestry. Like a tightrope walker's steps above a cobblestoned alley, **her lines follow each other with near breathless precision and echo delicately long after the final page has been turned.**"
—*ForeWord Magazine*

"**I realized that this novel is why I became a bookseller and why after almost 22 years I remain one.** To come across **a gem** like this makes slogging through many many other books we read, ones that may be goodish, or ordinary or even bad, all worthwhile. **Her voice captivated me from the start and the way the story unfolds kept me reading it compulsively...** I really loved this book and thank you for thinking of me and sending it along. **I think that Emily St. John Mandel will haunt me like Michael Chabon. Long after reading, the story, the characters will stay with me.**"—Michael Fraser, Joseph Beth Booksellers

“A cocktail of neurotic travel, obsession, and misunderstandings...The characters in St. John Mandel’s book are people who don’t understand one another, but more importantly, they don’t understand themselves...a very good, fast read...it was refreshing to read about people that are normal yet dysfunctional, intelligent yet confused—in other words, they’re just like most of us out there.”—*feministreview.org*

“I was caught and held by the small and large mysteries sprinkled throughout...then **sorry to see the book end.**”—**Jenn Northington, The King's English Bookshop**

“Mandel's debut novel, which is intense and subtle in equal measure, **has left me completely dazzled.** Lilia, abducted by her father at the age of seven, grows up to be a wanderer, utterly incapable of forming lasting attachments or understanding the concept of home. When she quietly leaves Eli behind, he traces her to Montreal, where Lilia's past and present collide in one mysterious young woman whose training as a tightrope walker stands in sharp counterpoint to her unbalanced mental state. Ultimately this is a novel about urgency and restraint and about both the tragedies and rewards that we reap when we try to push beyond the limits of meaning and understanding. **Mandel resists the temptation to tie all three storylines up too neatly, leaving a couple of them to unravel as they may, and I think we can expect great things from this author in the future.** – **Emily Crowe, Odyssey Bookshop**

"A strangely beautiful book...**easy for me to fall into.**"—**Stephanie Anderson, Moravian Bookshop and bookavore.com**

“Mandel's intriguing debut novel begins with the abduction of a young girl, Lilia, by her father, and leads the reader on a twisting journey that is **part love story, part mystery. I would recommend this book for anyone looking for a suspenseful read...**”—**Jennifer Meador, Lemuria Books**

"*Last Night in Montreal* marks the debut of a lyrical voice, singing its heart out. Please sit up and take notice. It's a **beautiful** work." –**Darin Strauss**

“Lilia is sort of a Dean Moriarty-like drifter and **the way Ms. Mandel writes is soothing like waves along a river's edge.** I loved the desolation but at the same time there's a weird connection between all these characters, who are all full characters. No one, not even the ones that only show up briefly, is less than three dimensional. It was just a very enjoyable read. Thanks for sharing it.”—**Julia Callahan, Book Soup**

"Mandel writes with refreshing sadness, the mystery and grief in her heart-wrenching story pulls you in and shows you everything in slow motion. And as you continue reading and learning what Lilia is running from and where she is running to, you will find yourself powerless to stop it. *LAST NIGHT IN MONTREAL* is **so full of emotion and history, it is amazing this book doesn't burst at the seams.**"—**Bn.com**

“**I can't help it; I am about to utter the hacky cliché of all book recommendations: I couldn't put it down.** The words "pleasure reading" hardly begin to describe it. This was

somewhere between a spa treatment and mid-day lovemaking. It's a mystery and a love story, a twisting path through the heart and mind of a richly drawn character.”—
BoxingtheOctopus.com

“*Last Night in Montreal* is **one of the best debut novels I've read in years.** It's a novel with a secret at the heart of it, a dark center around which the whole story unfolds. Its structure, the way it braids time, moving forward and backward through four lives, is a marvel. I admire books that can do a lot with a little, and this book is certainly one of these. Mandel has built robust, living characters and done so in the minimum time required. **It's rare to find such a delicate, brief book that still brings forth so many richly complex characters.**”—**Pat Brown, Vroman's Bookstore**

“**A poetic, profoundly moving, and intricately structured meditation on the desire for human connection in its many forms.** . . .As dense as the memories that shroud Lilia's fractured childhood, what ensues is a veritable stew of misplaced communication. Eli finds himself caught in a struggle to find Lilia as Michaela resorts to desperate measures and Lilia is driven by the need to escape. Driven by the interior lives of all the characters, *Last Night in Montreal* is **a tale of longing and of love, the shadows, light, and riptides of life echoing throughout in this beautiful elegiac story.**”—
curledup.com

“Mandel's prose is beautiful and provocative... a wonderfully written novel unlike anything I have read recently. I believe it will appeal to a lot of different readers who appreciate different genres. I highly recommend it!”—***Skrishna's Books***

“**A rare achievement, a gripping, mysterious and original literary novel about family secrets and the unbearable weight they place on young shoulders.** Lilia is a rootless twenty-something who has been running from her past since she was a small child, leaving a trail of broken relationships, abandoned apartments and false identities behind her. When her naive, hopelessly idealistic boyfriend follows her to Montreal after her latest disappearing act, the details of her past begin to come to light. Emily St. John Mandel is a wonderful and refreshingly unorthodox writer, with a deep compassion for the misfits of society. **Her style & sensibilities remind me of the early novels of Michael Ondaatje, and I hope her career is as brilliant.**”—**Rich Rennicks, Malaprop's Bookstore**

“Fascinatingly disturbing and well-written, this is a story about movement and inertia, about what not-knowing can do to a person's psyche.”—**Alice Meloy, Blue Willow Bookshop**

“*Last Night in Montreal* **took me by surprise in the most wonderful ways.**...From the very first chapter, I was drawn in to her provocative, delicately grim world full of wanderlust, betrayal, and the quest for answers. Each of [Mandels'] **deliciously real characters** are searching for answers to the questions of their lives, compelled to hunt them out no matter how shocking or painful those answers may be. Mandel's novel, though relatively short, amazed me with its intricacies and complexities. As days go by, I

find myself thinking of more and more reasons I so **loved *Last Night in Montreal***.”—
Elizabeth Lewis, Rainy Day Books

"I am dumbfounded that this is a debut novel. The pacing is impeccable, the characters are intriguing and well developed. The details the author chooses to highlight are poetic and evocative, and the paragraphs are well crafted...extremely impressive."—
Emily Pullen, Skylight Books

“Amazing -- that girl can write. The language alone would have kept me reading but the story created such a tension that I lost myself every time I opened the book...I cannot get Michaela out of my mind, latecomer though she was. It goes without saying that Lilia was fascinating...”—**Vicki Erwin, Main Street Books**

“A mystery, a love story, a book about family, about connections and disconnections. It is a recipe for a story that comes together perfectly for a literary meal... In the end, *Last Night in Montreal* was like that Raspberry Chocolate Chip Souffle that ended my dinner at Spago- a perfect ending that was both bitter and sweet and left me hoping that one day I would be able to come back once again and enjoy another meal from this author.”—**Drew Goodman, University of Utah Bookstore**

“It is difficult for me to believe that *Last Night In Montreal* is Emily St. John Mandel's debut novel. It is **a stunning book, easily one of the best I've read lately...I'm thrilled to have discovered it.**”—*booksiesblog.blogspot.com*

“I loved this book. Emily St. John Mandel writes well and conveys emotional turmoil brilliantly. I wish for her a long and rewarding career and look forward to discovering what else she has to contribute to the world about the realities of life.” —
educatingpetunia.blogspot.com/

“*Last Night in Montreal* is Emily St. John Mandel’s first novel, and it is **a stunning debut.** Told from multiple viewpoints and moving back and forth between the present and past, the book is compulsively readable. Mandel’s writing is flawless - poetic, compelling, and achingly beautiful. Perhaps the strongest aspect of Mandel’s prose is her ability to fully develop her characters - people who are adrift and searching and often in pain, but who attract the reader’s empathy and admiration despite their weaknesses. *Last Night In Montreal* is one of those books which once started cannot be laid aside. Disturbing and dark at times, it is a novel which will haunt the reader long after it is completed.”—*caribousmom.com*

“It's **jaw-dropping**...an incredible piece of writing, at once subtle and complex, perfectly paced and strung with little pearls of lovely writing that stop you in your tracks.”—
bookfoolery.blogspot.com

“Completely engrossing...These characters are just so memorable and have remained in my thoughts even after I finished reading the story...I was also very intrigued by the mystery angle of the book. I was desperate to understand what occurred in the past to set

this entire chain of events into motion. I couldn't read fast enough to learn about the characters' lives, and I was fascinated by the effect that their individual actions had on each of the other characters... **would make an incredible selection for book clubs.**”—
bookingmama.blogspot.com

“It was beautiful--poetic even--in writing and profound in scope.”—
theliteraryfeline.com

“An absorbing read.”---*shereadsandreads.com*