



The Trailing Spouse

Jo Furniss

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Do you really want to know the truth?

Amanda Bonham moved halfway around the world to be with the man she loves. Although expat life in Singapore can be difficult, Edward Bonham is a dream husband and a doting father to his teenage daughter, Josie.

But when their maid dies in an apparent suicide—and Amanda discovers the woman was pregnant and hiding a stash of drugs prescribed to Edward—she can't help but wonder if her perfect husband has a fatal flaw. And if he can't resist temptation under their own roof, what does he get up to when he travels?

Camille Kemble also has questions for Edward. Recently returned to Singapore, Camille is determined to resolve a family mystery. Amid a jumble of faded childhood memories, she keeps seeing Edward's handsome face. And she wants to know why.

For one woman, the search for answers threatens everything she has. For another, it's the key to all she lost. Both will follow his trail of secrets into the darkness to find the truth.

The Trailing Spouse Details

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Author : Jo Furniss

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From Reader Review The Trailing Spouse for online ebook

Berit??? says

4 Singapore Stars ????

A “trailing spouse“ is someone who follows their significant other to another country for work... this was a compelling domestic thriller... but I really enjoyed learning about the ex-pat life in Singapore.... in Singapore if you are the significant other you are considered a “dependent“ and you basically have no rights... can't imagine being an independent successful woman and moving to Singapore for your husband's job where all the sudden you are considered a second-class citizen, that would be tough!

In this book our trailing spouse is Amanda... Amanda appears to have it all a loving husband, a darling stepdaughter, and a beautiful high-rise apartment.... she's got Prada... she's got Gucci... she's got Louis Vuitton... but what she doesn't have is a child of her own.... I really found Amanda a very empathetic character, her plight for a baby was so powerful....

This Book is told from dual points of view... Amanda of course, and Camille... Camille is obsessed with her past and what really happened to her parents.... after meeting Ed Amanda's husband, Camille is convinced he is the key to her past... camille's character wasn't quite as interesting to me, admittedly I did enjoy Amanda story more in this book.... but I can see where someone else would see it completely differently.... also both of these characters were very essential to the story....

The story starts out with Ed and Amanda's “helper“ taking her life by swallowing bleach.... I really cannot imagine a worse way to go and this was a very impactful start to the story.... Camille volunteers for an agency who looks out for immigrant workers and that's what brings her into the lives of Ed and Amanda.... that is really all I'm going to say about the plot.... you really need to read the book to find out what happens... was this really suicide? Or something more sinister? this sure was a book filled with secrets and misdirection.... not only were we the readers misdirected but so were the characters... I was convinced the story was going one way and then... BAM this book took a crazy turn and then kept turning until it came to an unbelievable end! Great book, spectacular ending!

Absolutely recommend to fans of a well-done domestic thriller with the added bonus of the ex-pat Singapore culture....

*** many thanks to Lake Union for my copy of this book ***

Mackey St says

The Trailing Spouse follows the story of three characters, each of whom have a relationship with a man, Edward Bonham. Amanda, his wife, who traveled around the world to Singapore to be with Edward. She is "the trailing" spouse, a phrase used to describe the spouse who follows the person with a job wherever that job takes them. Here, Amanda has left Great Britain to move to Singapore, a city built on illusion, beautiful yet filled with horrors. This imagery is present throughout the marvelously crafted story. Camille Kimball has returned to Singapore to find answers from her childhood, her missing parents, and closure to her past. And, there is Josie, Edward's daughter who still is recovering from her mother's apparent suicide. Her

relationship with Edward is a strange one, to say the least. As the story progresses, the web around these characters grows and becomes more intricately tangled until the climactic conclusion.

Furniss has woven a story that is both beautiful and frighteningly realistic. Amanda is, at first, described as the very typical "trailing spouse" who is interested only in being in a glamorous place and with the money that most often goes with the move. These spouses have no rights, very little ability to work independently, in many countries - such as Singapore - they cannot have a bank account in their name or conduct financial transactions on their own. They are, therefore, totally reliant upon their spouses for all of their needs. After her maid, the helper, is found dead, Amanda's precarious life begins to unravel. As we watch her life come undone, we are left to ask ourselves "who is sane, who is not and how can we know who is telling the truth." The answers will shock you!

I will admit that I was fascinated with the story and its setting. I had heard from those who had traveled to Singapore about its beauty but, more often, about the illusion upon which this city is built. It has more millionaires and billionaires than any other country; it is, quite literally, one of the richest places on earth. And yet, its people have limited freedom and its immigrants, often used for servitude and menial jobs, are often abused and exploited. Furniss does an excellent job recreating this side of Singapore's tale. Her writing is skilled, filled with picturesque imagery and it was this craftsmanship that elevated the book for me. However, there are parts that drag as a result of too much detail. There were times that I really did not want to read another word about Amanda's embryos calling out to her or dancing in the freezer. While this storyline added depth to Amanda's character, it wasn't entirely necessary to the actual plot so, for me, it dragged on too long and too often. It does not take away from the overall suspense of the book, but it does keep it from being a non-stop, page turning thriller. Despite this, I loved the book and absolutely recommend it for all who enjoy suspenseful tales. You won't be disappointed.

Ann Marie (Lit·Wit·Wine·Dine) says

There's a U.S. only GIVEAWAY for this one on my Instagram account!

Welcome to my stop on the blog tour for *The Trailing Spouse* by Jo Furniss. I'm very happy to be sharing my thoughts on this book as I thoroughly enjoyed it! I've been on a roll – in a good way – with thrillers lately and this book was no exception. And can I just say... COVER LOVE!

The Trailing Spouse is original in a number of ways. The first is the setting. I don't think I've ever read a book set in Singapore. I enjoyed learning a little about the culture and ex-pat life. Next, and most importantly, is the plot. This book has a lot going on. There are at least 3, you could maybe say 4, mysteries with this mystery/domestic thriller. The phrase "falling down the rabbit hole" came to mind as the pace quickened about 1/3 of the way in. And I just kept falling, and falling, and falling. In the past I've been critical of a few books with a similar number of subplots. I felt these books tried too hard, opining that the authors need to reel in their imaginations. For whatever reason, Jo Furniss has managed to pull it off!

Meticulous character development ensured non-stop head spinning. Who should I be rooting for? Who should I suspect? While I had a slight inkling of where one of the lines might be going, I was truly conflicted about the "main event" until the very end. Ancillary characters were just as carefully rendered and helped to create a level on depth not always present in this genre. I would definitely place *The Trailing Spouse* on the "smart" side of the spectrum.

I'd not read Jo Furniss's previous novel, *All the Little Children*, but reading this book has made me add it to my already toppling TBR. I'd certainly be very happy to read her future work.

4.5/5 stars

Many thanks to Anne Cater at Random Things Blog Tours and Lake Union Publishing for providing me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

You can read all of my reviews at www.litwitwinedine.com

Linda says

"Nobody in Singapore drinks Singapore Slings." (Anthony Bourdain)

Is this all an elusion of the beauty, the jaw-dropping landscapes, and the towering buildings created from an architect's dream? Singapore seems to hide secrets well within its tropical foliage and its darkened streets have very limited access.

Amanda Bonham knows this full-on. She's the wife who trails behind her husband's successes in foreign lands. Ed Bonham rests on the laurels of being an ex pat pilot who brokers sales of private jets. Amanda knows that she's been limited in her own career by strict Singapore laws of employment as a dependant of Ed's. Singapore can show you the Exit sign in a heartbeat.

With no other options, Amanda spends her days as step-mother to seventeen year old Josie who is overflowing with teenage angst and spoiled by her doting father. Her days are spent sorting through a closet full of designer clothes and handbags. She's constantly online seeking advice from fellow ex pat spouses. But Amanda has a dark secret that even Ed doesn't realize. She's selling his expensive gifts online in order to continue to pay for IVF treatments after three miscarriages. Ed won't even consider adoption.

Now if you think that this is the height of the problems of being Amanda, you are definitely wrong. The story opens with the apparent suicide of their live-in maid. Amanda was the one to come across the body. She later finds Ed's prescription drugs in Awri's room. Why? As Ed flies out to his business destinations, bodies of young women are being found in the same hotels that Ed stayed in. Amanda is now panicking. Could Ed be connected somehow?

Jo Furniss adds more tension to this storyline with a parallel thread. Camille Kemble was raised in Singapore since she was a child. Her yacht leasing parents suddenly disappeared when she was ten. Camille works as a press officer for the British High Commissions. She accompanies her boss to the crime scene of Awri's death. Something about Ed is familiar. But what?

Furniss presents a top-draw thriller here. Her research is quite thorough in Singapore customs, laws, and social mores. The Singapore setting adds just the right amount of snap and the chosen characters deliver straight out. Furniss builds upon the tension with each new scene of action. She pulls the reader into the escalating onset of no return. Quite the unexpected little treasure of a read.

I received a copy of *The Trailing Spouse* through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to Lake Union Publishing and to Jo Furniss for the opportunity.

Nicki says

This mesmerising character driven drama is the twisty tale of two women's obsessive search for the truth. For Amanda the answers to her questions could result in the lose of everything. For Camille it's the key to all that she lost years ago.

The chapters are written in varying lengths and alternate between Amanda and Camille. Amanda's perfect expat life in her high rise condo starts to unravel when her helper Awmi dies in an apparent suicide. Some prescription drugs belonging to Amanda's husband Edward are found in the maids room and then Amanda is informed that Awmi was pregnant. Amanda begins to have doubts about her handsome husband. If he can't resist temptation under their own roof then what does he get up to when he is away on his travels for work. When she starts to uncover the possibility that Edward might be involved in a series of terrifying crimes, Amanda finds herself feeling more and more isolated. Trapped in her luxurious apartment with its stunning views of the ships in the harbour, she is like a bird trapped in a gilded cage. As a trailing wife she has no rights and can't even get access to her own money. She also doesn't want to leave her seventeen year old step daughter Josie. The poor girl has had enough trauma in her life, her mother committed suicide three years ago and now their maid has just killed herself. It's no wonder that the poor girl's behaviour has suddenly gone off the rails. With her father always away, she needs to know that she has the support of at least one of her parents. Our second protagonist Camille is a press officer who works for the British High Commission as well as being a volunteer at HELP, an organisation that campaigned for the rights of foreign domestic workers. Camille grew up in Singapore but was sent away to boarding school after her parents mysteriously disappeared when she was ten years old. She has just returned after fifteen years and is determined to solve the mystery of what happened to her parents all those years ago. When Camille is sent to Amanda and Ed's apartment after Ahmi's body is discovered, she is shocked to discover that she recognises Ed. She is certain that he knew her parents and therefore has the answers to some of the questions that have plagued her for so many years. Although I had mixed feelings about her character and didn't like her at times, Amanda's chapters were my favourite parts of the story. Ed certainly had issues but was he really capable of committing the crimes that Amanda suspected him of committing? What was the significance of the mysterious countdown on Josie's blog? So much mystery and intrigue whereas I wasn't drawn into Camille's story. I enjoyed her parts of the story enough that I wasn't tempted to skim read or skip any of her chapters, I just didn't care what the outcome of her story was going to be.

This is a well written, character driven, twisty, thought provoking drama that culminates in a conclusion that is shocking and intense. Although I personally enjoyed some parts more than others, I did enjoy this book and would gladly recommend it to other thriller readers.

Many thanks to Lake Union Publishing and Anne Cater for the opportunity to read and review this thriller and the opportunity to take part in the blog tour

Louise Beech says

The writing was so beautiful - the kind with lines you read back again and again - that the reveals in the story came as a complete surprise. Furniss is a master storyteller. Highly recommend.

Mystica says

Singapore can be a dream destination for many. For expatriate workers too, life can seem to be an endless round of relaxation and parties and the very good life. For the blue collar workers it may not be so.

Wives who are not working in Singapore are there at the mercy of their husbands. If the husbands visa is revoked, they have thirty days grace to get out of Singapore. Amanda lives a luxurious life with her husband and their step daughter. It is not an ideal relationship but Amanda tries to make it work. Their maid is Filipina and very pleasant with no signs of any dissent. When an apparent suicide takes place and her husband's medication is found in the maid's room, Amanda is left questioning her husband's past and present.

We have Camille working for the British High Commission but whose sole purpose is to find out what happened to her parents when she was a child in Singapore. They disappeared and were never found. Camille is very sure they are alive. Somehow Edward Bonham Amanda's husband seems to be the link and little memories that were hidden now keep popping up.

How Edward's secrets of so long ago are going to be an unexploded bomb in both Camille and Amanda's lives and the secrets of the maid's life are all innocently explained away but far too late for all of them.

The story unravels slowly and though you think it is a huge conspiracy there is a simple explanation for it all. Unfortunately too late for many of the people in the story.

Very well told and very descriptive of life in Singapore amongst the expat community.

Chandra Claypool (wherethereadergrows) says

Oh how I do love it when a domestic thriller surprises me. I was expecting the typical story as there has been an abundance lately in the thriller world but nope! Here's something a little bit different that will surprise and please thriller lovers everywhere.

What I loved was the expat life and the different rules that apply when living overseas. Coming from a military family and having expat friends all over the world, I all too well know how this can go so it's fascinating and fun to see in a novel.

This story bounces between Amanda and Camille - Amanda, a "trailing spouse" (I actually just learned this terminology and it is SO FITTING), having marital and reproduction problems, whose maid just committed suicide by drinking bleach (I'm not sure I can think of much worst ways to kill yourself) and Camille, obsessed with what happened with her parents. Both in Singapore, their paths cross and will change their lives irrevocably.

I honestly didn't see that ending coming. I knew there was something weird.. I KNEW IT... but yeah, THAT wasn't quite what I was expecting though I had an inkling. Am I losing you yet? Read the book so you know what I'm saying!

This moves at a great pace and you end up being just as confused and misdirected as the characters - personally, I love that.

Thank you to Lake Union Publishing and Random Things Tours for this copy <3

Beverley says

Earlier this year I read and reviewed *All The Little Children* by Jo Furniss and really enjoyed the clever slice of dystopian fiction. Her latest novel, *The Trailing Spouse* is different in both tone and style and could be described as a domestic thriller. Set in Singapore it explores the lives of two women; Amanda and Camille, who are both British expats. Amanda is married to Edward and lives with him and his teenage daughter Josie, in a beautiful apartment. When their maid commits suicide their perfectly balanced life is unsettled with the visit of Camille who is sent to visit the family as part of the investigations. She recognises Edward and thinks that he may be able to shed light on the events in her childhood that have haunted her into adulthood but she is unsure if he is all that he seems.

This is a book that is led by two strong female protagonists who were at first glance very different; career woman Camille versus kept wife Amanda, but in reality they are very similar. They have both had difficult paths which have motivated their futures and the choices they have made in life. I really liked both of them and found them to be well drawn and realistic. I also found that Amanda's relationship with her step-daughter was brilliantly written – Josie is a typical prickly teenage girl who is full of secrets. Her mother is dead and Amanda is an interloper into the world she and her dad have created. I loved the way the dance between these two was depicted with missteps and boundaries being both respected and crossed.

I think for me, the part I found most terrifying, was the erosion of power if you are a trailing spouse in Singapore. Amanda is deemed to be a dependent who does not have any rights and her days are spent in the gilded cage of their apartment or meeting with other women who are also trailing spouses. Facebook groups are filled with wives who gossip and snark at one another and for whom life is one long game of one-upmanship; the right clothes, the right shoes, the right brands and being seen in the right bars and restaurants. This glimpse into a world which appears to be beautiful and envy inducing is, when you scratch the surface, rotten. Amanda knows how precarious her situation is so turns a blind eye to Edward's suspicious behaviour, but is this the right thing to do?

The death of their maid is a catalyst for the unravelling of Amanda's life. A postmortem reveals that the maid was pregnant, Amanda discovers condoms in her husband's washbag, prescription pills belonging to him in the maid's belongings and when she sees a photo of him on the Facebook group dancing with a woman in a strip club she starts to put together a picture of Edward that she doesn't really like. Once she starts to pick she finds out more and more about his life and she wonders if he is linked to some heinous crimes. Is he capable of those things? How well does she know him really?

I really can't tell you anymore than this as it will spoil what is a great read and an accomplished thriller. I loved the setting of the book as it was so different and I really felt like I was there in Singapore. It also had the benefit of disorientating me so when the shocks came I was totally blindsided. This is an excellently

plotted and paced book with lots going on and I found it to be a clever and insightful piece of fiction which ticked lots of boxes for me.

Fiona Mitchell says

The pages of Furniss' book brim with all the colour and humidity of Singapore, and having lived in the country for almost three years, what a pleasure it was to go back. Furniss gives voice to the challenges faced by the thousands of foreign domestic helpers working there through one of her main characters Camille, a volunteer for an organisation that campaigns for helpers' rights. But for me, it's Amanda that steals the show. She's rather dislikable, yet utterly compelling. Pushed into being a stay-at-home wife by Singapore's restrictive employment laws, her life centres around lunches, expat online forums and the secret she's keeping from her husband - she's selling the gifts that he buys her to pay for IVF treatment. What a fine writer Furniss is, and there's lots of beautiful lines in this book. A most enjoyable read.

Joanne Robertson says

I read *All The Little Children* earlier on this year and really enjoyed it although I found it very difficult to work out which genre to file it under. *The Trailing Spouse* is much easier to pigeonhole as a domestic thriller but don't expect your usual run of the mill drama as it definitely brings something very special to the genre!

Told from the viewpoint of two women living in Singapore, the expat community is perfectly explored through their eyes. Amanda is enjoying a wonderful lifestyle married to the very generous Edward, and being stepmother to his teenage daughter Josie. They have a maid but it's the suicide of this young woman that sets in motion a series of events to threaten Amanda's idyllic existence. Is her perfect husband hiding something from her? Camille is also investigating Edward after recognising his face from her past and as the two women search for answers there are some shocking twists that threaten to change their lives forever.

I could not put this book down for one minute! As I read it until the early hours of the morning, I was desperate to discover the secrets that hid behind the glamorous and often bitchy expat lifestyle in Singapore. I thought it was a detailed and realistic portrayal of English speaking women abroad who often take second place to their husbands jobs and the related social networking. And don't get me started on their finances!! The fact that they had maids as well meant that they even more time on their hands to fill their boring lives. Amanda wasn't always an incredibly likeable character (in fact I don't think many of them were!) but I did get behind her as she tried to get to the bottom of her maids supposed suicide. Camille was much more sympathetic in my opinion and helped to balance out the exceptional characterisation that drove *The Trailing Spouse*. There were some gasp-out-loud twists for me as this dark and oppressive drama built up to its climax.

Jo Furniss has definitely found her niche here as this book showed off her exquisitely crafted storylines and well written narrative to perfection. It surprised me which doesn't happen very often and is one of those books that will stay with me long after I have finished reading it.

Highly recommended by me!

Imogen says

I have never been to Singapore nor been part of the expat community there but having read *The Trailing Spouse* by Jo Furniss it really feels as though I have. The author describes the setting of the book- the heat, the frustrations with bureaucracy, the back-biting – so evocatively and with such great insight that it almost becomes a character in its own right.

The story itself twists and turns quickly, leaving the reader breathless and desperate to work out who is telling the truth and who cannot be trusted. A fascinating read.

I received an ARC from NetGalley in return for an honest review.

Hannelore Cheney says

Thank you NetGalley and Lake Union Publishing for the eARC.

This is my favorite read of the year so far, I loved it.

Amanda has left her life behind in England to marry her dream husband, Ed. They live in Singapore in a luxurious apartment, complete with a live-in 'helper' (maid) and Ed's teenage daughter, Josie. Ed travels an enormous amount for business and always brings back expensive presents for Amanda. Life is perfect until their helper Ahmi commits suicide and it turns out she was pregnant. This is the start of the nightmare that becomes Amanda's life.

Camille grew up in Singapore until she was 10, when her parents went missing and she and her brother returned to England. The next 15 years her life was miserable, she couldn't get over the mystery of her parent's disappearance, so returns to Singapore, determined to find answers. Her job at the British High Commission means she ends up at Amanda's and Ed's apartment after Ahmi's suicide where, on meeting Ed, she instinctively knows she's met Ed before...Was it with her parents?

As an expat brat (in Mumbai), I was riveted from the very start of the book. The descriptions of the life of the expats are slightly unnerving, especially in regard to the 'trailing' wives. Legally they have no rights without their husband's o.k., and even though Singapore is the safest city in the world, I couldn't shake a feeling of dread that accelerated as the story continued. As an adult looking back to my happy childhood in India I realized the atmosphere (and cloying heat) was the same, but I lived in the innocent bubble of childhood and the selfish teenage years; totally unaware of the realities of life around me.

The characterizations were excellent, the two women and their obsessions understandable even though they make you cringe at times. I did find Amanda annoying at times, she was so caught up in her obsessions, she made thoughtless fatal

mistakes, teetering on the edge of sanity. Camille was more sympathetic to me, trying to find the closure she's sought for so long.

The ending was a shocker, wow! This is such a great book, I would love to give it more than 5 stars, so I give it 5+++, highly recommended!

Julie Parks says

This is a captivating and engaging marital drama that makes you feel pity a lot. I think the best thing about this book was the emotional portrayal of an expat life in Singapore. I loved it. I've never been but between the pages of this book, I was really there. And that made the story so much more real, adding it a dense layer of genuine human spirit.

Thank you NetGalley for the chance to read this.

Amber Cowie says

Furniss has created a world that is magical and eerie in the ex-pat community of Singapore. Using beautiful, intricate language and spellbinding plot points, this quiet thriller left me in awe. Like Mary Kubica, Emily Carpenter and Megan Abbott, Furniss' writing is subtle, haunting and mesmerizing.
