



Trail of Secrets

Eileen Goudge

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Psychologist Ellie Nightingale is haunted by the kidnapping of her baby daughter twenty-three years ago. Years of trying unsuccessfully to conceive another child have left her with a fierce desire to adopt - an obsession that is driving a wedge between her and her husband . . .

Former equestrienne Kate Sutton's hopes for both show-jumping stardom and a family are shattered in a fateful fall from a horse. Yet the miscarriage also brings her an abandoned infant she and her husband claim as their own daughter. Then she reads the headlines about the kidnapped baby and the young mother who lost her, and faces the soul-wrenching decision of her life . . .

Skyler Sutton is a young champion for whom no hurdle is ever too high - until she's challenged by her seemingly impossible love for Tony Salvatore, a tough-talking New York mounted policeman. Too soon for anyone's good, she is pregnant. And Tony knows a woman therapist who wants a baby more than anything in the world . . .

Trail of Secrets Details

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Author : Eileen Goudge

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From Reader Review Trail of Secrets for online ebook

Wendy says

The premise was interesting and the characters were done well (even though at times I really wanted to smack Skyler) but at times, the story dragged and felt too long and drawn out. While details about equestrian activities, antiques, pediatrics, and crisis counseling (various characters' interests/professions) were interesting, I feel that it was sometimes too much detail and didn't move the story forward. The ending was a bit predictable.

Robin says

Pace of book slowed down by unnecessary scenes. Compelling story, though predictable.

Sassbot5000 says

I'm a little conflicted by this novel. It had moments of very insightful and moving vividness of the happiness and difficulties within relationships. Be those relationships between mothers and daughters or a women and her husband. Those were beautiful. The constant internal dialogs with the characters were annoying and drove me a little crazy because they slowed the entire story down. The entire book plot can be found on the blurb and so the story was predictable. Getting there was wonderful and engrossing when I wasn't completely irritated with the internal dialog that all the main female characters had. Also, the ending left me wanting for more closure. Instead of the elaborate details that everything else had, things didn't feel fully explained and so I ended up frustrated by this novel.

Teresa says

It's been a while since I read any books by this author and I'm wondering now what I've been missing. This was an excellent story of family.

Two decades ago Ellie's infant daughter was kidnapped and sold to the highest bidder. Ellie knew in her heart that her child was alive somewhere but after spending years looking for her with no results her life moved on. Unable to have more children, Ellie and her husband have tried repeatedly to adopt a child only to have each birth mother change her mind at the last minute.

Skyler is a young woman raised by her wealthy parents with all the love and advantages they could give her. She's always known she was adopted and couldn't help but wonder about the birth mother who she's been told abandoned her.

Now Skyler finds herself unexpectedly pregnant and she's made the tough decision to give her child up for adoption. She's begun interviewing hopeful families searching for the perfect home for the baby she's carrying.

What follows is both heart-breaking and heart-warming. Ms. Goudge has done an outstanding job of capturing the emotions of her characters. I didn't want to put this one down....was so curious about how the chips would fall.

Sheryl Tribble says

I have only reached page 77 or so.

This is one of those books where I spend a lot of time wondering if I'm supposed to like any of the characters. The author just spent five pages telling me how one of the main characters has helped guys with AIDS for years, how she scolded the medical profession for treating them like lepers, and basically putting a big ol' blinking light on her saying, "This lady is so much better than you, you can't even imagine" -- and then has her sitting in a room full of men dying of AIDS, telling God, "... you owe me. No one deserves [what I want] more than me. No one."

Sitting in a room full of men dying of AIDS, she thinks this. Granted, she's had a rough time; her infant daughter was kidnapped through no fault of her own, and she hasn't been able to replace her (and, for the record, the fact that she's trying so desperately to replace her daughter is not an appealing trait, either, and that is exactly what it feels like to me – replacing, not wanting to adopt a child for its own sake).. But how can a woman who meets every week with AIDS sufferers, and has watched a dozen or more young men die of the disease over the years, believe God owes her a baby? Does God owe these men a full lifespan? Apparently not. But He owes her, alright.

And the whole book so far has been like this. The two characters I think I'm most supposed to sympathize with – the mother who lost her daughter, and daughter who was raised by someone else – keep doing over-the-top "Aren't I wonderful?" sort of stunts that everyone can see, and then reveal themselves to be egregiously shallow in their silent thoughts – except I'm not entirely sure the author means for me to see it that way.

But I have decided that I don't care if I'm supposed to see her as being shallow here or not. This is not how you build well-rounded characters, and I think I am done.

Geraldine Satz says

This is such a good book I hate to bring attention to the small things I found annoying. There is too much description on everything and every character involved. And the descriptions are discussed not just once but over and over. The plot is terrific so is the information on antiques and horse jumping. Ms. Goudge did a terrific amount of research for this book. Without all the descriptions she could have cut 35 or 40 minute chapters for more readable pleasure.

Eliece says

This book kept me up until the wee hours, as I couldn't turn out the light until I saw how it ended. If one is

willing to suspend belief in coincidences, it's a romantic, satisfying love story.

Ellie was a teenage unwed mother whose baby was stolen from her. 22 years later, she's a successful psychologist, but her heart had been broken when she lost Bethanne, and never having been able to have another child, she is desperate to adopt. Two girls have promised her their babies, but changed their minds at the last minute.

Enter Skyler, a young equestrienne whose adoptive parents dote on her, but are unhappy with her decision to give up her baby. The pregnancy was the result of an "afternoon delight" with Tony, a NYC mounted policeman. They are drawn to each other like metal to a magnet, but coming from completely different backgrounds, believe that marriage is out of the question.

It's no mystery to the reader that Skyler is the missing Bethanne. The book revealed that fact in the first chapter. However, neither Ellie nor Skyler is aware of this, and so papers are signed when the baby is born and Ellie blissfully takes her home.

What kept me turning the pages was wanting to know how and when the book's characters would be let in on the secret, what would be their reactions, and how would they resolve the issue of custody after Skyler predictably and inevitably wants her infant back.

Linda says

Eileen Goudge writes interesting books but for the most part they are simple and not intellectually challenging or provocative of further thought and discussion. Most are easy to discern the outcome early in the narrative - this is no exception.

Julie says

Trail of Secrets by Eileen Goudge is 2011 Open Road Integrated Media publication. I was provided a copy of this book by the publisher and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

This is one of those books originally published in the mid- 1990's and reissued in digital format, so that is something you want to keep in mind before starting this one.

Ellie, a young single mother suffers a parent's worst nightmare. Her infant daughter is kidnapped and Ellie must go forward with her life never knowing what happened to her child.

A world away, Kate and Will are raising their beautiful adopted daughter, Skyler and living the good life. A freak horse riding accident brings them in contact with a young doctor named Ellie. A brief connection occurs between Kate and Ellie, one that will haunt Kate for years to come.

As time passes, Ellie struggles to conceive a child, has issues with her marriage, and seeks alternative solutions to her childlessness which includes adoption.

An unbelievable turn of events puts Kate, Will, and Skyler in direct contact with Ellie in a heart wrenching scenario that will leave you gasping for air.

While this book is very typical of the style of women's fiction written during this time period, and it is obvious in many ways, it is also a book that can still withstand that age factor and maintain it's incredible power over the reader.

This would make a very good book club read since I can imagine the storyline would evoke some really strong emotions in some people. The book starts off in the 1970's and goes up to through the 90's. Attitudes

in those days of out of wedlock pregnancy were vastly different. Ellie chose to raise her child alone, which was a very brave decision on her part. Also, for someone like Kate, not being able to have children was an even larger frustration than it would be today. Adoption was pretty much her only choice.

A couple who can not have children is given the gift of a precious daughter, while another woman loses her only child, and that child grows up struggling with the unknowns regarding her parentage, and is lead to believe she was abandoned by her mother, and as a young adult must deal with a situation in her own life that mirrors that of her mother and adoptive parents.

The plausibility factor was stretched to the max in some places, but it made for some pretty crazy twist in the story. The odds of this actually taking place are infinitesimal and created some melodrama that almost got a little out of hand. I don't know if it would work in a more modern day contemporary novel, which is why it is important to remember heavier drama was common in this time period in women's fiction. If you overlook some of that, the book still packs an emotional punch.

The complexities of marriage, relationships between parent and child are examined and the effect the choices made so many years ago can come back to haunt you. Did Kate do the right thing by keeping Skyler in the dark about her heritage? As a mother, Kate worried about how this information would effect her daughter, but she was also worried about losing her, which was the reason she kept quiet I think. I sympathized with Kate, but also felt angry with her. I could understand Skylar's attitudes at times, and at others I was truly mystified. She was a confused young woman in many ways and while I wanted to like her, at times she just left me feeling frustrated. The one person I felt the most compassion for was Ellie and while she may not have had the happy ever after she had envisioned, she does get much needed closure and a chance to be a mother, just not in a way she would ever have dreamed.

In the end, despite all the drama and secrets, and lies, the families begin to put forth an effort to right wrongs and strive for forgiveness. Things will never be the same, but a tentative step in the right direction left me with a good feeling. It will take work, commitment, and lots of patience and forgiveness for these characters to make it things work, but I have faith they will. 3.5 rounded to 4

Amanda Langley says

Very interesting storyline

I'm not a fan of long chapters but this story was so captivating that I just had to get over it. Great story and great characters. I will definitely read other titles by this author.

Julie says

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Vicky says

Good ending.

Shirley Yuhasz says

Park lib. New York City, 1972. Riding for Mounted police. Prologue Northfield, Connecticut 1980. "Happy families are all alike, every unhappy family is unhappy in it's own way." Adoption, Horse Riding, & truthfulness. Loved the ending. Great characters, great read!

Lori says

I don't think I can say I enjoyed this book. It mostly made me feel antsy and annoyed, with too much description, and characters I wanted to smack across the face. The thing that kept me reading was wanting to know how the big secret would be revealed. In hindsight not sure it was worth it.

virginia osborn says**Wonderful story.**

I enjoyed all of the characters, each one was so believable. The story just kept getting better. I didn't want to stop reading.
