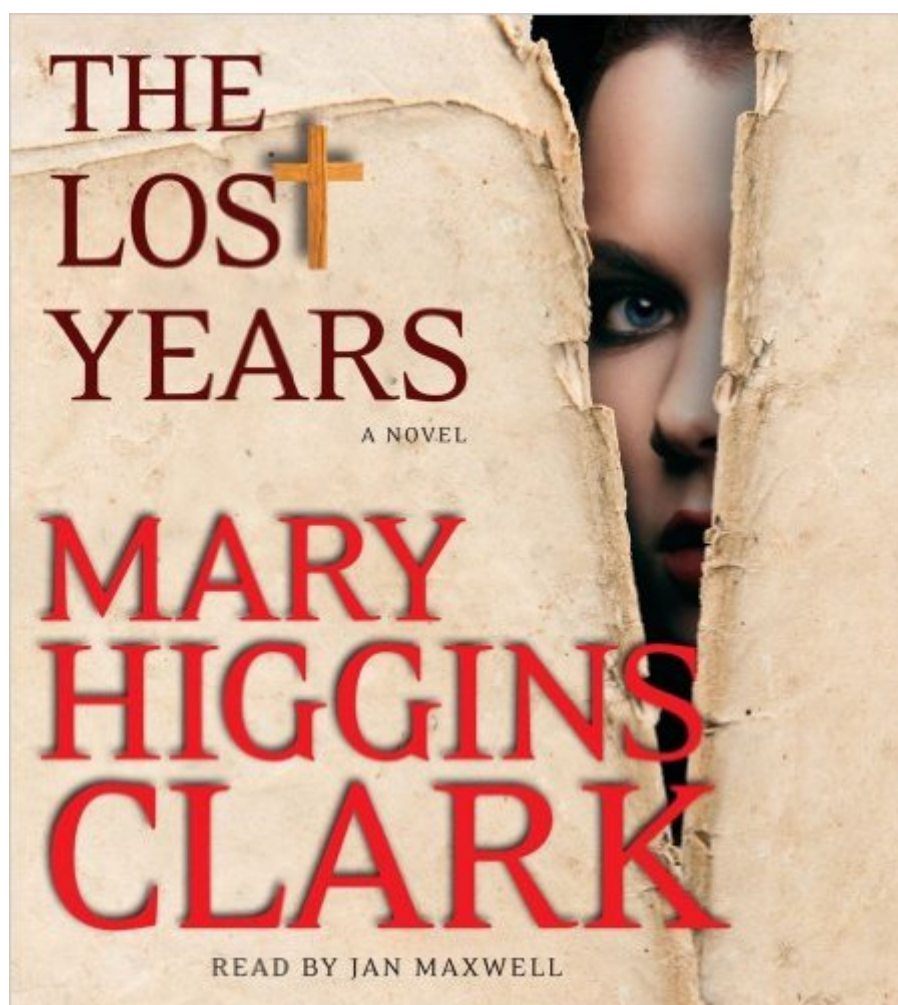


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The Lost Years: A Novel



Synopsis

In "The Lost Years," Mary Higgins Clark, America's Queen of Suspense, has written her most astonishing novel to date. At its center is a discovery that, if authenticated, may be the most revered document in human history—the holiest of the holy and certainly the most coveted and valuable object in the world. Biblical scholar Jonathan Lyons believes he has found the rarest of parchments—a letter that may have been written by Jesus Christ. Stolen from the Vatican Library in the 1500s, the letter was assumed to be lost forever. Now, under the promise of secrecy, Jonathan is able to confirm his findings with several other experts. But he also confides in a family friend his suspicion that someone he once trusted wants to sell the parchment and cash in. Within days Jonathan is found shot to death in his study. At the same time, his wife, Kathleen, who is suffering from Alzheimer's, is found hiding in the study closet, incoherent and clutching the murder weapon. Even in her dementia, Kathleen has known that her husband was carrying on a long-term affair. Did Kathleen kill her husband in a jealous rage, as the police contend? Or is his death tied to the larger question: Who has possession of the priceless parchment that has now gone missing? It is up to their daughter, twenty-eight-year-old Mariah, to clear her mother of murder charges and unravel the real mystery behind her father's death. Mary Higgins Clark's "The Lost Years" is at once a breathless murder mystery and a hunt for what may be the most precious religious and archaeological treasure of all time."

Book Information

Audio CD: 7 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio; Unabridged edition (April 3, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1442348364

ISBN-13: 978-1442348363

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.8 x 0.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (673 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,145,031 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in [Books > Books on CD >](#)

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Customer Reviews

I am a huge fan of Mary Higgins Clark's earlier work. I can vividly remember staying up until dawn to finish "A Cry in the Night" and "Where are the Children?". I think the last book of hers I really loved was "Remember Me". They are the kind that you don't really want to read if you're alone in the house, and they guaranteed chills. Sadly, I think that either the time has come that she should consider retiring (she is in her eighties, after all) or possibly her daughter is writing these books (and she does NOT have her mother's talent). This story is readable but I really didn't care who did it. I read it because I read all her books, but her last several have been just meh.

I have been a fan of Mary Higgins Clark since I read her first book many years ago. I have enjoyed them all. But her latest book was a huge disappointment. To me, the writing simply felt tired. The characters were flat, the plot was thin, the dialog was dull and the suspense that I have come to expect in the Higgins books was non-existent. I'm usually empathetic with the heroine but this time I found her to be somewhat annoying and childish. The supporting cast was poorly developed and, frankly, I wasn't all that interested in them. I agree with another reviewer that the addition of Alvira and Willy was a surprise. They have never been favorite characters of mine and their presence in this book seemed out of place, almost to the point of being unnecessary. I haven't given up on Mary Higgins Clark. I'm hopeful her next book will be back to her usual high standards, with interesting characters and a suspenseful and well-thought out plot.

As I was reading this book, I felt a strong sense of sympathy for the heroine, Mariah. Her mother had been suffering from Alzheimer's for several years; my late mother had it as well, so I understood how hard it is to be a son, daughter, or spouse of someone with the disease. Although I understood why Mariah resented the fact that her father was in love with another, younger woman, I could also sympathize with him because he could never have the woman he loved back the way she had been. That facet of the book alone made it fascinating to me. It was good to see Alvira & Willy again, especially now that I see Kathy Najimy's face on Alvira. I also enjoyed reading about Wally and his unique scheme for (almost) foolproof burglaries. On the negative side, I did not really feel I knew her father's four male friends that well. Although they were the main suspects, they weren't well drawn. However, it's a fast read and a pleasant one (except for thinking about the Alzheimer's). I'm glad I bought it.

I always look forward to a new Mary Higgins Clark novel and I have never been disappointed.....before this book. It lacks the character development that is usually a trademark of

hers. Alvira and Willy are in this novel and add nothing to it - just copies of their involvement in earlier novels. Definitely not a page turner and definitely not a book that I would ever recommend. Hard to believe this was truly written by Mary Higgins Clark.

In 1474 A.D. Pope Sixtus IV ordered the destruction of the Joseph of Arimathea Parchment; the only known letter written by Jesus, because he believes the document was a fake. Instead it was snuck out of the Vatican and disappeared for over five centuries. In the current day, Biblical scholar Jonathan Lyons believes he has found the original Arimathea Parchment. He obtains affirmation from peers and shows it proudly to close friends. Jonathan's twenty something daughter Mariah comes home to find her father dead from a bullet in the head and her mom Kathleen, suffering from Alzheimer's, inside a closet holding the murder weapon and blood splattered all over her. The police believe Kathleen murdered her husband because in her lucid moments she knew Jonathan was having an affair and there are times when she is violent. While her mom is locked away in a psych ward, initially a depressed Mariah accepts the horrid conclusion that her mom killed her dad, but once the fog lifts from her mind, she logically begins to wonder whether the motive was the Joseph of Arimathea Parchment. Once again Mary Higgins Clark affirms why she is the "Queen of Suspense" with this exciting biblical archeological thriller. The evidence points increasingly towards her mom as the murderer, but with help from friends Wiley and Alvira, the dispirited heroine starts to find other viable suspects as she seeks someone filled with pride and avarice; but even then Mariah still lacks proof. Ms. Clark has another winner for her readers to enjoy getting us there with this entertaining taut tale in which the suspense spins from family violence to biblical archeological violence. Harriet Klausner

If I had known that this was an Alvira and Willy book I doubt if I would have ordered it. The idea of this lady super sleuth running around solving murders makes the book lose any credibility it might have had. The fact that the police allow it is even more ridiculous. The assumption is that winning a great deal of money automatically makes you brilliant. The theme of priceless tapestries is an old one which has been done many times before. Having dealt with dementia in my family makes me sympathetic to the main character in this book. The hopeless condition of once brilliant people is heartbreaking to loved ones, knowing that there is no cure and that each day the condition worsens makes this disease so tragic. This aspect of the book was well done. Having said all that, I thought that this book lacked substance as compared with MHC of past times. It was not bad, nor was it great. There were some interesting moments but the outcome was no surprise from the getgo and

the characters lacked depthThe beginning of this book dragged a bit but it did get better.This was an entertaining,rather mindless read that just did not do it for me.

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