



Title: Easy Innocence

Author: Libby Fischer Hellmann

Description:

When pretty, smart Sara Long is found bludgeoned to death, it's easy to blame the man with the bat.

But Georgia Davis -- former cop and newly-minted PI -- is hired to look into the incident at the behest of the accused's sister, and what she finds hints at a much different, much darker answer. It seems the privileged, preppy schoolgirls on Chicago's North Shore have learned just how much their innocence is worth to hot-under-the-collar businessmen. But while these girls can pay for Prada pricetags, they don't realize that their new business venture may end up costing them more than they can afford.

Reviews

***Library Journal* (starred review):**

The award-winning author of the Ellie Foreman series (*An Image of Death*) here introduces Chicago cop-turned-PI Georgia Davis. A female high school student is found bludgeoned to death in a wooded area where a notorious hazing incident once took place. While many in the affluent suburb of North Shore are quick to suspect the mentally ill man found at the scene, the victim's sister isn't convinced and hires Georgia to look into the incident. Hellmann brings to life the reality of hazing and bullying among teenage girls in a story with enough twists and turns to keep you reading to the end. Highly recommended.

Chicago Tribune:

There's a new no-nonsense female private detective in town: Georgia Davis. Hellmann knows how to distill the essence of a character in a few unadorned but dead-right sentences.

In the end, after more blood has been spilled and a chain of lies has been broken, a friend of Davis' asks:

" 'This life of yours. How can you do it day after day Doesn't it get to you Don't you ever want to be -- normal' "

Davis answers:

" 'Who says I'm not "normal," whatever that is' "

All our detectives should be so normal. And all of them should have Hellmann on hand to get the message out.

Booklist:

In this fast-paced mystery, the author of the Ellie Forman series introduces suspended cop and now PI Georgia Davis. Georgia is hired to help clear a mentally ill man, Cam Jordan, who is accused of killing a teenage girl, Sara Long, in a local forest preserve. It looks like an open-and-shut case; Cam's fingerprints are on the murder weapon, and the victims blood is on his shirt. However, Georgia and Cam's lawyer suspect Cam is being railroaded. Through her investigation, Georgia finds Sara was killed at a high-school hazing, and a local teenage prostitution ring is operating on the North Shore, a privileged, upper-class area north of Chicago. Also, there is a shady real-estate deal going on. Even when Georgia finds enough evidence to cast doubt on Cam's culpability, she continues her investigation, intent on finding out who killed Sara and why. Georgia is a loner with a minimalist lifestyle who is recovering from her breakup with her boyfriend. She is a principled, compassionate character, determined to do the right thing, even if it doesn't follow conventional assumptions.

Kirkus Reviews:

Depth of characterization sets this new entry by Hellmann (*A Shot to Die For*, 2005, etc.) apart from a crowded field.

Stuart M. Kaminsky, Grand Master, Mystery Writers of America:

Libby Hellmann can get into the mind of a character, whether the character is a mentally ill man or a teenage girl. I kept reading after the first brutal and fascinating pages because I ... wanted to know what would happen to the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly people. PI Georgia Davis, the no-nonsense heart of this tale, is an original who cuts through the surface of the wealthy Chicago suburban North Shore and finds a darkness I didn't see coming. This is good stuff, very good stuff.

Sara Paretsky:

Hellmann's done her homework here and it shows: the writing is assured, the voices authentic, and the understanding both of criminal investigations and relationships among cops, lawyers and prosecutors come to life with great urgency. Her PI, Georgia Davis, works the affluent suburbs north of Chicago, fertile territory for crime that's lain fallow far too long. Davis' arrival on the mean streets is long overdue.

SJ Rozan, author of *In This Rain*:

Easy Innocence grabs you and doesn't let go. Hellmann's cool style and sleight-of-hand plotting draw you in deep before you know what's happened. This one will keep you up at night.

Midwest Book Review:

Exciting plot development and a strong heroine ... If you enjoy gritty noir mysteries, this one is highly recommended.