



Title: Moonlight Mile

Author: Dennis Lehane

Description:

Amanda McCready was four years old when she vanished from a Boston suburb in 1997. Desperate pleas for help from the child's aunt led savvy, tough-nosed investigators Kenzie and Gennaro to take on the case. The pair risked everything to find the young girl only to orchestrate her return to a neglectful mother and a broken home.

Now Amanda is 16 and gone again. A stellar student, brilliant but aloof, she seemed destined to escape her upbringing. Yet Amanda's aunt is once more knocking at Patrick Kenzie's door, fearing the worst for the little girl who has blossomed into a striking, bright young woman who hasn't been seen in two weeks.

Haunted by the past, Kenzie and Gennaro revisit the case that troubled them the most, following a 12-year trail of secrets and lies down the darkest alleys of Boston's gritty, blue-collar streets. Assuring themselves that this time will be different, they vow to make good on their promise to find Amanda and see that she is safe. But their determination to do the right thing holds dark implications Kenzie and Gennaro aren't prepared for ... consequences that could cost them not only Amanda's life, but their own.

Reviews

The New York Times:

What can keep *Moonlight Mile* from heading down an overly well-trodden path? Only the conviction with which Mr. Lehane breathes life into these characters. Unlike the usual sequel writer who simply puts old creations through new paces, Mr. Lehane registers a deep affection for the Kenzie-Gennaro team and a passionate involvement in their problems. And he treats each book in this series as an occasion for wondering what kind of world can produce the depravity that each new plotline describes.

Washington Post:

In the decade between the last Kenzie-Gennaro book and this one, Lehane has made quantum leaps as a craftsman: His breakthrough novel, *Mystic River* encompassed myriad perspectives and ultimately approached the level of Greek tragedy, and *The Given Day* an epic history of early 20th-century Boston, revealed a writer brimming with even greater ambitions. Still, *Moonlight Mile* should hardly be considered a step back. Instead, Lehane is a writer bringing new confidence and an easy prowess to a new chapter in an epic story -- the Kenzie-Gennaro saga.

Chicago Tribune:

Lehane's new novel *Moonlight Mile* is yet more proof that the author is as much social historian as mystery writer, and that his true literary forefathers include John Steinbeck as well as Raymond Chandler. Lehane's breakout hit was *Mystic River* (2001), turned into a gripping film by director Clint Eastwood, and the author has done the same thing here as he did there. He has precisely defined the gradations of class in American life -- and illustrated the distorting downward push of economic pressures -- through a fast-paced, heartbreaking story. Nobody pokes his nose into the crummy apartments and seedy bars and trash-packed alleys and emotional messes of lower-class life with more observational rigor than Lehane.

The plot of *Moonlight Mile* flies at you fast and sinks its hooks into you for keeps. But the heart of *Moonlight Mile*, and the aspect of Lehane's work that lifts it cleanly above other crime fiction the way a grappling hook can raise a body from a quarry pond, is his deep, visceral understanding of poverty's effect on the human psyche, of how the constant throb of hunger can disfigure anybody's good nature and grand ambitions.

Just as Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) told the story of one Depression, Lehane's *Moonlight Mile* begins to tell the story of another one. The latter is a nifty detective story, yes, but it's also more than that: It's an indictment of the times themselves, and a passionate hunt for the real criminals.

Kirkus Reviews (starred):

A modern master of suspense revives the series that initially earned him a hard-core following.

Before Lehane attracted a lot more attention through the film adaptation of his *Mystic River* (2001) and then made a major literary leap with *The Given Day* (2008), the author had built a loyal fan base through a series of detective novels featuring Patrick Kenzie and Angela Gennaro. In this sequel to *Gone, Baby, Gone* (1998), they are no longer partners as Boston private investigators but a married couple with a four-year-old daughter. Patrick freelances for a venerable firm that caters to the city's power elite, where he wrestles with the morality of his work but hopes for a full-time job. While Angie finishes grad school, they are all but broke. Twelve years earlier, they'd been racked by the case of a kidnapped four-year-old, Amanda McCready, when they rescued her from a couple who only wanted the best for her and returned her to her unfit mother. Now Amanda has disappeared again, and Patrick must decide whether to revisit a case that had caused his estrangement from Angie for over a year, and which now could threaten their domesticity and their daughter. As a return to earlier form for Lehane, the novel lacks the psychological depth and thematic ambition of his recent work, but its wise-cracking dialogue, page-turning (though convoluted) plot and protagonists who are all the more likable for their flaws extend the addictive spirit of the series. "When your daughter asks what you stand for, don't you want to be able to answer her" Angie challenges her husband. To do so, he becomes enmeshed with the Russian Mob, shifting allegiances and a wise-beyond-her-years, 16-year-old Amanda, who rubs his nose in the aftereffects of his earlier involvement with her. By the breathless climax, it may appear that this book is the last in the series. But Lehane has fooled us before.

Welcome back.

Christian Science Monitor:

Lehane's interest in investigating moral ambiguity and a genuine affection for his characters makes *Moonlight Mile* a satisfying send-off.

Library Journal:

The haunting conclusion of *Gone, Baby, Gone* obviously resonated with the author, as the result is this satisfying sequel. Longtime readers will appreciate how Leane's protagonists have believably aged. The resolution, while sad to series fans, makes perfect sense.

USA Today:

In many ways, the novel is an homage to happy family life. It's a deft delivery system for a story that mixes guts, betrayal and the importance of good values. It's also a sublime love story about what really matters in the grand scheme of things. Leane says this may be the last novel he writes about Kenzie and Gennaro. If that's the case, it's a heck of a way to go out.

Houston Chronicle:

Given that this is Leane writing, the novel offers intense and violent action, brilliantly evoked Boston and surrounding locales, an assortment of finely etched individuals skilled in thuggery, various awful parents, and a complicated knot of a plot with surprise twists to spare.

Dallas Morning News:

You always learn something new when reading Leane. Here, he'll have you flipping pages as fast as you can, loving the pace and danger, all the while pondering how far your own moral compass might wobble away from true north under the right circumstances.

Kansas City Star:

Moonlight Mile is a quieter outing than Leane's previous novels in this series, but no less gripping. Leane delivers an emotional story that connects with the characters' capacity to grow. Patrick isn't as sure of his moral compass he once was as he negotiates a labyrinth of choices and compromises. Leane's reoccurring themes of moral ambiguity and the loss of innocence receive a thorough workout in *Moonlight Mile*.

Moonlight Mile is a worthy return for Leane's iconic characters.

Denver Post:

Moonlight Mile is everything that Leane readers have come to expect: a tight story filliped with unexpected turns, delivered in prose that goes down easily. Compulsively readable, the duo at its heart is well worth spending time with. The story ends too soon -- not because the ending is abrupt or unsatisfying; the conclusion absolutely works. But it's too soon to leave Kenzie and Gennaro behind. They are addicting characters with a world of adventure, and developing lives, in front of them.

San Jose Mercury News:

It's first-rate storytelling. The back stories are layered and unpredictable, including the people in Amanda's life -- apparent friends and foes -- and how they got that way.

Lehane does a brilliant job of building the story, providing multiple surprises that leave the reader wide-eyed. He also does a superb job of showing that white is sometimes black and that the concept of "obvious" rarely exists with his all-too-human characters.

Columbus Dispatch:

Lehane knows how to get equally valid chills and laughs out of the same situation, throwing the reader for a welcome loop. His Russian mobsters are both intentionally and unintentionally funny as well as fully horrifying, and Patrick, the narrator, is as much patsy as hero. The dialogue pops with energy.

Virginia Pilot:

Moonlight Mile is the kind of detective novel that brings out the reviewers cliches -- mesmerizing, page-turning, pulsating -- but they're all true. I regretted putting it down at night and had to stop myself from dismissing my own work to read it the very next morning. But I can honestly say you'll love this novel -- if you like smart dialogue, compelling characters and plot, and thought-provoking ideas.

Lansing State Journal:

Lehane is one of America's best crime novelists; this book could easily become as memorable a film as two of his other spellbinding novels, *Mystic River* and *Shutter Island*.

Florida Times-Union:

Even though it takes a slightly different path than other Lehane books, most long-time fans will lap up this hot-off-the-presses thriller. It will send Lehane first-timers to the stacks searching for earlier titles.

The Independent:

Moonlight Mile is an excellent thriller because it takes its competent hero and heroine and puts them out of their depth. The very integrity with which they approach life -- and their sense that victims and villains can be told apart -- makes them vulnerable. Lehane is as skilful as ever with plot, action and an evocative sense of Boston's suburbs, but the real strength of this coda to a series lies in the way it interrogates and subverts the values on which the books -- and their genre -- are built.

Daily Mail:

Lehane is one of the great contemporary American crime writers.

Sunday Telegraph (UK):

Dennis Lehane, now best known for Hollywood adaptations of his novels *Mystic River* and *Shutter Island*, was once content to write superior mysteries featuring a husband and wife team comprising Patrick Kenzie and Angie Gennaro. *Moonlight Mile* reunites them -- physically and professionally -- to investigate the disappearance of a girl whose

original departure caused them to split up. Confused You wont be as Lebane brilliantly uses an ethical dilemma -- which comes first: the law or personal morality -- to explore the wintry wastes of Boston in the United States of Recession. The climactic bloodbath in which a bunch of grotesque Russians turn on each other is eclipsed by Kenzie's personal epiphany which has him throw away his Colt .45 for ever. Still, one hopes it won't be difficult for him to buy another one.

Evening Standard (UK):

The intriguing mystery can be encapsulated thus: five people walk into a room, two die but four walk out ...

The ingenious solution is just one of the pleasures of this tale of Boston blues. Each character is described with economy and wit and the portrait of the detective duo's spiky but loving marriage rings true.

There are several very messy deaths and yet the most impressive aspect of the novel is the way that Lebane shows the psychological effects of having to deal with damaged people day after day. It's enough to make anyone, including Kenzie, decide to change their life.

Metro (UK):

Moonlight Mile is a good thriller that doesn't shy away from questions of moral responsibility, and maintains a quick-fire pace and winning line in repartee.

Sunday Herald (UK):

This book reflects a dark mirror image of its predecessor, and is as tough and lean as *The Given Day* was long and detailed. Lebane creates strong characters through fast dialogue rather than descriptions. But writing a follow-up to an earlier novel and succumbing again to a series is not a step backwards. It boasts a combination of surface pace and moral depth that few can match.

Daily Record (UK):

Moonlight Mile proves once again that Lebane is worthy of the hype.

Morning Star (UK):

The result is a glorious Lebane classic -- funny, angry, intelligent and thrilling.