



Shielded Past

Patti Morelli

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Shielded Past is riveting and full of suspense. So many questions need to be answered. We find out about Kate's life in foster care after being abandoned by her mother. We meet Annie Collins, her best friend since their high school days.

Kate meets her ideal man and they purchase their dream home. This home was restored to its magnificent grandeur by her husband Gregg, and it is here that the intrigue begins. There is a light that shines every evening from the adjacent abandoned Marlboro Psychiatric Hospital in New Jersey, and with this, the suspense commences. We journey with Kate and Annie as they seek answers to the source of the light.

It is not only the light they are seeking answers to, Kate's past is also in question. Her seemingly bright future becomes more clouded by the unknown as the questions multiply. Kate wants to know who she is and finds out rather quickly that she was lucky to be shielded from her past. The forces that must be contended with are both dark and light. The two are not always distinguishable, and knowing who to trust is not always obvious. When Kate finds out her real surname, it connects her to a family she never knew existed. With the help of her new found family the past is unravelled and the truth about her parents is revealed.

Kate must now live with the memories of the horrors that were inflicted on her loved ones. Meet the man and learn his reasons for torturing so many innocent victims. The suspense does not end here.

There are questions that still remain. Was there a connection to her dream home and her past? Why does Kate and all those who love her feel that she is in danger?

Shielded Past Details

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Author : Patti Morelli

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From Reader Review Shielded Past for online ebook

Annelise LeStrange says

Review originally posted on The Book Adventures of Annelise LeStrange :)

I received this copy from the author in exchange for an honest review. Let's go :D

The Story

Kate was raised by a foster family and never really knew anything about her past. It wasn't a problem: she had her best friend ever, Annie, a loving husband, Greg, a foster mom that was very proud of her... Or so she thought.

After moving to a lovely house and getting pregnant, Kate starts to feel that there is something off with her so-called perfect life. Everything looks creepy: her house, her neighborhood, her new dog, her past...

Now that she is expecting a child of her own, Kate needs to know whether those scary incidents are really happening or if she is losing her mind and could be qualified to be in a place like the old mental hospital near her home...

The Analysis

Just remembering that those were my impressions and opinion while reading the book :)

This book was AWESOME. SO AMAZING. SO PERFECT. I apologize in advance, as it is so much more complex than my humble description, but it was a creepy and intelligent read! It surpassed all my expectations and for sure was one of the best horror/mystery books that I've read in my life! Overall rating was 4 stars :) Now let's get serious, haha!

The writing technique is the point that lost a star on my rating. Specially on the beginning of the book, I felt that I was reading a screenplay that had been transformed into a movie. And there were other minor typing/grammatical errors along the way, so this is the only reason I didn't give this book a full and big 5 stars rating. It was a third person narrated book with switching point of views, in the exact way that I like, so we always knew all that was going on. Moreover, Morelli was brilliant at this because we couldn't be sure of nothing until the really final chapters, as the mystery was too big. Morelli has a simple writing style that makes you fly by her story and feel the intensity of it like a punch, haha! I was constantly breathless each time that I picked up this book to read and couldn't sleep after the end, haha!

The plot was brilliant and very well executed. For every aspect of her life that Kate solved, there were other four or five new that she had to question. PERFECTION. The mystery remains until the very end, as the real villain threatens to kill Kate and we don't know if she is going to survive. And I'm not going to tell you if she did <3 There are no loose ends on this book, everything gets solved – oh, almost. There is a bit of a cliff hanger on the epilogue, but I can live with that, it was nice, haha! I hope this becomes a series!

Bonus point: this is a horror/mystery book that has an old mental institution on its plot. I love those! It's one of my favorite scenarios for horror books, haha! That's why I lost my mind in the Asylum series, haha!

I also freaking loved the way Morelli builds her characters: they are so real in the little things, you know?

Good or bad, their actions are true and you can understand their minds, their problems, desires and developments. I loved Annie and really connected with her (I swear is not just because my middle name is Anne, haha!). She was always so funny and optimistic despite everything that happened in her life and her eventual boyfriend is one of my new bookish boyfriends (oh the list that I never made, haha!).

The scenarios description was always very detailed, but not that kind that tires off the reader. I could see all the places just like in a movie in my head, where nothing passes in blank for Morelli. This is that type of book that, after you finish, you want to re-read just to see if you could have figured everything out sooner, haha! If you like a good thriller / mystery / horror book, just read this one. Just do it.

That's it! Thanks for reading and thanks again to Patti Morelli for trusting me with her work!

C. says

"**Shielded Past**" is a 2015 release I won from **Patti Morelli**. Her note and matching bookmark made it a sweet care package. Her novel is as unique as I anticipated. Criminality staggered through several storylines but a mystery of the most personal nature drove it: who were Kate's parents? Why was she given up? Star feedback is modest because explanations of pivotal decisions did not gel for me, which I will explain. However I attest to being invested and caring about her story's fine details! Readers will love **Patti's** heroes, who raise kinship and loyalty to a pitch that is more touching than is normally achieved.

My second note is: although "**Shielded Past**" becomes suspenseful and even grips readers with angst; it seemed to need one more touch-up draft. It is a well-plotted mystery with fully-rounded characters and a pace that jettisons in later chapters. It was the telling that felt rough; as if the novel were one big narration, including dialogue. Conversation was sparse and also felt like it was relayed to us; not infused with action that enfolded readers into the story. The novel read as if it were a transcript of events, as engaging as they were.

Kate learns her Mother, Samantha was a teenager who overheard her parents suggest that Kate be adopted. We know they are wealthy and so dedicated to family; all and sundry are invited to build homes on their land. I couldn't see anyone fleeing over a mere suggestion, not clarifying that Kate was wanted and leaning on this vast family unit. In a hostage situation, I imagined the reverse: it wouldn't take two years to escape; especially while on a vacation with this maniac! This novel is otherwise excellent and very unique. I was genuinely startled by at least two twists.

Marilyn says

Shielded Past by Patti Morelli is a well-written tale of mystery and intrigue. It is a tale about how little we all know about our pasts and the ones we love. Kate had been in foster care since she was 3 years old, so she knew nothing about her family. She eventually met and married the man of her dreams and gave birth to a little girl of her own. With the help of her best friend, Annie, Kate begins to search for answers about her past. Some of those answers are welcome blessings, others are heartbreaking and a threat to all she holds dear and her very life.

I enjoyed this story from beginning to end. It moved at a pace that held my interest. The story was new and original something I liked because many stories of this type are cliché. I gave this book a 5 star rating and recommend it because of its fluid writing, original content, and interesting story line. I would love to see this as a Lifetime movie.

SnoopyDoo's Book Reviews says

3 ½ ★

I haven't read any mystery/thriller books in a while and I was way overdue. So when I got offered the book for review I was super stocked.

It really sucked you in from the very beginning and I had a hard time putting it down at times.

The only thing I had an issue with, that it kind of read like a script for a movie or TV show. More in the beginning than the rest but it was sort of odd to read it like that, but like I said it got better.

Sometimes it did seem to be all over the place but it all made sense in the end.

You can find my full review here:

<http://snoopydoosbookreviews.com/shie...>

Melissa says

Suspense, Mystery and Intrigue

This is my first read by this author and I really liked her writing. I love the way that she wove such an intricate story that is literally full of suspense, mystery romance, drama, and intrigue. There are truly some really horror worthy stuff contained within these pages! I was swept up in the book and became totally engrossed in the story and just wanted to keep reading until the last page and read it straight through. I also loved the twists and turns and the ending was like... woah! I won't say why because SPOILERS!, but what I will say is that I definitely recommend this book. You should definitely grab a copy! I was generously provided a copy of this book for an honest review.

Karen Jerro says

Didn't want to put it down. A "real" feel to the read.

Can't wait for her next book.

Mollien Fote Osterman says

Review

5 Frightening Stars

This is another book that I had some trouble getting into. I just couldn't get a grasp on who was actually telling this story. It felt like there were too many points of view, but I stopped and thought about it. I decided to think of the story as being told from a person not really connected to the story. Maybe a reporter. Once I took that approach, I was able to "listen" to the story being retold to me. What a story it is.

Talk about a series of unfortunate events. That is the life of Kate. Living in foster care she made the best of

her life. Her last foster mother instilled the importance of getting an education and working hard. She became successful at her career, has a loyal best friend and foster parents that truly cared for her. She marries a wonderful man and her life is getting better every day.

Things are not always what they seem. When Kate tries to find out about her biological mother, she learns of how warped her past was. She learns how her mother's love forced her to put her in foster care to keep her safe.

With every turn of the page, this story becomes more twisted keeping you wondering and guessing until the very end. Great thriller that will have you up all night just to finish this book.

ARC Provided by Elite Book Tours. Honest review done by Mollien, for Alpha Book Club without influence from publisher or author.

Ebook Planet says

Shielded Past by Patty Morelli is a mystery story with a supernatural element. It follows Kate and Annie on an adventure as they explore Kate's past, and discover horrors beyond what they could have imagined.

There are many twists and turns in the plot, and the sense of needing to know what comes next acts as an effective hook. Some revelations are fascinating, others are a little confusing. Stylistically, the writing is not going to win awards, but for the most part is competent enough to engage the reader. The author has gone for a vague and mysterious quality, but sometimes it would have been better to get straight to the point.

The book is highly entertaining in places, making up for tedious patches which could have been trimmed. All in all this is a decent read, and those looking for a good mystery may well find a lot to like.

Erin M. says

SHIELDED PAST by Patti Morelli was selected from Book Club Reading List.

Kate doesn't know much about her childhood, and she's not asking--not yet. After growing up in the System, and bouncing from family to family, Kate has finally made it. She's got a great job, she's married the perfect man (Gregg), and they've just bought the perfect little house in the country. The only problem is that the house sits on the grounds of an abandoned psychiatric hospital. Kate becomes mildly obsessed with the hospital, noticing the eerie presence of a light in one of the windows. To make matters worse, Gregg has to travel a lot for his work, leaving Kate alone with her imaginings and her growing dread of the hospital. With the help of her friend Annie, Kate begins to go down the rabbit hole of her past, first exploring the hospital, discovering family she did not know she had, and secrets that haunt her dreams. She discovers that the psychiatric hospital was the scene of indescribable horrors--and is a place that is indelibly intertwined with her past and her present.

I was excited to read this book when I found out it had a horror/psychological thriller element to it, and I was not disappointed. I have long been fascinated and disgusted with the treatment of the mentally ill through the ages. Mental illnesses for which we now have multifarious diagnoses were in many cases chalked up to simple "madness," and the treatments were not nuanced in the least. Heavy sedation, lobotomy, and "skull drills" were among the available treatments, and all in all, psychiatric hospitals, well into the 20th Century, were more like jails than treatment facilities. This certainly seemed to be the case for Kate's mother at the Marlboro Psychiatric Hospital in Shielded Past.

From a narrative standpoint, Morelli made extremely good use of her chosen setting, and exhibited a really good understanding of how to build narrative tension. She begins by presenting us with a picture of a perfect life, where everything is seemingly as it should be: Cinderella has her prince, they're moving into their castle, and there is already a room for a future baby. From there, everything starts to slip gradually into chaos. There are light moments along the way to break up the tension, (This is not Stephen King, after all. But even Jack Torrance didn't slide into madness overnight.) but overall, the story continues its relentless march toward its terrible climax. The horror Kate faces lies less in the present and more in the revelations of the past. But there is certainly a growing threat to her own person--and Morelli, I think, really effectively foreshadows this threat without out giving it away outright. It's a hard balance to strike: making you suspect someone and then making you second-guess yourself right up until the last second. In my opinion, one of the best villains in all of literature is Iago from Shakespeare's Othello. Perhaps it is because he is the most despicable sort of villain in that he presents the face of a friend while hiding the heart of a wolf. Shielded Past draws a bit on this motif.

I felt that Morelli had a really solid cast of characters. Kate is arguably the main character, but I liked learning about Kate through her friend Annie. Annie was sort of the life of the book. She is so much more than comic relief, but drives the story forward. It is she, not Kate, who is the catalyst for many of Kate's discoveries. I was also fascinated by another character (who I will not reveal by name, in the interest of avoiding spoilers) who was a monster and did monstrous things, but who was also capable of deep and real love. I love it when an author takes a risk and asks us to look at the other side of the monster. It is easy to demonize those who do despicable things--and maybe they deserve to be demonized, at least partly. But it is even harder, and maybe more worthwhile, to try to find the humanity in such people.

The one beef I had with Shielded Past probably stems from my editing background. There was a lot of inconsistency with use of punctuation, paragraph breaks, etc. throughout the book. I can, of course, excuse missing periods or close-quotes here and there, but there were many instances where I had to stop and figure out who was talking because it was not clear from the formatting. Also, a personal stylistic preference, but I really dislike comma splices. I think there are instances where two independent clauses can be joined by a comma if it is following the natural flow of language. But in many instances, spliced sentences just read funny to me, almost like run-on sentences, and feel a little careless.

Conclusion

Patti Morelli has crafted a really great story with Shielded Past. If you've read my past reviews, you know that I put the highest premium on story. And while I prefer that the strength of the writing match the strength of the plot, I am more concerned that the plot and the characters work together cohesively. In Shielded Past, they do just that. I was hooked early on, and I found myself reading for hours at a time at each sitting. If you want a suspenseful read that will have you guessing right up until the end, you will not be disappointed.

(Read this review and others at [A Writer Reads](#). Erin never has, nor ever will, review a book in exchange for money in the interest of honest reviews.)
