



Lake of Tears

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"Logue writes beautifully about rural Minnesota life while telling a good mystery. For fans of J.A. Jance and Margaret Maron." --*Library Journal*

Deputy Sheriff Claire Watkins has had an easy summer in Fort St. Antoine, Wisconsin; the only problem is that her daughter Meg is leaving for college soon. When Claire walks down to the park to watch the Burning Boat--a large replica of a Norwegian longboat set on the shores of Lake Pepin, burned at the autumnal equinox--she has no idea that more than just a wooden structure is going up in flames.

The next day, the bones of a young woman are found in the ashes. When Claire learns that the new deputy she has hired, a vet returning from Afghanistan, was the young woman's former boyfriend, and that he is now dating her daughter Meg, she is desperate to find out who is responsible for the death.

In order to get to the heart of this mystery, Claire must understand what happened in an attack in the mountains of Afghanistan, which left one man wounded, one man killed, and one man disturbed. Could one of those two remaining men be the killer?

Lake of Tears Details

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Author : Mary Logue

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From Reader Review Lake of Tears for online ebook

Cary Griffith says

I attended a reading by Mary Logue one week ago. I bought a book of her poems and her latest Claire Watkins mystery. I've really enjoyed them both. To say Mary Logue is prolific is understatement. While she was finishing her last Claire Watkins mystery, she wrote two other mysteries, the book of poems and I believe an award-winning childrens book. There was also a serialized novel published in the Star Tribune (though I'm not sure when she wrote it).

All of the preceding notwithstanding, I enjoyed Lake of Tears, but not as much as some of the other Watkins mysteries I've read. The book was compelling, really well written, and enjoyable from page one to the end. Last night I was suffering from a migraine (very rare for me), but as the book rocketed toward its end I couldn't put it down and plowed on through the pain until I simply could not continue. Then this morning, I couldn't wait to finish it - even though I'm an 8 to 5 corporate cube guy. I managed to squeeze in the last 20 pages.

My problem with this novel happens in the last 50 pages. It's compelling, interesting, maybe even riveting, but some of the characters didn't ring true for me. This part of the book lacked verisimilitude, even though I couldn't put it down, and reiterate, it was very well written. Clean language, beautiful diction, loved Claire, Meg, and several of the other characters, but the troubled characters just didn't work for me.

Bottom line: well worth the price and the read. Try it; you'll like it.

Amodini says

Full review [here](#).

I did like "Lake of Tears", but for a murder mystery this was a little placid. The mystery itself was not too complicated, and the book's non-bombastic plot was underwhelming. It might be that I am used to mysteries, even cozy, small-town mysteries with some intrigue, a few red herrings, and plot twists, so this book's predictable plot line left me wanting.

I haven't read the other books in the series, but that didn't seem to make any difference as this book stood alone quite well, no back references or past events that seemed to bleed through here. Although it wasn't your fast-paced, effusive murder mystery, "Lake of Tears" was still a decent read.

David Schwinghammer says

When I saw the review for LAKE OF TEARS, a mystery featuring a woman sheriff of a small town, I was thinking "Marge Gunderson!" No such luck. Although Mary Logue has published twelve mystery novels, many featuring Claire Watkins, this book is nothing like "Fargo".

At the beginning of the book, the sheriff in the county seat of Fort St. Antoine, Wisconsin, has a heart attack, and Claire takes his place, just in time to be confronted with a skeleton imbedded in a replica of a Norwegian longboat set afire to celebrate the town's Norwegian heritage.

This book is different in that a couple of the characters are Afghanistan vets, suffering from PTS; one of the suspects who had been a boyfriend of the victim prior to his war service is a newly hired deputy on Claire's staff. One of his best friends from the war also shows up looking for the deputy. Another suspect is the girl's current boyfriend who had given her a diamond engagement ring. He and Andrew Stickler, the deputy, had locked horns previously, apparently over the girl.

Logue throwS in a further complication with Stickler, aged 26, dating her daughter, Meg, 18.

Otherwise, LAKE OF TEARS reads like a episode of "Law and Order" or one of the numerous cops shows on TV. It's short, only 207 pages, and Logue takes the easy way out in respect to resolution, but I didn't hate it. I guess I'll have to wait for the new "Fargo" TV series, sanctioned by the Coen brothers, to get my "Fargo" buzz.

Sharon says

Mary Logue's character and associated mysteries are so readable and unique. I always enjoy the series with each new addition. This book did not disappoint. Well done.

Kim Wyatt says

I really enjoyed this book. I've found a new mystery writer for my reading pleasure! I found the characters believable and the story gripped me from beginning to end. the dialogue is also very believable. I am going to look for more Claire Watkins mysteries my next trip to the library!

Claire, the acting sherriffs is concerned that her 18 year old daughter is dating one of her deputies, a war vet. her concern is even greater when it turns out he's a person of interest in the murder of a young woman.

Annie says

A wonderful 4 star read, review to come....:)

I first came across Mary Logue way back in 1995 when I read her book "Still Explosion" I enjoyed the book and I liked the slower pacing of that mystery so when later I ran across the first Claire Watkins mystery series book "Blood Country" I was first knocked out by the gorgeous cover art on the jacket and then knocked out again by the great storyline and with Lake of Tears there is no exception.

What I like best about the Claire Watkins mystery series is, it is local! I love reading about rural Minnesota the places I know and have been to. The Midwestern lingo gives me a good chuckle as well, "ya, ya you betcha".

In this book we have Claire Watkins Deputy Sheriff for Pepin county in the tiny bluff town of Fort St. Antoine and her "growing up way to quickly and off to college soon" daughter Meg and her ever put on the back burner local pheasant raising farmer boyfriend Rich.

They all find themselves digging through the mystery of the charred body found in the ashes of the Burning Boat, a large replica of a Norwegian longboat that is set on the shores of lake Pepin and burned at the autumnal equinox much to the delight of the townsfolk

Claire soon learns the ashes belong to a young woman with ties to various men in the town that at one time

all dated her, one of them being her new deputy recently back from Afghanistan and recently dating her daughter and what they all know about the dead woman.

I enjoy Claire as mom, Sherriff and feel for her as she tries to get a grip on her relationship with the ever patient Rich.

This is a fun, local series I have kept up with through the years.

My one complaint would be the loss of the beautiful cover art.....

Martha says

I'm liking this series, and would agree with the reviewer who said if you like JA Jance, you will like this series. It's almost a cozy series, but has a sheriff as the main protagonist. We get to know her and her family along with a bit of a mystery. Quick, good, and midwestern!

Linnaea says

This is a very quick read. It is not quite a cozy murder mystery but it is not violent or graphic either. The narrative was very easy to follow. It was easy to see who the killer could be (which is nice because sometimes stranger/serial killer novels reach a point where you know that region isn't that dangerous) but there were enough suspects that it was still interesting to read the solution. It wasn't amazing nor did it keep my on the edge of my seat. it was a nice easy mystery (kind of like tea, tea is easy to drink, this was easy to read). I doubt I'll remember it in a year nor do I have a strong opinion on the novel. I'd read her books again, but I'm not going to place all her books on hold to devour.

So, I Read This Book Today says

War is a big and sprawling word that brings a lot of human suffering into the conversation, but combat is a different matter . . . –Sebastian Junger, War.

It doesn't require any particular bravery to stand on the floor of the Senate and urge our boys in Vietnam to fight harder, and if this war mushrooms into a major conflict and a hundred thousand young Americans are killed, it won't be U.S. Senators who die. It will be American soldiers who are too young to qualify for the Senate. ~George McGovern

lakeoftearsI really don't like alliteration. It just seems that I could word things so much better, in a more sophisticated or literary way. But in this case, a term comes to mind that I simply cannot shake. So, here goes. The wanton waste of war. And in the case of Lake of Tears, it is so horrifically appropriate.

The little murder mystery is purportedly about Claire Watkins, and her daughter, Meg, a soon-to-be college student, working her last fall in town before going off to Madison. Things change suddenly, when Claire is thrust into the role of Sheriff of her little county when Sheriff Talbot, suffers a heart attack and is sent to Mayo Clinic in Minneapolis for a quadruple bypass. This shouldn't really be a big deal in their quiet county. However, everything changes before Sheriff Talbot is even sent off to the Mayo, when a body is found burned to bones in the remains of the Burning Boat, a Norse longship built out of pallets and burned in

effigy, a paean to the Norse history of Wisconsin. What follows becomes the story of Andrew Stickler, a newly returned veteran from that blasted sandbox, Afghanistan. Andrew spent four years 'over there,' fighting for his life, and the lives of others, vacillating from the boredom of waiting to the terror of fighting, before coming home to Wisconsin and going to work for Claire as a deputy.

Here then is where the 'wanton waste of war' come full circle. Having dated the victim before he left for the Army, Andrew is drawn into the investigation as a prime suspect. And we begin to learn more and more of his history in Afghanistan and what he, and others, lost over there.

Mary Logue handles the story with a deft hand, never overbearing, opening up the story and bringing you into the mind and soul of the veterans who give so much. She reminds us all that the boys and girls who go to war really are just children. Some are a very young eighteen or barely more, pushed into circumstances that would send anyone into madness. As Claire's husband says at one point in the book, "If we drafted the old men, like my age, I doubt there'd be many wars. I for one wouldn't go." Maybe we should expand that definition. If we sent the politicians and the generals, the corporate heads and rich old men, there certainly wouldn't be wars. Sort of like if men had children, there would be a lot less people on the planet.

Logue tells a sad, a heartbreaking tale, of loss and death, of madness and despair, but also of hope and new beginnings. It left me sad, but also hopeful for the characters in her story.

Now, if only I could develop some hope for the fate of mankind.

I was given a copy of Lake of Tears by the Publisher in return for an honest review. All opinions are my own. Lake of Tears is due out January 18, 2014.

Jen says

Mary Logue has an interesting repertoire: she writes mysteries, nonfiction, poetry, and children's books. She has won a Caldecott Honor and been nominated for an Edgar and has written for the New York Times and the Village Voice.

Lake of Tears is part of Logue's Claire Watkins mystery series. Claire is a Deputy Sheriff in Fort St. Antoine in Wisconsin and a level-headed and efficient woman.

Sheriff Talbot, Claire's boss, has a heart attack, and Claire becomes acting sheriff. The day after a replica Viking longboat is burned at the autumnal equinox, a charred skeleton is discovered in the remains, and Claire becomes responsible for the investigation of this bizarre murder.

To make the situation even more difficult, Andrew Stickler, the latest deputy hire, is a recently returned Afghanistan veteran who is dating Claire's daughter--and all of the evidence appears to be pointing towards Andrew.

Logue makes a statement about war and the psychological effects war has on veterans. Andrew would like to move on from his war experiences, but a particular episode from his last tour continues to haunt him.

I liked the characters, especially Claire's partner Rich, whose role is minimal, but who obviously maintains a solid support system for both Claire and Meg.

NetGalley/F+W/Adams Media

Mystery. Jan. 18, 2014. Print version: 210 pages.

Jennifer says

I enjoyed this book from the moment I started reading it until the last page. I didn't realize it was part of a series but I don't think it mattered. I enjoyed the characters and the story. Bones are found in the ashes after the Burning Boat ritual. A local girl is reported missing by her fiancé and the body is eventually identified, which causes Claire to suspect Andrew, a newly hired officer who recently returned from Afghanistan. To make matters worse, Claire's daughter started dating Andrew. The book revolves around Claire and her team trying to solve a murder, PTSD and what happened to Andrew when he was in Afghanistan. The book is a quick read and the only part that I didn't care for was the character Doug. I suspected who killed Tammy Lynn, but there were some twists that I didn't see coming. I can't wait to read the previous books in the series.

Bonnie says

Deputy Sheriff Claire Watkins of Fort St. Antoine, Wisconsin has enjoyed a peaceful summer with only the fact that her daughter is leaving for college in the fall to concern her. The town is staging a longboat burning Saturday night on Lake Pepin and Claire has no idea as she watches the boat burn that a body in hidden beneath the hull.

The next day the bones of a young woman are found in the ashes and she calls in a bone expert from BARFAA. Dr. Herman Pinkers says readily that they look like bones from a young female and promises to get more information to her as soon as possible.

Claire has recently hired a vet returning from a four-year duty in Afghanistan and thinks he is fitting in well until he starts dating her 18-year-old daughter. When the body is identified as that of a local woman and that she used to date the deputy, her anxiety soars.

In order to solve the murder, Claire must delve into what happened in Afghanistan to understand a vow made between three soldiers that could have influenced the murder.

Jess says

Nice little bit of rural Minnesota. I'd call it a cozy (because it isn't creepy or gory or terrifying) but it isn't necessarily what I'd expect from that label. No cutesy career, tea, amateur detective, or whatnot, but instead a female sheriff who feels like a sheriff. I'm good with that.

Turns out this is book nine in the series (jeez front pages. how about a list?) but I made it through all right without knowing the crew.

I grabbed this from the library's new shelf on a whim. It's not the sort of thing I typically read which was exactly what I wanted. It's shorter than mysteries tend to be and a little slow in places but hey, I'm good with it all. I mean, they found the body in a Viking funeral pyre.

Oh - serious Jess bonus points for referencing Menomonie.

Chris says

I have not read books 1 through 8 in this series, which means I don't have the background information on the main characters I probably needed to better understand some of what was going on. And I think the mystery was a little weak. Had to force myself to finish, because I didn't care about most of the characters.

Ellen Parker says

The Claire Watkins series, set in Wisconsin's smallest county, continues in this well-crafted story.

While attending The Burning Boat event which marks the autumnal equinox, Meg, Claire's college bound daughter, is drawn to a stranger with a fresh tattoo. Soon she learns he's the new sheriff's deputy, recently returned from Afghanistan, and carrying mental baggage heavier than any military pack.

The next morning a skeleton is discovered in the ash of the ceremonial fire. Claire, promoted to interim sheriff, directs and assists her deputies in the investigation.

Andrew, the deputy, is cautious with Meg. He enjoys talking to her and needs her company more as the clues entangle him with the bones in the fire and an Army buddy thrusts his own agenda into his life.

This book was hard to put down. The continuing characters are introduced in such a way that the story stands alone as well as adding to the saga of Claire Watkins.
