

## A Mountain of Evidence

**Amy O. Lewis**

Arrow Road Press (Sep 14, 2021)

Softcover \$14.95

978-1-73729-770-3

*Set in a small town, the charming mystery novel A Mountain of Evidence centers on a fugitive whose vulnerability becomes her strength.*

In Amy O. Lewis's thriller *A Mountain of Evidence*, a woman on the run from one complicated criminal situation is drawn into a murder case.

The woman who goes by Kim Jackson knows that is not her real name, and that the identification documents she used to start a new life far away from Chicago are not hers, either. Escaping threats of being framed for fraud at her former job, Kim ends up in a small Colorado town—just as a teenager, Emily, goes missing.

When Emily's body is found, Kim becomes curious. She investigates the strange circumstances around Emily's death, even knowing that she should be laying low. Matters are further complicated when Scott, the son of Lucy, a woman whom Kim reads to at the nursing home, begins to woo her, and Kim begins to suspect that he's doing so for reasons related to his mother's money. Romance gives way to tension; Kim is warned about Scott's potential for dangerous behavior.

Kim wants to be cautious, but she is driven by a need for connection and acceptance. She participates in social and community activities, framing her involvement with Emily's case as groundwork for clearing her real name. As the novel progresses, she sharpens her investigative skills, questioning locals and poring over Emily's notebooks and photographs for clues. Her thoughts reveal her tendency toward escapism, suggesting that her interest in Emily is enabling her to evade her own concerns. The revelation of Kim's memories is a slow process.

The citizens of Kim's new Colorado home are an additional source of color. They include awkward teenagers, chatty roommates, and nosy neighbors who collect rumors. All help to make up for the gaps in Kim's local knowledge. But the large cast also leads to some story lines being lost and abandoned as characters move in and out of Kim's tale.

Though this is an often procedural mystery, it includes unpredictable events for infusions of action. Lucy and Scott grow in importance throughout, as their personal histories twist through other plot points; the books that Kim reads to Lucy emphasize the novel's belief that love and money guide human behaviors. While the mystery of Emily's death is resolved by the end, Kim remains in personal limbo—though equipped with new investigative skills.

Set in a small town, the charming mystery novel *A Mountain of Evidence* centers on a fugitive whose vulnerability becomes her strength.

DELIA STANLEY (July 26, 2021)

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