ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

Lethal Hindsight
Robert Abel Jr.
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"We will make the world forget the failures of our fathers…Steps must be taken to return the Vaterland to what it should be," Gerhardt Kugler tells his company's board of directors in Robert Abel Jr.'s Lethal Hindsight. This speech sets the future direction for the company.

Kugler, the CEO of an electronic and optical engineering company, has bold plans for pharmaceutical terrorism and mind control that will promote Germany's return to world dominance. Kugler's plans develop nicely until Lauren Chandler, an ophthalmologist, notices an increase in drug-induced cataracts in the Washington, DC, area and writes an article for publication. Finding the connection is difficult, but she talks to her father, Senator Benjamin Chandler, who tells her, "There's a Senator Brown, from Montana, who is a real pain in the ass. He's gotten it under his skin to get our troops out of Germany. It makes no sense, really, at least for him to be so interested."

The coincidental timing of sudden cataract increase in Washington and Bonn, Germany, (the former capital) raises suspicion, especially when linked with Senator Brown's efforts. But after an attempt on Lauren's life, suspicion turns to investigation. Gradually, the puzzle pieces fall into place, and with the FBI, Lauren faces down the perpetrators.

Mark, an undercover FBI agent, is assigned to keep an eye on Lauren; he ends up using lips and hands too, and Lauren falls in love with him. Never too graphic, their relationship gets complicated when she finds out he is FBI and feels lied to.

Abel holds an MD and has written five books about eye care and health. Lethal Hindsight, his first novel, is well written. Murders abound, but Abel doesn't include unnecessary gore or frighten readers with fear mongering. Characters, though not deep, are believable. The romance between Lauren and Mark shines as it reflects the joy of falling in love. The story craft is good, with detail and foreshadowing that make the tale believable. The first half of the book, however, is set up for action coming in the second half and is somewhat dry and uninteresting. Perhaps this could be improved if the author were better at the art of description, or had given the dialogue a nudge toward realism.

The first half may drag a bit, but readers are advised to persevere to the end. The action picks up, and the tension rises to a dramatic conclusion.

David George