

The Lost Brothers: A Family's Decades-Long Search

Jack El-Hai

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Jack El-Hai's true crime story *The Lost Brothers* focuses on the disappearance of three young Minneapolis boys in November of 1951.

Kenneth, David, and Danny Klein went to play at a park mere blocks from their home, but they never returned. A police investigation concluded that the brothers drowned in the nearby Mississippi River, despite the fact that no bodies were ever found. Almost 70 years later, the case remains haunting and unsolved, a harrowing mystery without a final chapter.

This brief and compassionate book delivers a portrait of the boys' parents, as well as of their older brother, who did not accompany the boys to the park and who suffered from survivor's guilt. Through the decades, the Klein family struggled to carry on and remain optimistic. The boys' mother clung to the hope of a reunion, imagining herself welcoming her sons back and never questioning who had taken them, insisting that "God forgives and so can we."

Beyond the family background, the book recounts the initial search for the boys and the crucial errors made in subsequent investigations. Various theories and suspects are considered alongside details from a more trusting era, when children often spent their days playing unsupervised and exploring local surroundings. The duality of human nature is noted, contrasting the outpouring of support the Kleins received following the tragedy to the reprehensible "crank" letters, phone calls, and ransom demands they were subjected to.

Though the text comes without new leads, it brings the Klein case into a concise, cohesive focus, suggesting that advances in forensics and DNA testing and the broader reach of the internet may provide clues or closure. Poignant and compelling, *The Lost Brothers* asserts that the three vanished boys still deserve justice and to finally be found.

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