



Son

By Lois Lowry

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Son By Lois Lowry

“They called her Water Claire.”

When the young girl washed up on their shore, no one knew she had been a Vessel. That she had carried a Product. That it had been carved from her belly. Stolen.

Claire had had a son. She was supposed to forget him, but that was impossible. When he was taken from their community, she knew she had to follow. And so her journey began.

But here in this wind-battered village Claire is welcomed as one of their own. In the security of her new home, she is free and loved. She grows stronger. As tempted as she is by the warmth of more human kindness than she has ever known, she cannot stay. Her son is out there; a young boy by now. Claire will stop at nothing to find her child . . . even if it means trading her own life.

With *Son*, the two-time Newbery Medal–winning Lois Lowry has spun another mesmerizing tale in this thrilling and long-awaited conclusion to *The Giver*.

“Claire’s story stands on its own, but as the final volume in this iconic quartet, it holistically reunites characters, reprises provocative socio-political themes, and offers a transcending message of tolerance and hope.”—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

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Son By Lois Lowry Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1277367 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Listening Library (Audio)
- Published on: 2012-10-09
- Released on: 2012-10-09
- Formats: Audiobook, CD, Unabridged
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 7
- Dimensions: 5.95" h x 1.12" w x 5.38" l, .50 pounds
- Running time: 480 minutes
- Binding: Audio CD



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Editorial Review

Review

"Written with powerful, moving simplicity, Claire's story stands on its own, but as the final volume in this iconic quartet, it holistically reunites characters, reprises provocative socio-political themes, and offers a transcending message of tolerance and hope. Bravo!"

—*Kirkus*, starred review

"Lowry is one of those rare writers who can craft stories as meaningful as they are enticing."

—*Booklist*, starred review

"Son is a tender conclusion to this memorable story, and definitely the best of the books in this sequence since *The Giver* itself."

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

"The strength of this novel is its compassionate portrait of a mother's commitment to her lost child."

—*Horn Book*

"In the completely absorbing opening, Lowry transports readers back to the horrifying world from which Jonas came."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"A consummate stylist, Lowry handles it all magnificently: the leaps in time, the shifts in perspective, the moments of extreme emotion — fear, joy, sadness — all conveyed in unadorned prose that seizes the heart. Give this book to your child, your grandmother, your senator, your neighbor: It's a bipartisan tale for our times."

—*The Washington Post*

"Lois Lowry's *Son* [is] a gripping end to the Giver series"

—*The Los Angeles Times*

"It's the kind of book that will stay with you for days as you wonder about what it says about human nature, society, and the future of society."

—YPulse.com

"A quiet, sorrowful, deeply moving exploration of the powers of empathy and the obligations of love."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

About the Author

Lois Lowry is known for her versatility and invention as a writer. She has received countless honors, among them the Newbery Medal for two of her novels, *Number the Stars* and *The Giver*, the first novel in the Giver Quartet. Ms. Lowry now divides her time between Cambridge and an 1840s farmhouse in Maine.

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ONE

The young girl cringed when they buckled the eyeless leather mask around the upper half of her face and blinded her. It felt grotesque and unnecessary, but she didn't object. It was the procedure. She knew that. One of the other Vessels had described it to her at lunch a month before.

"Mask?" she had asked in surprise, almost chuckling at the strange image. "What's the mask for?"

"Well, it's not really a mask," the young woman seated on her left corrected herself, and took another bite of the crisp salad. "It's a blindfold, actually." She was whispering. They were not supposed to discuss this among themselves.

"Blindfold?" she had asked in astonishment, then laughed apologetically. "I don't seem to be able to converse, do I? I keep repeating what you say. But: blindfold? Why?"

"They don't want you to see the Product when it comes out of you. When you birth it." The girl pointed to her bulging belly.

"You've produced already, right?" she asked her.

The girl nodded. "Twice."

"What's it like?" Even asking it, she knew it was a somewhat foolish question. They had had classes, seen diagrams, been given instructions. Still, none of that was the same as hearing it from someone who had already gone through the process. And now that they were already disobeying the restriction about discussing it? well, why not ask?

"Easier the second time. Didn't hurt as much."

When she didn't respond, the girl looked at her quizzically. "Hasn't anyone told you it hurts?"

"They said 'discomfort.' "

The other girl gave a sarcastic snort. "Discomfort, then. If that's what they want to call it. Not as much discomfort the second time. And it doesn't take as long."

"Vessels? VESSELS!" The voice of the matron, through the speaker, was stern. "Monitor your conversations, please! You know the rules!"

The girl and her companion obediently fell silent then, realizing they had been heard through the microphones embedded in the walls of the dining room. Some of the other girls giggled. They were probably also guilty. There was so little else to talk about. The process? their job, their mission? was the thing they had in common. But the conversation shifted after the stern warning.

She had taken another spoonful of soup. Food in the Birthmothers' Dormitory was always plentiful and delicious. The Vessels were all being meticulously nourished. Of course, growing up in the community, she had always been adequately fed. Food had been delivered to her family's dwelling each day.

But when she had been selected Birthmother at twelve, the course of her life had changed. It had been gradual. The academic courses? math, science, law? at school became less demanding for her group. Fewer tests, less reading required. The teachers paid little attention to her.

Courses in nutrition and health had been added to her curriculum, and more time was spent on exercise in the outdoor air. Special vitamins had been added to her diet. Her body had been examined, tested, and prepared for her time here. After that year had passed, and part of another, she was deemed ready. She was instructed to leave her family dwelling and move to the Birthmothers' Dormitory.

Relocating from one place to another within the community was not difficult. She owned nothing. Her clothing was distributed and laundered by the central clothing supply. Her schoolbooks were requisitioned by the school and would be used for another student the following year. The bicycle she had ridden to school throughout her earlier years was taken to be refurbished and given to a different, younger child.

There was a celebratory dinner her last evening in the dwelling. Her brother, older by six years, had already gone on to his own training in the Department of Law and Justice. They saw him only at public meetings; he had become a stranger. So the last dinner was just the three of them, she and the parental unit who had raised her. They reminisced a bit; they recalled some funny incidents from her early childhood (a time she had thrown her shoes into the bushes and come home from the Childcare Center barefoot). There was laughter, and she thanked them for the years of her upbringing.

"Were you embarrassed when I was selected for Birthmother?" she asked them. She had, herself, secretly

hoped for something more prestigious. At her brother's selection, when she had been just six, they had all been very proud. Law and Justice was reserved for those of especially keen intelligence. But she had not been a top student.

"No," her father said. "We trust the committee's judgment. They knew what you would do best."

"And Birthmother is very important," Mother added. "Without Birthmothers, none of us would be here!"

Then they wished her well in the future. Their lives were changing too; parents no longer, they would move now into the place where Childless Adults lived.

The next day, she walked alone to the dormitory attached to the Birthing Unit and moved into the small bedroom she was assigned. From its window she could see the school she had attended, and the recreation field beyond. In the distance, there was a glimpse of the river that bordered the community.

Finally, several weeks later, after she was settled in and beginning to make friends among the other girls, she was called in for insemination.

Not knowing what to expect, she had been nervous. But when the procedure was complete, she felt relieved; it had been quick and painless.

"It that all?" she had asked in surprise, rising from the table when the technician gestured that she should.

"That's all. Come back next week to be tested and certified."

She had laughed nervously. She wished they had explained everything more clearly in the instruction folder they had given her when she was selected. "What does 'certified' mean?" she asked.

The worker, putting away the insemination equipment, seemed a little rushed. There were probably others waiting. "Once they're sure it implanted," he explained impatiently, "then you're a certified Vessel."

"Anything else?" he asked her as he turned to leave. "No? You're free to go, then."

That all seemed such a short time ago. Now here she was, nine months later, with the blindfold strapped around her eyes. The discomfort had started some hours before, intermittently; now it was nonstop. She breathed deeply as they had instructed. It was difficult, blinded like this; her skin was hot inside the mask. She tried to relax. To breathe in and out. To ignore the discom? *No*, she thought. *It is pain. It really is pain.* Gathering her strength for the job, she groaned slightly, arched her back, and gave herself up to the darkness. Her name was Claire. She was fourteen years old.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Allison Phelps:

This book untitled Son to be one of several books that best seller in this year, here is because when you read this e-book you can get a lot of benefit in it. You will easily to buy this book in the book retail store or you can order it via online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more easily to read this book, since you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to your account to past this book from your list.

Catherine Acevedo:

The book Son will bring that you the new experience of reading some sort of book. The author style to describe the idea is very unique. When you try to find new book to read, this book very appropriate to you. The book Son is much recommended to you to learn. You can also get the e-book from your official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

Loren Benton:

Exactly why? Because this Son is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who write the book in such remarkable way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any more or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book get such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking way. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I have been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

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