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Review of Lost and Wanted

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LJ Review Cover Sheet and Survey

Your name: Michael F. Russo

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Title of the book: *Lost and Wanted: A Novel*

Author or editor of the book: Nell Freudenberger

This book is recommended for: Public and academic libraries

Comments for your editor:

Review

Author: Nell Freudenberger

Title: *Lost and Wanted: A Novel*

Publisher: Alfred A. Knopf

Release date: April 2019

Number of pages: 318

Features:

Format: Hard cover

ISBN: 9780385352680

Price: \$26.95

In this, her third novel, Freudenberger (*The Dissident*, *The Newlyweds*) deploys the obscurities of science to untangle a series of interpersonal relationships as complex as any quadratic equation. Helen, the narrator, is a theoretical physicist. A Harvard graduate and now an MIT professor of repute, Helen is forced to ponder and question her place in the universe of persons in her orbit when she begins, inexplicably, receiving text and email messages from her recently-deceased best friend's telephone.

The book is rich in the vivid detail that is characteristic of Freudenberger. The narrator's lofty clarifications of physical concepts, such as gravitational waves and the efforts of LIGO scientists to detect them, are balanced by hints of the mundane world she inhabits, such as a desk strewn with the detritus of everyday life, including a note reminding her to buy toothpaste.

The title suggests the loss of something earnestly desired. What that desire is seems, at first, unknown even to Helen. But, in the end, through the apt analogy of gravity and with her own soul searching, Helen comes to an ultimate moment of "finding."

VERDICT: Recommended for anyone drawn to contemporary literary and character-driven fiction.

Michael F. Russo

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