



City of Lies

Victoria Thompson

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Elizabeth Miles scours 1920's Washington, D.C. for a killer in the first Counterfeit Lady novel from the author of the New York Times bestselling Gaslight mysteries.

Every woman plays a part—but some are more dangerous than others...

Like most women, Elizabeth Miles assumes many roles; unlike most, hers have made her a woman on the run. Living on the edge of society, Elizabeth uses her guile to relieve so-called respectable men of their ill-gotten gains. But brutal and greedy entrepreneur Oscar Thornton is out for blood. He's lost a great deal of money and is not going to forgive a woman for outwitting him. With his thugs hot on her trail, Elizabeth seizes the moment to blend in with a group of women who have an agenda of their own.

She never expects to like or understand these privileged women, but she soon comes to respect their intentions, forming an unlikely bond with the wealthy matriarch of the group whose son Gideon is the rarest of species—an honest man in a dishonest world. She knows she's playing a risky game, and her deception could be revealed at any moment, possibly even by sharp-eyed Gideon. Nor has she been forgotten by Thornton, who's biding his time within this gilded orbit, waiting to strike. Elizabeth must draw on her wits and every last ounce of courage she possesses to keep her new life from being cut short by this vicious shadow from her past.

City of Lies Details

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Author : Victoria Thompson

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Mystery, Historical Mystery, Fiction, Adult, Romance

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From Reader Review City of Lies for online ebook

Linda says

2.5 stars

After reading all of Ms. Thompson's *Gaslight* mysteries and becoming slightly disenchanted with the last few stories, I was excited to find *City of Lies*. IMHO, it *was not* a mystery. I thought of it as historical fiction with a few elements taken from true events. The upside for me was researching this time-gone-by. What was the truth, only you can decide.

Though no year was given, it appeared to take place in late August, 1917 and the weeks that followed. This was when the women suffragettes actually picketed President Woodrow Wilson in front of the White House. It was the underlying theme that encompassed *City of Lies*.

If you are familiar with Maeve from the *Gaslight* books, grifter Elizabeth Miles was taken from the same mold: stilted, blunt, even harsh at times. If I continue to read this series, I ~~need~~ hope her character blooms.

Like many first stories, there were quite a few characters and subplots. There was an interesting blend of WWI, Wilson's messy handling of the Suffragettes and an oily secondary strand of selling arms to the American government. And, of course, the *con*. Plus a confused LBGT character and two men fascinated with one woman. Instead of polishing it off in less than 48 hours, it took me *days* to complete it. In this case I thought it would help if '*less is more*'.

It saddens me to give *City of Lies* 2 1/2 stars. There was an abrupt HEA that could have made it a stand-alone; I assume there will be other stories. If I read the next one, it will be to see if the MCs expand.

Darque Dreamer says

City of Lies is more than just an intriguing mystery. It is an exciting, elegantly written historical fiction story about strong women, crime, betrayal, and wit. This one has all the makings of a fun crime novel, with the addition of women fighting for what they believe in, and rising above their times! For those who love historical fiction with flare and cleverness, this one is for you!

I was pleasantly intrigued by this book. Though, the synopsis doesn't quite match the true feel of the story, the book itself was an exciting read! I am a little ashamed to admit that I did not remember learning about the women's movement involved in this story, and in history, that ultimately led to our right to vote, but I am most definitely going to be doing more research to learn all that I can. I felt like that was an amazing addition to the story.

The plot of the story was spectacularly written. Elizabeth Miles was on the run from a man named Oscar Thornton because she and her brother, Jake, had cheated him out of a large sum of money. She found an opportunity to escape his sight by joining the Suffragists in a protest in front of the white house, and things quickly spiraled from there. She became involved in their cause, and emotionally connected with several members, and not only had an amazing character transformation, but also found ways to aid her escape from Thornton's hunt.

Elizabeth was so fascinating. She was clever, witty, sneaky, and brave. She was a great con artist, but also had a few hidden morals that showed throughout the story. I felt like she almost measured up to Audrey Rose from *Stalking Jack the Ripper*, and Lady Helen from *The Dark Days Club*, in my eyes. I loved seeing the emotional changes she faced, and I am excited to see what happens next!

The rest of the characters were a little less developed than I would have liked. But, they were still enjoyable nonetheless. Gideon was a fair match to Elizabeth's wit. Anna was an amazing friend, and strong woman, and Mrs. Bates and Mrs. Vanderslice were both strong characters.

I truly loved how the story mixed a large amount of historical aspects in with the fictional story of Elizabeth and her con-artistry. The history of the Suffragists was used to help shape Elizabeth's character, and to shape the time of the story, which led to a fair amount of enjoy-ability in the world building. I was able to get a true feel of the time from the description and imagery the author used. I cannot wait to read the next installment in the series! 4.5 stars for this one!

"I promise I will never be boring. I will be the most interesting woman you've ever met."

Thank you to NetGalley for providing me with this free e-copy in exchange for my honest review!

Dianne says

It was supposed to be a great con, easy money, but this time Elizabeth Miles finds the “respectable” businessman she has conned is a brutal and deadly con man himself and he is out for both his lost money and revenge. Running scared, Elizabeth gets herself carted off with the women of the Suffragists’ movement and for a woman on the run, jail may be the safest place for her.

Little did Elizabeth realize, these women would change her life and introduce her to a world of privilege and women who are equally as strong as she is and not the pampered princesses she always thought them to be. Now she has one last con to pull and it will take all of her skills, skills that could cost her newfound friendships and even her heart. Who knew doing the right thing could be even riskier than being a grifter?

With a villain as dastardly as Snidely Whiplash and a romantic interest as honorable as Dudley Dooright, our sweet Elizabeth is up to her neck in lies, cons and a new found conscience that lights up each page of this fast-paced and fascinating read!

CITY OF LIES by Victoria Thompson provides a little history, a little drama, some tense moments, and a delightful cast of characters that make this trip back in time a wonderful escape! While Elizabeth may not be the typical heroine, she is a truly memorable and lovable character who steals the show as she manages to shine across each page and wiggle herself out of each predicament she finds herself in! A fun read for sure!

I received an ARC edition from Berkley in exchange for my honest and voluntary review!

Series: Counterfeit Lady - Book 1

Publisher: Berkley (November 7, 2017)

Publication Date: November 7, 2017

Genre: Historical Mystery/Suspense

Print Length: 320 pages

? Kimberly says

City of Lies set in the 1920s both in Washington and New York home to the Four Hundred, Thompson shares an engaging tale about a woman who's running a grift with her brother. When things go terribly wrong she is forced to hide among a group of rallying female suffragists. The tale that unfolds was clever and engaging. So much so that I finished the tale in just two sittings.

Thompson weaves historical facts, friendship, LGBT issues, women's rights and a dash of romance into this suspenseful tale. In the author's notes, Thompson describes how some of the events our heroine Elizabeth Miles, Anna and others suffered through, actually happened during the Women's Movement of the 1920s. Of course, she took some liberties, but I love when actual events are woven into a tale. It gave an air of authenticity and notched up the suspense aspects.

Elizabeth is such a lively character, and I found myself holding my breath with the situations she found herself in. Her cleverness and ability to change the outcome of her circumstances kept me flipping the pages. Thompson made Elizabeth's story of escaping near death to befriending Anna seem genuine. I liked Anna, her brother, and mother and a large part of the scenes are spent in their home. Anna wants her life to matter, doesn't fancy marriage and finds herself drawn to Elizabeth. I loved the added threads concerning her and appreciated how the author addressed them particularly the LGBT issue. In the 1920s loving, someone of the same sex was never discussed despite the fact that homosexuality existed. The frank conversation and support were refreshing.

We are treated to a romance, well several actually. I loved seeing Elizabeth tackle these moments, use them to her advantage and become floundered entirely by others. The tale was balanced with the suspense thread at the center, and romantic elements threaded through the story. These features allowed for character growth, suspense and delightful moments to make your heart pitter-patter. Will Elizabeth escape or end up at the mercy of the villain? Who will get their heart-broken? It was all so engaging. This review was originally posted at Caffeinated Reviewer

Bridget Vollmer says

I'd rate this somewhere between 3.5-4 stars.

I was expecting more of a historical mystery but got more of a historical fiction/romance with a little bit of action. The beginning was definitely heavy on the historical info which wasn't bad but I was not expecting the historical info dump. Although, I did find it enlightening once I changed my expectations as I am shamefully lacking in knowledge of the suffragist movement. After I changed my expectations of the book, I really enjoyed the fast paced, clever story line. The ending was really good and had a bit of a shocker that surprised me. I'm looking forward to reading the next book in the series although I do think the genre should be changed from mystery to historical fiction. It had more of a "cozy" historical fiction feel than anything else (if that makes sense).

I'm curious to see if the next book revolves around a mystery/crime.

****I won this book in a GR giveaway in exchange for a review****

Mark Baker says

Elizabeth Miles makes her living as a con woman, an unusual profession for a woman in 1917. However, when her latest con goes south, she finds herself on the run from the mark's goons. In her attempts to escape, she joins a group of suffragists outside the White House and is delighted when they are arrested. But has she truly escaped the men searching for her?

If you pick up this book expecting a murder and five suspects, you'll be disappointed. However, with those adjusted expectations pick up this book because it is wonderful. The story is captivating and moves quickly; I always had a hard time putting the book down. This may be the first in a series, but the characters are already strong. I'm not normally one to root for a criminal, but I couldn't help but root for Elizabeth in this book. Real history is woven in without slowing down the fictional story at all. I'm not sure where the series will go from this wonderful beginning, but I can't wait to find out.

NOTE: I received a copy of this book.

Read my full review at Carstairs Considers.

Caille says

I absolutely loved this book. Any book that includes con artists, and especially smart female ones always intrigues me. When combined with the history of the suffrage movement, I felt like this book was made for me. The use of the rich history of the suffrage movement was fresh and new, and it was clear that Victoria Thompson put quite a bit of research into it. While the book had me hooked from the beginning, there was a part towards the middle where I wasn't sure I liked where the story was heading. However, Thompson turned it around and the ending was amazing. This is a great pick for anyone looking for a historical fiction drama, or for anyone who likes stories about sly and smart women. While I did love the character of Elizabeth, sometimes I got frustrated with the way that she was portrayed. I kept having to remind myself that this book was set in the early 20th century, and that whether she was a con artist or not, she would act more demure than women today. The character was well written though, and I look forward to seeing how her character will develop in future books. I do believe that this is misclassified as a detective mystery, because while there is a slight mystery in how the con is going to be pulled off, there is no crime that is trying to be solved. I think this book is better classified as a suspense drama, or a historical fiction.

NOTE: I received a free advanced readers copy of this book due to my job as a bookseller. I have not been paid for my opinions, and all of my opinions are my own.

Bj says

4 "The Grifter Suffragist" Stars!

Lovers of historical fiction that takes place during the women's suffragist movement in the US of the early 1900s (circa 1920s) will not want to miss *City of Lies*. There is also a dash of mystery and suspense thrown in to keep the reader guessing. Additionally, while this is not a traditional historical romance title, I also believe that there is enough of a romance thread (even the beginnings of a romance triangle) to make this historical fiction/mystery title also of interest to those who enjoy a historical romance titles.

When a con goes bad, grifter Elizabeth (Lizzie) Miles finds herself on the run. Believing their mark (Oscar Thornton) has likely done in her brother, she's left with no choice but to seek desperate measures. It's at that moment--as she's running through the streets of 1920s Washington DC--that she lands eyes on her possible salvation, a women's suffragist march (mostly high society ladies who were protesting to earn the right to vote). She quickly throws herself into the parade of women hoping to blend in, and when the entire group is arrested, Lizzie couldn't be happier as she knows it will give her a safe haven from Thornton and his crew that is out looking for her.

What Lizzie, however, never could of imagined is that she would soon come to understand what this group of high society women (a class she many times pretended to be in her cons, but never before felt a kinship with) was fighting for. What at first is just sheer determination to fit in, soon becomes a leadership style and showing of courage that bring her to the attention of Mrs. Bates, one of the leaders of the movement, and Anna Vanderslice, a young suffragist who quickly becomes her devoted friend.

The women endure terrible treatment in jail as its clear that politically the administration is trying to make an example of them in order to discourage them and others from demonstrating again. This, however, doesn't deter them in their beliefs. Fortunately, Anna's brother (David) and Mrs. Bates son (Gideon, who is a lawyer) help secure a writ of habeas corpus, though there attempts to find the deputy to serve it on are less fruitful (at least initially). Eventually, however, the women are released which of course is great news for all the prisoners, except Lizzie who now must try to evade Thornton again. Fortunately, Lizzie also makes an impression on David and Gideon, who each want to woo her in their own way.

Will Lizzie be able to maintain the friendships she has made and stay safe from Thornton? Moreover, Lizzie is no high society lady, even if she chooses to stay with her new friends, how will she maintain the illusion she has crafted? Will they find out who she really is? And if so will they remain by her side?

City of Lies was a fast-action historical fiction title that kept me interested both with the suspense and the interesting and varied inter-relationships among the many characters. I look forward to reading more of Victoria Thompson's titles in the future.

Source: Review copy provided for review purposes.

♥ Sandi ♥ says

3.75 stars Thank you to First-to-Read and Berkley for allowing me the chance to read this ARC. This book publishes on 11/7/17.

Elizabeth Miles is a grifter. She lies, steals and cheats for a living. It is in the process of a job that she

becomes involved with a Women's Rights Movement where she falls into a suffragette march as she flees from danger. She is soon jailed, along with the women in this march, and sent to a workhouse where she feels she will be temporarily safe from the people she was fleeing. Lo and behold, who manages to free them from this workhouse but the very person Elizabeth was hoping to remain hidden from.

Now Elizabeth has to put her resourcefulness to use. She must become the demure, gentle suffragette that these women believe her to be. Then she finds she is besieged by two separate suitors and must lie to each of them to protect both herself and her new found friends. But what effect is this having on Elizabeth? Can she change? Will she always be a grifter or will one of her suitors finally win her heart?

Victoria Thompson is also the author of the Gaslight Mysteries. She is very good at Victorian era novels and series. This is the first Book of the Counterfeit Lady series. In her books you find an immediate sense of belonging and fitting right into the world she has created. You emphasize with the highs and lows of the protagonist. Time, space and distance fall away as you read and savor that which you find is just out of reach, as you take in the familiar underpinning of a world in the early 1900's.

Anna Huber says

Rich with fascinating historical detail, Thompson's new series dives into the worlds of suffragists and con-men. City of Lies combines a cunning protagonist with a simmering romance and gripping suspense to form a story that is certain to beguile readers hook, line and sinker.

Milena says

I want to start by pointing out that the Goodreads blurb for this book is not accurate. First of all this is not a murder mystery, Elizabeth does not scour Washington, DC for a killer. The story does not take place in 1920's but few years earlier, in 1917-1918. Lastly, one of the main character's name is Gideon, not Gabriel. (The blurb on Amazon website is more accurate)

Now that we cleared this I must say I really enjoyed City of Lies. I found the time period very interesting and I enjoyed reading about the suffragist movement. The writing is very engaging and the pacing is great. I was never bored, I wanted to keep turning pages and read about Elizabeth's adventures. This book does have a few flaws that in any other book would have caused me to lower my rating, but City of Lies was so entertaining I decided to forgive them. These are the things I didn't love:

1. Insta-love, especially on Gideon's side. I wanted Elizabeth and Gideon's relationship to have more depth and more complexity, I wanted it to grow and develop slowly.
2. We are constantly told that Elizabeth is this incredible, amazing woman like no other. Gideon, Anna, and Mrs. Bates all rave about how different from anyone else she is, but we are never shown this side of her character. Yes, she is clever, resourceful, and street smart, but to imply that she is so much better than everyone else is a stretch.
3. The ending is too neat and tidy for my taste. City of Lies is supposed to be the first book in the series and it's hard to imagine how Elizabeth's story will continue when the ending was wrapped up like a pretty package with a bow on top.

As I mentioned earlier I still very much enjoyed this book. The City of Lies is a fun romp full of adventures and likable characters, and it's an interesting read despite some flaws. I will definitely pick up the second book.

*ARC provided by the publisher via Edelweiss

Melliane says

4.5/5

Mon avis en Français

My English review

I must say that I did not know about the novel at all but I really had a great time with the story. What to say? Everything seemed fantastic!

We discover Elizabeth Miles, a young girl who used to live on the margins of society. With her friends, she usually organizes scams to steal money from dishonest rich men. But while she usually does not have problems after these acts, the latest victim is far from appreciating it. Determined to find Elizabeth and to force her to return his money, or even to kill her, he will pursue her without respite. Yet the young woman, full of resources, does not hesitate to place herself in a feminist manifestation that demands the right to vote in order to escape her pursuers. Putting herself as a woman she is not, she gets arrested by the police and she is sent with all the others to jail. And you suspect that she is one of the only girls who absolutely wants to stay there to be safe. But then, under these conditions, she did not expect to connect so easily to Anna, a young febrile woman or to the matriarch of the group for which she will have great esteem. Elizabeth will help them understand how to act in jail and she will watch over them as best as she can. In parallel, we discover Gabriel, the son of the matriarch who arrives in town determined to save these young women. Thornton, allying himself with him, is also very interested to get them out!

I will not say more because it would be very easy to tell you everything but I can tell you that this novel is a pretty little pearl. I loved to follow Elizabeth, see her change at the touch of these young women and see her regret not to be a better person. It was also really interesting to have such a big part devoted to the cause that these women fight for! It was fascinating to have such a theme and it is true that we realize what these women have suffered a lot in order to advance their rights.

It was really a great story and I loved all the characters, be it Gabriel is his frankness, Elizabeth and her scams, Thornton and his wickedness, Anna and her naïveté, and many other things that I'll leave you discover!

Under the Covers Book Blog says

Elizabeth Miles is just like any other woman trying to get by in 1920s New York...only she does it with clever cons. Only her most recent ploy seems to have gone massively astray and forces her to hide amongst

some conveniently located Suffragettes. She never expected to come to admire the ladies she has been stranded with and she definitely didn't expect to find the one honest man in the whole of New York. However, Elizabeth must pull a massive con on the people she has come to greatly respect and form real friendships with, if she doesn't her life will be forfeit.

I picked this one up, despite not having read this author before, as I loved the idea of a grifter heroine, especially set in the 1920s New York. It all sounded very intriguing and I love a book with an unconventional heroine at the centre. I am immensely pleased that I decided to pick it up, it was a tale full of suspense, tension, historical events all with a dash of romance.

What stood out for me the most in *City of Lies* was the setting. Thompson has woven into the story true historical events of the women's suffragist movement, all with added liberties. Aside from being fascinating in of itself, it also added an air of authenticity to the setting that Thompson had created. It also added some tension, you know that the situations were very real and very dangerous, the suffragists suffered and some died for their cause, and despite Lizzie - at first- only sticking with the women to escape, her persecutors didn't know that.

If you like historical tales full of tension and intrigue, as well as a bit of romance, then you need to pick this up. It was both entertaining, fun and I enjoyed Thompson's inclusion of suffragists. This tale concluded very satisfactorily and I am unsure if it's part of a series or not, if it is I will gladly pick up the next book.

*ARC provided by publisher

Reviewed by Suzanne♥ ? Don't want to miss any of our posts? Subscribe to our blog by email! ? ♥

Yvonne says

The story takes us to 1917 Washington, D.C. and New York City. Women are protesting for their right to vote, but none of that matters to Elizabeth Miles. She has other interests in mind.

Elizabeth Miles is a con artist. Along with her brother, Jake, she schemes to steal money from less-than-nice men like Oscar Thornton. Unfortunately, during one of their schemes, their plans take a turn for the worst. Once Thornton finds out, it's over for the brother and sister team. They get separated. Elizabeth has no idea what happened to her brother, but she has no choice but to go on the run.

Elizabeth manages to blend in with a group of suffragists and joins their protest under an assumed name. She is not at all upset when they are arrested and jailed. Prison is the perfect place to hide from Thornton. However, life in prison isn't very enjoyable.

Much to Elizabeth's surprise, she finds herself forming a tight bond with some of these wealthy women, including Mrs. Bates and Anna. Thanks to Mrs. Bates attorney son, Gideon, the women are freed from jail, but Thornton is still hot on her heels. She must find a place to hide. Fortunately for her, Anna insists she stay with her family. Anna agrees, but is she really safe there?

The author weaves actual historical facts into this fictional story. I found the storyline and characters fascinating. The author did a great job of making the main character likeable and sympathetic, despite her being a con artist and thief.

I'm not really much of an historical fiction fan, but the premise and setting grabbed my interest. I must admit, I originally thought this was a murder mystery, but it's not. It's more like fiction with romance and some suspense mixed together.

It's a gripping, cleverly written story that had my attention from the start. I was immediately transported back in time. I felt I was standing right alongside Elizabeth.

I enjoyed every minute of this one. I'm so glad I stepped out of my normal genre to try it. This is the first of a new series and I'm looking forward to reading the next one.

FTC Disclosure: I voluntarily reviewed an Advance Reader Copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. All opinions expressed are my own.

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

Set in a time where the world was on the cusp of change, Thompson's City of Lies will pull you in with both intrigue for the mystery behind Elizabeth's life and the fascinating con that this woman and her brother are pulling on others.

With hints of danger and a touch of romance, this was a fun read that kept me entertained and interested right up to the very end.
