



In the Shadow of the Glacier

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Trouble is brewing in the small, bucolic mountain town of Trafalgar, British Columbia. An American who came to Trafalgar as a Vietnam War draft dodger has left land and money to the town. But theres a catch. The money must be used to build a garden to honor draft dodgers.

In the Shadow of the Glacier Details

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From Reader Review In the Shadow of the Glacier for online ebook

Robert says

I admit I like free shit. I also admit I'm not entirely rational in my thought process. For example, I happily hand over my Bouchercon and Left Coast Crime Conference fees and feel like I've won the lottery when I receive a bag filled with books. Seriously, this ends up being one of the major highlights of these conferences. So in my continued pursuit of this high, minus the conference fees, I have decided to scour Amazon for the best free short stories and books available. With that being said, let's get to the review.

If I didn't pursue mysteries with such determined passion that I simply can't imagine a world without them (despite an active imagination) and actually feel incomplete and unfulfilled whenever one doesn't strike my fancy, I might have enjoyed IN THE SHADOW OF THE GLACIER more. Instead, I felt like I never came out of the shadows of this tale, the light nothing more than a distant memory. The void left in this story's wake could rival the destruction of Greenland, and I have a feeling by the end of this review even I will probably have questioned my own objectivity. But all I can say is I'll endeavor to do my best.

To say I didn't like Constable Molly Smith is probably an understatement, but I'll handcuff myself from using stronger terms, and we'll leave it at a strong dislike. I could write multiple paragraphs on her level of incompetence, but I can sum it up thusly: She reminded of Stephanie Plum. Only Smith was in a paid law enforcement position and wasn't funny on purpose, entertaining the masses with her hijinks, and she certainly didn't exhibit any promising police skills that I noticed. In short, if you're a criminal and want a taste of the good life, then Trafalgar, BC is your new utopia, the Promised Land if you will. Look it up on a map and then you can swarm across the border in droves.

The dialogue reminded me of a college dissertation. To say it's stilted probably proves to be a severe underestimation. I'd find my body pulsing involuntarily, and sometimes spasm uncontrollably, at the way some of these conversations were executed. Dialogue should be a condensed version of how folks talk, without all the noise and filler, except when used in slight doses to create verbal tics. Needless to say, many of these discussions didn't measure up.

Maybe the text reads better in print, but the formatting errors on my Kindle were bad enough that I couldn't overlook them. And their abundance interrupted the flow of the story for me. If I were *Poisoned Pen Press*, I'd ask for my money back.

I could talk about the plot, but let's just say Constable Smith spends more time on tangents and not working than she actually does solving crime and chasing down the bad guys. In other words, she's the model government employee that the media loves to idealize, and she gives the rest of us a bad rep. She may be a new constable, but she could have displayed a modicum of competence.

Which brings me to the ending. This might just be the worst ending I've ever read in my entire book reading existence. You can take your cliffhangers, your unresolved resolutions, and speed racer sprints to the finish line, and this book laughs at every last one of them. I'll just put the whole shebang in spoiler tags and you can read at your own accord. If nothing else, it does provide a certain amount of entertainment, just not in a good way.

(view spoiler)

Chinook says

Listen to the audiobook - the fake Canadian accents, that the narrator slides in and out of seemingly at random, are hilarious. The book might have been a two star read or even a DNF without the humour imparted by those accents.

So, it's a crappy sexist setup. Not just one but two younger women being mentored by older men in their professions - the cop a good guy, the reporter a total asshole. Molly is totally infantilized by everyone around her - she's got an unprofessional name that people keep using regardless of her clear attempt to change it, she doesn't have a car so she keeps having to be picked up and borrowing one, she lives with her parents, she has no faith in her own skills and abilities, etc etc etc. The male cop can't stop obsessing about how beautiful his wife is, though if she has any other characteristics, they slid right by me. Molly's Father is a total dick to his wife and is overprotective of wife and daughter in such an obnoxiously macho way.

It's a weird cozy/not cozy. A lot of violence against women, for all that this is a story about the murder of a man by a man and some bike thieving (also done by a man.) Yet somehow there is a side plot of Molly's stalked and assaulted best friend - who idiotically blames her for missing one plan to meet up and help her with a restraining order - and Molly herself being assaulted.

I may try the next in the series and see how that goes. I was relatively entertained and the small town Canadian life portrayed was relatable. Hopefully the character of Molly improves after this intro so she's less naive and incompetent. Hopefully the other female characters improve a bit as well. We shall see.

Melinda Worfolk says

Borrowed this audiobook from my library's Overdrive service. I thought it was enjoyable, if unchallenging, and not a very mysterious mystery. I think what I liked best about it was the setting in the British Columbia interior--in the Kootenays. It was decently written and interesting enough to keep my attention--a good simple read, suitable for recuperating in bed.

One annoyance I had, however, was the narrator: she had the strangest way of pronouncing the diphthong "ou" (as in "about"). Unfailingly, she'd pronounce it "oh." So, "about" became "aboat," "town council" became "tone cone-sill," "how" became "hoe." Very irritating. Apparently she's an American--was she told that's a small-town Canadian accent?? I also found it jarring that she didn't know "Kootenays" is pronounced "Koot-knees," not "Koo-ten-aze." I did appreciate that she tried to do different voices for each of the characters--that worked to an extent.

FangirlNation says

Molly Smith works as a constable in Trafalgar, British Columbia despite her hippy upbringing in In the Shadow of the Glacier by Vicki Delany. The hitherto peaceful city is set aflame when Molly discovers the body of Reg Montgomery, who is trying to create a major development decried by environmentalists and who is the first murder victim in Trafalgar in over a year. Assigned to assist Sergeant John Winters with the

investigation in the absence of Winters's regular partner, Molly finds herself embroiled in the case personally when her parents become involved. A muckraking journalist trying to stir up trouble edits an interview with her mother, Lucky, to damage opponents of the development and supporters of a peace garden dedicated to those who stood up for peace by moving to Canada during the Vietnam War. This then causes activists to descend upon Trafalgar, creating serious havoc and further violence. So the pressure is on for Molly and Winters to solve the murder.

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Helen says

This could have been an interesting book, if only the characters weren't eye-rollingly irritating. For an ambitious cop Molly appears to have very little sense; her reluctant and grizzled partner constantly thinks about his adored wife, but only in the context that she's stunningly beautiful and no one else has a wife as hot as he does. I gave up after the first few chapters - a pity, since the actual murder and seething small town politics were interesting - because I just couldn't take any more.

Lori says

Constable Molly Smith finds herself partnering with the lead homicide detective when his usual partner heads out of town when Trafalgar's first murder in years occurs. The town about a half-hour north of the United States border boasts a significant population of Vietnam draft dodgers. Many citizens, including Molly's activist mother, want a Peace Garden honoring draft dodgers, but others like Reginald Montgomery oppose the plan. Montgomery aspires to build a resort which might lose American tourist dollars if the Peace Garden plan succeeds. The town becomes a magnet for troublemakers and for one American journalist who manages to slant all his journalistic efforts to capture his own opinion. Molly offers to help a friend get a restraining order against someone harrasing her, but she becomes so involved in the investigation she failed to remember to meet her. She later refuses to proceed, and the results are disastrous. The town also experiences a rash of bicycle thefts, including Molly's own. Sergeant Winters notices all the thefts occur near times Molly visited the locations on her beat. Are the thefts and murder connected? I look forward to seeing where Delany takes Molly Smith in the next installment of the series. Molly's naivety makes her an interesting character with a lot of room to develop. I listened to the audiobook. The narrator's accent led to some unusual pronunciations for American ears, but perhaps it reflects the dialect of the area.

Carol says

After hearing some thumbs up comments about Delany's Smith Winters series I recommended it to a friend. Two years later the friend was back seeking the series name. By this time I didn't have a clue. With the help of the readers' advisory skills of fiction_1 members I was able to put this series back into the hands of my friend. Thought it was time for me to actually read one.

I decided to listen to the first in the series *In the Shadow of the Glacier*. Somewhere, somehow I got the impression that it was if not a cozy, not terribly graphic either. It started out that way but somewhere the tone was amped up. There is something about this and also the development of the main character, Molly

(Moonlight) Smith that seems uneven to me. Initially I get the picture of an innocent, sweet-talking rookie cop, love child of hippie parents and before you know it she's dropping the f bomb ll over the place. This seemed out of character to me. It didn't help that I listened to this, finding the narration annoying too. I say this reluctantly as I realize it is not easy to narrate an audio book and I don't mean to insult this person's life work (Carrington McDuffie). In my opinion, the narrator's normal reading voice was excellent. It was when she got into character narration that I had the problem. Perhaps the change of voice or role play is needed to distinguish the characters but for me it did not work.

Back to the story. What would make me read another in this series. Delany sets the series in the fictional town of Trafalgar, British Columbia, a small town with some major political and ecological issues. Trafalgar's just above Vancouver and is holding out to keep it's wilderness character. At the get-go, Molly on her rounds as cop trips over the body of Reginald Montgomery. Many suspects emerge as Montgomery has many enemies. Not only is he opposed to the building of a Commemorative Peace Garden to honor Vietnam War draft dodgers but he is also financing Grizzly Resort, that if allowed to be built will ensure no grizzlies roam here any longer. . These two charged topics are dividing the townspeople. This would be enough to keep the police busy but add a whole bunch of other seemingly unrelated crimes and Trafalgar could use more than Smith and her Sergeant, John Winters, a tough veteran cop relocated from Toronto to keep the peace. I loved all the other stuff going on in small town Canada. reminding me much of my own small town living. Everyone knows everything about everyone and it's hard to stay out of everyone's business or get away with anything. Delany does a good job of giving us background on her key characters even if I thought their development uneven. I liked Molly's mother, Lucky, a throw-back to her hippie days and Molly's dad, Andy, who is trying to live in the present as a respectable businessman, forgoing his hippie past and clashing with his wife but also fiercely protective of both Lucky and Molly. Did I mention there's a dog; Sylvester? Molly is struggling with many things, the death of her young husband, living at home where she is still treated as a child named Moonlight, not driving, being a female on the force and trying to be taken seriously by townspeople who have known her since she was a babe and of course, her new superior John Winters (he's married so for now no love interest there), who she wants to impress. Getting back to location. Though the town is fictional the area, the Kootenay Mountains and river is make a great backdrop for the story. Many draft dodgers and resisters flocked here during the Vietnam War and this part of the story rings true.

In the end the book made me smile, kept my interest so I'll be back for more.

Madelyn says

Constable Molly Smith of Trafalgar, British Columbia is assigned to assist a veteran Detective Sergeant when she finds the body of a man in an alley. This is an exciting series debut from Vicki Delany. There are complex characters that kept me busy sorting them all out. I look forward to the next book in the series.

Trish says

A decent and readable Canadian procedural, with good scene setting and an interesting collection of town characters. To me, the juxtaposition of the small-town atmosphere with the darker underbelly is reminiscent of Louise Penny's Three Pines. However, the two main leads - local girl Constable Molly Smith, and the older, more careworn Detective Sergeant John Winters - are obviously very different characters to Inspector Gamache. It will be interesting to see how the series develops.

Tasula says

Very enjoyable murder mystery set in the small Canadian town of Trafalgar, where conflicts have arisen over a proposed peace memorial and a proposed resort. Small niggles: 1) Sgt. John Winters was a real p----k in the first part of the book, very critical and short with his temporary assistant -our heroine- Molly (Moonlight) Smith, 2) in one incident with a persistent reporter Molly's behavior was incredibly stupid and immature, when she should have known to just walk away, 3) Molly's childhood friend Christa was too whiny, needy and helpless. But I expect the series to improve (I had read a much later book in the series before, and liked it a lot).

Rory says

This story has that witty humor I enjoy. I really liked it!

Linda says

The plot seemed a stretch and characters -both the good and bad-never seemed to develop beyond first impressions. The dialogue seems stilted. The young and green Constable and the experienced Detective Sargent never really seem to solve the crimes. The bad guys throw themselves in front of them and confess for no apparent reason. The ending seemed rushed and unbelievable.

Carrie says

I really enjoyed this book, the first in a new mystery series. It takes place in small town Canada, so is reminiscent of Louise Penny. It also reminds me of the TV show Broadchurch, although the story isn't nearly as sad. The book stars Molly Smith, a young local woman who is a new Constable, working on her first big case. The boss in charge is Sargent Winters, who's new to the area, and needs her local knowledge, if not her lack of expertise. Additionally there is an interesting cast of characters.

I look forward to reading more books in the series!

Zora says

While starring a cop, this novel reads like a cozy.

Had this been written by a man, I'd scream for three paragraphs here about how sexist it is, how stupid and weak and victimy all the women characters are, how much they seem like artifacts of 1958, and how offensive I find that. I suppose that's pretty sexist of me, isn't it?, that I'm only giving it a paragraph of complaint here because the author is female. I promise to work harder on my sexism and slam women

authors for weak female characters more often. I wish the cozy world would work harder on its sexism, too.

As an American, I enjoyed its unapologetic anti-Americanism. Very forthright--you Canadians are usually too polite to be this overt about it. So a star for the chutzpah of that.

Caroline says

This is a good book about a young officer in Canada who is trying to become a detective. She's a bit overeager on her first assignment but she grows on you and her family is pretty interesting. In this first of the series, there is controversy over a park to be built in honor of those Americans who fled to Canada for escaping the draft during the Vietnam war and it is still as controversial in this small Canadian town now as it was back then. There are also the ever-present issue of a developer wanting to create a big resort in the area which of course, stirs up more unrest. While I enjoyed the book and I know that such issues are "real life", I'm a bit tired of authors painting their political viewpoints in a work of fiction that I would like to enjoy.
