



## Whisper of Jasmine

*Deanna Raybourn*

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**Rediscover the adventure and romance of a magical New Year's Eve party in 1914, where two guests will find the passion of a lifetime in this prequel novella by *New York Times* bestselling author Deanna Raybourn.**

Notorious socialite Delilah Drummond won't be deterred by the war. Instead, she decides to throw the event of the year, and she's handing out invitations with an eye for wanton fun and wild abandon.

There is the dashing explorer and archaeologist Gabriel Stark, a man at a crossroads in his life. Brilliant and restless, he's just committed to a secret enterprise that forces him to play a public role very different from the man he truly is.

And then there is the charming if flighty Evangeline Merriweather. Evie has dreamed her whole life of adventure. Little does she know, she's about to get more than she bargained for. Especially after her vivacious Aunt Dove acts as fairy godmother, if a saucy one, providing a scandalous gown and a whisper of jasmine on her skin...

Evie will shake cool Gabriel to his core, but just how far are they willing to take love at first sight?

One seductive night will change Evie forever. Watch for her next adventure, in the *City of Jasmine*.

*Originally published in 2014*

## Whisper of Jasmine Details

Date : Published April 1st 2017 by MIRA (first published December 20th 2013)

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Author : Deanna Raybourn

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## From Reader Review Whisper of Jasmine for online ebook

### Daniele says

Cute intro to the next (real) book that I had seriously enjoyed. Will Evie and Gabriel come back? Would love to.

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### Ruth says

4.5 Stars. When socialite Delilah Drummond's husband Johnny breaks the news that he's enlisted, she refuses to cry -- rather, she'll do what Delilah does best, and throw a New Year's Eve party to remember. She's determined that she and Johnny will ring in the year 1915 in style, making memories to treasure while they're far apart, separated by the conflict riddling Europe. In typical Delilah style this will be the party to remember, and as such she can't resist a bit of good-natured match-making between a few select invitees -- among them the dashing explorer Gabriel Stark, and the charming, if down-on-her-luck Evie Merriweather. Gabriel and Evie aren't intended for each other, but on that London night, with the magical promise of the new year in the air, when their eyes lock across the room sparks fly and they begin to write their own love story. But with the specter of war hovering over the festivities, and Gabriel's every move watched by those who would seek to utilize his special skill set and bravado in service to king and country, can a romance sparked by the magic of New Year's hope to survive the realities of a world at war?

Whisper of Jasmine is Deanna Raybourn's latest novella, a stunning prequel to her forthcoming release City of Jasmine (due to release February 25!). Similar in tone to last year's novella, Far in the Wilds, this story showcases Raybourn's penchant for penning an unforgettable, pitch-perfect Edwardian-era adventure. I didn't realize going into this story that Whisper of Jasmine features Delilah Drummond, heroine of A Spear of Summer Grass, the full-length follow-up to Far in the Wilds. Somehow 2013 got away from me without reading that novel, a fact I plan to rectify THIS MONTH. Knowing that novel deals with Delilah coming to terms with the aftermath of the Great War in her own life, this glimpse into her pre-war life is bittersweet and heart-rending -- but beautifully, vividly rendered on the page.

Simply put, I ADORED this introduction to Evie and Gabriel. The orphaned Evie, long shuttled between relations and struggling to make ends meet, is a wonderfully spunky, vibrant heroine. And I ADORED her Aunt Dove's role as an eccentric fairy godmother/adventuress, whose refurbished Worth gown gives Evie an entrance to Delilah's party that rivals any Cinderella herself. For a story set against the grim backdrop of the Great War, this story is a beautiful, gorgeous, heart-stopping (and humorous) fairy tale. I loved every second. And the clues dropped throughout the narrative regarding Gabriel's war work were the icing on the cake -- a swoon-worthy, whirlwind romance and a dash of old-fashioned spy-craft? A dream come true!

Whisper of Jasmine positively sparkles, and I cannot WAIT to discover the rest of Evie and Gabriel's story -- and the promised return of Aunt Dove's witticisms! -- in City of Jasmine. This novella is an absolute delight from start to finish -- very, very well-done Ms. Raybourn!

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### Helen says

I am not a big fan of novellas – but this one broke all the rules! This was more than just a fill in, a prequel, a teaser. It had a good strong plot, developed characters, a sense of completeness yet cleverly left you wanting more. And luckily there is! This book serves as a prequel to City of Jasmine and also has connections with Raybourn's Spear of Summer Grass, which I have read and highly recommend.

Whisper of Jasmine is a romantic tale with some humour and a sense of intrigue and mystery of what is to come in the sequel. How Raybourn managed to pack so much into so little is testament to her writing finesse.

This tale of the meeting of Evie and Gabriel was the stuff movies are made of: “Does that mean a memory is all I’ll have?”....She needed an excuse for the things she wanted to say to him  
...”You haven’t just met me,” he said his voice low and mesmerising, “you’ve known me all of your life haven’t you? I’ve always known you, it just took a while to find you”.

Yet somehow this ‘grand happiness, a joy so indescribable that it must be followed by a terrible calamity’ is lurking. Little snippets that there was more here than met the eye was clear - “It pierced him to know there were things he could not tell her, could never tell her.... he’d have to make a choice”.

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I have NEVER come across such an enticing novella - it was BRILLIANT! Raybourn just makes you want to grab City of Jasmine and dive into it. So, now onward to City of Jasmine and the promise of more Gabriel and Evie and the delightful Aunt Dove.

### **Cat C says**

I've never read anything by this author before, but I'm intrigued enough to read more. I didn't really buy the insta-love of the main couple as it just takes one conversation to agree on marriage. But I loved all the interconnecting stories and characters. And OMG does Aunt Dove have stories? Because she's the coolest.

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### **Tara Chevrestt says**

A short review for a short book, but remember, short doesn't always mean not adequate. In this case, it was. Though quick, it's but enjoyable and serves as a great prequel. I feel I've been adequately introduced to the characters and am dying to know more, meaning I will certainly read the novel, City of Jasmine. We're in England. There's a war on, the Great War, the men are getting ready to leave and possibly die. It's NY's Eve with a party and some potent punch. Gabriel, the male love interest...there's something going on here not quite explained, very intriguing though. Could he be a spy?

Love Evie. Very spunky. But I love her aunt more. I certainly hope she appears in the novel. She made me smile.

The romance was way too spontaneous for me. They were talking marriage before they even knew each other's names and eloped within in two hours. Bit fast.

Full review: <http://wwwbookbabe.blogspot.com/2014/...>

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### **Froggie says**

I've read two of Deanna Raybourn's introductory novellas and none of them enticed me to pick up the main novel. Both novellas had somewhat intriguing set-ups but my aversion of the early 20th century era might have reduced my enthusiasm. And unlike the Lady Julia Series, these characters aren't interesting enough for me to care, let alone want to learn more about them.

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### **Carla says**

Interesting set up of a bigger story. Wasn't that fond of the rush marriage and the impetuosity of the characters but the mystery of what Tarquin and his sister want Gabriel to do let me craving for *City of Jasmine*.

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### **Misfit says**

What a great little appetizer to the main book, and what a delight to see Delilah from *A Spear of Summer Grass* in 1914.

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### **Annie says**

2.75

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### **Allison says**

I'm not usually a big reader of novellas because they're too short to be satisfying, but this leads up to the actual book I want to read. (Seems like it could have been included as a prologue instead???)

As far as novellas go, I think this was a good one. We see Delilah from *Spear of Summer Grass* before her husband goes off to the war, so if you've read that book this will mean a lot more. Delilah also introduces us to a new character for *City of Jasmine*, which I can't wait to read. So this was a nice teaser, I suppose.

It was free when I bought it, but is now \$.90. I don't think I would actually pay for it at 50 pages. On to the main feature...

Edit: After reading *City of Jasmine*, I would recommend saving this prequel for afterwards. This novella gives you some background information that spoils it a bit. I still enjoyed it, but if I hadn't known what is revealed here it would have been even better.

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### **Wendy says**

Loved this novella!

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### **Midnite says**

Whisper of Jasmine is a novella that introduces readers to characters from Deanna Raybourn's forthcoming full length novel of 2014, City of Jasmine.

I haven't read A Spear of Summer Grass, Raybourn's second novel independent of the Lady Julia Grey series, so I was unfamiliar with Delilah Drummond and her husband Johnny, the couple who throw the party in Whisper of Jasmine that brings together Evangeline Merriweather and Gabriel Stark. I didn't mind Delilah and Johnny in this novella. Some reviews of A Spear of Summer Grass indicated Delilah was kind of horrible and that is part of teh reason I decided not to read it. In this novella, she seemed spontaneous and light-hearted and ready to throw away money on a big New Year's Eve party, despite the fact that her husband was off to war in a matter of days. It didn't bother me in this brief story, but I'm sure that kind of thing would have bugged me in a novel.

Neither did I mind the other characters we were introduced to, like Evie's delightful Aunt Dove, the mysterious Quentin Harkness (who I believe is in another novella I own by Raybourn) and even more mysterious Tarquin March.

I did, however, have a problem with Evie and Gabriel. Enough of a problem that I started reading early reviews of City of Jasmine to try to find out whether I should cancel my preorder. Because Evie and Gabriel's scenes are full of schlock and ridiculous dialogue that made me cringe, and I can't imagine reading an entire book of it.

The only reason I haven't canceled the preorder yet is because it seems Evie and Gabriel don't spend a lot of time together in City of Jasmine, and since Evie was very tolerable in her scenes with Aunt Dove, I might enjoy them together. I'm also kind of fascinated by the plot, and possibly learning more about Tarquin March, since I love the March family. I can't work out from any of the early reviews if City of Jasmine is written in first or third person. This novella is written in third person and jumps from Evie's POV to Delilah's to Gabriel's to Tarquin's. I didn't mind it here, but I may take issue with it in the longer novel.

This was my first time reading a prequel novella and I'm not sure I should do it again!

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### **Lisa says**

I am typically less than impressed by novellas, but this one is absolutely BRILLIANT! Raybourn packs an incredible amount into this small package and leaves you dying to read the subsequent full-length novel!

Full review on the blog: <http://greatreadsandtealeaves.blogspot.com>

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### **Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says**

The early 1900's just happen to be one of my most favorite time periods to read about and when you combine that with one of my most favorite historical writers, you have a win win situation.

Raybourn is truly a master at her craft. She is just an amazing writer that creates amazing storylines and characters and her Lady Julia Grey series happens to be one of my all time favorite series.

I just knew with that series being put on hold (at least I am really hoping it is only being put on hold) I missed her writing and decided that it was about time that I branched out and tried another one of her books. When I saw this prequel to a book set during WWI I knew I had found the one to try.

And can I say for the record that I loved it? It has all the magic from her Julia series but in a completely different era with completely different characters. It was fabulous. This may be a novella but it is packed full of goodness that by the end, leaves you craving the next book.

With romance in the air and mystery and dangers afoot, I can not wait to dive into City of Jasmine.

Once again I am blown away by Raybourn's talent and skill. I just know this will be one of those books that will stay with me long after I have read it and one that I will eagerly devour when it is released.

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### **Erin says**

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot....>

Deanna Raybourn's prequel novella, Whisper of Jasmine, is a delightful short and an amusing lead-in to City of Jasmine. Building a foundation for the larger story, Raybourn hints at many of the larger novel's motifs in this humorous six chapter narrative.

Having developed a bit of a crush on Gabriel Stark while reading City of Jasmine, I was only too happy to see a bit of his carefree impetuousness in this piece, but I also loved how Raybourn used the novella to showcase Aunt Dove's eccentricities and Delilah's burgeoning self-confidence, independence and sass.

Infused with Raybourn's signature wit, I couldn't help chuckling at her playful dialogue and clever characterizations. A fun and flirtatious romance, Whisper of Jasmine plays beautifully into the exotic intrigue that follows.

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