



Spy in a Little Black Dress

Maxine Kenneth

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Inspired by an actual letter in the John F. Kennedy Library written by Jackie and revealing her job offer from the newly formed CIA

When young Jackie Bouvier receives her second assignment from the CIA, she knows it will go better than her first. She managed to survive the Paris job-while looking her best in Givenchy, no less-but now she's completed her official CIA training. So she's excited to show her boss exactly what she can do for her country.

Her new mission: Go undercover in sultry Havana and investigate a young revolutionary named Fidel Castro. But before Jackie can infiltrate the communist cabal, she's in past her hemline in danger. In another exciting adventure, she colludes with Grace Kelly, dances with Frank Sinatra, and flirts with an up-and-coming congressman from Massachusetts.

As the international intrigue escalates, Jackie must use all her finely honed skills to stay ahead of her enemies . . . and make sure spying never goes out of fashion.

Spy in a Little Black Dress Details

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Author : Maxine Kenneth

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From Reader Review Spy in a Little Black Dress for online ebook

Angela says

Cute concept. Good for when you need "fluffy" reading.

Wal.li says

Grow a Beard

Die Ausbildung geht weiter. Die 22jährige Jackie Bouvier zeigt, dass die Schulungen nicht umsonst waren. Mehrfach entwischt sie ihren Verfolgern und dabei gelangt sie eher durch Zufall an eine Schatzkarte. Das ist aber garnichts gegen die Bekanntschaft mit dem Congress-Abgeordneten Jack Kennedy, dem sie sich nähert. Gäbe es die Karte nicht, die sie nach Cuba führt in die Arme des Revolutionärs Emiliano, würde sie Kennedy umgarnen. Doch das cubanische Abenteuer hat es in sich. Schon angefangen bei den Begegnungen mit Sinatra und dem Mob, über Hemmingway zu Castro. Jackie trifft sie alle und entkommt des Öfteren nur wirklich knapp Gefahren, durch die ihr Leben in Gefahr ist.

Als Nachfolgebund zu "Paris to die for", den ich nicht kenne, ist dieser Roman eines Autorenduos erschienen. Und welch eine verwunschene Geschichte wird hier erzählt. Am Rande der Tatsachen, denn schließlich wurde Jackie J.F.s Frau, spinnen die Autoren eine Phantasie, die einen nach Luft schnappen lässt. Eine Ehe geschlossen auf Betreiben der CIA? Nun gut der Roman ist einige Jahre eher angesiedelt. Die Revolution in Cuba ist im Werden. Der Osten schickt seine Spione aus und dass Sinatra Verbindungen zur Mafia hatte, könnte sein. Ideen wimmeln in diesem Buch, die einem so manches Aha, so könnte es auch gewesen sein entlocken. Doch gibt es auch eine kleine Berg und Talfahrt. Möglicherweise geht es anderen Lesern auch so, manche Passagen sind emotional und humorig, andere wieder etwas dröge und hart fast schon wie ein Crime-Noir. Vielleicht liegt es daran, dass ein Mann und eine Frau gemeinsam diesen Roman verfasst haben. Jedenfalls ist der Stil nicht einheitlich und führt den Leser auf einen Pfad, der von Uneinheitlichkeit zeugt. Ist es nun ein Geschichtsthriller oder einfach ein emotionales Abenteuer einer jungen Frau bevor der Ernst des Lebens beginnt? Auch sind die Situationen, aus denen sich Jackie im letzten Moment befreit manchmal nicht ganz glaubwürdig. Denn wer kann zum Beispiel schon ruhig bleiben, wenn er Krokodilen zum Fraß vorgeworfen wird. Eine wunderbar witzig unterhaltsame Idee, aber mal wieder eine, bei der weniger mal wieder mehr gewesen wäre. Neugierig auf den ersten Band macht das Buch allerdings schon.

Denise Fleischer says

Book Review

Spy in a Little Black Dress

By Maxine Kenneth

Grand Central Publishing

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Fiction

The writing team of Maxine Schnall and Kenneth Salikof (Maxine Kenneth) penned a second Jacqueline Bouvier novel. "Paris to Die For" introduced a fictional twist about a beloved First Lady being a spy for the CIA.

You gotta love someone not afraid to create a whole new side of a highly respected American icon. Even though you have to suspend your belief for this novel, Jackie could never run wearing designer shoes nor would she be able to stay out of the path of a spy's bullet.

Though, the story is very interesting with the assimilation of real celebrities and history. It begins when Jackie is assigned to motivate Jack Kennedy into understanding the significance of the CIA. Those with high standing in the agency recognize his political elevation and know they'll have to deal with him down the road. Add to her assignment: learning what kind of man Fidel Castro is, his power over his people, and the course he feels he is destined to achieve.

Then there's a third element, as if Jackie didn't have enough to handle. She purchases a book on Cuba only to learn that it has pages of a historic diary in it. And because nothing seems to remain a secret when Jackie is concerned, powerful people learn about it.

Upon arriving in Cuba, Jackie is presented a behind-the-scenes lesson on what life is like for the Cuban people and how Americans are experiencing luxury at the expense of the poor. Danger always appears to be around every corner.

The book has to be read slowly. There's a lot of history and people that that you're going to recognize cleverly involved. Their personalities, attitudes and lifestyles have to be observed one page at a time. The book is loaded with suspense, crime, fashion and the struggle to survive when you're fighting for what you believe in. It wasn't something I would have naturally chosen. I'm more of a romance or cozy mystery reader. But I'm glad I read it for it made me see the reality of Cuba, which seems to be a topic never discussed.

Four and a half spies out of five
Denise Fleischer
gottawritenetwork

Sandy Appleyard says

Spy in a Little Black Dress is the story of Jacqueline Bouvier, or Jacqueline Kennedy, as we all are familiar with; before she was a Kennedy. This novel touches on her life as a CIA agent working under cover in Havana, Cuba. It is riveting, heartbreaking and historical in the sense that some of the story line is factual.

Reading about Jacqueline's budding romance with Emiliano was excellent. The character development was nicely done and the reader could slowly follow along as Emiliano transformed from her protector and essentially tour guide, to a very important love interest.

The author opened a door to the past and introduced the reader to many historical figures including Fidel Castro, John F. Kennedy, Frank Sinatra and Grace Kelly to name a few. It was very interesting to read a bit

about what these people might have been like.

What took away from the story a little was the overuse of fancy words, which I felt interrupted the flow. The author could have used more common words to make *Spy in a Little Black Dress* more of an easy read and more enjoyable.

As a person born in the 1970's, I found reading some of the comparisons to historical novels and movies somewhat difficult to follow. I think the author could have kept the book open to a much larger audience had she minimized some of the associations she made to such items from that era.

Jacqueline Kennedy was a very heroic, intelligent, caring and unique person, and this story very clearly demonstrates that. The action that took place in the book was very entertaining and certainly kept me reading. Some of the scenes were downright nail biting.

Here are some excerpts I enjoyed from the book:

"She looked into his eyes and was surprised by their intensity. They were blue and fervent as though lit from within by a holy fire, and his riveting gaze made her feel safe."

"For a man like Jack Kennedy, nothing is a bigger aphrodisiac than competition,"

"One thing you need to know about Jack Kennedy is that as soon as he has a woman, he loses interest,"..."The chase is everything to him, the challenge of getting the woman to say yes, and then he's off to the next one. He has a voracious sexual appetite, it's like Chinese food-an hour after a meal, he's hungry again."

"Call me Jackie. Anyone who saves my life is entitled to call me by my first name."

"I admired them because even though they wrote about the seamy side of life from firsthand experience, they were still idealists who believed in a better world. They brought rebellion, but by using their words to accomplish what activists had been trying to do for years."

"I should have said a cigar-factory reader," Emiliano corrected himself. "We have a long-standing tradition in Cuba of hiring people we call torcedores, or lectors, as you would say, to help our cigar-factory workers pass the time by reading to them while they roll the tobacco leaves into cigars. The lectors sit in the front of the factory room and read aloud all day long. They start out with the newspaper in the morning, and after that, it could be anything the workers might like-self-help-improvement books, magazine, modern novels, or classics."

"That's a wonderful idea, but doesn't that distract them?"

"No, actually, it improves their concentration by keeping them from getting bored, and they're not allowed to look at the reader or talk to their workmates because quotas have to be met. So instead of distracting the workers, the reading helps them keep on rolling cigars at top speed while it entertains and informs them."

Spy in a Little Black Dress was an enjoyable read that I would recommend to someone who enjoys historical fiction, especially from the JFK era. Well done Maxine Kenneth!

Janet Cleary says

This story imagines a young Jackie Kennedy (before her marriage to JFK) working for the CIA in Cuba & meeting up with Fidel Castro before he took over that country.

Madonna says

Spy in a Little Black Dress was fun to read. I never would have thought of Jackie as a spy for the CIA. She always seemed just too refined to be in those situations. But I guess that was the whole idea...to surprise the reader with the complete story. I have always been a fan of detective and spy stories. I loved that the treasure hunt was thrown in too.

I was married the same year President Kennedy was assassinated. My husband was in Germany in the Army when Jack Kennedy gave his "I am a Berliner" speech there and during the Cuban missile crisis. We all heard a lot about Batista and Castro; so this was an interesting read. Makes you wonder what Jacqueline Bouvier really was like...not just as the First Lady, but as a person. I do feel that she was a very strong woman throughout her life's trials. Maybe she could have been as portrayed in this book!

It was fun and I do plan to find "Paris to Die For" so I can read it as well.

I would like to say thanks to GoodReads for letting me read this book. I love meeting new authors this way.

I did find a couple pages in this book nearly impossible to read due to the print coming out so light.(264 and 273). Might want to have the prints checked.

Read Ng says

This was a GoodReads giveaway.

Sorry to report that this particular copy had a printer's issue with pages 264 and 273. Both of these pages were barely legible with about 20 % totally illegible. Just needed to do some creative guessing. If I had purchased it, I would be asking for a replacement.

I had not previously read the first book in the series. I am very interested so I will be running out to find a copy. As I expected with an historical slant, the story likes to weave in historic events and characters. I like the events. Some of the cameos are just tossed in for little reason. Perhaps my ignorance of minor events and gossip of those days works against me.

Okay, I am very detail oriented, so some small items nag at me. For example, I don't find it very likely that a padlock that had been buried for almost a century can be picked with a bobby pin. Overlooking these types of details, it is a fun romp through history. Who would imagine that before she became the first lady, Jackie would be such a different person than what I was taught. It is an extremely strong female lead for a woman in the 1950's.

The story appears to be independent of the first in the series. I will know better after I catch up.

Go get your copy. Enjoy!

Paula Phillips says

Who is like me and loves a little injection of chick lit and mystery now again ? What's even cooler is the fact that it is inspired by a true tale ? Maxine Kenneth brings to us Book #2 in the Spy in a LBD series starring the wonderful Jackie "O" - the now Mrs Kennedy. However before she become Jackie Kennedy , she was Miss Jacqueline Bouvair , a new recruit for the newly formed CIA or so the story tells . This book is inspired by a true story which was discovered in the form of a letter from Jackie to her husband John F Kennedy. Book #2 tells of Jackie's journey to Cuba where she will come across trouble and meet some famous stars and newfound friends along the way including Ernest Hemingway whose new book "The Old Man and The Sea" is about to hit bookshops around the world , her cousin Gore Vidal who is having to write under a pseudonym as one critic has boycotted others against Gore due to his homosexuality , Frank Sinatra , Ava Gardner , Zsa Zsa Gabor and of course a new and upcoming actress wannabe Grace Kelly who is hoping for a big break into the Hollywood scene and of course we are introduced to Cuba's newest leader Fidel Castro who Jackie assures if he wants people to respect him and look older he needs to grow a beard. This was such a quick and fast-paced story that holds your attention as you read from page to page and I now can't wait to read Book #1 Paris to Die For.

Polly Castor says

This book was a pleasant surprise. I found it on the library's new book shelf, and didn't expect to like it as well as I did.

It is the second in a series and you may wish to begin with the first, titled Paris to Die For, which turns out to be well liked too. I'll probably get around to reading the first one also, but I didn't feel handicapped reading this one without having already read the previous one.

Apparently there are some letters actually linking Jacqueline Kennedy to a job at the CIA, and this little tidbit was the springboard for this series. These first two books take place before Jackie was married; her first date with JFK occurs in this second book.

This book chronicles Jackie's undercover assignment in Cuba meeting Fidel Castro. While this is invented fiction, care has been taken to get historical facts and settings correct. All the details were interesting, Jackie is depicted as a wonderfully intelligent, gutsy and resourceful person that is truly likable, and there is enough action to make it seem like a screenplay.

These books are co-authored by two authors whose first names are Maxine and Kenneth, so they use the pseudonym Maxine Kenneth. Between them they are well informed about style, movies, and key figures in this time period. This book's balance between energetic activity and character development was most likely born out of the balance in this partnership of writers.

If you are looking for a summer beach read, I recommend this one. It is amusing entertainment that is a

refreshingly different and brings a little insight into historical characters as well. I give this light romp of a book 4 stars.

Tim says

Possibly the worst conceived and executed book I have ever read.

If my last name were Bouvier, or Kennedy, I would sue the authors.

Charlotte says

In my opinion, this book is the best example for a mediocre book. On the one hand it was entertaining, the storyline was not breathtaking but still kept me interested. However, once in a while, I had to stop reading for a second as I was too bewildered about the sheer uselessness of the protagonist, Jackie. She seemed to think an awful lot about herself, but I could not see so much as a few hints of her "extensive training on the Farm". Sometimes she seemed more like a headless chicken than a CIA-trained spy. But nonetheless, if you read for the purpose of learning English or simply distracting yourself from the real world and all its truly amazing, deep and meaningful literature, this is your book.

Carol N says

Fun read - engaged me from the first page to the last. An amazing "what if" story centered around the beautiful young Jackie Bouvier prior to her engagement and marriage to JFK. It is her adventures as a young CIA agent in Cuba . Smart story.

Kim Justice says

My Review:

I completely loved this book. First, my daughter would tell you that I am not a history buff. But this book was so fun to read and to fantasize about how things might have turned out had Jackie did some of the things within these pages of this book. I can remember reading things about her while I was growing up, such a beautiful lady who was the model for every woman in America. So to read a book like this was so awesome!

There is mystery, suspense, fun, love, what if's and much much more in this awesome well written novel by author Maxine Kenneth. Her writing is with much respectful for Jackie Bouvier as expected from someone who has done her research.

I am not, as usual, going to get into the actual book because I still and as always believe you need to read for your self.

But author Maxine Kenneth's characters are awesome. Starting from Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra, come on, who would not want to work under cover doing spy jobs with these two as well as others.

I feel this book is a Must Read!! I will keep this one on my book shelf to read again. And I will also pick up a copy of the book Paris to Die For which is the book before this one.

So due to the above, if I could it would be higher, I am giving this book a Breath of Life ratings of:

Five Clock Rating!!!

Disclosure: I received the above book in exchange for my honest opinion and review. Opinions are my own and yours may differ.

Lindsay Heller says

This is the sequel to 'Paris to Die For', an amusing "What If?" book about Jackie Bouvier, before she was Jackie Kennedy, as agent of the newly formed Central Intelligence Agency. In the first book Jackie met with a potential Russian defector, flirted with a French photographer, became ensconced in the plight of an exiled princess, and made a date with an up and coming congressman from Massachusetts. In the sequel we are in for more of the same.

Jacqueline Lee Bouvier has just returned to her stepfather's Virginia estate after an exciting, yet harrowing, mission in Paris for the CIA. Between putting in social appearances, maintaining her pristine collection of couture, and spy training at the Farm it's a surprise that Jackie has time for anything else. But when Allen Dulles, director of the intelligence agency, asks Jackie to get close and personal with Jack Kennedy to find out if he supports the fledgling agency, Jackie agrees immediately. But soon Jackie is whisked away on a new mission to Cuba; get a better understanding of revolutionary Fidel Castro's political leanings should his group manage to overthrow president Batista, and try to find the treasure of a Civil War soldier buried on the island. Before she can even click her heels together Jackie is in trouble with three Stoooge-looking Stasi agents and the diabolical General Sanchez. Not to mention she's in danger of losing her heart to her handsome young Cuban contact, Emiliano. But in a country with this much unrest and this close to the equator things are sure to heat up for our refined young CIA agent, who just so happens to be a future first lady.

This book is just pure fun. It's not great writing, and the people she meets are just a bit too convenient (at a club in Havana she runs into Hemingway and Sinatra and shares a table with a young Grace Kelly in a Schraft's in New York) but they are sort of fun. Especially as it's sort of a game to think who she might run into yet. But, it also helps to keep in mind that the plots and characters in this book are flat out absurd. It's also interesting to note that Jackie does manage a few dates with her future husband and the epilogue ten years in the future in the middle of the Cuban missile crisis, which brings an interesting view to both Jackie as a character, and wife to the rakish gentleman we've seen throughout the book, and to her mission, which she's never spoken about to anyone.

This book gave a surprisingly sympathetic view to the Cuban revolutionaries, but stopped short before Castro was actually in power. We're never given Jackie's views on what Cuba's fall to communism. Though we're left with idealistic views that don't get to a far deeper subject, that's probably for the best. This is light reading after all. It's a fun book about the early days of the CIA with an improbable heroine. Not realistic, but I never wanted it to be. Now if they'll just write FBI Pat Nixon I think we'll have it covered.

Skye says

Spy in a Little Black Dress, Maxine Kenneth (Grand Central Publishing, 340 pages, 2012, \$14.99) This is a GoodReads First Read book.

A very clever little book! A female Indiana Jones!

First of all, Spy in a Little Black Dress was co-authored by Maxine Schnall and Kenneth Salikof (combining their names into Maxine Kenneth!). And that is just the first of “oodles of ‘clevernesses’” in Spy.

Did you know that Jackie Kennedy was a CIA agent before her marriage? If you can believe that, you will love this book, actually the second in a long (hopefully) series - after Paris To Die For.

Things just “happen” to Jackie as they did to Indy a couple of decades earlier. I simply love the references to the 50s – how she is concerned about being overdressed in a Cuban guerilla camp, for instance. (And did you know that a young Castro wrote a letter in English to FDR asking for a ten-dollar bill?)

Each chapter is literally a cliff-hanger as our heroine is saved from alligators, sails on Ernest Hemingway’s Pilar, listens to Fidel Castro drone on in a guerilla camp, receives her CIA assignment from Deputy Director Allen Dulles (her boss), eats an impromptu lunch with the budding actress Grace Kelly, runs into Jack Kennedy several times. . . .

Who else but the Inquiring Camera Girl (also a newspaper columnist) would carry dynamite in her camera bag or bump into Zsa Zsa Gabor in a hotel check-in line or dig for (buried) treasure in a cemetery at midnight, become a hostage and ‘visit’ Bahia de Cochinos (the Bay of Pigs)?

From cousin Gore Vidal to Tennessee Williams. From Sam Giancana to Frank Sinatra, who Jackie says would make a great Private Maggio in From Here to Eternity, a book she has just finished reading, Spy could easily be serialized or made into an action movie.

After finishing this little story of 340 pages, you will want to read Paris To Die For. I do – can’t wait until Jackie meets Audrey Hepburn!

Light fare. Beach reading. Really!

(Disclosure: This was a First Reads book.)
