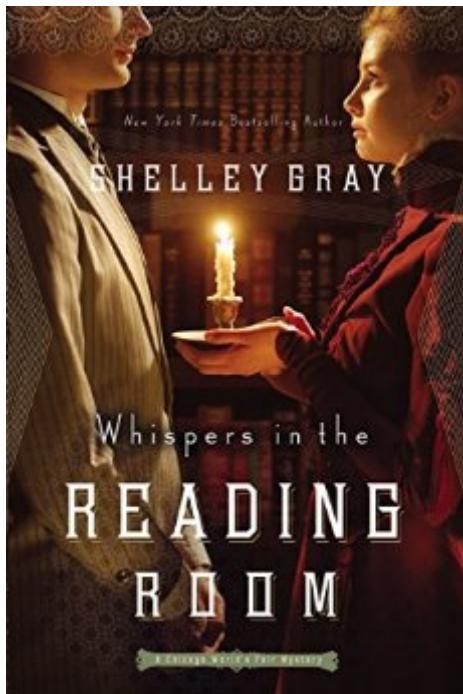


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Whispers In The Reading Room (The Chicago World's Fair Mystery Series Book 3)



Synopsis

Lydiaâ™s job at the library is her worldâ™ until a mysterious patron catches her eye . . . and perhaps her heart. Just months after the closure of the Chicago Worldâ™s Fair, librarian Lydia Bancroft finds herself fascinated by a mysterious dark-haired and dark-eyed patron. He has never given her his name; he actually never speaks to a single person. All she knows about him is that he loves books as much as she does. Only when he rescues her in the lobby of the Hartman Hotel does she discover that his name is Sebastian Marks. She also discovers that he lives at the top of the prestigious hotel and that most everyone in Chicago is intrigued by him. Lydia and Sebastian form a fragile friendship, but when she discovers that Mr. Marks isnâ™t merely a very wealthy gentleman, but also the proprietor of an infamous saloon and gambling club, she is shocked. Lydia insists on visiting the club one fateful night and suddenly is a suspect to a murder. She must determine who she can trust, who is innocent, and if Sebastian Marksâ™ the man so many people fearâ™ is actually everything her heart believes him to be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When you put together a murder mystery, library, and two unlikely lovers, you're at the start of an interesting read. I was hooked from the very beginning and the twist and turns found throughout the novel kept me fully engaged. While the title and cover leads one to believe that this mystery will be centered in a library, we actually see very little of the library. Most of the setting revolves in or around Sebastian's club. This setting makes the novel more difficult to stay in the Christian category. This book will not be for all readers. I hope to help you see where the book shines and where it fell apart for me so that you can decide for yourself whether to add this one to your reading list or not. As mentioned, the setting sets up for a dark and gritty type of novel. Gray actually does a really good job with these subjects. In context, we pick up dark vices such as prostitution, drinking, gambling, and murder. While there were a few key moments that were slightly shocking, I felt that as a sensitive reader, I wasn't so put off by Gray's handling of these hard subjects. The sexual content was extremely light. Prostitution was mentioned various times, but it was mentioned only and never acted out on the page. The relationship between the couple was very tasteful. There were mentions of beatings and using one's fists to gain respect or to get results, but again, these acts were mentioned and not seen on the page. For me personally, the most disappointing thing was how Sebastian made his money. While he has a form of reformation towards the end, his drinking and selling drink was never repented of and was a deal breaker for this dry Christian. Many won't agree with me, but for those that do, you'll want to know that this isn't the book for you.

About the Book: Lydia's job at the library is her world "until a mysterious patron catches her eye . . . and perhaps her heart. Just months after the closure of the Chicago World's Fair, librarian Lydia Bancroft finds herself fascinated by a mysterious dark-haired and dark-eyed patron. He has never given her his name; he actually never speaks to a single person. All she knows about him is that he loves books as much as she does. Only when he rescues her in the lobby of the Hartman Hotel does she discover that his name is Sebastian Marks. She also discovers that he lives at the top of the prestigious hotel and that most everyone in Chicago is intrigued by him. Lydia and Sebastian form a fragile friendship, but when she discovers that Mr. Marks isn't merely a very wealthy gentleman, but also the proprietor of an infamous saloon and gambling club, she is shocked. Lydia insists on visiting the club one fateful night and suddenly is a suspect to a murder. She must determine who she can trust, who is innocent, and if Sebastian Marks "the man so many people fear" is actually everything her heart believes him to be.

My Review: Lydia Bancroft loves

her job as a librarian, and one of her favorite pass times is watching the patrons, especially Mr. Tall-Dark-and-Handsome. He never speaks more than a few words and has never told her his name, but yet he still interests her. One day while having lunch with her fiancÃ© at the Hartman Hotel, she spots him in the corner watching her. She tries her best to remain cool while being under his stare and in the presence of fiancÃ©, but soon she finds herself in a difficult situation.

I'm not a huge fan of mystery/suspense books, but I really enjoy Shelley Gray. Since I have come to like Gray, I knew that I had to at least give this series a chance or I would always wonder if I would like it or not. I have only ever read her Amish fiction, so to break out into genre of mystery felt like a huge leap for me. After finishing this book, I now want to read the rest in this series, *A Chicago World's Fair Mystery*. I'm sure if someone loves mystery with lots of suspense and twists and turns, then this book may not be one of the top suspenseful books you've ever read. However, for me, it was the perfect amount of suspense and mystery. Lydia and Sebastian both have a lot of mystery surrounding them. Sebastian hides a lot and very slowly more of who he is really is exposed throughout the story. The relationship between Sebastian and Lydia's ex-fiancÃ© also holds a bit of mystery for a while. Even Lydia doesn't quite know all of who he is. The mystery book seems perfectly fitting to take place in a library. It was the perfect setting for this story. Gray did a wonderful job in crafting a story that leaves the reader turning page after page, anxious to understand who Sebastian is and what decisions in the past have lead to who he is now. I also found Lydia's mom fascinating because she has just faded away ever since her husband's death. She has different idea of what Lydia's life should be like because she so desperately wants Lydia to marry for wealth and society. Not only is there the mystery surrounding who Sebastian Marks is, there is also a mystery surrounding a death.

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