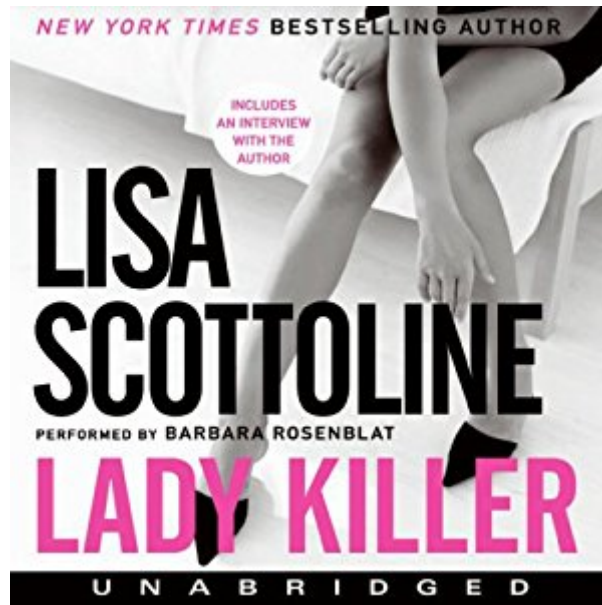


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Lady Killer



Synopsis

Mary DiNunzio has become a big-time business-getter at Rosato & Associates. But the last person she expects to walk into her office one morning is super-sexy Trish Gambone, her high-school rival. Back when Mary was becoming the straight-A president of the Latin Club and Most Likely to Achieve Sainthood, Trish was the head Mean Girl, who flunked religion and excelled at smoking in the bathroom. These days, however, Trish needs help. She is terrified of her live-in boyfriend, an abusive, gun-toting drug dealer for the South Philly mob. Mary remembers the guy from high school, too. She had a major crush on him. Then Trish vanishes, a dead body turns up in an alley, and Mary is plunged into a nightmare that threatens her job, her family, and even her life. She goes on a one-woman crusade to unmask the killer, and on the way finds new love in a very unexpected place. --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It was painful to read about the talented Mary DiNunzio giving up her world for Mean Girl and Goretta alum, Trish Gambone. Mary comes off as pathetic and desperate for acceptance. She screws up work, friendships, and a potential relationship so she can help Trish. I never felt sorry for Mary; I just felt embarrassed for her. Once the author revealed the murderer, I stopped reading. There's way too much going on in Lady Killer. We've got South Philly Italian culture, Mary's low self-esteem, Mary's widowhood, kookie neighbors and coworkers, an abusive boyfriend, high school bullies, Mary's high school ex-boyfriend, mob connections, and MARY'S BIG SECRET. I figured out the secret in the

middle of the book. It wasn't shocking, but some readers might be offended. The secret does and doesn't help the story. I think it is treated too lightly. When Mary reveals the secret, it just isn't **so shocking**. (Is that why Judy and Anthony show no emotion?) I also didn't believe that Mary was in love with Bobby Mancuso, now Trish's boyfriend. I thought she had a lusty teenage crush on the guy. To add to the nonsense is Bonnyhart, a small town in the Poconos. How and why Mary ended up there is just too unbelievable. Does Mary owe anything to Trish? Yes, Trish asked for Mary's help. Mary gave her legal counsel. Trish disappears. Should Mary get involved? Or, should she just wait until if and when Trish returns? And what about Mary's honor? The close-knit Italian neighborhood snubs Mary when they think she's snubbed Trish. If Scottoline eliminated all the extras, this book would have been much better. And, Scottoline should have made Mary's involvement a little more believable. Because Lady Killer received a number of 4 and 5 star reviews, I will be reading the earlier Mary DiNunzio books.

Scottoline is in her best form when she's writing about Mary DiNunzio, a three-dimensional complex character who's just fun to be around. Mary's still ambivalent about being a lawyer (although she's becoming a rainmaker in her firm, thanks to the residents of her old neighborhood). She still goes home to her mom when things get tough. And she's still an associate at Bennie Rosato's firm. So what does Mary do when her old high school classmate (Trish) shows up, married to the mob and an apparent victim of domestic violence? Never mind that Trish led the Mean Girls, the snooty gang that did everything they could to make Mary's high school life miserable. Mary gives Trish some lawyerly advice, worried for her classmate's safety. When Trish disappears, Mary risks everything to find her...including some trips to off the wall places far from Center City Philadelphia. Only Scottoline knows how to combine human interest with edge of the chair suspense. Just about every character has a piece of story, just enough to be memorable. Mary rounds up clues in classic detective story fashion, but shatters tradition with a romantic comedy interlude. It's hard to imagine a better urban mystery - a page turner with soul and attitude. The only bad part is...it's impossible to put down and once you're through, you have to wait at least a year to find out what's next. Will one of these associates finally make partner (they did in the first and -- in my opinion -- best book, when they worked at the white shoe law firm). Will Mary finally fall in love for more than a few pages? Will we learn more about Judy, besides the facts that she's a perfect gal pal who defies fashion conventions? Will Mary buy a house and get a dog, like Bennie's goldens? And whatever happened to Mary's cat (or did I miss something)? It's just a few hours and already I'm in Scottoline withdrawal...and homesick again for that great town of Philadelphia.

Thank God, after the "Dirty Blonde" misstep of a couple of years ago. I've enjoyed all of Scottoline's books right from word one (except "Dirty Blonde"), especially the ones that take place in the world of continuing character Bennie Rosato (Scottoline's "alter ego"?), and this one's simply a feast of goodies. Fast-paced and tightly plotted, the characterizations are vivid, engaging, and in many cases truly hilarious. To begin with, I just love the character of Mary DiNunzio. She cracks me up! If she were a real person, I'd want to date her. She's such a true girly-girl, in the midst of some crisis she'll be worrying about her fashion statement, or whether her stockings have a run, or whatever. It is just hilarious! The Mean Girls, pivotal secondary characters in the plot of this book, are simply a hoot. The plot itself is tightly knit, and moves along without any glitches or hitches, crafted with Scottoline's deft touch for discrete misdirection. Like a magician, while you're watching her right hand, her left hand carries off the illusion. A solid five stars for a really entertaining read.

I first started reading this author because her books take place in the Philadelphia area, where I am from. Am I glad I did! Her novels are exciting page turners with plot twists that keep you reading through the night, and this one was no exception. In fact, I read the whole book in one day-I could not put it down. Highly recommended for anyone who enjoys fast paced legal thrillers with smart female main characters. While the plot is reason enough to read the book, Scottoline also does great character development without slowing down the story.

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