



North Star Conspiracy

Miriam Grace Monfredo

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Glynis Tryon, the delightful Seneca Falls, New York, librarian introduced in *Seneca Falls Inheritance* (SMP, 1992), returns, still balancing her own life against the momentous events of the times. With sure authenticity, the author evokes the atmosphere of 1854, seven years before the Civil War, and brings to life the vivid cast of characters involved. A local election is pending, from which Glynis and Elizabeth Cady Stanton hope will come gains for women's rights. A wealthy resident has started Seneca Falls's first theater, and its production of *Macbeth* looms large in the story. Glynis herself faces a wrenching decision: Constable Cullen Stuart wants her as his wife when he moves west to become a Pinkerton man. Warm as her regard for Cullen may be, Glynis is reluctant, knowing how her life must change after marriage. Meanwhile, Seneca Falls has become an important stop on the Underground Railroad. Fugitive slaves following the *North Star* to Canada find support from many of the town's inhabitants, including Glynis. It is a difficult commitment at best, and when complicated by murder, a perilous one as well. Once again, Miriam Grace Monfredo has combined historical events, a moving personal story, and an engrossing mystery in a work of extraordinary interest.

North Star Conspiracy Details

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BeParticular says

I enjoyed this second book of the series very much--a bit more than the first. Again, the sense of time and place is very well done. The author educates as she entertains and I find that a very potent combination. Women's rights are still a main topic, but slavery and the workings of the Underground Railroad are the main focus. Monfredo obviously devotes much time to research and it pays off. I enjoy her characters as well. Recommended!

Eunira says

Glynis Tyron joined forces with Elizabeth Cady Stanton a few years back in the fight for women's rights. Now the independent librarian-sleuth finds herself embroiled in an equally compelling campaign against injustice - helping to lead fugitive slaves to freedom along the historic Underground Railroad (to Canada). While most of the town of Seneca Falls, New York, is focused on the opening of a brand new theater, Glynis finds high drama of her own when she instigates the suspicious death of a freed slave - and digs up a shocking secret from years past...

A wonderful evocation of time and place with meaningful reflections on slavery and its devastating effects on the people, both owners and slaves. Historically very interesting, and still a good crime story. A bit of romance and desire adds the final touch to this compelling story.

Dennis Fischman says

Very good historical fiction at the point where the movement for the abolition of slavery meets the movement for women's rights. Good characters, with the ongoing relationships among our heroine and two different (very different!) men developing. The mystery played fair with the reader--the clues were there to be found--but the solution, once again, was more explained than revealed.

Carolyn says

Although I was hampered a bit by not having read the first book in this series (I think - there are undercurrents in the relationships between the characters that I did not understand), I would highly recommend this book for anyone interested in the Fugitive Slave Act in the 1850's. The best part of the book was not the mystery, which I didn't find all that compelling, but the social atmosphere and analysis of slavery and other social systems of the day. There were "cameo appearances" by Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. These were handled in a way that seemed natural to the story. This book is better historical fiction than mystery, and recommended as that.

Sara Snarr says

This is a fun read. Mystery combined with the history of the fight for women's rights and abolition. Nothing profound, but it's a compelling mystery and a nice introduction to the Underground Railroad and the genesis of the women's rights movement starting in Seneca Falls.

Una Tiers says

Monfredo continues to teach history through mysteries. This book covered the underground railroad as well as the social atmosphere of the 1850s.

Jann Barber says

This is the second book in the series about librarian Glynis Tryon from Seneca Falls, New York. I think there are only five or six books in this particular series and I'll probably read them all. Not only does Monfredo write mysteries, but she pulls historical events into them, as well as people who were the movers and shakers of the time.

In her first book, Seneca Falls Inheritance, the historical events involved the Women's Movement and suffrage. In North Star Conspiracy, slavery and the Underground Railroad play an important part in the story.

I had trouble putting this book down once I started reading. I liked it more than Monfredo's first book; perhaps knowing the backgrounds of many of the characters helped, as I've invested in them and feel as if they're old friends.

I recommend this series and would have given this a 4.5 rating if partial stars were allowed!

Nell says

I am thankful that I don't have to deal with the daily miseries, obstacles, and indignities of life for women in the 19th century, from clothing to restricted choices to less pay for equal work--not that there isn't work to do still. Makes one realize how much courage the leaders of the women's equality movement had.

Roberta says

Second in a series of light murder mysteries, set in New York State before the Civil War. The main character is a small-town librarian, Glynis Tryon. The social problems, sexism and racism of 19th century America all reflect the times in which the story is set. I enjoyed this book and intend to search out the rest in the series and look for other books by this author.

Annalinda Ragazzo says

I stumbled upon this treasure right on my own book shelf, still not knowing how I acquired it. But what a

well written treat! Monfredo spins a murder mystery set against the backdrop of the underground railroad, abolition movement and women's rights movement centered in western New York. Having finally toured the National Women's Rights Historic Site in Seneca Falls and the Mount Hope Cemetery and Susan B. Anthony house in Rochester this summer, I could actually visualize and feel the protagonists make their way in this taut mystery. I loved it and can't wait to read Monfredo's other novels in the Glynis Tryon series.

Elizabeth says

This is an excellent book set in the mid 1850's in Seneca Falls, NY. It is primarily about the underground railroad. Glynis Tyron, the town librarian who has been working for the right of women to vote, has always felt slavery was a grave wrong. Until the issue hits close to home she hasn't become involved in the abolition movement because she is more comfortable obeying the law. When her landlady's son helps a young woman slave escape from VA Glynis becomes involved in helping her hide from the slave hunter. Meanwhile several people in Seneca Falls have been murdered, and their deaths seem to be involved with the slave hunter.

I thought the author did a very good job of making the reader feel as if you were there, hidden in a wagon's secret compartment, hidden inside a wall behind a bookcase, and hiding in plain sight dressed as a mourner complete with head coverings.

Andrea says

This mystery novel had very little mystery to it - it was almost like an afterthought that was squeezed in around the story the author actually wanted to tell, about a librarian helping with the Underground Railroad.

Stacey Andrews says

This was an amazing read! Cameos by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B Anthony, Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass. A great glimpse inside the Underground Railroad, the Fugitive Slave Law and general North/South relations in the decade prior to the Civil War. I really like how the parallel between woman's rights and slavery was drawn - no one is free while others are oppressed. Great mystery to boot :)

Alice says

A look at the fugitive slave act and western New York in the mid 19th Century. This was a fascinating place, culturally alive because of the wealth brought by the Erie Canal. An engaging heroine and interesting plot. This series did slide down hill a bit toward the end. Still, I'm sorry Ms. Monfredo hasn't written any more installments recently.

Deanna Turner says

I picked up this book in the library because I saw "North Star" and "Elizabeth Cady Stanton" in a very quick perusal of the contents. It turned out to be a book I couldn't put down. The locale of the story and references to Rochester, where I live, made it very interesting. I have read a number of books on slavery and abolition, detesting the cruelty and thoughts toward slavery. This book also includes the Constitution's acceptance of slavery, which to my thinking made many of our founding fathers, including presidents, very hypocritical.
