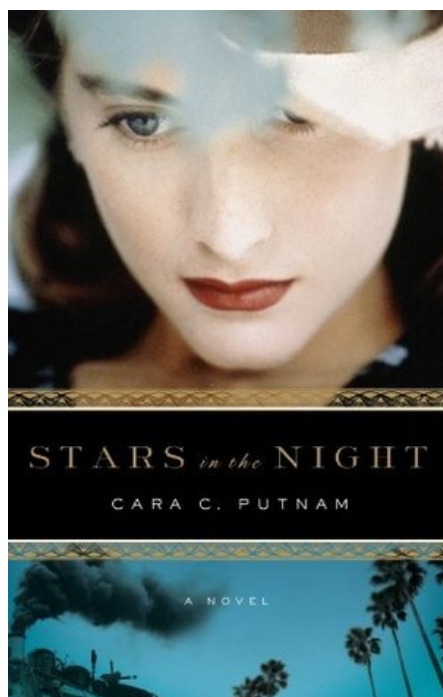




Stars in the Night

Cara C. Putman

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Hollywood 1942. When attorney Audra Schaeffer's sister disappears, Audra flies to Hollywood to find her but instead must identify her body. Determined to bring the killer to justice, Audra takes a job with the second Hollywood Victory Caravan. Together with Robert Garfield and other stars, she crisscrosses the southern United States in a campaign to sell war bonds. When two other women are found dead on the train, Audra knows the deaths are tied to that of her sister. Could the killer be the man with whom she's falling in love?

Stars in the Night Details

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From Reader Review Stars in the Night for online ebook

Jesseca Wheaton says

It was like "Murder on the Orient Express" with romance set in my favorite era. One of my favorite books ever.

Martha says

I loved the mystery set in this time period!

Christy Lockstein says

Stars in the Night by Cara Putnam is a terrific WWII romantic thriller. Audra Schaeffer has always been the sister with her feet firmly on the ground in contrast to sister Rosie who has left their family home in Indiana for the bright lights of Hollywood. When Rosie fails to make her weekly phone call home, Audra has a feeling that something is terribly wrong. On this instinct, she flies all the way to California only to discover that Rosie is missing. After meeting handsome actor Robert Garfield on the plane out, she feels he may be the only one in town she can trust. Eventually Audra ends up on a train tour across the country with a list of Hollywood's finest in hopes of discovering the truth about what happened to Rosie, but her investigation may put all of their lives at risk. Robert and Audra have terrific chemistry and on occasion their repartee sparkles like that of movies of the era. The Murder on the Orient Express-esque tour is filled with colorful characters who keep the reader guessing. The only flaw is that the motive behind the murders seems a bit flimsy. That said, Putnam could easily make a fantastic series of Robert and Audra solving mysteries in Hollywood in the vein of The Thin Man. I hope she continues writing in this era and uses the characters again.

Janna Ryan says

Enter "Stars in the Night" and step into a world of Hollywood glamour in the 1940's as Audra travels from Indiana to check up on her little sister Rosemary. Call it a hunch but Audra is concerned when Rosemary doesn't call home like she should. She arrives in Hollywood and her instinct is correct, there is a dead body in Rosemary's apartment, but who is it and where is Rosemary?

Audra can't leave until she knows what is going on and where Rosemary is, so she is sucked deeper into the Hollywood world as bodies start piling up. She takes on a job with the 2nd Hollywood Victory Caravan, filled with B list celebrities going on a cross country train tour to entertain and sell war bonds just so she can learn more about the people Rosemary knows. But now has she put herself on the very train that the killer is on?

Cara has such an incredible handle on WWII history and it was so cool to see that open up into Hollywood (she has previously written a WWII series set in Nebraska and a WWII series set in Ohio). I learned a lot I didn't know historically, including the fact that there really was a 1st Hollywood Victory Caravan with lots of amazing stars on it, but Cara fictionalized the 2nd one for the sake of the book. On top of that, I enjoyed

the mystery/suspense in this book as I tried to figure out the killer before it was revealed (I did pretty well, but it isn't spelled out for you, you have to use your head). Great stand alone book from Cara C. Putman and Summerside Press' new line of historical books.

Liriel says

Fun little story, more a love story than a murder mystery. Feels very Grace Livingston Hill and overdoes the attempt to make you believe she's not going to fall in love with him. *spoiler alert* She already did. Cute novel though, and the setting was done rather nicely.

Carol says

Cara C. Putnam knows exactly how make Hollywood in the 1940s real. Most of the time I felt like I was watching an old black a white romantic suspense movie. The main character is Audra Schaeffer who lives with her parents just after finishing her education to become an attorney. Her younger sister, Rosemary always wanted to be a star in the movies. Rosemary made a promise to call her family weekly or she would not be allowed to go to Hollywood.

When Rosemary's call does not come on the expected day, her family is very upset. Audra is not one to wait for a long time to find out why she didn't call. She took her savings and bought a ticker out West to investigate. In the 1940s, party lines on the phone were common and you had to call an operator to make a long distance call. Also back then, a plane trip required many stops so that the trip took much longer. Also, the meals were served on china. The author has well researched the 1940s and everything was true to the times.

Audra discovers a body in her sister's apartment, the first of a long line of strangled victims. She wants to work with the police but is told to stay out it for her own safety. She finds herself on a train of Hollywood stars who were performing and selling war bonds. There is mystery, suspense, a little bit of romance and plenty of history in this tale.

I was really drawn into this story and hated for the story to end.

Michelle says

More like 3.5 stars.

When I first read about this book, I knew I needed to check it out. I love a good historical romance, and I read another book Cara had written and enjoyed it. I read this book quickly, though it didn't grab me like I had hoped it would. It probably had a lot to do with the fact that I'm not a big fan of movie stars from the 1940s, and I don't watch old movies. Never have. The plot was very forward-moving, but the characterization fell flat for me. I don't feel like I ever got to know Audra's heart.

The romantic element also seemed more like a minor subplot (or an afterthought) than an underlying theme to me, which is how I classify romance novels in my mind. The romance drives the story. In this book it

didn't. I kept hoping things would perk up between them, but just when a spark started, it was over. But that is just my opinion, of course. I am sure others would disagree with me. I suppose I just didn't bond with the characters because I enjoy books focused more on the characters' inner growth than the plot itself. This book was strong on plot, but not so much in romance or character development. That said, on to other positives...

The plot for this book was interesting, and I didn't know who the bad guy was (I loved that), or when the murders would end (that upped the suspense.) I really like it when a book keeps me guessing. That proves it's a well-developed mystery, and this book had that aspect nailed. Thankfully, the murder scenes weren't gruesome, and if anything, they were overly tame. That worked for me because I'm a wimp when it comes to gore. I shiver at the sight of blood. Again, the mystery embedded in the storyline was probably the best aspect of this book. Bummer is I'm not a huge mystery fan either.

But the story kept me reading and I didn't give up on it like I have with so many other books lately. For that, I applaud the author. She obviously knows how to develop a plot. I guess the fact that I never really felt anything for the characters made the story not resonate with me on an emotional level like I had anticipated it would.

What turns my crank when I'm reading a book is deep point of view. I want to be inside the character's head, not just an observer. I recently finished a book (Courting Morrow Little by Laura Frantz) that blew me out of the water because it was so emotionally gripping. Since I finished that story everything else seems to fall flat for me. Maybe it's just bad timing. That said, I'd recommend this novel for people who enjoy a solid historical mystery. If you enjoyed Songbird Under a German Moon, you'll love this story because it has a very similar feel to it.

Carly says

One of my favorite time periods to read about is World War II and Cara Putman has done her homework and she has created a world that pulled me in instantly. I read another book recently that involved a war bond tour and I really liked that concept, so when I saw that a large part of this story took place on the Hollywood Victory Caravan I was looking forward to reading it even more. There were a few slow spots, especially at the beginning of this story, but as the story builds, the danger and suspense builds as well. The slower parts didn't negatively affect my feelings about this book because they gave the story a very natural feel and kept the book from feeling rushed, which I think is important with a suspense story. The romantic aspect fit perfectly with the rest of the story and never felt awkward or out of place.

Overall, I found Stars in the Night to be a very well balanced story with just enough suspense, mystery and romance to keep me interested from start to finish. I was very impressed with the research Cara did to make this book authentic and believable. This is a book that will appeal to a wide variety of readers, from fans of historical fiction and suspense to fans of romantic fiction. I know it fit perfectly with my taste in books because it had a little bit of everything.

Audrey says

When Audra Shaffer's sister goes missing in 1940's Hollywood, she flies in to find her. What she finds are two dead bodies, a dashing movie star, and a killer on the loose. Determined to get justice for her sister, she decides to play undercover detective on a second Victory Caravan full of B-list starlets out to sell war bonds.

She hopes her role as coordinator and chaperone will allow her to get close to the crowd that worked with her sister and to discover who may have killed her. To stay focused, Audra tries to ignore the growing attraction she feels toward movie star, Robert Garfield, not knowing whom she can trust.

Okay- I just honestly could not get into this novel. I kept waiting for it to get better because it had good reviews, but it never happened for me. First of all, I felt that Audra got herself into stupid situations all the time. If there's a killer out there, and you're poking around asking questions, don't you think you're putting yourself in harm's way- especially on a train in a confined setting? I guess this happens all the time in books and movies, but for some reason, I couldn't get past this fact in the book. I could not connect to any of the characters. They seemed very flat to me and the story dragged on. It took me a long time to get through this. And secondly, I love inspirational books that weave God into the story, but all the faith references felt really awkward to me. Sorry Cara Putman.

Victoria says

I don't know what it is about the majority of Christian romance novels, but the authors always tend to waste so much time in the middle and drag things out and then finish everything really quick in the last two chapters...this book was no different. The book is set in 1942 during WWII, which is one of my favorite eras, so I was really looking forward to this book. However, about half way through I just groaned every time I opened it and tried to finish it. The main character was flat, (view spoiler)

Sarah Sundin says

A fun read for anyone who loves World War II stories, classic movies, or a good mystery.

Ruth says

Audra Schaeffer couldn't be more different from her gorgeous, popular sister Rosemary. Bookish and cautious, older Audra dreams of being accepted as an attorney – an atypical career choice in 1942 for a woman to make in the very male-dominated profession. Rosemary decides to try her luck in Hollywood, but the land of silver-screen dreams has a darker side than she'd ever imagined. When Audra plans a surprise visit, sure that Rosie will confide her worries face-to-face, she's horrified to discover she's too late – her little sister has been murdered. Determined to discover Rosie's killer, Audra takes a job on the second Hollywood Victory Caravan war bond tour, hoping to learn more of Rosemary's life from her peers in the entertainment business. The job has the added bonus of allowing her to spend more time with the handsome actor, Robert Garfield – but can she possibly trust her heart with a man who makes a living out of putting on an act? When it becomes clear that the killer has followed Audra on the train and is determined to cover their tracks, Audra's only ally may be the man who makes a living from pretense. In the city where appearance is everything, can Audra uncover the truth about her sister's killer and trust her heart to fall in love, or will she be disappointed by Hollywood illusions?

I am a huge fan of classic movies (okay, I'm more like obsessed), and thanks to Stars in the Night, Cara Putman has now made my must-read list. In fact, if I can dare to presume, I feel like we're kindred spirits in a way – her inspired homage to the golden age of film nails every detail and story beat necessary to appeal to a fan of Turner Classic Movies like me. This book feels so authentic to the tone and history of old Hollywood and the pace and style of the classic films I adore that I found it to be absolutely un-put-downable

– each page was a joy to read. While there was actually only one Hollywood Victory Caravan during World War II, for her second, fictional caravan Putman crams it with the variety of performing talent one would expect from the time period – everything from dancers to slapstick comedians to crooners. I loved Audra and Robert, and the romance Putman develops between her two leads is a sweet treat to watch unfold. There’s also a fantastic cast of supporting players. Each and every character is well-drawn and realistic, from the villains to the egotistical actors to the fans, and their personalities ring true to the time. Putman clearly has a passion for writing about the World War II time period, and her thorough research and affinity for the era bring every aspect of Stars to vibrant life with a flair worthy of the silver screen.

Stars in the Night sparkles with the glamour of old Hollywood, enhanced by a swoon-worthy romance. The suspense factor kept me turning pages, to the point that I carried this book with me everywhere until I finished it. Clearly inspired by classic film noir with a dash of Agatha Christie’s *Murder on the Orient Express*, Putman’s carefully plotted mystery expertly unfolds, littered with enough red herrings to keep you guessing and building the suspense to a thrilling conclusion. The faith element is also extremely well integrated into the storyline. I really liked Audra’s “outsider” take on Hollywood’s morality (or lack thereof) and Robert’s honest efforts to live out his faith in a culture that encourages compromise. Equal parts Hollywood glamour, romance, and mystery, with a dash of faith, Stars in the Night is a must-read for fans of Hollywood’s Golden Age. The story unfolds with a cinematic flair that will keep you turning pages until the very end and the closing credits roll – and like all good classic movies, Stars is a treat you’ll want to revisit. I can’t wait for Putman’s next book!

Laura says

Title: STARS IN THE NIGHT

Author: Cara C. Putman

Publisher: Summerside Press

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ISBN: 978-1-60936-011-5

Genre: Inspirational/historical/romantic suspense

Audra Shaeffer has just landed her first chance to go to court as an attorney. But then her sister, Rosemary, fails to make a phone call home from Hollywood. Worried, Audra talks her parents into allowing her to go to Hollywood to see if Rosemary is okay. She throws away her chance to work as an attorney and buys a ticket to Hollywood.

Robert Garfield is a B-list actor. He dreams of making it to the big time, but it seems unlikely, even though his ex-wife is making great strides. He agrees to jump through the hoops his agent demands, but it seems unlikely any of them will work.

Robert and Audra are attracted when they meet, but Audra puts Robert off to find her sister. Unfortunately, her sister has been murdered...and now Audra wants to solve the murder. She joins a Hollywood Victory Caravan to get to know those who knew Rosemary best—the stars. But is Audra flirting with her life?

Set during WWII, STARS IN THE NIGHT focuses on the movie stars, the ones who went to sell war bonds to the American public, those that are struggling to make it in the dog-eat-dog world of Hollywood. STARS IN THE NIGHT doesn’t set a pretty or glamorous picture of a struggling movie star in the 1940s. Small apartments, working at unattractive jobs, and other things that those desperate to succeed did in order to get a small chance at a part in a movie. Ms. Putman obviously did her research on what it took...or even takes...to break in there.

The suspense is immediate, from the moment the book starts in the prologue. I had to keep reading to figure out who did it, though I had my suspicions early on. I wanted to see if I was right. Audra and Robert are realistic characters, hurting and flawed, though struggling to do what is right. If you like historical suspense, then don't miss STARS IN THE NIGHT. \$12.99. 354 pages.

Casey says

With a depth of historical detail and rich setting, STARS IN THE NIGHT is a story of mystery, a fledgling love and all the glamour Hollywood can provide.

With the flavor on Murder on the Orient Express, this book swept me away into the murder mystery of a young starlet looking for a place for herself in rising stardom. I loved the flavor of the setting. I was brought in the 20th century Hollywood world and given a glimpse into an era I don't often get the pleasure of exploring. I could see each scene vividly. See the glittering lights and taste the eagerness for fame on the back of my tongue.

And explore this world I did, along with the main characters as Audra worked to solve the mystery surrounding her sister's death. Each scene in the book moves it forward in one way or another and with each twist I was more surprised.

I was comfortable and at home while reading this novel. It flows with a grace and sense of purpose towards the ending, while wending its way into the heart of the reader. I felt for Audra in her loss and grew to admire her tenacity.

All in all, this book was a very enjoyable read and I look forward to getting lost within its pages again in the future.

Katrina Burchett says

3.5: Ever since her first visit to the theater, all Rosemary Schaeffer wanted to do was be in pictures. She hopes to make it in Hollywood, land on the silver screen and become a star. While trying to make her dream a reality, she becomes involved in a little something on the side and now, when producers were about to try her in a film, she's missing.

Audra Schaeffer worked hard through seven years of law school only to end up as a legal assistant. After two years on the job she is about to get the chance she's been hoping for to litigate a case in Superior Court. But when the scheduled call the family expects from Rosemary never comes, Audra puts her dream on hold to travel to Hollywood so she can check on her sister. When she discovers that Rosemary has been murdered, she feels obligated to help the police whether they want her to or not and find out whodunit.

Robert Garfield had top billing in movies but now his career isn't going very well. He accepts a job as emcee with the Hollywood Victory Caravan to sell war bonds. The thought of living on a train with forty other stars and staff isn't appealing to him, but he hopes that three weeks of playing the host in city after city will lead to bigger and better things.

While Audra's faith seemed shaky at times (it happens), Robert had a much stronger faith in God and I loved what he said on page 226 when he was speaking to Audra: "I've done nothing, Audra. As much as possible

in Hollywood, I've lived a life that honors Christ. You can search and hunt all you want. Aside from that disaster of a marriage to Lana, you won't find anything I'm ashamed of. And if I learned anything from that experience, it's that I need to submit every decision to Christ's authority, not some studio's and certainly not mine."

Stars in the Night has one of the most beautiful covers I have ever seen. Once it caught my eye, I decided to read the synopsis. I love to watch classic black & white movies, and that is why I bought this book. It is a good read, but it wasn't as intriguing as I hoped it would be. It did become more interesting when I got to chapter twenty-one; it was at that point when I started guessing who the murderer was. And it was entertaining for me to see names like Jimmy Stewart (love his work), Myrna Loy, Clark Gable and Desi Arnaz. I also liked Dalia and her southern drawl.
