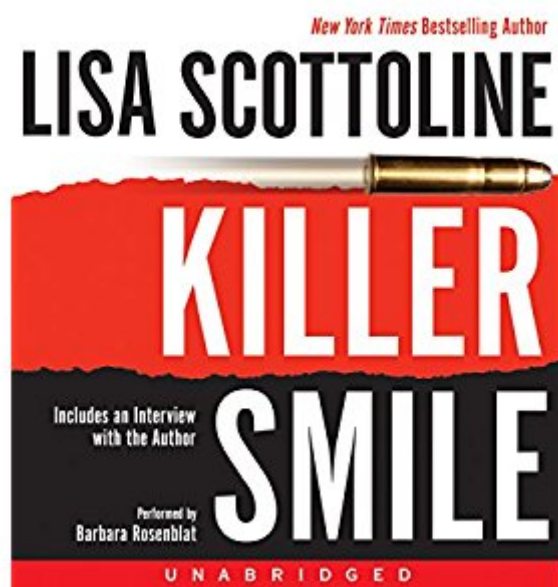


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Killer Smile



Synopsis

Lawyer Mary DiNunzio's new case is a mystery—the strange suicide of an Italian fisherman interned during a dark, unspoken chapter in American history. Armed only with the puzzle pieces of a lock of hair, an old photograph, and a paper covered with indecipherable doodles, Mary digs deep into the case and suspects betrayal—and murder. Meantime, Mary's friends worry that her investigation is becoming an obsession, so they set her up on a series of truly disastrous blind dates. She escapes romance only to risk life and limb to hunt down a ruthless killer. But someone in the shadows—powerful, cold-blooded, and very deadly—will stop at nothing to keep Mary from the truth. --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Here is another fascinating book by Lisa Scottoline which kept me glued to every word from beginning to end. Mary DiNunzio, a lawyer with Rosatto & Associates law firm represents the interests of a client, Amadeo Brandolini, who had died in 1942. The more she investigates his past, the more she learns about a little known historical/political event when Italian immigrants were interred in a camp during World War II to protect the US from potential harm. Mary becomes obsessed with learning the truth of how he died and about a piece of paper she discovered in his wallet which she surmised was very valuable. It had circles and something else on it. Everyone to whom she showed it believed it was merely doodles but... her hunch was it had to be very important or else why was it folded carefully in his wallet? The more she dug, the more she wanted to learn

the truth. The facts were he was Italian and Catholic and unlikely to commit suicide, this knowledge gnawed at her. Mary's need to know led her to the internment camp in Montana, where she searched for people to interview who might have known Amadeo Brandolini. She went to the cemetery where he was buried and went to the site where he allegedly committed suicide. Several clues of what she learned there haunted her ... It is totally amazing how Lisa Scottoline ties together the clues and discoveries as Mary DiNunzio is provided hints and gradually puts the pieces of the puzzle together. The reader is fascinated with the life of Amadeo Brandolino, a simple fisherman from Italy who came to the US to build a better life for himself and his wife Theresa. After Mary returns, she believes she is being followed by a black car ... the lawyer who hired her to investigate Brandolini's estate had removed her from the case before her trip (although she persisted investigating on her own) and is found dead in his office. She learns Amadeo's best friend in the camp ... is still alive and a very wealthy elderly Italian man, who also was from Philadelphia and lives in a rich suburban home. Under false pretext she visits him and exchanges a few words ... only to be struck in the face and spit on by his son. The ingenious methods by which Mary DiNunzio achieves her goals are worth discovering. With amazing twists and turns in the plot, the reader is taken for a wonderful reading experience. This reader is totally captivated by the dazzling writing style and talents of Lisa Scottoline. Erika Borsos (erikab93)

Lisa Scottoline's "Killer Smile" is more than just a suspenseful and engaging mystery with great characterization and plot. It is historically enlightening as we are reminded of the internment camp relocation of over 10,000 Italian-Americans during the outbreak of World War II. But first and foremost- "Killer Smile" is a fantastic mystery. Scottoline's story is compelling and sincere. What is even more touching is that Lisa draws from her own paternal grandparent's experiences for this novel. Her father would have been so proud of this book by his daughter. "Killer Smile" is more than historically engaging, however. It is a mystery that has you turning pages quickly because it is so gripping and suspenseful. I especially loved the thoughts of Mary throughout the book in regard to her feelings toward her family and friends. Some were particularly hilarious and Scottoline is quickly turning into one of my favorite authors.

Lisa Scottoline's 2004 legal thriller is as much about history as it is about personal danger in pursuit of justice. Mary DiNunzio is a young lawyer at the all-female firm of Rosato and Associates embarking on a pro bono case to sue the U.S. government for reparations on behalf of the estate of an Italian-American who committed suicide in 1942 while at a internment camp in Montana. Wading

through documents, Mary uncovers a lead that suggests perhaps Amadeo's death was not as simple as previously thought. Her persistent sleuthing puts her and others' lives in danger, and, as she gets closer to the truth, the stakes become obviously more modern day than historical. After an awkward start and all-too-obvious false suspense, this novel picks up as Mary starts to understand the history of the Italian-American persecution during World War II and meets the characters both peripheral and pertinent to her case. The strength of this novel lies not in the suspense (which is decent but not page-turning) but in the unfolding of history as it relates to the present; to Scottoline's credit, these historical details are revealed through the experiences and voices of her characters, not through preachy passages. The characterizations are mostly memorable, although the characters that talk in all capital letters can be annoying, and the premise is a poignant one. Scottoline uses the setting of Philadelphia well, making it impossible for this thriller to be set elsewhere. Unfortunately, Scottoline's attempt to make history come alive in present-day Philadelphia results in forced plot turns and unneeded peril. The final revelation and its implications, however, rescue the rest. Despite some clumsy writing and a premise that is more historical and sociological than by-your-throat suspenseful, KILLER SMILE is an entertaining read. Readers looking for high adrenaline levels will likely be disappointed, as will be those expecting a thorough look at American internment issues. This legal thriller is a light mix of suspense and history, a pleasant enough way to spend a few hours.

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