



Fool's Gold

Caro Peacock

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"Readers who relish impeccably crafted historical mysteries will find the eighth book in the Liberty Lane series, to be an especially toothsome literary treat"

Booklist

A series of anonymous letters leads to a case of cold-blooded murder for 19th-century private investigator Liberty Lane.

September, 1841. A new arrival has taken London society by storm. Lord Byron's handsome illegitimate son, George, recently arrived from the exotic island of Cephalonia in the company of his guardian, the mysterious Mr Vickery, has been setting female hearts aflutter.

But not all the attention George attracts is welcome. Mr Vickery has been receiving disturbing letters from a woman who calls herself Helena, and he hires Liberty Lane to find out who Helena is and what she wants.

As Liberty is to discover, there is more to this case than meets the eye. Is George really Lord Byron's son - or is he an imposter? And who exactly is Mr Vickery? What is his agenda? When Liberty comes across a body shot dead near Mr Vickery's home in Muswell Hill, the investigation takes a shocking turn.

Fool's Gold Details

Date : Published May 1st 2017 by Severn House Publishers

ISBN : 9780727886910

Author : Caro Peacock

Format : Hardcover 224 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical

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From Reader Review Fool's Gold for online ebook

Christy says

I picked this up from the new fiction arrivals shelf. It was a decent mystery - didn't really get exciting until the last chapter or so. I didn't realize there were a bunch of books that came before it, but it stands on its own anyway. I may or may not check out another in the series.

Katherina says

★★★★1/2 I really enjoyed this historical mystery. It wasn't very hard to figure out the villain, but it was still a very entertaining story. I liked Liberty's interactions with her team and I'm looking forward to more books in the series. This is book 8 I believe in the series and I haven't read the others. I would like to know more about her, but the book works really well as a stand alone.

For more romance reviews, check out my website: <https://katherinasbooks.wordpress.com>

S.J. Higbee says

Of course, the catch is that it is the eighth book in the series, so would I find myself floundering at all? Nope, not for a second. Peacock is far too adroit and experienced a writer to fall into that pitfall and from the first page, I was pulled into this twisting story where the plot snaked in all sorts of unexpected avenues. So I had to read it in one greedy gulp to find out exactly where it was going.

Liberty Lane is clearly a remarkable young woman as a female investigator at a time when her male counterparts were looked down upon with contempt and suspicion – obviously there is a hefty backstory here. But I certainly found myself believing in the 19th century London streets depicted by Peacock and as a historian, there were no glaring anomalies that yanked me out of the story. Without holding up the action or pace, all sorts of little details contributed to make the world vividly convincing – and I very much liked the fact that she does not expect her horses to go galloping or cantering everywhere, which they generally didn't.

I also enjoyed her characterisation. Alongside Liberty, there is a supporting cast who leap off the page – the beautiful, blind George is suitably enigmatic and Mr Vickery is by turns exasperating and open-hearted. But Liberty's small team help to bring this story alive – it seemed entirely plausible that she would be on good terms with an experienced horseman, Amos, running a livery stable, for she often needs sudden access to transport and the main mode of transport back then is horsepower. Young Tabby, a streetgirl part of a gang of children surviving on their wits, is also a regular gatherer of information for Liberty.

However, while the setting is vividly depicted and the characters believable and entertaining, what sets this murder mystery apart is the sheer skill and dexterity of Peacock's plotting. Just when I thought the story was off in one direction, it snapped around and the momentum and stakes were cinched ever higher. Of course, this means the ultimate climactic denouement has to not only deliver in terms of plenty of action and high drama, but also resolve all that tension entirely satisfactorily. And yes, this one certainly did. I have not read any of these mysteries before, but I'll certainly be looking out for more – if your taste runs to historical murder mysteries with plenty of tension and action, then this one comes very highly recommended.

While I obtained the arc of Fool's Gold from the publisher via NetGalley, this has in no way influenced my unbiased review.

10/10

Judy Lesley says

I received an e-ARC of this novel through NetGalley and Severn House Publishers. Thank you.

4.5 out of 5 stars

This is book eight in the Liberty Lane series set in Victorian London - and, of course, its environs. I really enjoyed this book which functioned very well as a stand alone novel, but which has put me in the mood to download more of the stories to my Kindle. Author Caro Peacock has constructed a Victorian female private investigator in such a way that she doesn't irritate me at all - and that's saying something because I can be a very picky reader when it comes to time period mysteries.

In May 1841, Liberty and Robert are newly married and on their honeymoon sailing on a borrowed yacht close to one of the Greek islands, Cephalonia, when they see a young man diving into the ocean. His natural beauty and grace call to mind the images of Greek gods from art and literature. Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael receive an invitation from a wealthy man living on the island to come to dinner and they accept. There they meet the diver, a young man of eighteen or nineteen years, blind, and of an uncanny resemblance to Lord Byron. Their host, Matthew Vickery, plans to take Georgios to London to take his rightful place in society as a son, even though illegitimate, of Lord Byron. A tragic death by drowning happens before Liberty and Robert sail away from Cephalonia with Georgios blaming himself because he feels he carries a curse which causes danger to follow him wherever he goes. When everyone meets up again in London it looks as if Georgios (now called George) just might be right.

The Liberty Lane character has had seven previous novels in which to become fully formed so what I found here was someone who was unconventional for the times, but not a woman prone to making exactly the wrong decision each time she was given the opportunity. The supporting characters returning from previous books were just as well developed as were the new cast for this story. The historical time period rings true without spending annoying amounts of time discussing sewage and general grime and uncleanness. (I do get so tired when those things are what an author relies on most to create atmosphere in a novel.) The actual mystery plot is very well imagined and carried out and I was completely fooled by who was behind the curtain moving people about like puppets. A very enjoyable reading experience and recommended for readers who enjoy sensible characters and a difficult problem to solve.

Susan says

I love historical mysteries so I was happy to be given a review copy by Severn House through NetGalley. Then I realized it was #8 in a series. Would I be able to enjoy it without having read any of the previous books? Yes, it worked well as a stand alone. However, now I really want to read the rest of the series. The characters are well drawn and there are no jarring modern words or actions that would take the reader out of the story. The mystery is excellent and the settings range from the Greek Islands were Liberty, the Victorian private investigator, and her husband, meet George. He is a young man who, they are told, is the illegitimate son of Lord Byron. The scenes of Victorian London were not overdone. Sometimes authors tend to paint the

background with a heavy brush and it can take away from the story. If you enjoy books by Deanna Raybourn and Tasha Alexander, add this series to your to be read list.

Damaskcat says

I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley

A young man is taking London society by storm. He is said to be the son of the scandalous Lord Byron. But is he really Byron's son or is he an imposter? Why is he under the protection of the mysterious Mr Vickery? Liberty Lane - newly married to Robert Carmichael - is appointed by Mr Vickery to find out the identity of the letter writer who wants him to bring George - his young protégé - to meet her. Is Helena her real name and what does she want?

Liberty is concerned about Vickery himself as she is sure he has some sort of agenda. When she finds a murder victim close to Vickery's house in Muswell Hill she is even more disturbed. I really enjoyed this well written historical crime story. It is fast paced and intriguing and takes the reader into the London criminal underworld as Liberty and her helpers investigate both the commission they have undertaken and the individual who is employing them.

I have read other books in this series and I really like Liberty Lane herself. She narrates the stories and I really do feel as though I am seeing London in the 1840s through her eyes. I like the way she goes about her investigations and the network of helpers she has gathered about her. The books in the series can be read in any order and this is number eight in the series.
