



The Lady of Tarpon Springs

Judith McCoy Miller

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Much to the dismay of her Greek family, Zanna Krykos makes a living as a lawyer in Tarpon Springs, Florida. When her friend Lucy needs legal advice about the business she inherited upon her father's passing, she ends up asking Zanna to run the business instead so she can focus on her medical career.

Nico Kalos is a Greek diver who has worked on sponging boats in the Aegean Sea since the age of 14, giving him a vast knowledge of the trade. When he hears of an opportunity to lead a group of spongers to the United States, he seizes it. But his excitement is quickly quelled when he arrives only to discover that a young woman with no experience in the business will be in charge of the new crews.

But as Zanna and Nico face even more complications than they could have imagined, they must learn to work together or risk everything they've worked so hard for.

The Lady of Tarpon Springs Details

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Author : Judith McCoy Miller

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From Reader Review The Lady of Tarpon Springs for online ebook

Katie says

Zanna Krykos has defied gender stereotypes quite enough, according to her traditional Greek father. Her budding career as a lawyer is already a point of conflict between them. When her friend Lucy inherits not only a fleet of highly specialized Greek boats but also the responsibility for the crew - Greek immigrants who have recently arrived for the sole purpose of working on these vessels, Zanna offers to help Lucy turn this uncertain investment into a solid business. Lucy, who has few alternatives, agrees, placing Zanna in charge of the boats and the crew.

Nico Kalos is the leader of a crew of Greek sponge divers who have emigrated to Tarpon Springs, Florida. Lucy's father purchased their fleet and their passage to America, dreaming they might together discover great wealth in sponge beds deep beneath the Gulf waters. Unfortunately, the investor died before their arrival, and the crew shares the traditional Greek opinions upheld by Zanna's father. They are quite reluctant to work for their deceased patron's daughter and her eager friend. Since they have no other option, Nico must walk the line between appeasing his men and teaching Zanna about the sponging business.

As a Florida resident and history lover, I enjoyed reading about the history of Greek immigration to the United States. While I live on the opposite coast, I have visited the area near Tarpon Springs, and the town in which I now live was also initially heavily populated by Greek immigrants. I found the author's insight into period sponge diving quite fascinating, as well. I had no idea that the sponges we often take for granted today were so highly prized and varied greatly in value. The author gives readers a glimpse into this unique industry and the Greek immigrants who revolutionized it in America.

While I enjoyed the context of the book and its connection to local history, I was less impressed with the story. I love historical fiction. I enjoy contemporary novels, as well. The rising action and the heroine of this tale, however, seemed to function more as an ungainly period remix of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding." The dialogue between characters often felt unnatural (especially considering the historical context), and the plot dragged a bit through the middle, in large part because the secondary characters were generally unremarkable or unlikeable. Toward the end, however, the action picked up a bit and a fairly foreseeable plot twist finally garnered some sympathy toward a particularly annoying character.

"The Lady of Tarpon Springs" didn't captivate or enchant me. It didn't keep me up late turning pages. It informed me and it engaged my interest enough to keep me reading, but I won't re-read it. I probably wouldn't recommend it to a friend, unless that friend was heading to the Tampa area and looking for a historical fiction beach read with local flavor. I may, however, recommend it to my library here in Florida, due to the local interest factor. If I could add a half star, I would give it three and a half stars. I liked it. I just didn't like it a lot.

I received an Advance Reader Copy of this book from Bethany House through NetGalley. All opinions contained in this review are my own.

Nora St Laurent says

I enjoyed the spunk and determination of main character Zanna Krykos who has gone against the wishes of

her father; and followed the dream of becoming a lawyer in Tarpon Springs, Florida in 1905. She's about to follow her heart again which surprises even her. This time she feels like a fish swimming up stream as she not only has to convince her father, a very traditional Greek family man; to believe in her but her best friend Lucy, medical doctor to get on board with it as well. Not to mention the women in her society who think she should abandon her dreams; get married and have children.

If losing her father wasn't hard enough, she receives a telegram with overwhelming news, 50 Greek men are heading her way expecting to work in the sponging business her father owns. Zanna has helped her friend legally now she has an idea to help her with the sponging business. Zanna hopes her father and Lucy will agree to her idea.

This was an interesting time period. I liked learning about the traditions of Greek families, and the sponging business in Tarpon Springs, Florida in 1905. I enjoyed Zanna's spirit, her family, Nico Kalos, the Greek diver who helps Zanna navigate the sponging business and how he goes about uncovering the mystery aboard one of the three ships that killed a crew member.

In author notes to readers Judith describes how the story came about and how Tarpon Springs is located on the Anclote River where they have walking tours, historical museums, sponge shops and boat rides. I wish I would have known about this when I lived in Florida. This was a fun, informative, engaging historical novel with a splash of romance I recommend for a entertaining summer read and one to share with your book club. There is so much to learn.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary copy of this book from Netgalley. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising"

Nora St. Laurent
TBCN Where Book Fun Begins! www.bookfun.org
The Book Club Network blog www.psalm516.blogspot.com

Lucy says

I was totally engrossed in this story and had to read quickly as I found the historical aspect so interesting. Ms. Miller is impeccable in her research and makes learning about sponge diving enjoyable while enjoying a story of Greek immigrants. Tarpon Springs is new to me and now I want to visit. She paints a lovely picture of the foods, clothing, boats on the ocean, the sponging industry, and falling in love. The words flow on the page without bogging down and the characters of Zanna and Lucy come to life in 1905 as independent women taking on the roles primarily held by men. I love their strength and determination. It also contains a character who tries to undermine and cause harm for added suspense. You will laugh at the antics of the spinster sisters. All in all this is a well rounded book that I found very enjoyable and will go on my keeper shelf with the rest of this authors books. Yes, I am a fan girl.

I received a complimentary copy from the author/publisher. The honest review and opinions are my own and were not required.

Alysha (For The Love of Christian Fiction) says

The history of this book had me enthralled!

I was raised in Florida not to far from Tampa, so my family and I would go to Tarpon Springs quite a bit. I have nothing but fond memories of the town.

I've always loved the sponging history. The suits always intrigued me, as did the clean process. It was so cool to see what they were talking about in my mind's eye because I've been there.

That being said the characters were a little flat for me. The romance was 2 dimensional and the "suspense" subplot fell flat.

There was so much build up that the ending (which was one page) was a bit of a let down.

I rated this book a 3/5 stars.

I wasn't a fan of the fiction aspects, but man how I loved the history!!

Shirley Chapel says

Judith Miller has once again pleased readers with the delightful story of The Lady of Tarpon Springs. This book had me chuckling out loud at the three Rochester sisters who often graced the pages. Then I was taken to the edge of my seat with apprehension as the Greek divers went deeply under the waters to search for and harvest needed black sponges that would make Dr Penrose's new business successful.

From the dangers the divers faced every time they went down into the deep waters of the Gulf Coast to the apprehension from the secrets that were kept from Nico the head diver, I was swept in almost from the first Chapter. Judith Miller has done an awesome Job of researching the history of deep water diving for sponges in Tarpon Springs Florida during the early 1900s. I liked that both Dr Lucy Penrose and Miss Zanna Krykos were both professional women in 1905. Readers knew midway into the book who the real villain of the story was and were kept on pins and needles as the other characters faced dangers unknown to them.

Readers who enjoy historical romance will love this book. Fans of Judith Miller should definitely read it. I was fortunate to win a signed copy of this book from a giveaway given by the author. I was not required to do a review but since I truly enjoyed the story I was more than happy to do so. I have given an honest review on how I felt about the book.

Caroline says

I liked it, but I didn't love it. So much research done, and sponge diving in 1905 Florida is fascinating, but I felt the love story and character development took a back seat as a result. It just didn't excite me, though it was a pleasant read.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher through NetGalley. All opinions are my own.

The Books and Biscuits Blog says

The Lady of Tarpon Springs – Judith Miller (3.5-4 Stars)

In The Lady of Tarpon Springs, Zanna Krykos challenges her family's expectations when she passes the bar exam and becomes a lawyer in their town of Tarpon Springs, Florida. When her friend Lucy unexpectedly loses her father and finds herself inheriting a barely-established sponge business, Zanna volunteers her services to manage the business on her friend's behalf. Soon after, fifty Greek men arrive in Tarpon Spring, ready to begin the area's first sponging expedition. As one of the few Greeks in the area, the Krykos family help these men and their manager, Nico Kalos, adjust to life in Florida. Facing unanticipated challenges to the fledgling business, Nico and Zanna work together to manage their crews and make Lucy's sponge business a great success.

Ms. Miller explores the fascinating world of early twentieth-century sponge businesses, bringing her readers along to the Gulf coast. The historical details surrounding the process and those involved are definitely one of the highlights of this book!

Overall, I found the premise of The Lady of Tarpon Springs to be quite unique. Ms. Miller's focus on the details of the sponging business and the work of the divers and tradesmen were particularly fascinating aspects of this book. Likewise, I enjoyed reading about Tarpon Springs, as it serves as a very different kind of setting than found in many other Christian historical fiction novels. I also found some of the characters to be quite interesting, especially Nico and his crew of Greek spongers. However, I was not a particular fan of the structure of the novel. I found the front half of the book to have a slow pace and repetitive dialogue, while the ending seemed somewhat abrupt. I would have expected a stronger overall story from such an esteemed novelist, but I'm confident that many of Ms. Miller's long-time fans will be quite happy with this book.

Special thanks to Bethany House and NetGalley for the complimentary copy of The Lady of Tarpon Springs! Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.

Thanks!
Brittany at the Books and Biscuits Blog

PS. To see the full review, please visit <http://booksandbiscuits.com/blog/2018....> Thanks!

Trisha says

Zanna is a woman ready to show her family and the world that she is good at what she does. Nothing is going to stop her from being a lawyer, even when it isn't popular. Then, her good friend, Lucy, inherits a business that she wants nothing to do with it, and Zanna convinces her that she can run the business too! Zanna and the Greek diver, Nico, have to learn to work together to see the business thrive. Will their strong-wills and opinions of each other hinder the new business, or will they compliment each other in the end? Read more about Zanna and Nico in Judith's new book "The Lady of Tarpon Springs". You will enjoy their story, learning more about those close to them, as well as learn about Greek culture.

I received a complimentary copy of this book by NetGalley. This is my honest opinion.

Robin Willson says

Independent women and Greek sponge divers

Interesting story about sponge harvesting in the early 1900s. A diving crew and boats were brought over from Greece. Aman had invested in them and then died without mentioning it to his daughter - who had inherited the business but didn't want to be involved. She's a female doctor in the small town which is just off the gulf coast in Florida. Her friend is a female lawyer who happens to be Greek so she offers to handle it for her. But neither really knows what they're getting into. However the lives of 51 Greek men depend on this to be a success and diving is dangerous. I found this a little frustrating at first with all of the bantering back and forth between the characters, but quickly became enthralled with the story and found it hard to put down.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from the publisher from the Baker Publishing Group, Bethany - Netgalley book review bloggers program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

#TheLadyOfTarponSprings #NetGalley

Deanne Patterson says

Judith Miller's books are an automatic buy for me when she has a new release. Her newest voyage in writing has left quite an impression on me and will stay in my memory for a long time. Let me start out by saying I have never been to Tarpon Springs or even Florida but Tarpon Springs is now where I want to go do some fun historical research. Right from the start of the book I was immersed in the story, the smell of the ocean, the calls of the divers, the clanks of their diving suits, feeling the pull of the rope, the fear and anticipation of that next dive for sponges, the authentic Greek food. This book was absolutely fabulous and it challenged me as well. When a book challenges me historically I love it because it means I want to find out more about what the author is writing about. In this case looked up sponging, which I have never read about before. I also was interested in reading about the trauma divers can cause themselves by rising to the surface to quickly after a deep dive. I have heard of "the bends" before but wasn't quite sure what it was. I felt as though I were there during this whole book experiencing it, perfect descriptions! My favorite character was definitely, Nico Kalos who was in charge of the diving team. Least favorite character was for sure, Adelfo Pappas, what a sneaky slimeball. He's all for himself though he tries to make you feel as though he's on your side. I was impressed with how the author made the male characters sound and think as male characters rather than as a female author would think. I love the forward thinking of the time period as well in that the town's doctor and town's lawyers are both females. Bravo! The three spinsters sisters are a bit annoying but where a hoot, loved having them in the story. I absolutely loved this book and can't wait to see what Judith puts out for us next. Highly recommended!

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Bethany House through NetGally/the author. Thank you. All opinions expressed are my own.

Robin says

I picked this because it was set in Tarpon Springs, which is very near me. I've always been interested in the history of the town and in sponge diving. The author did quite a bit of research and wove that into a fictional account of the first Greek sponge divers coming to Tarpon Springs. She includes two strong women as well as a fake and a real romance. The young female town doctor inherits a sponge diving business instead of cash and hires her friend, a young female attorney, to manage the business. There are some credible problems that arise. This is a "ladies' book," and a quick read.

Claudia says

I was excited to see this title because I love Tarpon Springs, Florida: the history, the close community feel, the absolutely amazing food, and the culture. Judith Miller captured it all in *The Lady of Tarpon Springs*. About a quarter of the way into the story I turned to the Author's Note in the back in order to get an idea of which characters were fictional and which weren't. It turns out they are all fictional, but the story gives the flavor of the time and place quite well, giving a down-sized version of the arrival of Greek sponge divers, an industry that continues to play an important role in the small town as it also sustains tourism in the area.

Attorney Zanna Krykos and physician Lucy Penrose are taking on new roles for women in the early 1900's, not only in their chosen professions, but also in the ownership and management of a sponge company that fell into their hands with the death of Lucy's father. While Lucy owned the company, it was Greek-speaking Zanna who managed day-to-day operations along with Nico Kalos, the leader of the fifty Greek sponge divers. Lucy's father had left them ill-prepared, but Zanna proved herself up to the task. Once the daunting challenge of housing and feeding such a large group was met, other challenges continued to arise. While relying on Nico to help meet them, Zanna realized she was losing her heart to the seafaring man, something that would not set well with her own father.

I have some other books by Judith Miller loaded on my Kindle. After reading *The Lady of Tarpon Springs* I am anxious to read those as well. I thank Net Galley and Bethany House for providing me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I was under no obligation to write a positive review and received no monetary compensation.

Prairie Sky Book Reviews says

I am always excited to read a new standalone historical novel by Judith Miller, primarily because she takes fascinating but obscure snippets of history and weaves a captivating story around them. From a girl who paints carousel horses to a father and daughter who travel the country preaching the gospel from a chapel train car, Judith's stories always promise to teach readers little-known history while simultaneously entertaining them with a wonderful story. It's a win-win all around! Judith Miller's newest story from Bethany House Publishers is "*The Lady of Tarpon Springs*", which is set in 1905 Florida and centers around the sponge trade... yep, you read that correctly! This is a story of how trained divers (from Greece) arrived in Florida to harvest sponges from deep beneath the surface of the ocean. Although the characters are all fictitious, the details of the sponge business are well-researched and true to history.

While the highlight of “The Lady of Tarpon Springs” for me was the unique setting from history, the story itself, complete with realistic characters and intriguing plot, was also a delight. At first the heroine, Zanna, seemed rather bull-headed and overly forceful, but watching her grow and learn to lean on her faith rather than her own strength was a primary theme of the story. Nico, the hero, was a likeable character from the beginning. His selfless care of the men under his charge was admirable, and the tender romance that developed between Zanna and him was sweet and humorous to witness.

In the end, if you adore unique and well-researched Christian Historical Fiction as much as I do, you won’t want to miss Judith Miller’s newest work. Not only will it provide you with a memorable and endearing story, but you will also enrich your mind by learning about a fascinating facet of history - the sponge trade of the early 1900s!

“Book has been provided courtesy of Baker Publishing Group and Graf-Martin Communications, Inc.”
