



Under the Skin

Vicki Lane

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In this haunting tale from the heart of Appalachia, Vicki Lane draws together past and present, good and evil, folklore and secrets, mesmerizing readers with the mysterious bond of true sisterhood—richer than blood, stronger than the passage of time.

Elizabeth Goodweather and her city-girl sister, Gloria, couldn't be more different. Elizabeth lives on a farm in the Great Smoky Mountains. Gloria lives in Florida off an ex-husband's fortune. Gloria is a beauty; Elizabeth isn't. Now, to Elizabeth's intense displeasure, Gloria parks herself at Full Circle Farm, on the run from her latest man, who, she insists, is trying to kill her. Elizabeth thinks this is just another of her sister's fantasies. Besides, Elizabeth has her wedding to plan—if only she can overcome her fear that the man who already shares her life may not be what he appears to be. At this precarious crossroads, the sisters must turn to each other—or face a lifetime of consequences.

Under the Skin Details

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Author : Vicki Lane

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From Reader Review Under the Skin for online ebook

Lisa says

Pleasant mystery (sort of mystery) which centers around sisterly rivalries both past and present. The characters are well developed and the setting (which happens to be where I live, or there abouts) is well drawn. Lane has fine descriptive powers.

Cheryl says

This was a great conclusion to In A Dark Season and well worth the wait. Elizabeth gets a visit from her troublesome younger sister, Gloria who's convinced that her current paramour is trying to kill her. But this also contains the companion story of Nellie Bly's undercover operation to expose "mediums" preying on guests staying at a mountain resort in the 19th century. All of this turmoil mirrors the turmoil Elizabeth feels regarding her upcoming marriage as she tries to navigate the complex feelings and relationship with her sister as well as her fiance.

I love Vicki Lane's books as much for their story and characterization as for the location. I love the area and towns surrounding Asheville and the location becomes as much a character as the people that populate the stories. Her love for the area seeps through every page.

There are so many rich characters in the Elizabeth Goodweather tales that I hope that this is not the end of the series but hopefully just the end of this chapter.

Amanda says

We have heard about Gloria, Elizabeth's annoyingly shallow younger sister. She lives in Florida, with her latest husband, where shopping, lunching, and following loopy New Age gurus seems to be her big interests.

It is interesting to see how Elizabeth reacts to a lengthy visit from this sister who could not be more different from herself. Even at age 50-something, it can be hard to let go of the habits that were locked in during childhood.

Not the best actual mystery of the series...but an enjoyable book nonetheless.

Sandra says

ABOUT THIS BOOK (from Ms. Lane's website)

In this haunting tale from the heart of Appalachia, Vicki Lane draws together past and present, good and evil, folklore and secrets, mesmerizing readers with the mysterious bond of true sisterhood—richer than blood,

stronger than the passage of time.

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I really enjoyed this book, but wish I would have checked to see if it was a series, it seems to be so I will read the ones before this book anyway. I love anything about the Appalachians, and Ms. Lane's books fit perfectly. Great characters, and storyline.

Debra says

Vicki Lane's books are on my "buy as soon as they are published" list because of the mountain atmosphere and the strong characters. Under the Skin doesn't disappoint.

Interweaving two stories, modern and not, with little initial apparent connection works when both tease your imagination.

The ending seemed forced, and detracted from an otherwise five star book. Ms. Lane's position on my purchase list, however, is still quite secure.

Kimberly Lynne says

A wonderful escape back to the mountains with old friends. Philip under suspicion? Secrets about Sam? And Miss Birdie there to bring everyone back to their senses. True to the Goodweather mold, I'd pick up this 6th-of-the series every chance I got.

Lisa says

This series continues to improve. This one interwove past and present in a way that I particularly enjoy. So glad I didn't give up on it. The best part of the book is the interconnection of characters with one another and the land, with the past and the present. A pleasure to read!

Susan says

I have been waiting for Under The Skin since I finished the last page of In A Dark Season. And it was worth the wait! I have read the entire Elizabeth Goodweather series and delight in Vicki Lane's wordsmithing.

Perhaps another reason I'm such a devoted fan of hers is the fact that she writes about our beautiful Appalachian Mountains with all the exquisite descriptions and extraordinary dialects western North Carolina can boast. Her characters come to life on the page and instantly endear, especially Miss Birdie, the "witchy woman".

As Elizabeth begins to plan her wedding to Phillip Hawkins, her sister Gloria arrives to set other wheels in motion and turn the household upside down. Phillip, a detective and an old friend of Elizabeth's deceased husband, Sam, tries to determine if Gloria is really running from her ex-husband or vying for her sister's attention.

Gloria and Elizabeth attend a séance in Hot Springs, and Gloria thinks she's found her long-lost child. Later events turn ugly in a beauty salon in Asheville, and Elizabeth takes action before Phillip can get there.

Blue Ridge Mountains, Hot Springs, Asheville, folklore, colorful characters, a good mystery.

What's not to love? Lane keeps me riveted in action, memorable characters, and mountain lore from the beginning to the end. Now I'm ready for the next one.

Glenda says

A "fluff" book that did not really excite me. I read it only because I was waiting for books to become available at the library.

I hope that the next book is a better read!

Marsha Hubbell says

Vicki Lane is a master storyteller. I have read all the Elizabeth Goodweather books and am continuously amazed how adept Ms. Lane is at weaving two stories together, fusing past and present, combining history and mystery. This was a long-awaited answer to a cliffhanger, and she did not disappoint. I've never experienced the beauty of the Great Smokey Mountains, the simplicity of the life she writes of, or the people, friends and family of the Appalachia. But when I finish one of her books, I feel like a happy tourist who can't wait to come back and visit again. I hope Under the Skin is not our last stopover in this hauntingly beautiful series.

Suzanne Moore says

I read this to find out what clues Elizabeth would uncover about her fiance. The previous book In a Dark Season ended with a mysterious telephone message from Elizabeth's aunt. I was glad to find out the information about Phillip was not incriminating. Elizabeth did have to unravel the details though, which made me wonder for most of the book if the wedding would still take place.

The heart of the story was about Elizabeth and her sister Glory. They are complete opposites! Glory comes for an extended visit when she believes her husband is trying to kill her. While she is there, she convinces Elizabeth to go with her to a resort for some pampering. Glory has an ulterior motive as she reveals a secret from her past about a love-child she had years ago. The child died at birth and Glory has heard that a renowned medium will be visiting the spa to help loved ones make connections with those who have passed on. Elizabeth is skeptical and she unravels a mystery that will expose past and present criminals. Vicki

Lane's books have a wonderful way of making a historical mystery part of a present day scenario. The historical mystery refers to Nellie Bly an undercover journalist, who exposes fraudulent spiritualists. Elizabeth's research about the revelation of this historical scam, helps her put together clues to save her sister's life.

Carol says

Vicki Lane always keeps me interested. I read *The Day of Small Things* and *Under the Skin* back to back--I hope there will be more of these delightful stories. Meanwhile I enjoy her website and recipes.

Carolyn Hill says

I haven't read all of the Elizabeth Goodweather mysteries, just the one before this one, *In a Dark Season*, but I intend to get to all of them. I really would consider this number 5 in the series, as *The Day of Small Things* just takes one of the characters and gives her back story, and doesn't really continue the Goodweather saga. This one is not as dark and foreboding as its predecessor, and there is no murder mystery to solve. It is more about the relationship of Elizabeth with her sister Gloria, who couldn't be more unlike Elizabeth. Glory (her nickname) married money in her string of husbands, never worked, lives to shop and go to spas and 'spiritual' retreats that don't involve years of praying, fasting and meditating. Elizabeth, on the other hand, is a hard-working, level-headed, skeptical country woman who runs an herb farm and happens to solve mysteries. I found it interesting how Gloria brought out the worst in Elizabeth, who is usually serene, kind, strong, and independent. Gloria really knows how to get under her skin, but in the end Elizabeth comes to find that they are more alike 'under the skin'.

There is a bit of a mystery about Elizabeth's fiance Philip, which was left dangling in the last book. I thought there would be more to this than there was, but it was used to highlight how Elizabeth must rely on her gut instincts, something that serves her well.

Vicki Lane loves to color her setting with tales of the past in this corner of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In this book she highlights Hot Springs and the spa-like retreat it was in the late 1880's. This is when spiritualism was at its height, and the tale centers around a duplicitous medium and her companions, a mountain witchy-woman, and investigative reporter, Nellie Bly. Did Nellie Bly really expose a spiritualist in Hot Springs or is this some of Lane's literary license? I wonder.

I always enjoy seeing Asheville and its surroundings described in her books, and I loved recognizing the shop where Elizabeth finds her wedding dress, though the name is changed. This is a treat for local readers.

There is always a little bit of mountain magic in Vicki Lane's books - ghosts, seers, healers - that paints a contemporary story with a brush stroke of the mystical. Elizabeth Goodweather, grounded and sensible, is a good foil to this, even though she, too, has her uncanny moments. This makes her stories all the more enjoyable.

Sheila Beaumont says

I found this tale of suspense, mystery, and Appalachian folklore well worth the long wait since the last Elizabeth Goodweather novel, which had a bit of a cliffhanger at the end. Above all, *Under the Skin* is the story of the complex relationship between two sisters who are very different from each other. I liked the way the novel shifted between past and present and alternated chapters from the points of view of various characters. This is primarily a character-driven mystery, and the characters are indeed colorful and beautifully portrayed. The North Carolina Appalachian setting is also vividly depicted. The satisfying resolution at the end made me a very happy reader, and I do hope we'll see more of these delightful tales set at Full Circle Farm.

Anna says

This latest Elizabeth Goodweather ties up some loose ends and has an air of finality. I hope Lane is not finished with her. I like the characters and the setting.
