



The K Street Affair

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What if a massive corporation, one with political ties on both sides of the Atlantic, decided to start a war?

Hours after a crippling attack rocks Washington, D.C., Lena Mancuso, a talented young associate at one of the country's best law firms, finds federal agents at her door, bearing unbelievable news.

Lena's clients may have financed the murder of hundreds of civilians.

The FBI wants Lena's insider access to spy on her firm's high-profile roster of international clients, whose ranks include a disgraced K Street lobbyist, a flamboyant Russian oil baron and the future Saudi king - unlikely bedfellows linked by common interests in a massive multinational corporation with lofty but sinister goals: control of the world oil markets and a takeover of the United States government.

Helping the FBI means Lena will endanger herself and everyone she loves, but refusing them feels unthinkable. Armed with a mix of smarts, intuition and grit she never knew she possessed, Lena will risk everything in a race to stop a catastrophic chain of events.

The K Street Affair Details

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Laurel-Rain says

What if a massive corporation, one with political ties on both sides of the Atlantic, decided to start a war?

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From this point on, the story moves rapidly through a complex series of events that show how much more danger is involved than Lena had been led to believe. Just when she is sure that things could not get worse, they do, and she finds herself the victim of a kidnapping. Held hostage in Moscow, she is soon partnered with Mikhail, who is supposedly a Russian equivalent of the FBI agents she has already been helping. But can she trust him? And even when she plots ways to escape, she hangs in there because of the elusive promise by one of the Russians that she will receive incriminating evidence that will bring closure to her life.

And which of the various nefarious agents, counter-agents, and generally obnoxious thugs will strike next? Will she ever extricate herself from this crippling danger? And will she be able to help prevent further atrocities before she herself becomes a casualty?

Told in Lena's first person narrative, I enjoyed that we got to see inside the character as she experienced these events, and also liked how the author brought in a little bit of sex and potential romance to lighten up the dark events. Lena's narrative allows the reader to understand some of the complexities of the world of politics and shady finances as she learns about these things from Mikhail. While much of the financial and political issues were over my head, I enjoyed Lena's take on these things, as well as her perspective and internal monologue that were both enlightening and enjoyable.

Lena was a credible character who had good instincts and a sharp wit that helped bring "The K Street Affair" a realistic human dynamic. I can visualize more stories about this character.

Meanwhile, the ending was satisfying in a number of ways, while realistically not bringing all the perpetrators to justice. This passage illustrates, in Lena's voice, her philosophical conclusions:

"...One thing I've learned is that the successes and failures of law enforcement turn as much on luck and circumstance as on expertise and intellect. I tell myself I gain nothing by obsessing over missed chances...."

A brilliantly wrought story of suspense and hijinks, with great character development, this story earned five stars.

Frank Kelly says

The author is clearly a talented writer but this books moved so fast in the first 20 pages it went from interesting to implausible. Wasn't terrible but wasn't great either - she needs a good editor. I bet her next book is much better.

Wendy Walker says

The K Street Affair has everything you could want in a book! It's fun. It's smart. It's engaging. And it's witty. From the first few pages, you will be rooting for Lena, laughing out loud, and holding on to your beach chair (if your lucky) as you follow her through this cleverly plotted adventure. Mari Passanante has a remarkable skill. She pulls you into a serious plot, all the while amusing you with clever one-liners and rich insights into what motivates people across the globe. Loved it!

Malcolm says

"The K Street Affair" is filled with enough international intrigue, corrupt corporations, laundered money, and dead bodies for the authorities (assuming you know which authorities to trust) to call Batman or James Bond. Instead, they call Lena Mancuso, an associate at a prestigious law firm, and ask her to use her insider position to spy on her employer.

Lena thinks the FBI is nuts when two agents show up on her doorstep immediately after terrorists strike multiple Washington, D. C. Metrorail stations and ask her to search for incriminating documents that will help the government prove its charges of bribery and money laundering against a once-powerful lobbyist defended by the firm. If she agrees, she would be serving as an informant under provisions of the USA Patriot Act; yet why isn't the FBI focusing on the biggest terrorist attack since 9/11?

Actually, they are. The FBI thinks the firm's founding partner and the lobbyist knew the Metrorail attacks were going to happen. When Lena agrees to help, she soon realizes that money laundering paperwork is the tip of the iceberg in a huge international conspiracy and that the FBI has undersold the dangers of looking beneath the surface of the defense team's case.

Author Mari Passananti ("The Hazards of Hunting While Heartbroken") has used her experience as an attorney to write the kind of story that reviewers often call a "dandy thriller" and a "page-turner." The novel's tension is accentuated by the fact that in a world of thugs, guns and plots against major public officials, Lena is in over her head.

However, what Passananti's protagonist doesn't know about serving in a Batman or James Bond capacity, she balances out with legal knowledge, high intelligence and--she will surprise herself about this--more grit than she knew she possessed. The character has great depth even though her role in uncovering an international conspiracy may be somewhat implausible.

"The K Street Affair" story begins quickly with the terrorist attacks. It slows down a little after that because, due to the nature of defense team files and attorney's offices, Passananti must fill in the reader with a fair

amount of backstory narration about the issues, documents and the people involved. Then, to put it mildly, all hell breaks loose. Lena finds her life in shambles and, the only way to put it back together is to become a "soldier" and help the FBI stop her country from being torn apart as well.

Passananti delivers a highly entertaining story in "The K Street Affair."

Kathleen Kelly says

The K Street Affair is one of those books that keeps the reader on the edge. A political, legal and terrorist story all wrapped into one very suspenseful book. Lena Mancuso is a happily married woman who is a lawyer in a prestigious law firm..the opening pages find her being evacuated from her building after a massive bomb has exploded. She soon finds her world turned upside down when she is asked by the FBI to assist them in an ongoing investigation, then her husband is found dead whether from suicide or murder, then she is kidnapped and wakes up in Russia. This book would make a great movie, filled with lots of unsavory characters, strong plot which could be taken right from today's newspapers.

Just when you think you have the story figured out, something else happens that keeps the reader guessing...I love a great suspenseful thriller and this book does not disappoint. I give it 5 stars..it is that good.

Mari says

I wanted to write a suspense caper with a young woman lawyer at its center (I think the world needs more thrillers featuring women), and I wanted to explore the nexus between money and power in our political system. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Aditi says

Lena is the new age heroine/spy, who is firm, brave and determined on her mission. *The K Street Affair* by Mari Passananti is a thoroughly gripping literally from its first page, since the book opens with a terrorist attack in several Washington DC metros. The book takes you from the inner lives of the most powerful men in DC to the darkest alleys in Russia, and the whole journey is more like a ride on a roller coaster.

Thanks to the author, Mari Passananti, for sending me over a copy of her book, in exchange for an honest and unbiased review.

Lena works in a law firm and the client list includes some of the most powerful men in the United States, a Russian oil tycoon, a government lobbyist and a soon-to-be Saudi prince. There is a underground bombing attack on several metro stations of DC, following which 2 FBI agents approach Lena and asks her to spy on her boss who is covering up those powerful clients, who are believed to be behind those bombing attacks. As a result, determined, Lena takes up the offer and gets down on her mission. But she soon finds out that there is a bigger political picture behind those attacks. Taking a dark path, will always end you up in trouble, similarly, Lena gets kidnapped and was captivated in Moscow. Will she free herself from the grips of the

Russian mafia and what has she led herself into? For all those answers, you need to read the book, because, its a mystery book, and revealing too much will hamper the fun!!

The storytelling of the author is smooth and she has tried to show so many complicated twists and turns, thus making the plot more complex and intelligent. Also to ease up the darkness for a little while, she has also shown some budding romance. Lena, what to say about her, she's a coming age woman, strong, motivated, and determined and we see the whole story from her eyes, her perspective. So many political secrets and turmoil were unveiled on this story; even the most powerful man in the government can be most dangerous. And all the other characters are very appealing and well-developed which makes the plot more interesting. And not to mention, this book will keep you guessing till the very end.

So if you love some thrillers which include some of the most powerful lawyers and politicians, then this book perfectly fits the bill.

Chuck says

This was one of the most riveting books I have read in a long, long time. I couldn't stop turning the pages. Ms Passananti created believable, sympathetic, and complex characters, which along with her fast paced and edge-of-your-seat plot, made for a terrific read. I highly recommend this novel. I can't wait for the author to publish another book.

Stephanie says

Great book!

Diane says

If you are hooked (like I am) on the new FX TV series The Americans, about Russian spies embedded in the Unites States in the 1980s, then Mari Passananti's political/spy thriller novel The K Street Affair is the perfect companion piece.

The setting is today's Washington DC, where the book opens with a bang- literally. There have been underground explosions in several DC Metro stations, killing hundreds. A terrorist attack is suspected, and corporate lawyer Lena Mancuso is still shaken walking home after the attack when two FBI agents show up at her door.

They ask Lena to help them prove that her boss is covering up for some international clients- a Russian oil tycoon, a government lobbyist and a Saudi prince- whom they believe are behind the bombings. Lena is stunned by this revelation, but she reluctantly agrees to help by looking for information in the files of her law firm.

It is a decision she will come to regret as she is dragged deep into a byzantine plot, where her life and the lives of people she loves become endangered. She is kidnapped and ends up in Russia, where her life depends on trusting the right person. Does she trust the FBI agents who got her into this mess or Mikhail, the Russian mobster's right hand man who has kept her alive and tells her a different story?

The part of the story set in Russia is most interesting. Lena is dragged from place to place, from hotel to the mobster's casino to his mansion to the Russian criminal underground. She has to use her gut instincts and smarts to keep her self alive and to get the one piece of information she needs to put the puzzle together.

There is plenty of political intrigue, with the Vice-President of the United States involved in a plot to control a new oil pipeline for a company he used to head up, and the usual FBI/CIA infighting and intrigue, complete with double-and-triple agents. There are also a lot of nail-biting action scenes which ratchet up the tension. The car chase scene was particularly well done, and the nuns were a nice touch.

I did find myself lost a little bit at times, trying to follow the conspiracy. If you don't trust lawyers or your government, The K Street Affair will have you saying "See, I told you so".

Lena is a gutsy, smart main character, and I liked her even if I did not agree with some of the choices she made. Fans of John Grisham's The Firm will enjoy this book, as it has a similar tone. It's very cinematic as well, and would make a great movie. Maybe Jennifer Lawrence as Lena?

Viviane Crystal says

K Street in Washington, D.C. is renowned as the home of lobbyists of special corporations, business groups and companies representing special interest. Their job is to influence the course of American policy through the Senate and House of Representatives. However, on the same street is one group that carries out activities that the President wants done secretly, and so the group exists with absolutely no connection to any member of government. The novel opens with a killing job that goes awry. When it's all over, two of the attackers are dead as well as Callahan, the head of this secret group, landing in the hospital in critical condition and another of his employees dead. Kay Hamilton had been going to meet with Callahan to let him know she was quitting as his worker; instead she walked into a barrage of bullets flying and dead bodies everywhere. Before he goes into a coma, he whispers a letter to Kay, which immediately sets her in a specific direction to find the thieves and murderers.

Kay is determined to find out who is behind this attack. No spoilers here. Suffice to say that the people in charge of this mayhem are just as determined not to be found. The question is twofold: should Callahan and Hamilton be allowed to live or can they remain alive and harmless regarding a higher mission, the passing of military secrets to a foreign government?

Kay Hamilton was originally fired from her DEA job for doing things her way instead of following rules and protocol. She's no different here as she refuses to carry out someone else's narrowly-defined investigation. The result is a satisfying romp with constant surprises, tension, deaths, and answers slowly revealed. Kay Hamilton is an intelligent, street-savvy investigator who gets the job done and keeps the reader guessing through the entire process!

K Street.. is a great read and will thrill all those who love adventure and a great mystery!

Meg - A Bookish Affair says

"The K Street Affair" is a thriller set in Washington, D.C. and some in Moscow. While thrillers are not my usual fare, I wanted to give this one a try. I was definitely glad that I read it! This book definitely opened me up to reading more thrillers in the future. This is a great book to read during this super busy and chaotic time of year because it's one that has a lot of action that will keep you engaged throughout the entire book but it's

not a book that you have to use too much brain power to enjoy.

This book starts with a literal bang as the city of Washington's Metro system was attacked. And of course, being a commuter, I read quite a bit of this book including the initial bombing while riding the Metro (yes, it was terribly creepy).

I loved the main character, Lena. She's a young lawyer who is living the dream in the city. She works long hours and doesn't particularly like her company. When she's enlisted by the FBI to essentially act as a spy within her company in order to figure out whether her firm, which is known for representing all sorts of unsavory characters throughout the world. The problem is that she isn't a really good spy. Not at all. All of the people she is supposed to be spying on very quickly see through her but she's trying to do her job. Lena is playing a game with very high stakes that even ends up getting the ball rolling on the demise of one of her loved ones.

I did notice a couple things that if you aren't a DC-er, you will probably not notice but I figure that I would mention them here (although these are negated by the fact that the author mentions two of my favorite DC Restaurants, Matchbox and Lauriol Plaza, and those most definitely exist).

- The author makes up a Metro station. Chevy Chase is not a Metro station. Friendship Heights, which is in Chevy Chase, is the Metro station.
- Our McPherson is not spelled MacPherson.
- We capitalize Metro :)

I think that this book will appeal to people who don't read a lot of thrillers because of the great characters and good writing.
