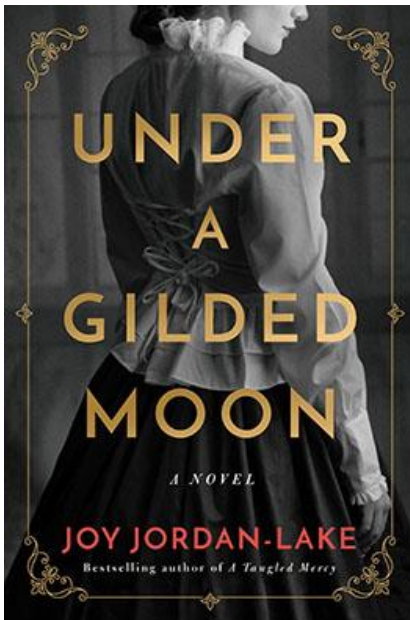


Hella's Book Review



I was so intrigued by the book *Under the Gilded Moon* by Joy Jordan Lake. The author combined historical fiction with suspenseful mystery and romance against the backdrop of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, and the Biltmore Estate.

A couple of my friends visited the Biltmore Estate, and I saw the pictures of this magnificent house with its forty-two bathrooms, two hundred and fifty rooms, and an all enclosed winter garden with a glass ceiling and marble fountain surrounded by palms and orchids.

In this novel, Kerry MacGregor has spent two years attending college in New York City. She is suddenly called back to her home in the Appalachian Mountains because her father is near death. On the train with her is her aunt Rema, along with her twin brother and sister. During the trip Kerry strikes up a conversation with a reporter from the New York Times. The reporter tells Kerry he is investigating certain people who are involved in trying to cover up secrets.

George Vanderbilt, the owner of the Biltmore Estate, and some of his friends are also passengers on the train. At the station in Asheville, which is near the Biltmore House, a mysterious death occurs. Throughout the rest of the novel this death is investigated, along with other unusual characters and strange happenings.

In order to complete the Estate George Vanderbilt has to acquire a few more pieces of land, including Kerry's family farm. But Kerry is determined not to sell since it has been in the family for generations and where she was raised. Only a one-room log cabin with mountains and peaks serving as other rooms and the blue sky as the ceiling. Kerry was proud of her heritage, and she was not about to let people of privilege destroy that.

Very reluctantly Kerry takes a job at the Biltmore Estates where she meets a variety of mysterious and intriguing characters. Her life is even threatened by a conservationist who contributes to the National Parks, but who also believes that poor mountain people are an inferior race, while white people are the superior race.

This is a story of wealth and poverty, of innocence and corruption, good versus evil. *Under a Gilded Moon* by Joy Jordan Lake is a story of “the haves” and “the have nots”. A historical fiction story worth reading, which can be found in the adult fiction section at the Tilden Public Library.

Happy Reading!