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The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel

By Lois Leveen



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“Masterfully written, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* shines a new light onto our country’s darkest history.”

—Brunonia Barry, bestselling author of *The Lace Reader*

“Packed with drama, intrigue, love, loss, and most of all, the resilience of a remarkable heroine....What a treat!”

—Kelly O'Connor McNees, author of *The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott*

Based on the remarkable true story of a freed African American slave who returned to Virginia at the onset of the Civil War to spy on the Confederates, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is a masterful debut by an exciting new novelist. Author Lois Leveen combines fascinating facts and ingenious speculation to craft a historical novel that will enthrall readers of women’s fiction, historical fiction, and acclaimed works like *Cane River* and *Cold Mountain* that offer intimate looks at the twin nightmares of slavery and Civil War. A powerful and unforgettable story of a woman who risked her own freedom to bring freedom to millions of others, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* celebrates the courageous achievements of a little known but truly inspirational American heroine.



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Editorial Review

Review

“Masterfully written, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* shines a new light onto our country’s darkest history. Balancing fire and grace, the story of Mary Bowser is an ethical journey we won’t soon forget, one that takes us from hatred to courage to love.” (Brunonia Barry, bestselling author of *The Lace Reader* and *The Map of True Places*)

“*The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is a good old-fashioned historical novel packed with drama, intrigue, love, loss, and most of all, the resilience of a remarkable heroine who forges her own destiny from the first page. What a treat!” (-Kelly O'Connor McNees, author of *The Lost Summer of Louisa May Alcott*)

“Deftly balancing history, romance and adventure, Leveen honors the life and historical importance of a brave, resourceful woman.” (Kirkus Reviews)

“Told with clarity, confidence, and courage, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* illuminates an untold and important story about slavery, the Civil War, and the role of women in achieving emancipation. A riveting and powerful book.” (Naseem Rakha, internationally bestselling author of *The Crying Tree*)

“Lois Leveen has written a captivating novel...[she] demonstrates considerable skill bringing the historical period to life. Mary’s world is nuanced and complicated, but the reader is thoroughly drawn into it, never lost. The narrative voice carries with it a seamless authority, rare in novels of this type.” (Oregonian)

“Deftly integrating historical research into this gripping tale of adventure, love, and national conflict, Leveen brings Mary to life and evenhandedly reveals the humanity on both sides of America’s deadliest war.” (Publishers Weekly)

“*The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is not only fascinating reading, but also historical fiction of the highest caliber.” (Seattle Post-Intelligencer)

“Author Lois Leveen’s meticulously researched historical fiction is best consumed with sweet tea and a porch swing.” (DailyCandy.com)

“This novel will sweep you into the world of Mary Bowser without making you feel as if you’re sitting in school instead of on the beach.” (Statesman Journal (Oregon))

Review

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From the Back Cover

Based on a remarkable true story, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* is an inspiring tale of one daring woman's willingness to sacrifice her own freedom to change the course of history

All her life, Mary has been a slave to the wealthy Van Lew family of Richmond, Virginia. But when Bet, the willful Van Lew daughter, decides to send Mary to Philadelphia to be educated, she must leave her family to seize her freedom.

Life in the North brings new friendships, a courtship, and a far different education than Mary ever expected, one that leads her into the heart of the abolition movement. With the nation edging toward war, she defies Virginia law by returning to Richmond to care for her ailing father—and to fight for emancipation. Posing as a slave in the Confederate White House in order to spy on President Jefferson Davis, Mary deceives even those who are closest to her to aid the Union command.

Just when it seems that all her courageous gambles to end slavery will pay off, Mary discovers that everything comes at a cost—even freedom.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kerri Goodman:

The book *The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You should use to make your capable more increase. Book can to get your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make reading a book *The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel* for being your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You may know everything if you like open up and read a publication *The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this reserve?

Michael Pauls:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be change about what going on or details even knowledge to make these keep up with the era and that is always change and progress. Some of you maybe will update themselves by reading through books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know which one you should start with. This *The Secrets of Mary*

Bowser: A Novel is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Edgar Hightower:

The book with title The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel possesses a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This specific book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world now. That is important to yo7u to know how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you in new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on the smart phone, so you can read this anywhere you want.

Anna Hart:

Are you kind of stressful person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your day to upgrading your mind ability or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you have problem with the book when compared with can satisfy your short space of time to read it because pretty much everything time you only find book that need more time to be go through. The Secrets of Mary Bowser: A Novel can be your answer since it can be read by an individual who have those short extra time problems.

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