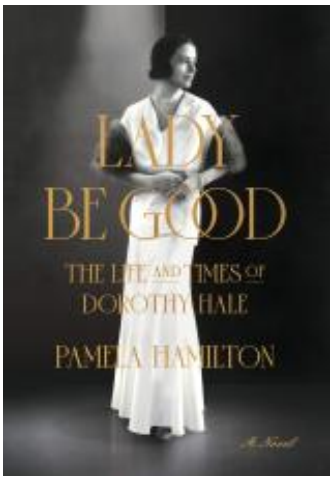
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Lady Be Good: The Life and Times of Dorothy Hale

by Pamela Hamilton



About the Book

A moving portrait of Dorothy Hale, the legendary 1930s socialite immortalized in one of Frida Kahlo's most celebrated paintings.

In her vibrant debut novel, Pamela Hamilton delivers glamour, romance, tragedy, a close and stormy friendship with famed playwright and *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* editor Clare Boothe Luce, and the enchanting story of a woman navigating a world of incredible wealth and power in New York, Paris, Hollywood and grand estates of the Gold Coast --- a perfect book club read.

LADY BE GOOD transports us to the glittering, sumptuous era of 1920s New York to follow the life of aspiring actress Dorothy Hale as she comes of age. Breaking societal rules imposed on women, "Peck's Bad Girl of Pittsburgh Society" leaves behind her privileged world for the bright lights of Broadway to chase her dream. From convent school debutante runaway to Ziegfeld showgirl to Hollywood star, Hale transforms herself into one of the most adored figures in the highest echelons of society. Yet behind the public façade, the darling of the press contends with heart-rending loss, gossip and betrayal, and a tempestuous friendship with Luce.

Surrounded by her fabulous circle of friends --- Gertrude Stein, Fred Astaire, Cole Porter, James Roosevelt, Elsa Maxwell and other iconic figures --- Dorothy finds her way to the other side of heartbreak and prepares for a White House wedding. Then, suddenly, at age 33, at the height of happiness and peak of her fame, she falls to her death. Her life story is revised and written into history by the tabloids and the famed and fêted --- leading to this novel's stunning conclusion.

Former NBC News producer Pamela Hamilton turns her journalism skills on discovering the facts about Dorothy Hale's story, then spins them with color and life into breathtaking revelations about the irresistible and misunderstood glamour girl whose legend has endured for more than half a century.

Discussion Guide

1. What are the biggest differences between Dorothy and Clare, and when do they start becoming clear?

2. How did you feel toward Clare? Did your reaction to her change as the book progressed?

3. Clare is a gifted storyteller who can spin the truth and she?s also painfully honest, possibly even hurtful with her words to Dorothy. Have you ever had a friend like her?

4. How did Dorothy handle difficult relationships?

5. When she faced adversity, she continued to project confidence and strength, despite how she felt. Did her attitude help her overcome obstacles and move forward?

6. A central theme of the book is that life obstacles can be a blessing, one door closes and another one opens if we have a positive outlook. What is an example of this in Dorothy?s life?

7. Another theme is how the simple stroke of the pen can raise one to the apex of the good life as easily as it can destroy a name. Discuss its relevance to today?s era of ?fake news? and social media.

8. Have you ever known someone like Happy Longhorn? Discuss.

9. Dorothy and Clare were ambitious, determined and independent. Were they conflicted about achieving something on their own because they wanted to be ?good? wives? Discuss the parallels between societal rules and expectations of women then and now.

10. Our past informs our future; decisions can have unexpected consequences. Which of her decisions most impacted her life later on when she became engaged to Harry Hopkins?

11. The narrator says of Dorothy: ?She was too trusting to believe a friend would deceive her and too tragically loyal to run when they did.? Do you agree? Do think she should have turned her back on Clare when she heard that Clare leaked the news of her engagement?

12. Harry Hopkins was weeks away from his confirmation hearings to become Secretary of Commerce, and he was considered the dark horse candidate for president if FDR didn?t run. How did his political career effect Dorothy?

13. After it was revealed that Clare donated the Frida Kahlo painting of Dorothy Hale to the Phoenix Art Museum, she did an interview about Dorothy and the stories became legend. How did you feel about the way Clare portrayed her?

14. Which of their character traits do you most admire?

Author Bio

Pamela Hamilton is a writer and consultant who has worked with notable figures in business, US intelligence, music and the arts, and has covered some of the most significant events of the 21st century. For more than a decade she was a producer for NBC News, and she was a producer on the award-winning documentary "Grateful Dawg." Based in Manhattan, she serves on the board of the Society of Professional Journalists? Deadline Club and on the advisory board of the Art Deco Society of New York.

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