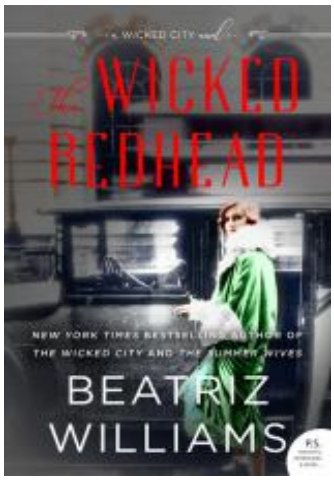
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The Wicked Redhead: A Wicked City Novel

by Beatriz Williams



About the Book

The dazzling narrator of THE WICKED CITY brings her mesmerizing voice and indomitable spirit to another Jazz Age tale of rumrunners, double crosses and true love, spanning the Eastern seaboard from Florida to Long Island to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

1924. Ginger Kelly wakes up in tranquil Cocoa Beach, Florida, having fled south to safety in the company of disgraced Prohibition agent Oliver Anson Marshall and her newly orphaned young sister, Patsy. But paradise is short-lived. Marshall is reinstated to the agency with suspicious haste and put to work patrolling for rumrunners on the high seas, from which he promptly disappears. Gin hurries north to rescue him, only to be trapped in an agonizing moral quandary by Marshall?s desperate mother.

1998. Ella Dommerich has finally settled into her new life in Greenwich Village, inside the same apartment where a certain redheaded flapper lived long ago...and continues to make her presence known. Having quit her ethically problematic job at an accounting firm, cut ties with her unfaithful ex-husband, and begun an epic love affair with Hector, her musician neighbor, Ella is eager to piece together the history of the mysterious Gin Kelly, whose only physical trace is a series of rare vintage photograph cards for which she modeled before she disappeared.

Two women, two generations, two urgent quests. But as Ginger and Ella track down their separate quarries with increasing desperation, the mysteries consuming them take on unsettling echoes of each other, and both women will require all their strength and ingenuity to outwit a conspiracy spanning decades.

Discussion Guide

1. Gin has a premonition in which she pictures her sister Patsy and herself ?stuck on a wheel. The three of us, a nightmare Ferris wheel that turns over and over and never lets us off.? Why do you think she has this particular vision?

What can she do to stop the turning of the wheel?

2. Gin is terrified of having children, after years of watching her mother suffer from repeated births and miscarriages, and then die in childbirth. How does her 1920s vison of childbirth as something potentially deadly contrast with Ella?s modern pregnancy?

3. What do you make of Mrs. Marshall?s ?little proposition? that Gin marry Billy? Why is she so intent on what seems to be a terrible idea? Why does Gin agree to go along with the charade? What would you have done?

4. Granny Annabel tells Ella ?You always see the best in people. You can?t imagine sin because you haven?t got any inside you.... You believed [Patrick] was good and faithful because you are good and faithful.? Is this true? If we see others as we are, how do you think Gin views the world? What about Theresa Marshall? Or Aunt Julie?

5. Stefan urges Ella to tell Patrick that she?s pregnant because ?...it would be a kindness to him, one he maybe does not deserve, but one which you have the power to give him. It is man?s burden, you see, to send his seed into the world, and sometimes never to know how it grows.? Is he giving her good advice?

6. Gin tells Christopher that ?I?m nobody?s nice girl.? He disagrees and tells her she has a ?noble soul.? Who do you agree with?

7. Why do you think Ella?s father waited so long to tell her the truth about her own paternity? Was that a mistake?

8. There are many characters in the novel who were raised by men who are not their biological fathers. What do you think the author is saying about the meaning of family and fatherhood?

9. Do you have suspicions about who might be Gin?s father? How does the mystery of his identity shape Gin?s decisions?

10. What does the future have in store for Gin and Ella? How would you like their stories to continue?

Author Bio

Beatriz Williams is the *New York Times*, *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author of HUSBANDS & LOVERS, THE SUMMER WIVES, THE SECRET LIFE OF VIOLET GRANT, A HUNDRED SUMMERS, the *Wicked City* series, and several other works of historical fiction, including five novels in collaboration with fellow bestselling authors Karen White and Lauren Willig.

A graduate of Stanford University with an MBA in Finance from Columbia University, Beatriz worked as a communications and corporate strategy consultant in New York and London before her first novel was published in 2012. Beatriz?s books have won numerous awards, have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and appear regularly in bestseller lists around the world. Her essays have appeared in magazines such as *Real Simple* and *Southern Living*, among others, and she regularly reviews fiction for the *New York Times Book Review*.

Born in Seattle, Washington, Beatriz now lives in southeastern Connecticut with her husband and four mostly grown children.

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