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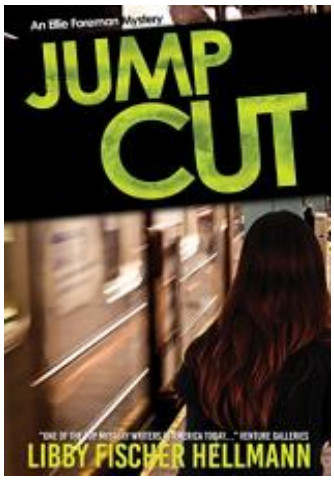
Jump Cut: An Ellie Foreman Mystery

by Libby Fischer Hellmann



About the Book

Chicago video producer, Ellie Foreman, has been absent from thriller author Libby Fischer Hellmann?s repertoire for almost a decade. Now she?s back?and soon entangled in a web of espionage, murder and suspicion that threatens to destroy what she holds most dear.

Hired to produce a candyfloss profile of Chicago-based aviation giant, Delcroft, Ellie is dismayed when company VP Charlotte Hollander, the architect of a new anti-drone system for Delcroft, trashes the production and cancels the project. Ellie believes Hollander was spooked by shots of a specific man in the video footage. But when Ellie arranges to meet the man to find out why, he?s killed by a subway train before they can talk. In the confusion, she finds a seemingly abandoned pack of cigarettes with a flash drive inside that belonged to the now dead man.

Ellie has the drive?s contents decrypted, but before long she discovers she?s under surveillance. Suspecting Delcroft and the ambitious Hollander are behind it, she?s unconvinced when Hollander tells her the dead man was a Chinese spy. Ellie and her boyfriend Luke try to find answers, but they don?t realize how far they ventured into the dangerous echelons of hidden power where more lives are on the line, including theirs.

Discussion Guide

1. How did you like JUMP CUT? Was this the first Ellie Foreman novel you?ve read? Is so, do you want to read the earlier ones? Why?

2. Besides Ellie, who was your favorite character? Why?

3. Did you learn anything new in this novel? What?

4. Did you know about the Uyghurs before reading JUMP CUT? If so, what did you know?

5. The book points out that some of the Uyghurs (who are Muslims) did launch attacks against the Chinese government. But they claim they simply want autonomy and the end of persecution. The Chinese government labels them terrorists. Who do you believe?

6. If you were part of the government in China how would you deal with the Uyghurs?

7. You already know the US government (NSA) has the capability to eavesdrop on every phone call you make, every email you send or get, and every website you visit. How do you feel about this?

8. If this surveillance by the government does indeed identify potential terrorists or groups who want to do this country harm, is it justified?

9. What is the right balance between protecting our country vs. the erosion of our civil liberties? Where do you draw the line?

10. Edward Snowden is considered a hero by some, a traitor by others. What do you think?

11. The government has stepped up drone attacks on ISIS and other terrorists in the Middle East. Do you think those attacks have helped or harmed the fight against terror? Why?

12. Would you condone the tactics used by Delcroft?s Security Chief in regard to Rachel, Ellie?s daughter? Was there a legitimate reason to pressure Ellie by xxx her family? What if the shoe was on the other foot, and the only way to ferret out information from an enemy was to xxx his family members? Is that justified?

13. What was your opinion of Charlotte Hollander? Did she surprise you?

14. Did JUMP CUT make you feel differently about espionage in the ?post-Snowden? era? How?

15. How did the events in Jump Cut affect Ellie?s relationship with Luke? Where do you see it going?

Author Bio

Libby Fischer Hellmann left a career in broadcast news in Washington, DC and moved to Chicago a long time ago, where she, naturally, began to write gritty crime fiction. She soon began writing historical fiction as well. Eighteen novels and nearly 30 short stories later, she claims they?ll take her out of the Windy City feet first. She has been nominated for many awards in the mystery and crime writing community and has even won a few.

She has been a finalist twice for the Anthony and the Shamus Awards; four times for *Foreword Magazine*?s Book of the Year, which she won in 2018. She also has been nominated for the Agatha and the Daphne, and she won the Chicago Writers Association Book of the Year in 2021. She has won the IPPY, *Foreword Magazine*?s Indie Awards, and the

Readers Choice Award multiple times.

Libby was the President of Sisters in Crime in 2006. For two years she hosted ?Solved,? a streaming video show featuring bestselling and emerging Crime Authors. She also was the host of ?Second Sunday Crime,? a podcast with the Authors on the Air network. Episodes of both shows are on Libby?s YouTube channel.

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