

The Anonymous Girl (Special Edition): Bundled with That Girl Started Her Own Country

Holy Ghost Writer

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Action against corrupt authorities mixed with master plans concocted from prison build the suspense of this young woman's story.

A precocious young woman uses prison computers to plot her future in the bundled edition of *That Girl Started Her Own Country* and its direct sequel, *The Anonymous Girl*. These two episodes of this series build mounting suspense about the mysterious heroine's family lineage and future plans.

To hide her identity, the titular girl uses aliases, such as Pippi Longstocking and Ester Bilderberg, but she calls herself Zaydee among friends. A reactionary moment with an FBI agent lands her in the Federal Detention Center in Miami. There, a sympathetic prison guard facilitates Zaydee's occasional time away, where she awaits trial for charges she insists are spurious. On these sojourns, she orchestrates revenge on the two FBI agents responsible for her incarceration and pursues romantic interests. While in prison, she sets in motion a master plan to establish her own country, using her computer skills to hack websites. Zaydee believes she possesses the resources to populate her private domain solely with exceptional people like herself.

Zaydee's mysterious identity is compounded by the parallel story of her twin sister, Liz, who experienced a less nurturing childhood. Liz goes to London to visit her lover, Lars, a computer expert sequestered in the office of a hacking group. Unaware the two women are actually different people, Lars mistakes look-alike Liz for Zaydee, who he claims to truly love. Hearing a menacing noise at the office door, he tells Liz where to hide and gives her a box of letters intended for Zaydee. This chapter ends in heightened suspense: "Slipping through the small opening [within a wardrobe], she let the door close behind her, sealing herself into the safe room."

As the principal protagonist, Zaydee's enigmatic personality unfolds through her internal thoughts as she plans her future and charms cohorts into helping her. Action scenes and rich narrative description move the plot forward at a quick pace. She seeks revenge against corrupt authorities while befriendng the people she considers worthy of her friendship. Her goal of living entirely on her own terms and manipulating those who will share her idealized country seems less than altruistic.

The author introduces real people of public note as incidental characters. Alan Dershowitz serves as Zaydee's legal adviser while she's in prison. Nancy Grace is warned to "tread lightly" and stop digging into Zaydee's fruitful efforts to undermine her antagonists. William Barrett of *Forbes* arranges for a private meeting with Zaydee at the prison to reveal important family connections.

The self-assured writing style renders Zaydee's ideas and interactions with others believable, despite her larger-than-life attributes. However, neither Zaydee nor her enemies or comrades possess the depth of personality that could bring them to life. Dialogue occasionally slips into expository mode. A short excerpt from the projected sequel completes this combined volume of *That Girl Started Her Own Country* and *The Anonymous Girl*.

This book's author adds mystery to the series by remaining anonymous. Those who like fantasies set in the present day, depicting exaggerated lifestyles and cyberspace intrigue, will be entertained.

MARGARET CULLISON (July 21, 2014)

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