

The Cuban Gambit: A Historical Political Saga: Book 3 of the One Hundred Years of War Series

Jay Perin

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In the expansive thriller The Cuban Gambit, a woman fights to maintain control of a massive corporation as her enemies launch desperate attacks on her.

In Jay Perin's thriller *The Cuban Gambit*, an ambitious woman takes control of three oil dynasties, placing her in political danger.

By the late 1980s, Senator Temple had devoted almost two decades to his political manipulations and maneuvers, resulting in him securing the American presidency. He also controls the three families in charge of most of the world's oil supplies. He chooses Lilah, for whom he has parental affections, to rule over the families' businesses while he handles issues like a nuclear explosion in Russia and the crumbling of America's European alliances. But he balks when he feels his control over the world's oil supply actually slipping: Lilah has proven herself to be a formidable force, both in her working and personal lives.

Lilah's backstory includes multiple traumas, beginning in her childhood. There was an attempt on her life in her young adulthood, too. These events steeled her. Thus, even as it becomes clear that her allies and President Temple have targeted her, Lilah refuses to back down. Her past traumas surface nonetheless, disrupting her personal life. She strives to maintain her grasp on her corporate powers.

This entry into the extensive saga of three families who influence world events with historical implications maintains a firm balance on its narrative early on, moving between providing context and advancing the current story line. Some of the intricacies of the cast's backstories are not as detailed as they need to be to justify their actions; in cases such as Lilah's, firsthand knowledge of the previous entries is required in order to appreciate the depth and breadth of her transformation from a sheltered young girl to a corporate powerhouse.

As the book progresses, though, its political machinations, which often take place in the shadows, come to overwhelm the most empathetic elements of the story. The detailed depictions of global events are entertaining, but their volume detracts from the cast's progression—as does the fact that these events sprawl across a period of almost a decade. In this time period, Lilah's enemies work to dethrone her on repeat; some even wish to kill her.

When its focus shifts to Lilah, the narrative is more compelling and grounded. She is a fascinating lead whose ability to overcome her past, and to stand strong against her political and corporate rivals, is impressive. Still, her successes are dimmed by the fact that the book seems most concerned with generating interest in the next series installment; there is no clear conclusion in this volume, leading to frustration.

In the thriller *The Cuban Gambit*, a woman fights to maintain control of a massive corporation as her enemies launch desperate attacks on her.

JOHN M. MURRAY (April 12, 2022)

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