



Vol. 2, No. 9, February 28, 2020

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## From the Editor



It's Leap Year! Today is not the last day of February. It's too bad I didn't think to do something about it for the newsletter this week. Having the idea the day the newsletter goes out is not quite enough time to follow through with the thought. Ah well, now I have four years to work on it. If I remember in four years.

Last April, Carolyn E. Cook was a guest author. She's back with us this week to talk about her new book that was just released – ***You Can Call Me Glory***. It's exciting to see how many of our authors from last year are returning this year with a new book. We already have some scheduled from now through August.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend full of lots of reading and lots of writing!

*Trisha*

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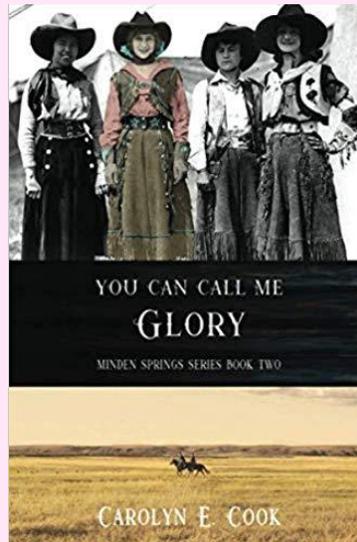
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New Release: You Can Call Me Glory

## You Can Call Me Glory

Carolyn E. Cook



Minden Springs Series Book Two New Orleans, spring, 1905. A year after Lilly Quinn's demise, Abigail Thibodeaux continues to mourn the loss of her good friend. She works at the candy shop near the Vieux Carré, reads dime novels, and expects always to live in her house on Prytania Street. Periodically, she receives letters from Stratford Brock, telling of his progress in turning Lilly's reminiscences into a book. When a package arrives containing that completed work, the re-reading shakes Abigail to her core. She says, "If I could walk in the places where Lilly had walked, see the prairie skies that she'd seen, meet the people she'd known, then I would find her again and in some unfathomable way, I'd become whole."

In short order, Abigail leaves New Orleans and embarks on the boldest risk of her life, the long journey on the train to Minden Springs, Kansas. Will she discover the traces of Lilly that she seeks? What people and incidents, dangerous or otherwise, will she encounter? And will she ever return to Prytania Street?

***You Can Call Me Glory*** is an action-filled novel about the turn of the last century, as the Old West fades and the modern era of electric lights, indoor plumbing, and automobiles begins. Join Abigail on a journey of self-discovery that will bring her changes to last a lifetime.

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## Author Spotlight: Carolyn E. Cook

I'm excited to introduce a familiar face again to talk a little bit about her newest book, *You Can Call Me Glory*. I had the privilege of being able to read an Advance Reader Copy, and I have to say that I enjoyed this tale just as much as I did her first book, *The Life and Times of Lilly Quinn*. Come sit a spell and join us as we chat with Carolyn.



Welcome, Carolyn! When we last chatted with you ([April 26, 2019](#)), you'd finished *The Life and Times of Lilly Quinn* and were partway done with the second book in the Minden Springs series. *You Can Call Me Glory* is just released and your newest child is out in the world. Can you tell us a little bit about *You Can Call Me Glory*?

I always find it hard to boil down several hundred pages to a short paragraph, but I'll give it a go!

First, when I read a series, I appreciate a brief refresher in the beginning, to get myself oriented again. So I do start this story with a two-page prologue, just some re-capping of Lilly's story and where Abigail is now.

In 1904 to 1905, the year following Lilly's death, Abigail grieves her loss and struggles to pull her life back together. With little interest, she returns to her job with the candy shop in the Vieux Carré, and

sorts Lilly's things, promptly sending Lilly's written memories of Minden Springs back to that town where they belong. Nothing really lifts her spirits until a published copy of Lilly's story arrives on Abigail's doorstep, edited by Stratford Brock, owner of the *Minden Springs Tribune* and one of Lilly's good friends. Reading that book becomes Abigail's impetus for undertaking the long train ride from New Orleans to Lilly's town. Abigail hopes that there, she will somehow find her friend and mentor again. But this trek becomes a grand journey of self-discovery and she encounters far more than she ever expected.

**Abigail Tibodeaux is a friend of Lilly's from the first book. Are the two characters more alike or far different in character?**

While Lilly and Abigail both grew up in New Orleans, their childhood experiences were 180 degrees opposite, which created entirely different characters. Lilly was a child living with her "aunts" in a bordello, which made her gutsy and independent — she had to be, in order to survive. Abigail's family was wealthy and she lacked for nothing materially. Too bad that her parents treated her as an afterthought. Thus, Abigail grew up shy, starved for attention, and didn't know how to take care of herself. When she arrives in Minden Springs, she gets a crash course in speaking up and taking charge — that self-reliance she sorely needs.

**What was it like writing the second book from a different viewpoint? Did it change the way you viewed Minden Springs or the other characters?**

My preferred point-of-view is almost always first person. I really like getting into the character's head and seeing experiences through her eyes. I have to become that character, sort of. Given Abigail's background in New Orleans, and her love of the Western dime novels, she had expectations of Minden Springs and the West that would be dashed very soon after her arrival. She wants to meet Lilly's friends, but doesn't quite know how to behave with them. In writing her, I had to juggle those things about her, while keeping the secondary characters from the first book consistent. Sometimes, I'd catch myself in a re-read of a day's work. "Oh now, Strat wouldn't say that," or "Dodson shouldn't do that," or "Violet NEVER uses contractions." And on top of all that, I had to allow those characters to breathe and grow, just as Abigail grows. Gee, there was a lot to keep track of!

**The Kansas frontier varies drastically from New Orleans. What was it like writing from these two different environments?**

I've driven through Kansas once. And I did a ton of research about the Old West and Kansas history before starting Lilly's story, all kept in a binder with tabs. Much of it wasn't used, but it was in my head and had the effect of coloring the story. As for New Orleans, my oldest son lives there and I've visited a number of times. Even so, I did a ton of research about that city's history, too. When writing the scenes there, I could easily picture those places, the Vieux Carré, Jackson Square, Café du Monde, because I've been there.

To toss in one interesting, historical tidbit— in my research for Abigail's story, I found a great website that had lots of maps of rail lines, from the 1880's to around 1900. Those maps showed how the number of lines virtually exploded during that period. By the early 19-aughts, every city and small burg was linked with the outer world by train tracks. Only the farthest west states still lacked such connection. So instead of sending Abigail on the same, complicated route Lilly had taken years previously, I could have Abigail ride the trains to Minden Springs on a different course, giving her the scenery and towns of north Texas and Oklahoma to travel through, and the chance to gain some initiation into Western culture.

**The years from 1871 (where your first book started) to 1905 (where the second book starts) had a lot of changes in our world. You mention electric lights, indoor plumbing and the early days of the automobiles. How did these changes affect the story you're telling?**

By 1905, the wildness of the Old West was fading and the modernity of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was blowing in. But all those new inventions took money. Successful businesses and wealthy townspeople could afford them. Others couldn't and had to muddle on without the fancy conveniences. I had to show this discrepancy between the haves and the have-nots in Minden Springs, as it would have been in many small towns of that era.

Also, the numbers of Old West outlaws, perpetrators of hold-ups and shoot-outs, had decreased dramatically, to be replaced by a different breed of lawbreaker, the bootleggers. Actually, writing about them made for a fun afternoon! (Yes, bootleggers in Kansas, starting before 1910. It was the earliest state to enact a Prohibition Law and years passed before it was universally enforced. No, it wasn't exactly popular...)

**You said that Minden Springs is a series. Is a third book planned? If so, will we see some characters from Book 2 in Book 3 also?**

I've just started Book 3. As in Book 2, one of the secondary characters will become the main character and of course, other characters from Book 2 will have things to do in Book 3. It's a friendly town, mostly. People tend to keep their friendships and stay put. (Unless I've killed someone off. But then, they're still around, just residing in the cemetery.)

**Thank you for joining us today, Carolyn. Below are some links where readers can find You Can Call Me Glory and The Life and Times of Lilly Quinn.**

Links to Amazon book pages are on Carolyn E. Cook's website:

<https://www.carolynecookauthor.com/>

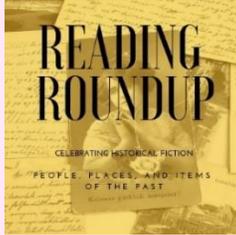
You can find Carolyn E. Cook on Facebook here:

<https://www.facebook.com/CarolynECookHistoricalFiction/?eid=ARB7iHdZJSzJ4YbMW4GK-gVDiKD2Do6YX3t4wFUGMXilF4i-TvSaNnjd7q4HIWFWbF7XKYH23zfWUQY->



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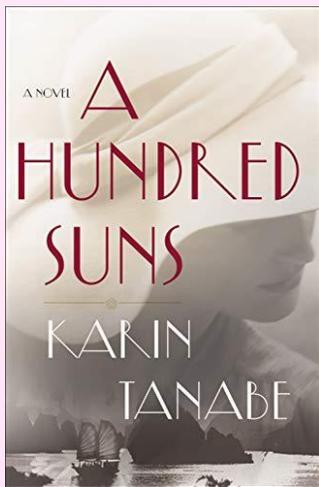
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## The 1930s

### [A Hundred Suns](#)

**Karin Tanabe**



On a humid afternoon in 1933, American Jessie Lesage steps off a boat from Paris and onto the shores of Vietnam. Accompanying her French husband Victor, an heir to the Michelin rubber fortune, she's certain that their new life is full of promise, for while the rest of the world is sinking into economic depression, Indochine is gold for the Michelins. Jessie knows that the vast plantations near Saigon are the key to the family's prosperity, and though they have recently been marred in scandal, she needs them to succeed for her husband's sake—and to ensure that the life she left behind in America stays buried in the past.

Jessie dives into the glamorous colonial world, where money is king and morals are brushed aside, and meets Marcelle de Fabry, a spellbinding expat with a wealthy Indochinese lover, the silk tycoon Khoi Nguyen. Descending on Jessie's world like a hurricane, Marcelle proves to be an exuberant guide to colonial life. But hidden beneath her vivacious exterior is a fierce desire to put the colony back in the hands of its people—starting with the Michelin plantations.

It doesn't take long for the sun-drenched days and champagne-soaked nights to catch up with Jessie. With an increasingly fractured mind, her affection for Indochine falters. And as a fiery political struggle builds around her, Jessie begins to wonder what's real in a friendship that she suspects may be nothing but a house of cards.

Motivated by love, driven by ambition, and seeking self-preservation at all costs, Jessie and Marcelle each toe the line between friend and foe, ethics and excess. Cast against the stylish backdrop of 1920s Paris and 1930s Indochine, in a time and place defined by contrasts and convictions, Karin Tanabe's *A Hundred Suns* is historical fiction at its lush, suspenseful best.

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