



2017

Palace of Spies

Aylea Stephens

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr>

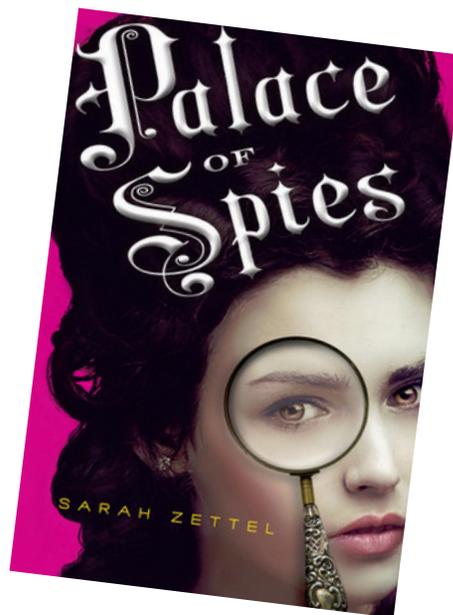
BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Stephens, Aylea (2017) "Palace of Spies," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 38 : Iss. 5 , Article 53.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol38/iss5/53>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Book Review

Title: Palace of Spies
Author: Sarah Zettel
Reviewer: Aylea Stephens
Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9780544074118
Number of Pages: 368
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Significant Shortcomings



Review

When Peggy is kicked out of her uncle's house because she refuses to marry the man her uncle wants her to, she is thrown into a world of the royal court and espionage. The mysterious man who claims to know her father asks her to play the part of Lady Francesca at Hampton Court. Peggy has to find the information that her new benefactors want, but uncovering what happened to Lady Francesca could be a matter of life or death for her as she starts to uncover the Jacobite plot to change who rules England. During her time at court she starts to fall in love and discover things about court and the people there who could not only change her life but the future of her country. With spies around every corner, it is hard to know who to trust, but she manages to uncover what happened to Francesca and who are the major spies in the court.

Several of the characters are ridiculous: the uncle throwing her out without much of an explanation of why, people knowing that Peggy is not who she says she is but don't say anything about it, a character who knows who Peggy is right away even though he was not as familiar with the real Francesca as other characters were, and the murderer's motive being ego more than anything else. The sexual assault scene is disturbing and unnecessary; there were many other ways Peggy could have started the life of a spy, and she doesn't react the way someone would after becoming homeless and sexually assaulted within a few short hours. The romance is also underdeveloped with very few conversations before the characters decide that they are in love. There are good parts of the story. It is written in a fun, engaging way and the historical details are interesting, but the weaknesses of the book make it hard to enjoy the parts that are good.

*Contains sexual assault and other sexual content, mild violence, some sexism and racism.