



Viper's Kiss

Shannon Curtis

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Librarian Maggie Kincaid yearns for excitement—but being accused of espionage is not what she had in mind. Wanted by the police, the FBI and the criminal element, Maggie goes on the run—and runs straight into sexy Luke Fletcher. Unfortunately, when Luke pulls out the handcuffs, it's not because he has something kinky in mind...

Security expert Luke is intent on seeing the murderous spy known only as Viper brought to justice. The un-spy-like behavior of his fugitive makes him suspect he's apprehended the wrong woman. Just as they give in to lust, new evidence convinces Luke that Maggie's not as innocent as she claims to be.

Devastated by Luke's inability to trust her, Maggie runs again. She's determined to clear her name, and if that means tracking down a notorious spy even Interpol can't seem to locate, then that's exactly what she'll do...

Viper's Kiss Details

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Author : Shannon Curtis

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From Reader Review Viper's Kiss for online ebook

Pamela(AllHoney) says

A quick, light, romantic suspense novella. It was a fun read. Loved the references to Wonder Woman and Diana Prince and took me back to when I was young and used to watch the show. I will look for more by this author.

Ella Drake says

am a total sucker for romances with librarians.

Tracy says

Strained My Willing Suspension of Disbelief

Maggie Kincaid isn't having a good week. She's been forced to disguise herself as an old woman to sneak past a throng of fans just to get to her library job at the University of Washington. They're not *her* fans, per se, though they don't know that. It's just her rotten luck that a woman bearing enough resemblance to Maggie to be her doppelganger posed nude as Miss April Hotrod in a popular...and apparently well-circulated calendar.

Her mother certainly wasn't amused.

Little did Maggie know that the abject mortification caused by the...um...lovely Ms. Kandy Karamel (there was a website, too) would actually be the *highlight* of her week. It went steadily and horrifyingly downhill from there.

Arrested, witness to double homicide, kidnapped, almost murdered, forced to nearly kill in self defense, kidnapped again, held in custody by a gorgeous security agent she could just lick up like sweet cream (that part's not so bad), condemned for espionage, almost killed - again...and again, accused of treason, and more. Some days it just doesn't pay to get out of bed. Except for that whole gorgeous security agent thing. The big jerk may think she's the most obvious and stupid spy in history, but he's got one *fine* form.

Said big jerk Luke Fletcher is convinced he's finally apprehended one of the world's most notorious spies, code name: Viper. They have Viper on tape murdering a man and stealing highly classified and sensitive materials that could be used against the country and the men and women who fight for it. Luke's seen the tapes. Studied them. And has no doubt Maggie Kincaid is the cold-blooded, murdering spy he's been tracking. Even her own laptop shows quite clearly that she was the one who hacked into the classified files prior to the theft. Every single scrap of evidence points directly at the delicious...er...devious Maggie.

And all the protests that spring from that hot, wet, gorgeous mouth of hers...a mouth he could easily and happily imagine around his...um...weapon of mass destruction...won't save her ass....that tight, luscious ass of hers... Uh, yeah - he's focused and single-minded in his determination to bring Maggie Kincaid down. By *any* means necessary.

~*~

I have ultimate respect for authors and the effort they put into writing stories they hope their readers will enjoy, and I do my best to remain true to that respect in my reviews. I always keep in mind that I'm reviewing books, not authors, not other reviews/reviewers and/or their opinions. Books. Still, sometimes I have to wonder what an author was thinking when I read something that really strains my ability to maintain a willing suspension of disbelief. Unfortunately, that's the case here.

It's not that Curtis isn't a decent author, or that the book showed a lack of skill. In fact, most of Viper's Kiss is a fast-moving, action-packed, lusty, wild ride. It's skewed heavily towards the lighter, more humorous end of the romantic suspense sub-genre, of course, and there were parts that felt like farce - fun on the surface, not a lot of depth beneath. But that's fine - it's not always to my personal tastes, maybe, but I recognized it for what it was and could accept that. Obviously so, or I wouldn't have considered this a three star book.

No, my problems came not so much from the execution of the story, but from the concept behind it. There were just too many coincidences, too many clichés, too many bad ideas. Does the world really need one more security/bodyguard/protection company staffed by ex-Special Forces military types? They're as ubiquitous as paranormals in New Orleans. Hell, I've read books where the paranormals in New Orleans *were* the ex-Special Forces military-type security agents. It's been done before.

I'm sorry to say it's been done better. Aspects of this book were very ill-defined. It was never made clear just what sort of security agency would send out agents to track down spies and get smack in the middle of an investigation that included the brutal murder of two police officers without once having to answer to the cops. Or even come face-to-face with one. That's FBI-level stuff at the very least, CIA more likely, not a group with a questionable agenda and undefined government connections, one who seems to be roughly akin to highly skilled bounty hunters but who acts like Fed. One with agents, I have to say, who are *really* bad at their jobs.

I mean, seriously, the egregiously large number of things that should have been verified and investigated *before* detaining a U.S. citizen and accusing her of murder and treason were fairly astounding. Not to mention how quickly and often a rank amateur gave three decorated military men the slip. The sheer implausibility of it all was more than I could bear.

I need a book to be at least vaguely believable to enjoy it. Maybe that's odd, given my reading preferences, but even the most wildly fantastical world ruled by the wickedest mystical elements has to make sense within its own mythos to work for me. Viper's Kiss wasn't badly written, nor was the story devoid of high points. For me, though, there were just way too many things that prevented me from maintaining a willing suspension of disbelief.

Disclosure: An ARC of this book was provided to me by Carina Press Via NetGalley. This rating, review, and all included thoughts and comments are my own.

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Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

Jess the Romanceaholic says

This is a Quickie Review. For the full review, please visit The Romanceaholic.

Expected Release Date: July 25, 2011

Publisher: Harlequin

Imprint: Carina Press

Author's Website: <http://www.shannoncurtis.com/>

My Source for This Book: Netgalley

Part of a Series: No

Series Best Read In Order: N/A

Steam Level: Steamy

This book started out with a bang and didn't slow down until the very ending. We open with dowdy Maggie Kincaid, librarian for a large university, having to sneak into work so that she won't be mobbed by her "admiring fans". You see, Maggie, for all her prim clothes and boring lifestyle, bears a striking resemblance to a luscious model who recently posed nude for a car calendar.

Unfortunately for Maggie, this case of mistaken identity is not the only one in store for her, and minutes later she finds herself under arrest for theft and murder. It seems she's been mistaken for a notorious international spy named Viper! But the police aren't the only ones who want to get their hands on Maggie — the real Viper has double-crossed her boss and framed Maggie, and suffice it to say that the bossman isn't happy. Kidnapped from the police, she must rely on her own quick thinking to escape a horrible fate when she literally stumbles into the incredibly handsome Luke Fletcher, who insists that if she wants to live, she'll have to come with him.

Luke is a security expert charged with capturing the Viper and recovering the suit she's stolen — a prototype of technology that can literally render the wearer invisible as it bends light particles around it. Sounding more in the realm of science fiction, the technology is frighteningly real, and the implications of it being sold on the black market are absolutely devastating.

Convinced that Maggie is actually the Viper, he presents to her seemingly irrefutable evidence of her guilt in an attempt to gain her cooperation, but Maggie insists on her innocence. Chastising himself for falling for the ploys of a master spy, he continues to interrogate her, but the more time he spends with her, the more he begins to doubt that her innocence, fear, and frustration are a ploy, as well as the harder it becomes to ignore the temptation of her body.

Soon, he not only begins to work to clear Maggie's name, but also allows himself to give into their attraction. When more details come in, however, Luke becomes convinced that Maggie is yet again lying to him, and once again begins treating her as a suspect.

Heartbroken by Luke's mistrust and casual disregard for their budding relationship, she escapes, determined to prove her innocence in the only way she knows how — by capturing the notorious Viper herself!

Overall, this was an incredibly fun read with just the right amount of sexual tension. A heroine whose prim facade was a result of her situation rather than lack of personality, a hero who can't help but resist the one woman he knows he should avoid at all costs, and an exciting mystery with both espionage and just enough of a sci-fi element to appeal to the geek in all of us lead me to a solid final rating of 4/5 Stars

Rebecca says

You can also read this review at [Reflections on Reading Romance](#)

In college, I worked at the library in the circulation department as part of my financial aid, and as a result I've always enjoyed reading about librarians. So when I saw that the heroine of Shannon Curtis' *Viper's Kiss* was a librarian, I had to read it, and when I realized that said librarian was accused of being a spy, I was hooked. After all, what librarian doesn't dream of being a spy? *Viper's Kiss* will be released on July 25 and is available at the Carina Press webpage and on Amazon. The novel's a short romantic suspense, only about 53,000 words, so it's a quick read and a fast-paced adventure. And the hottie on the cover isn't hard on the eyes, either! This was a fun read, and I'm looking forward to seeing more in the future from Ms. Curtis.

Maggie Kincaid is a librarian at the University of Washington, and her life has suddenly grown much more exciting than she would like. Miss April HotRod, aka Kandy Karamel, is a dead ringer for Maggie, and suddenly the demure librarian is being hounded by people mistaking her for the pin-up girl. Shortly after dodging a herd of horny male students outside the library, two men in black arrive and arrest her for espionage. She's been working with the Department of Defense and tech company Tek-Intel on a top secret invention, and they're accusing her of stealing the prototype. To make matters worse, as soon as she and the detectives pull out into traffic, they're rammed by a van, the detectives are murdered, and Maggie's dragged off by some truly frightening villains. Just like the detectives, they're convinced that she's a female spy working under the codename Viper. Maggie is barely pulling together an escape attempt, when Luke Kincaid arrives and whisks her away to safety on his motorcycle.

Luke is a security expert with McCormack Security Agency, and he's tasked with recovering the Visi-suit prototype that Viper's stolen. He can't quite believe that Maggie Kincaid is guilty, but all the evidence points in that direction. Too bad that the first job he's in charge of involves a female spy he finds really appealing. Maggie finds Luke attractive as well, but every time he starts to believe in her innocence, evidence surfaces that convinces him that she's not trustworthy. In the end, she's the only one who can uncover the truth and recover the visi-suit, clearing her name in the process.

Viper's Kiss is non-stop action, with poor Maggie escaping from one dangerous situation only to find herself in another. The plot progresses quickly, and just when you think that she can calm down and relax, the action picks up again. It's a fun ride, and Ms. Curtis introduces two supporting male characters, Derek and Noah, whose presence makes me believe that she has sequels planned for the two of them, which would definitely be good news for us readers!

Maggie is a likeable character, and despite the danger and trouble she finds herself in, she manages to escape each time, thanks to her own actions. That makes her really appealing, since she's had a tough time of it for the last few years, but instead of being overwhelmed and complaining, she acts to resolve the situation herself. She's also always one step ahead of the so-called security experts, figuring out a way to escape them and solve the mystery surrounding the true Viper while recovering the Visi-suit prototype.

While there are definitely sparks between Luke and Maggie, their romance feels a bit rushed. They're clearly attracted to one another, but from the beginning of the novel Maggie has been cautious about men, insisting on a 90 day probationary period before sex with all dates, which has resulted in her still being a virgin in her

mid-twenties. This caution is blamed on a bad relationship her mother had with a boyfriend when Maggie was 16 (more about that later), so it seems somewhat inconsistent with her character that she would choose to act on her attraction as quickly as she does with Luke. I prefer romances that develop over time, but the novel is so short that it's difficult to see how Ms. Curtis could have maintained the fast pace of the action and included the romance in any other way. I would love to see a longer work from her, which would give her more room to develop the relationship between the characters.

Because I thoroughly enjoyed reading the novel, I hate to criticize but I do have two complaints, although the first is somewhat minor. Given how the action unfolds, I have to think that McCormack Security Agency must hire the most inept employees in the world, because every time Maggie needs to escape, she asks to use the bathroom and wiggles out of a window, with the so-called experts none the wiser. First, how many bathrooms have windows, and second, how could this trick work on them more than once? Seriously, she's portrayed as an innocent and naïve librarian, yet she's easily able to escape the security experts and goons who try to force her to reveal the location of the Visi-suit.

The second complaint I have is about a plot point that bothered me so much it actually lessened my enjoyment of the novel. *****Warning: Spoilers Ahead***** We learn that when Maggie was 16, her mother had a boyfriend named Andy who tried to sexually assault Maggie. When her mother learned of the attempted assault, she kicked Andy out, and he retaliated by robbing their house and wiping out her checking account. This forced Maggie to have to work to help support them, plus required her to work to pay for her college education. Later, her mother falls seriously ill, and Maggie has to find a way to pay her mother's overwhelming medical bills. So when Luke looks into Maggie's finances as a way to prove that she is the spy they're looking for, he's stunned to see that she's barely eking out a living and lives in a one-bedroom apartment with her mother. What drives me crazy about this is that I don't understand why her mother didn't go to the police when their house is robbed and the bank account is wiped out! She just sits back and does nothing, allowing her daughter to work like crazy to pay for her education. This seems inconsistent with Maggie's behavior at the very least, since throughout the novel Maggie acts to clear her name rather than remaining a passive character. It seems so odd that there was absolutely nothing her mother could have done, and it felt completely contrived.

Despite this, the rest of the novel was a fun, quick read with a likeable hero and heroine and lots of action. I definitely enjoyed it and can't wait to see future books by this author, because her writing drew me in quickly and I loved her choice of heroine.

This book was provided for review by the publisher through NetGalley.

Ruth says

I really enjoyed this little romantic suspense provided to me by netgalley. It had a few bits which were a tad irritating, but on the whole this is a lovely little beach read.

- The heroine is a librarian. It's a normal job, and the way the author writes about it is convincing, but not intrusive. The heroine is also a nice person. She has some hang-ups that I just couldn't get behind, though. I didn't get why she, a librarian/researcher, would be more concerned about the safety of the hero, an ex-Green Beret and general badass, than herself. I honestly couldn't buy that one.

- The hero is also nice, but does some pretty heinous things to the heroine, in my opinion, such as taking her virginity, when she's clearly at least moderately "saving" herself, and then turning away from her not 10

minutes later, and yet, SHE NEVER CALLS HIM OUT ON IT!! If that were me, I'd want blood, to be honest, or at least hate his guts, no matter how cobalt his eyes.

- The twist in the tale for the baddie was rather silly and unbelievable

Having said that, if you want a romantic suspense, which doesn't scare you witless or isn't too angsty, but just to entertain you for a while, then this is a great choice. I really hope that it's part of a series, because every now and then I love to have a nice relaxing, romantic read, more akin to a TV thriller-lite, and this just fits the bill.

3 stars. I liked it. And will you check out that super-hot, lickable cover...

MBR says

Who in the world wouldn't want to read a title with a cover as this one? I fell completely for it and though Shannon Curtis is a totally new author for me, within the first chapter itself I knew that in this instant judging the book by its cover had been the right thing to do.

Margaret Elizabeth Kincaid is the Information Services Librarian at the University of Washington whose wildest nightmares couldn't have shown her the turmoil her life could turn into. Arrested and taken into custody for economic espionage and murder, Maggie's orderly life is turned upside down when being arrested with the whole university looking on is just the tip of the iceberg.

When the squad car in which she is held is stopped by gun-toting vicious looking goons who have no problem with killing two federal officers whilst they are at it, Maggie undergoes the goons' vicious onslaught whose only aim is to retrieve the research of the world-altering kind she supposedly has stolen for their boss. Being called the 'Viper' when she has no clue as to who she is, Maggie is at a loss which doesn't stop her from fighting for her right to survive.

Maggie narrowly escapes being manhandled to death by one set of goons only to run smack-dab into the arms of Luke Fletcher who is Ex-Special Forces and works for the McCormack Security Agency who has been entrusted with the task of retrieving the sensitive information stolen by the notorious and vicious Viper.

What Luke doesn't comprehend happening is that he would screw up his first solo assignment so royally by lustng after the notorious Viper, almost believing the lies that comes out of her delectable mouth. Tall, blonde and too dangerous for her peace of mind is what Luke is to Maggie who has never been so tempted to break her own ninety day rule before. The fact that he almost makes her forget the reason for their acquaintance is reason enough for Maggie to be wary of the man whose rough and hard kisses stir her to her very soul.

And just when it seems like things may finally work out for Luke and Maggie, reality intervenes making Maggie take matters into her own hands to prove once and for all that she is not the infamous Viper whom everyone thinks she is.

For me, Viper's Kiss turned out to be a surprisingly enjoyable read. I liked both Maggie and sexy as hell Luke and the chemistry between the two. Luke surprisingly is the only ex-military hero that I have encountered who actually has plans of settling down and what scares him is the fact that Maggie is the one

he wants to do that with whilst still thinking her to be Viper.

The adventure aspect of the novel was fast-paced with plenty of action and thus never a dull moment in the story. And I enjoyed Drew Michaels and Noah Samuels entry into the story, the two other agents sent in who lend the story something extra with their presence. Would love to see more stories about the rest of the guys at MSA and I definitely look forward to reading more from Shannon Curtis.

Rating=4/5

Original review posted on MBR's Realm of Romance

Crystal ♥ RBtWBC says

Quicky Arc Review

Viper's Kiss is an exciting and quick tale of who-done-it with a dash of romance.

I really liked this novel; I enjoyed all the characters and found even the secondary characters interesting. The plot flowed quickly and smoothly with no potholes, a few light twists to keep you guessing. The romance was pretty light as well; it was there but not too intense. Well, there was that one scene against the fence... ;) The attraction between the two main characters sparked quickly but progressed at a believable pace, there was a back and forth battle of trust between Luke and Maggie that added to the romantic suspense. There was also plenty suspense in trying to figure out the villain's identity and purpose. A fun read that I'd recommend to contemporary romance fans looking for a break from the long, intense full length novels.

<http://readingbetweenthewinesbookclub...>

Bree T says

Maggie Kincaid is a librarian who struggles to make ends meet and cares for her terminally ill mother full time. Working for a university doesn't provide much in the way of danger and excitement, until Maggie is mistaken for Viper, one of the world's most notorious and wanted spies. Viper has used Maggie's codes for a secret project that she was working on (only as a small time technical component regarding the database and network) and stolen the prototype. And the FBI, the police, a private security company and the owners of the company responsible for the prototype are all looking for Maggie. And they all find her at the same time.

Whilst in police custody, Maggie is kidnapped by a rogue gang who want nothing better than to torture her for information regarding the whereabouts of the prototype and how to get it back. Despite being, well a librarian and with no real violent tendencies, Maggie escapes using little more than a knitting needle in her bag – only to run headlong into Luke Fletcher.

Luke is a private security expert hired to track down the mysterious Viper and find the prototype. When Maggie starts stressing that she isn't Viper, Luke is skeptical. After all, Viper has been around for some time and they're one of the best in the business. Of course if caught, they would deny everything. And what better

cover than that of a meek and mild librarian? But the more Luke delves into Maggie's life, the more she pleads with him that she's not this Viper, the more doubts he starts to have. After all, he's seen Maggie's bank accounts. He sees the small flat where she lives with her terminally ill mother. And with all the money Viper would have, from all the jobs they've pulled before, they would be able to afford the best care for someone so important to them. And there's no doubt that Maggie's mother is important to her as she risks everything to see her when she is hospitalised due to stress from the publication of Maggie's arrest and subsequent escape (really kidnap) from police custody.

When Luke's back up arrives, they are determined to find the truth about just who Maggie is and if she is really just who she says she is – an unassuming librarian who was caught up in the middle of a theft executed by a mastermind. Luke believes in her, much to his colleagues chagrin, who think he's thinking with a part of his anatomy that is not his brain. However when Luke hears something that causes him to doubt her, she disappears again, shattered by his lack of trust in her and determined to track this Viper down herself and prove once and for all that she had nothing to do with the theft.

Viper's Kiss was another easy, quick read on my Kindle that has helped keep me reading through the month. And this was a fun, if silly and light-hearted read riddled with some romantic action cliches, such as Luke, the handsome mysterious private security man who after an armed services past, is on his first solo assignment. Maggie herself is another stereotype – the quiet, shy unassuming lady who is wrong place, wrong time. Except that in real life, anyone else would've been tortured to death by the first rogue gang that grabbed her, rather than manage to overpower two of them (armed with a mere knitting needle) and do a runner!

Luke is possessed of all sorts of interesting technology and gadgets that helps Maggie in her quest to convince him that she's not the notorious Viper but Luke still isn't clever enough not to board up the window to the bathroom in the safe house he takes her to, which means that Maggie high-tails out of it when she hears her mother has been hospitalised, but that's not the most laughable part of the plot. Oh no, the most laughable part is that she manages to escape in this fashion not once, but twice, the second time evading not just Luke but also his two colleagues. For private security men, Luke and his fellow employees aren't really that clever. Or good at their jobs.

And once Maggie escapes she makes the decision to go after the notorious Viper herself, just to prove to Luke that he was wrong about her and that she was telling the truth all along. Oh she also wants to clear her name, which has been publically dragged through the mud, but mostly it's just about Luke. So armed with well, nothing, she goes to find Viper (which proves to be alarmingly easy for a mastermind spy). And given what sort of novel this is, the outcome isn't too difficult to predict. It's not about the ending with this book, it's more about the journey there.

Both Maggie and Luke are likable enough and Maggie has the added incentive of a broken home and incident from her past that makes it doubly likely that she'd never steal anything in her life. I'm a huge wuss though, so I can never quite get behind the main characters that take matters into their own hands. Even though Luke and co were relatively inept most of the time, by the end they manage to get their act together and assist quite awesomely so I'd have been happy to just let them do it! Of course I wouldn't have bothered jumping out any bathroom windows either! But Maggie, for all her mellowness, is definitely no chicken, although it is sort of unlikely that proving her innocence is best accomplished by charging off to the meeting place where Viper is attempting to sell the prototype to the highest bidder.

Viper's Kiss is readable enough to get you through a lazy afternoon quite easily and it was an enjoyable way to pass the time. But ultimately the plot is a bit thin (both what the prototype is and how easily Maggie's

identity is swiped and used against her and how swiftly everyone assumes it is her, despite the fact that any cop worth their salt could tell that she has basically no idea what they're all talking about). The romance is cute, but like the plot, a bit lacking in plausibility and not quite as well fleshed out as I would have liked.

Tara Chevrestt says

This is the first book by Carina I have sat down and thoroughly read and didn't like. Oh, I haven't loved them all, but I can normally tell in the very beginning whether a book is for me or not. If it's not, I normally mark it dnf and move on with my life. This one sorta tricked me, however, and by the time I realized it wasn't for me, I had read over half of it.

A sexy librarian is mistaken for a tough woman spy named Viper and accused of stealing an amazing secret. Some hot covert op guy captures her with all intentions to turn her in to the authorities, but attraction takes precedence.. What's not to like about that?

First of all, the heroine is a virgin. I hate virgin heroines. Only in a regency romance do I want to see a virgin heroine. This is a contemporary novel. Second, your mom's boyfriend cleaned out her bank account and stole everything you own and no one thought to call the bank? The authorities? I know for a fact that nowadays, even if your divorced spouse cleans your bank account, a phone call can fix it. Third, again this is a contemporary.. where is the sexual protection? The guy is a former green beret. The Green Berets are the elite in the Army.. we are not talking about a stupid guy here, but he bangs a woman he thinks is the dangerous, man murdering Viper and doesn't wear a condom? And no, he didn't know she was a virgin.

Point in the novel's favor: There was a twist in the ending that I didn't see coming. Nice touch! I also liked the whole thing about the suit and what it does. I found that to be a very original idea.

The book is very action packed and if it wasn't for those irksome details mentioned above, I would have enjoyed it a lot more.

Elle says

Oh this book was a hilarious, ridiculous, circus of a plot. But it was well constructed.

This is a case of mistaken identity and has a really strong heroine who is sort of believable, I mean, if anyone was ever to get into her situation.

The missing item was a bit strange but the whole plot was out there so the missing item being a bit off the wall seemed fitting.

This is a great Romantic suspense that will keep you turning the pages looking for what is next. The characters were also well developed and battling their own demons which added a nice complexity to the tale.

It's been awhile since I've read a book so quickly. I was just completely absorbed!

Christi Snow says

Fabulous, fabulous book! OMG, I loved this great suspense. I hope that this is the start to a series...

I received an ARC of this book from NetGalley. It is releasing on July 25th and the following review will post on my blog, Smitten with Reading, that day.

My Review:

Wow! This book was a suspenseful, fun romp from the absolute beginning of the book. Maggie is a smart, resourceful librarian at the University, with a Wonder Woman fetish, who has definitely had a weird twist of fate take hold of her life. First, she has a double in the world who just posed naked for a Miss April centerfold. As if that hasn't made her life crazy enough on campus, she was just arrested for spying and espionage. She has no idea what's going on...simply that everything has to do with a visi-suit that is being developed and obviously stolen by someone pretending to be her. She is certainly not a spy...just a resourceful librarian working on the outskirts of the project through the University.

Suddenly, people are dying all around her and she is on the run...straight into gorgeous Luke Fletcher's arms. Luke is a contract security guy working for the company out to catch Viper (codename for the spy that stole the visi-suit.) He's holding her captive also, but the difference is, he doesn't appear anxious to kill her or convict her without proof like everyone else has been.

Luke is a computer savvy tech guy in charge of his first mission. He can't decide whether to trust Maggie or if she is just a really amazing actress. All he knows is that she is extremely sexy and he feels incredibly protective of her. Not a good combination when he is supposed to be bringing her into protective custody. I liked the way that he would get totally flustered and then make himself step back and think everything through. This is a guy used to using his brain before his brawn and it was incredibly sexy.

Maggie is amazing. To say that her day/week/month has been bad is putting it mildly, but she doesn't break down into a pity party. She realizes that the only one that may be able to get her out of this mess is herself so she sets to using her brains to do just that. Maggie reacts to adversity the way that we ALL hope that we will react when things go bad. She continues to think things through and gets proactive in finding a solution, no matter how bad it gets.

There were things about this book that probably pushed the limit of believability, but I was having so much fun reading it and following along with Luke & Maggie's adventure, that I decided to simply accept it all at face value. The suspense was great. I had no idea who the really bad guy was until right before it was revealed. The sexual tension was perfect. I loved Luke & Maggie together. They really made an incredible team. I loved how Luke would just randomly need to kiss Maggie, much to the surprise of both him and her. It ended absolutely perfectly and had me in tears.

I am really, really hoping with the way that the book ended in Chicago and with Reese (Luke's boss) that this is the beginning of a series. I definitely want to see more of this team!!!

Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

Maggie Kincaid leads a fairly boring life as a librarian at the University of Washington. Her mom is losing her battle to cancer and Maggie is struggling to pay the bills, keep a roof over their heads and be there for her mom during her final days. After being mistaken as "The Viper" who stole sensitive information from a partnership between the Department of Defense, TekIntel and the University, the worst day of Maggie's life begins. She's arrested at her job, in a car wreck, watches the 2 agents who arrested her get shot and killed, is taken again this time by really bad guys, gets beaten for information she doesn't have, escapes only to be caught by Luke Fletcher – who's working to catch the Viper – she finds out her mom was rushed to the hospital, so she escapes Luke's custody and rushes to the hospital to be with her mom. Ok, deep breath. The sadness and craziness of her day doesn't end there. Between the back and forth with Luke, will he believe she's innocent or not, she escapes again to prove her innocence only to be caught in another showdown between the good and bad guys. I wanted to call a time out half way through just so Maggie could catch a breather and maybe deal with all the important things that happened throughout the day, the biggest being with her mom.

Luke Fletcher works for a security company hired by TekIntel and his first mission with the company is to recover the item stolen from the Viper, a suit with the potential to cause horrible damage if found in the wrong hands. What he doesn't count on is Maggie. All the clues point to her guilt, but the evidence slowly piles up in her favor and he realizes too late that she's a completely innocent party to everything going on. By this time, Maggie's taking matters into her own hands and Luke has to rush to find her yet again as she sets out to prove who the bad guys really are.

There was so much action packed into the story that every scene Maggie made it through got lost in the overall story because it felt like so much was going on. Maggie has so much thrown at her in such a short period of time, hours really, and she holds it together through it all. She's strong but the scenes with her mom showed how vulnerable she really is. It was heartbreaking to read those scenes, but again the emotion of it was so powerful and could have been even more so if we weren't tossed back into the action along with Maggie. I also missed having more between her and Luke, seeing their relationship grow suffered because they were constantly dealing with outside forces.

For a book that's a little on the shorter side, the action was just too much for me. Had the book been a little longer, and we had more development for Maggie and Luke's relationship, it would have helped balance out the story. It had a lot of potential to be an interesting story for a quiet girl who busts out of her shell and into a crazy new world, but it didn't really hit the mark.

Laura Summers says

Reviewed for www.BookChickCity.com (7 out of 10 on the blog)

When I first began 'Viper's Kiss', I wasn't sure if I was going to like it. I thought that the heroine Maggie was going to irritate me. But luckily she grew on me very quickly. She has spunk and ingenuity. A librarian with a reasonably quiet life, Maggie gets caught up in the worst case of mistaken identity. Arrested and charged with espionage, Maggie gets attacked, kidnapped and arrested all in one day.

Our hero Luke is a security expert charged with bringing 'The Viper' to justice and retrieving the last item, an important military weapon she stole. If I'm honest there's nothing remarkable about him, he's your typical romantic hero. Tough, brawn, brave and handsome, oh and super clever. But I liked him never the less!

Perhaps one of the harder plot points is that it takes a very long time for Luke to trust Maggie and at points of the story, after some very sad developments with Maggie's poorly mother, this is actually quite heartbreaking. I wanted someone to route for Maggie and be in her corner. Just when you think Luke's there, he takes a few steps backwards again.

The chemistry between Maggie and Luke is fantastic, virtually palpable. And despite Luke's annoying trust issues they were a couple I really routed for. Which made this a great, sizzling read.

You do have to suspend your disbelief a little as the plot is perhaps a little far-fetched. It's quite a short book, not quite a novella, but not really a full novel either. And the story is completely, non-stop, action packed. Blink and you might miss something. It's one of those books that whizzed by as the pages just keep on turning.

One comment... I'm not sure what's going on with the book cover? Hunky man yes, but I think given the plot the publisher could have easily come up with something much more fun. But I do have a few issues with romance covers in general!

VERDICT:

This was an entertaining read, I enjoyed the story and how despite being a slightly conservative librarian, Maggie is brave, tough and feisty. The romance had plenty of sparks and the plot kept you guessing.

Emily says

Librarian Maggie Kincaid is just going about her day when she is taken into custody and accused of being a devious spy known as the Viper. While Maggie tries to explain they have the wrong person, she ends up with Luke Fletcher who is convinced she is the Viper.

Security expert Luke is not happy he is attracted to Maggie, he needs information and she is thwarting him at every turn. When Maggie turns out to be more crafty than he expected he begins to question how some things about her are just not adding up. As Luke begins to believe Maggie it is short lived but with the case unfolding around them will he be able to convince Maggie he is worth a second chance?

This was fun, there was a zest to the story that had you smiling where Maggie was concerned. Luke thinks Maggie is a bit of an enigma and she is. would love to see more in this series.
