Lost Girls by Robert Doherty

After World War II and the emergence of the United States as the leading world power, one single man was chosen to create an agency known as The Cellar to police all the other agencies as they formed (CIA, FBI, ATF, DEA, etc.).

With its founder on his deathbed, a new face is commanding the Cellar: Hannah Masterson. Her first task may prove to be the most harrowing of her career.

Deep in the forests of Kentucky, a girl is being held captive.

In Alabama, a young pre-school teacher is murdered in front of her students.

In the panhandle of Florida, a college undergrad is kidnapped from a nightclub.

These seemingly unrelated crimes catch the eye of the Cellar and trigger a most intense and frightening investigation. Cellar operatives Jack Gant and Neeley are chosen to track down those responsible. Enlisting the help of profiler Susan Golden, the three-person team is dragged up and down the Eastern Coast of the US, following a trail of caches into a vicious trap. The men responsible aren't your ordinary criminals. They are highly trained Special Forces Sniper Team, and their crimes ignite an intricate plan of revenge. But as is always the case with the Cellar, nothing can be taken
for granted. Underneath this web of deceit lies an even more shocking crime--a conspiracy that men of power will sacrifice their lives and the lives of their families to protect.

My Personal Review:
Lost Girls brings in a butt-kicking group of government operatives to find out who is killing and kidnapping innocent young women who are tied to government officials. This isn't my usual YA paranormal read but it's a lot of fun.

I'm a big Bourne Identity fan and this story is along those lines. It's fast paced, filled with action and keeps you turning the pages. Doherty gives you enough information to keep you guessing and trying to figure things out right along with the protagonists.

While Gant is your typical (and likeable) guy spy, I also like the fact that Doherty puts in strong female operatives as well. I actually heard the author speak at a conference (where I bought the book) and he said that when he wrote this and another book with the same characters, publishers weren't interested in tough female spies. Then things became popular, like the TV show Alias and of course Lara Croft was the bomb, and suddenly the publishers thought it was a great idea and the books sold.

The bad guys aren't flat either. They are a good bunch of fellows who go bad after the people they trusted most betray them. While you're not rooting for them, you can understand how they became who they are.

It's a great action yarn, with a good story, fun twists, and enjoyable characters. If you like this spy/government thriller kind of stuff, you can't go wrong Lost Girls.

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