

During World War II, knitting was more than a pastime. Women knitted socks, scarves, and other comforts for soldiers overseas, while some also played vital roles in intelligence gathering and resistance efforts. Knitting has long been associated with the possibility of concealing messages in plain sight, with stitches and patterns offering intriguing opportunities for secret communication. Inspired by this fascinating intersection of wartime history, espionage, and the fiber arts, our Secret Stitch Society story blends historical inspiration with a healthy dose of creative liberty. While some elements are rooted in real events and practices, others have been imagined for the sake of a good mystery.

In Plain Sight, by Adaylia Shiman

CHAPTER 1

Light from the hallway poured into the apartment as the heavy door creaked open and Maxine pulled the key from the lock. Leo jumped off the

couch to greet her, already meowing for his dinner. She set a piece of mail on the table atop a tall stack of unopened envelopes and flipped on the kitchen light switch. The lights flickered on with an accompanying hum and cast an unflattering yellow hue across the pristine kitchen. Maxine opened a cabinet and pulled out a small metal can, peeling back the lid. Leo started weaving between her legs as he eagerly anticipated his dinner. The Pâté squelched as the suction released, and it hit the plate with a jiggle. At least *he* found it appetizing. She set the plate on the floor, and Leo devoured his dinner as if he'd never eaten before. As soon as he was finished, Maxine washed and dried his saucer. She wanted to keep the apartment clean for when Ruby came home...if she ever did. Maxine needed to hold out hope - it was all she had. She took a seat on the couch and put on a Billie Holiday record. She wanted to give some normalcy to Leo; he must be just as confused as she was. She took a deep breath and lay back on the couch. It was especially hard to relax these days - why her sister had been missing for a month - and where she was - consuming most of her thoughts. All of a sudden, loud meowing cries for help cut through her

concentration. Leo was yowling from deeper within the apartment. Maxine got up quickly and ran to him. She flipped on the light in the bedroom to see what was happening. Leo had a claw caught in a bundle of yarn and couldn't get free. Maxine freed him, and he ran quickly into the living room, fleeing the scene of the crime. She picked up the yarn, discovering that it was a partially finished scarf. Ruby loved to knit - especially to give as gifts to loved ones. Maxine suspected this may have been the case for this piece, whose colors were like nothing Ruby would have chosen for herself. In fact, the pattern didn't look like something Ruby would've really cared for either. The more Maxine looked at it, the more she decided that this scarf looked like *nothing* Ruby would have ever made - maybe not even as a gift. A blue scarf with completely sporadic red stitches all over it. Absolutely no discernible pattern at all. Not an attractive piece. She didn't know why, but Maxine found this scarf to be highly suspicious for some reason. Perhaps she was grasping at straws, but any potential leads to her sister's whereabouts should certainly not be ignored.