

Reviewed By Paul Johnson for Readers' Favorite

In the city of St. Louis, the Gay Nineties, as the time period is later known, have brought about major changes; a thriving metropolis where trolley cars, carriages, and even automobiles can be seen everywhere. But like many large cities, it has a dark side. A brutally murdered city official is found along the Mississippi River. Former Army Major Herbert Falken, now a private sleuth, is called upon to assist the police in hunting down the killer. Falken's quest for the truth is confounded by dishonesty, duplicity, and betrayal. As the clues are uncovered, each one seems to contradict the other. As the trail leads to unusual sources, friendship, integrity, and honor are stretched to breaking point.

St. Louis Affair: The Adventures of Herbert Falken by Michael Scheffel is a well-written and well designed period thriller set in St. Louis in 1899. I've always been a fan of accurately written period or historical fiction. This book didn't disappoint. The story's main characters have great strength, but also major flaws. The setting of turn of the century St. Louis was expertly done with all the sights and sounds you would associate with that period. The story plot provides many twists and turns, leaving the protagonist searching for a truth that ends up difficult to find. I particularly liked Herbert Falken, a complicated character who struggles with his own internal demons. Overall, I enjoyed the story and the book held my interest throughout. I expect to see Major Falken in new and interesting stories.