

***The Lipstick Bureau* by Michelle Gable**

Niki is a Czech immigrant, married to an American military officer. Being a European immigrant and a quick learner, Niki's language skills are very impressive. When the opportunity for women to help with the war arises, she quickly responds and is asked to serve in the Office of Strategic Services. Niki's language skills are of significant value on the European front and she is asked to serve in Italy. Hoping to hear more of her family in Czechoslovakia, Niki accepts the assignment.

The news Niki hears about her family is devastating. She throws herself into her assignment, which is creating propaganda. The OSS goal is to create materials and share stories that will weaken the morale of the German soldiers and local residents.

The OSS is the predecessor of the CIA. By using 2 timelines- the first one at the end of WWII, and the second in 1989, Gable loosely retells the story of Barbara Lauwers. Lauwers worked with the OSS Morale Operations Division located in Italy. Most of the story revolves around her wartime work, but the inclusion of the 1989 events reveal more of the life left behind when she returned to the United States, adding a second layer to this World War II historical novel. Be sure and take the time to read the author's note at the end as it will add additional depth to the novel.