

# Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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## **The Third Mrs. Galway.**

By Deirdre Sinnott

July 2021. 336p. Akashic/Kaylie Jones, paper, \$17.95 (9781617758423); e-book, \$17.99 (9781617759390)

In this debut novel set in pre–Civil War Utica, New York, Helen is plucked from a school for young ladies to marry a local widower. She barely knows her husband and is uncomfortable in her new role, intimidated by the formidable housekeeper, Maggie, who remained with the family after her emancipation. Helen is shocked to discover Imari, a pregnant fugitive slave, and her young son, Joe, hiding in a shed on the property. Her first instinct is to expose them; however, as she learns more about them, she questions her preconceived notions. Adding to her concerns is her husband's opium addiction, which is being exploited by an unscrupulous doctor who has his eye on Helen, and the appearance of bounty hunters looking for Imari and Joe. Meanwhile, abolitionists gather in Utica to found the New York State Anti-Slavery Society. Opposition from more conservative locals leads to violence and brings to light previously buried family secrets. Utica-area native and local historian Sinnott's deep knowledge of the abolition movement in upstate New York informs this nuanced portrayal of white ambivalence and anti-slavery activism.

— *Lindsay Harmon*