



★ **Autumn Leaves, 1922**

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Autumn Leaves, 1922 is a sumptuous spy romp with an irresistible heroine.

Glamorous gossip columnist Kiki is bereaved and beauty-starved when she returns to Paris from her mother's deathbed in Australia. The jazz age is in full swing, and Kiki throws herself into the madcap bliss of the high life, from Chanel couture and champagne to heady arguments with Hemingway.

Although Paris is a balm for Kiki, her former life catches up with her, and her "days [are] shaped by secret meetings with shady men," including Theo, a Russian prince who's reduced to driving a cab post-Revolution; Tom, a reporter who is wanted in Australia for military desertion and in Britain for treason; and Dr. Fox, a manipulative, silver-tongued spymaster who directs Kiki's espionage efforts. Embedded in glamorous Paris, Kiki hunts down a blackmailer, a communist plot, and the men who are driven to bring the next war to a head. Meanwhile, she searches for clues about her mother's murky past.

This sequel's backstory is dispatched in an uncluttered, quick manner so that the book can maintain a brisker pace than Kiki's satin shoes do. It sticks to its heroine: a modern, driven woman with an uncanny knack for sizing up anyone she meets. Kiki describes Paris, from its flower sellers to amuse-bouche, with luscious, piercing images that only a gossip columnist or a spy might notice. Her moxie and sense of style permeate the story, in which each character retains a trace of shabby glamour from their former lives. While individuals' motives are not especially complex, Kiki's investigations are suspenseful and sustain a frisson of tension.

Swoon through *Autumn Leaves, 1922*, whose mysteries are enriched with toothsome details of a bygone Paris in the glittering years before Hitler came to power.

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