

Falcon in the Dive

Leah Angstman

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A teenage spy falls for her sworn enemy and faces impossible choices in Leah Angstman's novel *Falcon in the Dive*.

Ani's comfortable childhood was cut short by the greed of the wealthy, merciless Beaumercy family. As the French Revolution rages, Ani agrees to infiltrate one of their palaces, which contains arms and information that the rebels need. There, she becomes entangled in a battle of wits with Aubrey, a handsome, charming marquis who is far kinder and more trusting than she expected. With events speeding out of control, Ani must decide who to betray: her people or her heart.

Eighteenth-century Paris is rendered in gritty, chaotic terms, evoking shattered glass, the smell of rot, and the blood of men slain before feral crowds. Orphans like Ani are kidnapped off the streets and forced to perform deadly work in coal mines. By comparison, Aubrey's world, though teetering on a razor's edge, still contains luxuries and comfort beyond measure. In such an atmosphere, trust is an expensive commodity. Shifting allegiances make Ani's mission all the more dangerous.

The more entangled Ani and Aubrey become, the higher the price they pay for their love and freedom. The story culminates in emotional, shocking scenes in a Parisian jail and with a firing squad at the side of a dark road. As each hero fights for France in their own way, the other is not far from their thoughts, though the odds of their reuniting become ever dimmer. Only an extraordinary stroke of luck could bring them back together for good—and miracles are hard to come by amid faithless friends and hopeless causes.

Falcon in the Dive is a novel about star-crossed lovers negotiating the physical and moral dangers of the French Revolution.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (January / February 2024)

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