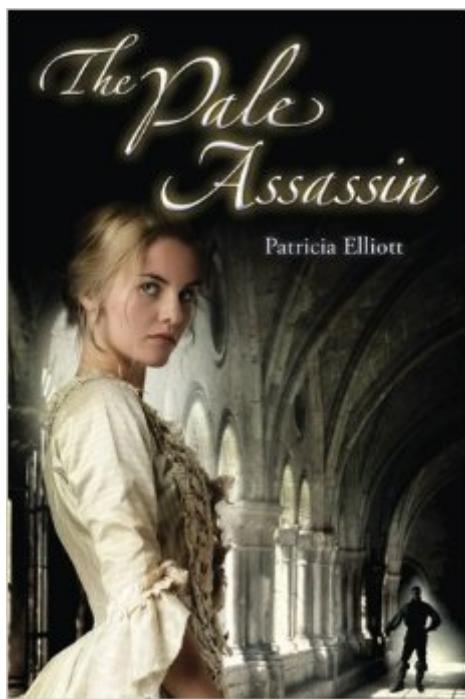


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# The Pale Assassin



## **Synopsis**

In this dramatic novel set during the French Revolution, a teen aristocrat must question the justice of her own wealth while facing the cataclysmic divisions of her society. Secrets are revealed, sympathies shift, and every choice change or end a life. Spoiled, beautiful fourteen-year-old Eugenie de Boncoeur is accustomed to outrageous privilege. The French Revolution may rage around her, but Eugenie's luxurious lifestyle is only improved by visits from her brother, Armand, especially doting since the two were orphaned. What Eugenie doesn't know is that their guardian has promised her in marriage to the wealthy, vengeful Le Fantome, a revolutionary nursing a secret grudge against her family. As the Revolution becomes increasingly violent, Eugenie is shipped off to convent school. Finally, there is no place in France that is safe for her. Eugenie dusts off her lightly used brains and rises to the challenge of survival; and soon she is in the thick of turmoil and romance, confronting spies, secret agents, and double-crossing suitors in her quest to get out of France alive."

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 840 (What's this?)

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Holiday House; Reprint edition (July 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0823423123

ISBN-13: 978-0823423125

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #104,986 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #91 inÂ  Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Europe #100 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Europe #366 inÂ  Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Girls & Women

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Although orphaned at a young age, fourteen-year-old Eugenie de Boncoeur has never known much hardship. Raised by a wealthy guardian, her life is carefree. She is more concerned with parties and dresses than the growing unrest around her. But in July 1779, she is suddenly and violently made

aware when the French Revolution begins. Eugenie is sent to a convent for her own safety, but even there she cannot escape the violence. And she soon learns that she is in danger from more than just the hatred the revolutionaries have for aristocrats like Eugenie and her family. Her guardian has betrothed her to a mysterious man named the Pale Assassin, a man who wants to marry her to get revenge for a wrong he feels her father committed against him years ago. Eugenie attempts to flee to safety with relatives in England, chased by both revolutionaries and the sinister Pale Assassin. I had mixed feelings about this book. It starts out a bit slow, and Eugenie was a hard character to like at first - she is spoiled, selfish, and immature. However, as the book progresses the story picks up pace, and Eugenie becomes more likeable as she matures and develops an awareness of the world around her. Ultimately I did get into the story and am interested to find out what happens next in the sequel, which will be published next year. This isn't the best book I have read recently, but if you can overlook the slow start and enjoy historical fiction, I would suggest giving this book a try.

The Pale Assassin is a very interesting historical fiction book. The book opens with a short scene about the assassin, Le Fantome, and his downfall due to Eugenie's father. After this event, Le Fantome swore to get revenge on their family. The rest of the book is about Eugenie, 14 year old spoiled aristocrat, during the French Revolution and her escape to avoid the assassin as well as the guillotine. Historically, this book is very accurate and you get a good sense of what France was like during the revolution. I found that it gave just the right amount of history. Enough that you understand the time era and what was happening around the heroine, but not so much that it was boring and distracting from the main story of Eugenie. As other reviews state, Eugenie is a spoiled brat who really only thinks of herself. She never thinks before she speaks or acts, which makes her a very unlikable character. I was hoping that as the story progressed, we would see her mature to become a real heroine. You don't. She stays as irksome as ever. Even with the drawback of Eugenie's character, I still found that I enjoyed this book immensely. I have never been into the French Revolution time period, but this book told it in a different light and actually made it quite interesting. At times the story was slow, but the fast adventuresome parts made up for it, making this book a great read. I will soon be reading and reviewing the sequel, *The Traitors Smile*, in hope for a great conclusion to this thrilling story.

Probably on my top 10 list of best books ever read. If you even slightly liked *Les Miserables*, then you should totally read this book. It has the same idea, but from a different point of view (and no singing of course for those of you who don't like musicals). But I seriously suggest this book. It's got

romance, adventure, passion, and sadness in it. Great book.

The story itself sounded interesting, but the cover wasn't all that pretty, so I held off buying it for a while until I saw Barnes and Nobles only had one paperback left. I swoop in and bought it. I'm so glad I did. The backdrop of the story is that it set in Paris during the French Revolution. As the reader reads the book, they get to watch the French Revolution slowly turns more violent and bloody. It's a very interesting story involving the politics at the time. I was suck in by it. It was way better then what the back made it sound. Plus the story isn't too predictable as the signs are very subtle that you keep second guessing yourself or you figure something out, change your mind, and find out you're right. There is a little romance in it, but not much and it might seem like it develop fast, but the people had gone through a lot that to them it felt like a lifetime. When I first picked up the book, I thought the story would end with one book, but by the ending, I hope it didn't end like that. Thankfully, there is a sequel like I thought there would be and I can't wait for it to come out. Well worth your money and time. I think the story can be enjoy by all ages, but maybe more by the older crowd then the younger. The series is only coming out in paperback, so it's more affordable. I'll check you local bookstore first to see if they have it, if not order online although it will cost a little more with shipping and handling. Another great thing is the sequel is coming out fairy quick, about half a year after the other rather then a typical year.

First for the good: The historical details of The Pale Assassin have been excellently researched, and the story carefully adheres to the actual timeline of major events of the French Revolution. Elliot's use of technology, her descriptions of fashions and trends, and her representation of actual historical people all fit the time period, and lend an air of authenticity to her writing. I feel as though this would be an excellent way for a Social Studies or English teacher to sneak in some in-depth knowledge under the guise of entertainment. Now for the not-so-good: The best I can call this novel is 'mediocre'; yes, the historical details are excellently represented, but weak characterizations and inconsistent narration drag the book down. The heroine swings wildly between idiocy and brilliance. Throughout the book she demonstrates selfishness, a profound lack of empathy or understanding for the people around her, and a dangerous inability to recognize the danger of her situation. At other times, she inexplicably knows exactly how to deal with danger, and comes up with genius plans to save the day. I find it difficult to believe that someone who's stupid enough to trapse around the streets of Paris during the violent riots of the Revolution, oblivious to the roving gangs of the anti-aristocracy, would also be able to bluff their way past guards and gatekeepers. All of the

other characters are similarly inconsistent. There are also a lot of loose ends; though the abruptly cut-off ending is the biggest, throughout the book Elliot introduces characters and situations which are never properly resolved or explained. You know how you should "never introduce a gun in the first act that isn't used by the last act?" That happens over and over, and it's annoying. In all, this is a half-hearted rip-off of the far better "Scarlet Pimpernel."

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