



## You Only Love Once

*Caroline Linden*

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Devilishly handsome and absolutely fearless, Nate Avery is in London on an important mission—and paired with an English spy who is meant to watch him as much as aid him. But much to his surprise, that spy turns out to be an alluring and enigmatic temptress.

Angelique Martand may be a beauty, but she's also the most dangerous agent in England—and this job is far beneath her. She doesn't like the way the dashing American looks at her, or the way he makes her feel—like a woman, not like a spy. She can't afford to fall under Nate's spell and indulge her desires, no matter how desperately she wants to. But soon it becomes clear that there's more to this job than either of them knows . . . and the secret they uncover could cost them their lives as well as the once-in-a-lifetime passion that burns between them.

*"The Bow Street Agents: Spies in Love" series is an historical romance trilogy set in the Regency era. The individual book titles allude to similar titles in the popular, modern-day James Bond spy novels and films.*

## You Only Love Once Details

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Author : Caroline Linden

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## From Reader Review You Only Love Once for online ebook

### S says

During the French Revolution, in 1793, a newborn little girl was whisked out of France by her mother's maid Melanie, leaving her parents, the Comte and Comtesse d'Orvelon, to be killed. In 1820 London, Angelique Martand is a spy and assassin who takes her last job before retirement. She is to work with an American, Mr. Nathaniel Avery, to find and apprehend an embezzler, Jacob Dixon. Angelique is given additional instructions: kill Dixon. Angelique is a good character; she's confident yet insecure. She wants out of the spy/assassination business but doesn't know any man who would love her given her job. Nate is loyal and smarter than he seems. The supporting characters are fun, too, especially Ian the Scotsman and fellow spy and Prince the former slave and experimental chemist. Too bad Nate doesn't get to show off more of Prince's inventions. Then Dixon tells them something that further shakes Angelique's confidence in her spymaster.

This was a riveting read. I could practically hear the James Bond music at times, especially when Angelique, Ian, and Nate have to insure Angelique's retirement. The prologue though, is that the rationale behind why Angelique is a spy/assassin? To right the wrongs done to her parents? Isn't that career not very conducive to having children to perpetuate the family genes? I suppose at 18, she didn't think that far ahead.

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### Ada says

Decent read. It's the third book of the Bow Street series. I enjoyed book 1 a little better but I did really like how Harry, the hero of book 1 made an appearance in book 3. What I really enjoyed was the climax of the book once our hero, Angelique, finally made up her mind about which way she wanted move on with the plan and sided with our hero, Nate. Once it got to that point, the story really started to move and I like how it concluded.

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### Janet says

Book #4 is leaps and bounds better than #3. This one had a real plot, and dynamite between-the-sheets scenes (and staircase scenes...closet scenes...bedroom scenes...hackney cab scenes...). Only one more to go—dare I hope it's even better?

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### Elaine says

I read this some time ago and rated it 3. I read it again today and rated 4. I liked this story much more than the first time. It's an enjoyable read with some twists and turns. I especially like the ending, giving Angelique freedom.

4?

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## **Mina Khan says**

Loved the heroine: strong, smart and vulnerable. Even though this is a romance, she just carries the story. The relationship between the hero & heroine is well-developed. The story is fast-paced and interesting. Only one issue in the final confrontation scene made me roll my eyes, but overall loved the book.

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## **Minna says**

*You Only Love Once* was pretty darn good. Set in London, it featured a French expatriate female assassin-spy (awesome) and an American government agent in England to retrieve a thief. The actual tracking-down of the thief was almost laughably easy if you think about it; basically Angelique (assassin-spy) and Nate (government agent) only had to talk to two people and search one house to find him.

The 4 stars are earned in the chemistry between Nate and Angelique. Two people with pasts they aren't proud of and a pile of secrets to keep, they are drawn to each other but have a hard time letting down their inner walls (so to speak). It was obvious that their professions force them to be lonely people and, in each other, they find the one safe person to relax their guard around. It's fortunate, I suppose, that they both also found each other attractive and compatible.

I like Ms. Linden's writing style, it is smooth and moves the plot along so easily that you hardly even notice any plot holes. I would have liked things to have been a little more difficult for the main characters, but overall I enjoyed the story so much I didn't really mind.

Two small quibbles: (view spoiler)

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## **Jody says**

From the moment she was born, Angelique Martrand's life has been one of danger. Before being sentenced to the guillotine, Angelique's parents entrusted her to the care of their most trusted servant to flee to England to save her life. Through bribes and lies Angelique made it to safety and has based her entire life on making those pay who seek to harm others. To that end she has become a master spy with a deadly reputation. She's smart, strong, and always in control.....until the day she meets her latest assignment.

His name is Nathaniel Avery and he's come to England from America to find an embezzler who tarnished the reputation of his godfather. To recover his government's money he must partner with Angelique to act as a bored married couple while searching for his prey. Her connections and womanly wiles are the perfect bait, not only to find the embezzler but to set Nate's heart racing. Angelique has her own orders when it comes to dealing with the embezzler, orders that have shadowy motives and have her questioning the rightness of what she's been ordered to do. As their assignment progresses, pretending to be a couple soon becomes a reality and for the first time Angelique has found a man who she sees as an equal. Tired of disguises and deceptions, she lets Nate in on who she really is and what she's been ordered to do. Will he accept her and the love she offers or will her past be too dark to forgive? And once she starts telling the truth, those in power will do whatever is necessary to keep her quiet. Will Nate be there to save her or will she be on her own?

This is a fast paced story with two very likable characters. Angelique is smart and gives as good as she gets. The sexual tension between her and Nate is combustible and leads to some very sexy interludes. She accepts what she's had to do in life and makes no excuses, she's no wilting heroine. Nate is the perfect match for her. He admires her strength and never holds her back. He's honorable to his cause but very willing to sacrifice for love. There's very intriguing secondary characters as well. One of them being a fellow spy who's a sexy

Scotsman named Ian. He has a mysterious past and after the explosive finale I'd love to see more of him. So for those who like sexy and intelligent characters with a good mystery, this is definitely the book for you.

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## Ursula says

It doesn't happen often but I could not finish this one.

Went back to it after several weeks and got to 60%. I was bored with the story and bored with the heroine. I just didn't care. I liked him but I do not like her, our female spy. I wouldn't like her if she were a man, either, btw. It's probably her cold-bloodedness and the ease with which she will sleep with someone when she is on a mission if it helps her to succeed. I dislike her comfortable-with-killing for England schtick, even though it is 1820 and she is a woman, which stretches my ability to suspend disbelief. I am not a fan of the James Bond stereo-type, male or female. (I should have taken note of the book title!)

The first chapter:

*Angelique Martand was not particularly proud to be a spy. It was a distasteful job, often dirty and dangerous, and at times it left such a mark on her soul that she feared the stain would never wash away. But it was also a necessary job, and someone must do it, for the good of the entire country.*

OK. Fine. If she hates her job, why is she doing it? If it is gradually killing off any finer feelings, like compassion and empathy, (she has little of either) why not quit? She seemed financially secure. Was the job worth destroying her soul for?

Let's not pretend that a person who does all this and more is going to be a nice person. Fair enough. We have horrible heroes who redeem themselves or are "saved". So maybe the idea was that the lovely man is going to "save" the jaded female spy. I could buy that. But we are given to understand that she is also a cold-blooded killer. I should add, I **hate** hitman/woman books and films. I will never understand how a person can kill another person for money or because it is a job. Yet our hero is a darling- he saves slaves and is an idealist. So he will save the sociopathic spy? Ummmm- nah. Just doesn't work for me. If she were the evil temptress villain in this book- that would work! Heroine- no.

There is a lot of sex in the book. I am always up for that, but it just reinforced my feeling that the heroine valued the great sex but not the man. She was very aggressive and experienced, fine, I just hated her detachment, her lack of commitment to *any* kind of meaningful relationship. She was going to screw the hell out of him and dump him once the mission was over. I am being even-handed here- I would dislike a hero who did this, too. Using people is just not nice.

Good on the author for trying something different. There will be many who will no doubt enjoy the book. Oh well. I really wish I could have liked it more.

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## Karla says

This was a good book. While there is a spy plot the focus is really on the relationship and how Angelique will escape her circumstances and have an Happy Ever After. The plot was smart and it was very nice to read a story without aristocratic characters. I also think Caroline Linden does a very good job at action scenes (there's one toward the end). So why the three stars? I just never connected with the characters. Not sure that

that was the book's fault as I read this very slowly.

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### **Lizzie says**

Now one of my favorite romance novels! What has won me are the equally matched main characters with intelligent and fantastic scenes together. I wish I could read it again for the first time! Loved it.

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### **Candace722 says**

Overall a good book and a pretty good author. This was a first (and not the last) book I've read from Linden. The ending threw me off a bit, but I was able to catch on. This story could easily be turned into a series. I felt like I wanted to know more about the after story with other characters. Again, good stuff.

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### **P. Kirby says**

3.5 It's a pity GR doesn't let you use decimals, because I do think this is a touch beyond a 3, which is my code for "okay, but forgettable." There was a lot to like about *You Only Love Once*.

Angelique is a spy and sometimes assassin working for a shadowy arm of the British government. When Angelique was just a baby, her nursemaid smuggled her out of France just before an angry mob captured her parents, a count and countess, and hauled them off to the guillotine. Consequently, Angelique believes in what she is doing, seeing it as a means of insuring the stability of her adopted country by keeping insurrectionists and other malcontents in line. At nearly thirty, however, Angelique is starting to tire of the game. She decides that her recent assignment, finding an Englishman who absconded with a chunk of money from the American government, will be her last.

Nathaniel (Nate), an American, has come to London to apprehend Jacob Dixon, the man who stole thousands of dollars from the U.S. and in the process ruined a friend of Nate's. He is annoyed to be paired with an English agent, especially one who appears to have her own agenda and who thinks he's an amateur.

Further complicating matters is the fact that Angelique has been given the secret directive to kill Dixon, while Nate is determined to take Dixon back to the U.S., alive and kicking.

What I liked about *You Only Love Once*: Angelique. First, Angelique is presented as a strong and capable assassin and secret agent. This doesn't change when Nate arrives on the scene. Angelique doesn't start shedding IQ points like a white cat on a black sweater, just because she's falling in love. Better yet, Nate likes Angelique because she is dangerous and smart. And while he gets protective and a bit alpha-male-ish, he doesn't take over the show. He respects Angelique and even lets her come up with "the plan."

Better yet, the characterization doesn't fall back on "Men are from Mars, Women from Venus," sexist gender stereotypes. The narrative makes no attempt to soften Angelique, none of the usual, "yes, she's an assassin, but she also loves kittens and works in a soup kitchen feeding the poor." This character isn't Snow White and she doesn't apologize for that. (There is one spot where Angelique worries that Nate will be disgusted by the fact that she is an assassin. Honestly, it felt sort of contrived, like an agent/editor made the author add it to make the character appealing to more sensitive romance readers.) She takes charge in and out of bed.

Unfortunately, the novel felt terribly overwritten to me, which is why I can't give it more than a three. First there's the unnecessary prologue. ("Unnecessary" and "prologue" being redundant.) The prologue is nothing more than a backstory exercise, featuring characters that play no part in the story. Melanie, Angelique's maid, does show up briefly in the story, in a scene that really doesn't advance the story. As for Angelique, she's a squalling infant at the time and not a character.

Overall, there isn't that much to the plot to merit the page count. Angelique and Nate wander about London a bit, have sex, find Dixon, and concoct a plan to reconcile their differing goals (kill/capture Dixon). There is entirely too much text devoted to internal dialogue and introspection. I.e., a lot of "does he/she care for me?" sort of thing. A story needs to reveal some of the characters' thoughts and feelings, but I'd prefer that it be done by "showing" me via dialogue/action, rather than paragraphs of "telling." (The telling approach seems to be a "feature" not a "bug" of romance, but it doesn't work for me.) The constant immersion in the characters' thoughts also diminishes sexual tension.

I also found that too much of Angelique's plan, at the end, was revealed. Had it been kept from me, the reader, it could have generated more suspense.

Nevertheless, I really liked Angelique. If she is typical of Linden's other heroines, I'll have to read more of her [Linden's] work.

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### **Nancy Luebke says**

What's a man to do with a charming, beautiful spy who may or may not be on his side. I was captivated with this book and it was hard to put down. Stayed up to early morning to finish this. And a unusual ending to put the icing on this cake.

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### **Jackie says**

2.5 Good writing and historically informed, but the author doesn't construct her characters in a way that allows readers to connect emotionally to them. Linden has half of the character construction piece down -- creating plot events that shape the characters -- but is missing the more vital other half -- creating individualized, unique characters with emotional lives.

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### **Sharyn says**

Oh no the 3rd in a series!! Spy story romance with a wonderful heroine who was whisked out of France by her mothers maid in 1793 as her parents were arrested for being aristocrats. London 1820, she is now a spy for England and is sent to help an American in London find a fugitive. She way underestimates him, as he does her, but the story and the romance build well and make an enjoyable book.

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