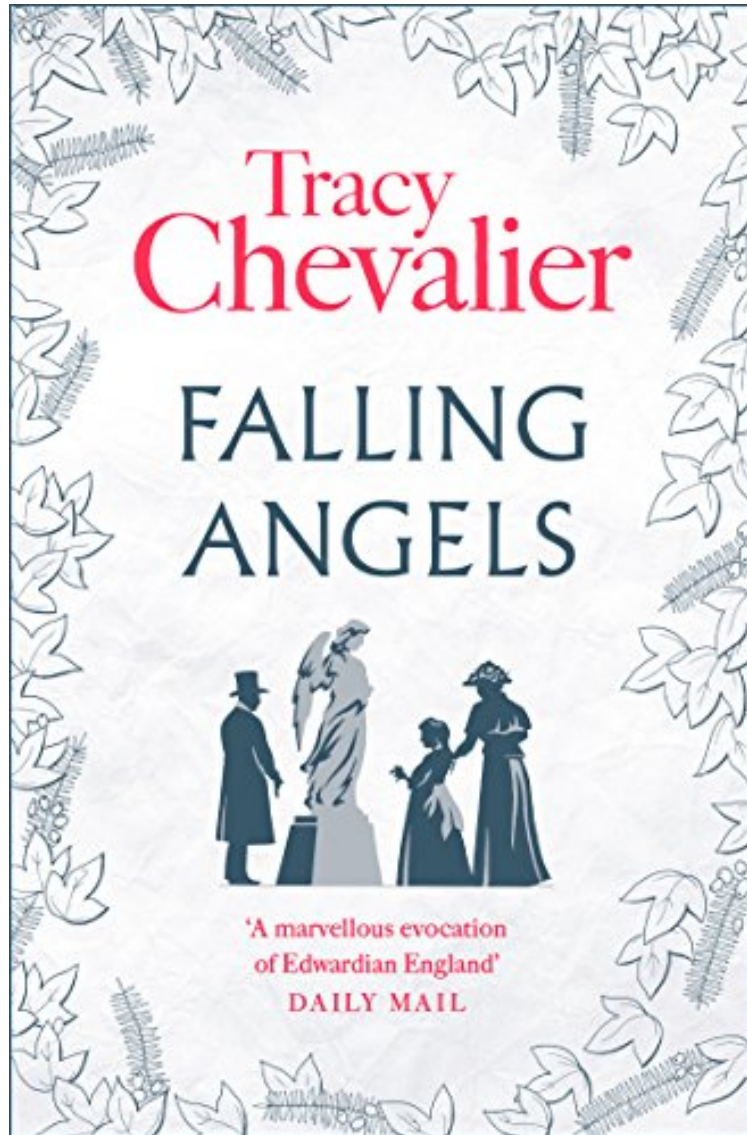


[PDF] Falling Angels

## Falling Angels

Von Tracy Chevalier

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**Von Tracy Chevalier : Falling Angels** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Falling Angels:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.  
DECEPTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS... Von lawyeraauThis book covers the period in the lives of two families that stretches from January 1901, the end of the Victorian era, to May 1910, the end of the Edwardian one. The lives of these two families, the Colemans and the Waterhouses, converge and become inextricably woven together when they

inadvertently meet at a cemetery while paying their respects to deceased loved ones. Unbeknownst to them, their lives are moving inexorably towards a tragic denouement, one that is to have ramifications for both families. Two of the daughters of these respective families, Lavinia Waterhouse and Maude Coleman, find that they have formed the beginning of a friendship during the brief interlude at the cemetery. The two girls also befriend Simon Field, the son of one of the gravediggers at the cemetery. The friendship of the two girls is cemented when they later discover that they are to be neighbors, as through happenstance the Waterhouse family moves onto a property adjacent to that of the Colemans. Despite differences in social class and personal taste, as the Waterhouses are definitely sentimentally bourgeois and the Colemans have pretensions to more refinement, the families are brought together, however unwillingly, through the friendship between Lavinia and Maude. The mothers of these two girls are unable to form a true friendship, as stolid Gertrude Waterhouse and pretty Kitty Coleman are unable to find much common ground. Gertrude is bound in tradition, while Kitty, dissatisfied with her marriage and her life, is looking to escape tradition and expand the role allotted in society to women. Never the twain shall meet, as these women will never see eye-to-eye, despite the friendship between Lavinia and Maude. This is a well-plotted novel with each character adding his or her perspective to the events that unfold, many of which are of a secretive nature. Even the husbands, Albert Waterhouse and Richard Coleman, have something to say that contributes to the development of the story, as does Richard Coleman's mother, Edith, as do the Coleman's maid, Jenny Whitby, and their cook, Dorothy Baker. Lavinia's younger sister, Ivy May, who plays a small but pivotal role, also has her say, as does Kitty's admirer, John Jackson. There are also a number of twists and turns in the tale. The story is told in the clean, spare prose that fans of the author have come to expect. It is told through first person narratives, and it is almost as if the narratives were taken from the personal diary or journal of each character. Therein lies the rub, as the author is unable to make the voice of each character truly distinguishable from that of the others. The book suffers somewhat from the failure of the author to develop a truly unique voice for each one. This is, however, the only failing of this otherwise absorbing and intriguing story that is suffused with period detail. This is an otherwise excellent book that fans of the author will enjoy, as will those who love historical fiction. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. DECEPTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS... Von lawyer

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**Kurzbeschreibung** Will friendship overcome the social boundaries of Edwardian London in this bestselling historical tale from the author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. One cold January morning, in the wake of Queen Victoria's death, two young sets of eyes meet across the graves at Highgate Cemetery. One pair belongs to smartly dressed Lavinia Waterhouse, whose mother clings to the traditional values she sees slipping away; the other to Maude Coleman, whose mother longs to escape the stifling grip of Victorian society. Thrust together by the girls' friendship, these two very different families embark on a new century that promises electricity, emancipation and other changes that will shake the very foundations of their lives. Set among the sweeping skirts and social upheavals of Edwardian London, Tracy Chevalier's *Falling Angels* is a meditation on change, loss, and recovery. Her central characters are two young girls of the same age, whose family plots are situated side-by-side in a cemetery modeled on Highgate. Lavinia Waterhouse is respectably middle-class, devoted, like her conventional, doting mother, to the right way to do things, although suspiciously well-schooled in subjects like funerary sculpture and the English practices of mourning. Her friend Maude Coleman comes from a slightly more privileged and free-thinking background. In contrast with Lavinia's mother, Maude's mother Kitty Coleman is well-educated by the standards of the day, and it has made her restless and irritable. But neither her reading, nor her gardening, nor her affair with the somber, high-thinking governor of the cemetery is enough for Kitty. She comes alive only when she discovers the women's suffrage movement, and her devotion to the cause takes her away from Maude in every sense. Although the point of view shifts between many characters (with even the Coleman's maid and cook getting their say, sometimes unnecessarily), *Falling Angels* is essentially the children's story, since it is their lives that are most open to change. The narrative spans exactly the years of Edward VII's reign, from the morning after his mother Queen Victoria's death in January 1901 to his own death in May 1910. Chevalier (*Girl with a Pearl Earring*) deftly uses the nation's dramatically different mourning for these two monarchs to signal the social transformations of the period. Readers at ease with English history will find *Falling Angels* an unusually subtle novel, with an emotional range that recalls the best of the Edwardian novelists, E.M. Forster, and his quintessential novel of Edwardian manners, *Howard's End*. --Regina Marler.co.uk In *Falling Angels*, Tracy Chevalier has combined a moving elegy to the lost innocence of the 21st century's grandmothers and great-grandmothers with a reminder of the strength and modernity of their aspirations and achievements. Maude and Livy are aged six in 1901, when Queen Victoria has just died and the whole country is in mourning. In 1910 they are almost young women who have experienced their own personal losses and belong to a generation who are no longer prepared to wear black for months to mark the death of Edward VII. Their families, the Colemans and the Waterhouses ("no relation to the painter"), meet in a graveyard beside their family graves. One has a large marble angel erected above it, the other an urn (an allusion more to the morbidity of a Victorian columbarium than the eternity of Keats' pre-Victorian "unravish'd bride of quietness"). Their choices of a monument to death seem to reflect their differing attitudes to life, but Chevalier makes clear that these two families are forever linked in their fates and aspirations. The story moves swiftly, switching to multiple narratives: young but quickly maturing Maude and Livy; the adult Colemans and Waterhouses; their servants; and Simon the gravedigger boy. Chevalier has chosen carefully who speaks when, and who, more importantly, keeps silent. Livy's little sister Ivy May is one of the most beguiling figures of the work, but is given only two sentences of her own (and those two bring a lump to the throat). Mrs Coleman's

experiences with the campaign for women's suffrage are marginalised through silence; Maude and Livy tell instead of their reaction to the women's antics. And while *Falling Angels* may be a story of women, despite, or perhaps because of their exclusion from contemporary politics, Simon's observations are the most honest and revealing. Chevalier herself writes after the story's end that "the Acknowledgements is the only section of a novel that reveals an author's "normal" voice. Every character uses their "normal" voice in this novel, and Chevalier's own voice excels in ensuring that each one is unique (for example, everything is "delicious" for Livy), so that, like Mr Coleman mourning his daughter growing up, you will "miss her when she goes". --Olivia Dickinson