



Angeline

Anna Quinn

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Out of the cloister and into the world, a young nun with a tragic past is presented with a chance for a new beginning in Anna Quinn's novel *Angeline*.

After taking vows to escape losses that she cannot talk about, Angeline fades into her cell at a Chicago convent. Its restrictions and quiet complement her despair. But when the diocese withdraws funding, the nuns are forced to scatter. Angeline is sent to an island past Seattle that's led by "the Gloria Steinem of nuns."

At first, the freedoms of Light of the Sea are anathema to Angeline—as is the fact that its sisters have been excommunicated for the same. But as she adjusts to warmth and plenty in place of her former paucity, she begins to think that Washington is where she's meant to be. Here, her sisters march for social justice, give communion, have pets, and preach equality. She begins to blossom in their presence.

But not everyone on the island is fond of these radical nuns.

Drawing a distinct line between what behaviors are godly and which are not, the story includes clear heroines and villains; few fall into the grey. On the latter side are violent fathers, unhelpful sheriffs, and a vicious priest; on the former are Angeline's crew, each of whom survived tragedies and pain, but who still preform variations of miracles every day, beginning with their kindness. Shocking developments and bursts of violence push the book toward a melodramatic close, but also one that signals hope for Angeline, who finally allows herself to pursue the forgiveness that was always available to her.

Issuing a strong refrain of redemption, *Angeline* is a novel in which bold and loving nuns move toward a healing future, with or without the approval of the Vatican.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (March / April 2023)

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