

REBEL DOVE  
Adapted from a historical novel  
by Linda Daly

**LOGLINE**

Intrigue and passion are a dangerous combination for a woman in wartime.

**PITCH**

Elise Hamilton is pretty, vain, self-centered, and a southern spy in America's Civil War, dividing her time between playing hostess at her mother's boarding house, gathering information from their eclectic Yankee guests, and delivering important messages to the Rebels.

Joshua Carmidy, a Union major, attracts her interest and despite her own resistance and their mutual suspicions, her affections as well. Caught in a swirl of intrigue and danger as the young nation divides into warring sides, Elise's attitude and actions endanger her friends and relations.

Torn between her loyalty to the southern way of life, the devastations and deaths all around her, and her increasing romantic feelings for Joshua, Elise must choose between idealism, the exciting game of spying, loyalty to the Southern way of life, and the pull of her heart.

**SYNOPSIS**

Pretty, vain, and self-centered Elise learned early on at her mother's Virginia boarding house to use her feminine wiles in return for flattery and gifts. She sees the impending war between the states as the perfect opportunity to meet more admiring gentlemen and maybe even dabble in some local espionage among the increasingly volatile mix of Union and Confederate officers, politicians, journalists, and travelers. Yankee Major Joshua Carmidy catches her attentions and vice versa, but both are deeply suspicious of the other, all the while denying the blazing attraction so obvious to others.

Naively conniving yet endearing, Elise exposes her best friend as an abolitionist helping slaves to escape north, without realizing the ramifications of her actions. As a spy, she steals a list of Union sympathizers and in the ensuing reprisals, an innocent little girl is killed. Then she accidentally shoots her best friend's slave. Wracked by guilt and remorse, Elise decides to quit spying as the war escalates. But she's in too deep.

Joshua is wounded and Elise lovingly nurses him back to health, then lives in a state of high tension about her beloved's safety when he returns to the battlefields. In the midst of the war years of deprivation and danger Elise matures and her indomitable spirit holds her family and friends together. In the last days of conflict while delivering a warning to Rebel troops, Elise is attacked, barely rescued, and in danger of being accused of conspiracy. Only her wits and the force of her personality save her. With the war finally over, Joshua and Elise have a sweet, passionate reunion and determine to head north to New York City the very next day with her mother and her journalist husband. A better future beckons them all.

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**LONG SYNOPSIS**

In a country torn between North and South, slavery and abolition, Southern belle Elise's heart is torn between the way of life she has always known and a Yankee Major who is stealing her heart.

Elise overhears information about where the Union troops are storing their ammunition, sneaks out in the ruse of delivering food to the troops, and delivers the valuable information to her long-time friend and admirer Thomas Hastings, local head of the Confederate Army. On her way back from that rendezvous she's stopped by Major Joshua Carmidy. Beneath the regulations of his official investigation and her denials is a challenging flirtatious banter. And beneath that, suspicion.

Elise's mother Sarah is gravely concerned that her daughter's play at espionage endangers their boarding house and their livelihood.

Citizens vote to split Virginia and a new state is formed—West Virginia, greatly heightening tensions in the now-divided states.

To cover her own espionage activities, Elise exposes her best friend Miranda, telling her plantation-owning father Lucas that his daughter is an Abolitionist and that she has been attending quilting parties among sympathizers who sew coded "safe" messages into the colorful quilts they then hang outside their homes as signals to runaway slaves and their sympathizers.

Furious about his daughter's betrayal, Lucas enlists the help of Reverend Noah Crenshaw to expose the Abolitionists, unaware that Crenshaw and his wife are also helping slaves to escape from bondage.

Dissembling, Elise weaves herself tighter and tighter into a web of deceit, using Lucas's misogyny and her mother's blind concern to supposedly cover her tracks. But does that handsome Major Carmidy see right through her? His gaze certainly lingers on her feminine attributes, but then Elise herself is often caught breathless by her own reactions to the dashing officer.

Reverend Noah and his wife Gwyneth play a dangerous game of denial and deflection to draw attention away from their Abolitionist cohorts. Noah is wracked with guilt over lying to his good friend Lucas, though it is to protect many other innocent lives.

Lucas flies into a rage and tells his daughter Miranda that he knows of her Abolitionist activities.

Sarah notes the attraction between her spirited daughter Elise and her guest Major Carmidy, though Elise still won't admit it to herself.

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## **LONG SYNOPSIS** (*page 2*)

At a lively dinner party at the Brown's plantation, Elise steals a list of the local men and how they voted on the measure for secession from the Union. She turns it over to rebel spy Thomas Hastings. Major Carmidy announces that he's been put in charge of travel for all residents and the restrictions are getting tighter as war between the states becomes more immanent. Lucas Brown discovers the document is missing but Elise plays a very good flighty, innocent belle. Though the Major casts suspicious but admiring eyes on her.

That night, still reeling from the effect of his daughter Miranda's betrayal, Lucas recalls some of the indignities and abuse of the slaves by their owners, particular the rape of a young Tess by Lucas's father-in-law and the subsequent birth of Jesse. Though he's comforted by his lover slave Elmira, his soul-searching does not turn up a pretty picture. Upstairs in the plantation house his wife Catherine undergoes a similar depressing self-assessment.

As hostilities increase between the Union and the Confederacy Sarah again admonishes Elise to stay out of men's affairs lest she put their family in great danger. About the attraction between Elise and the Major, Sarah notes that Joshua follows orders and Elise follows her heart. Joshua also warns Elise to be very careful, since having Union officers in their boarding house could inflame rebel sensibilities against her and her mother. Journalist and boarder Michael Honeycutt also warns Elise.

Sensing an attraction between Michael and her mother Sarah, Elise feels the typical youthful horror that her parent might be having a romance. She also decides, based on how she's been treated by the men who usually fawn over her, that men like war more than they like women. That eases her dented ego a bit.

Out on a moonlight walk, Sarah and Michael reveal their growing feelings for each other and share details from their past lives and loves. They also revel in the electricity between them and promise each other to be extra careful during this war; neither wants to lose a love again to death. As the Federal troops advance, Sarah tries to warn Elise of the ugliness and horror of death but the girl is still blithely romantic about the whole thing, thinking only of how much she would miss Joshua were he never to return.

The Battle of Bull Run is brutal confusion. Michael the journalist makes sketches and notes; some civilians picnic and watch the from the sidelines. Major Carmidy and Michael meet over one of Carmidy's dead troops, assuring each other they need not fear one another. The Yankee troops are routed, leaving the battlefield a sea of bloody bodies.

Carmidy, wounded and bleeding, returns to pack his things and he and Elise spar around their feelings: her jealousy and his impatience with her pettiness. But both know there's more depth than either will admit aloud.

The same night Michael and Sarah announce their intentions to marry, Elise's stolen list of Union sympathizers leads to the fiery death of local friends. Though Lucas blames himself for the list having been lost, Elise knows she is to blame for the tragedy and is fraught with guilt. She's also angry at her mother for choosing a Northerner to love.

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## **LONG SYNOPSIS** (page 3)

Lucas is off to join Jefferson's forces and fight for the Confederacy. Revealing his plan to send their son north to safety and an education, Elmira and he are caught in bed by his wife Catherine, who rages with jealousy and jumps back into the brandy bottle, swearing revenge. Thinking Lucas gone, Catherine tries to sell her rival Elmira, who is raped by the corrupt overseer, who first knocks Lucas out cold.

In a heartfelt reunion Elise and Joshua admit their feelings for each other along with the acknowledgement that they hold opposing loyalties, him for the Union and her for the Southern way of life. With the Yankees in town and confiscating people's belongings, Elise and Sarah walk a tightrope between the warring sides, aided by Joshua's influence. Elise decides to stop spying.

Lucas and Elmira are discovered, him recovering from the blow and a heart attack and her raped and in shock. Catherine fears discovery of her part in the whole mess.

Down by a stream, Elise tells Thomas she will no longer spy for him. He pulls a gun and accuses her of going over to the other side because of Major Carmidy. Carmidy finds Elise but he doesn't know Thomas is hiding there with a gun aimed at her. Elise manages a tense withdrawal from the scene.

She and Joshua come across the overseer, shot dead. When Elise identifies stolen property from Lucas's office, Joshua realizes it was her who stole the papers. He is disappointed and furious at her complicity. She is devastated by the whole complex situation of the war without and within.

Continuing home they come under fire and Joshua is badly wounded. Seeking help for Joshua Elise accidentally shoots and kills Joseph, Lucas and Elmira's son, who was hiding there with Miranda, who was also helping Sarah and Elmira's slave Jesse to escape. Elise feels betrayed, furious, devastated, and dreadfully concerned for the badly wounded Joshua.

Months later, Elise is worn out and harried by concern for Joshua, who she has been nursing day and night without him seeming to make any progress. Elise is humbled by the tragedies all around her – some of which she caused – and prays for Joshua's recovery and the restoration of their love.

Elise overhears Joshua tell Michael that he's well enough to travel and is on his way to Washington, in part for the safety of her and Sarah. She is overjoyed to hear him admit his deep love for her. They share a passionate farewell.

Surrounded by the crumbling state of affairs around her, Elise swears not to let the war get her down. Catherine meanwhile decides to kill her gone-mad rival Elmira with deadly mushrooms on the day of Sarah and Michael's wedding there at the plantation house. Through an innocent accident, Catherine herself is also poisoned and dies.

Miranda grieves for her mother and Elise comforts her with wise words about the devastations of war, the need for hope, and revelations of her own love for a Union Major.

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## **LONG SYNOPSIS** *(page 4)*

Michael offers Lucas a job managing his investments up north in order to get him and Miranda to safety. When she hears her friend will be leaving for New York, Elise is wild with grief. Michael comforts her and promises they'll stay at Dove's Landing so Joshua can find her after the fighting.

Another year on in the war, things are hard at Dove's Landing with food being scarce and everything getting run down. Plus all the suffering and grief over lost loved ones. Michael reveals his wealth to Sarah, who is surprised and relieved, given the dire straights they are in because of the war. They agree to leave for New York a week after the war ends.

Elise, while delivering a warning to the Rebel troops, is attacked by Thomas's ragged men. He saves his old friend but clearly reviles her for her involvement with Carmidy. In the aftermath of a deadly ambush Elise fears she'll be accused of conspiracy against Thomas and the rebels. Confessing her complicity to her friend Constance, Elise feels relieved and reconnected. Constance, protecting Thomas and hoping to soften his deep hatreds, steels herself to tell him of Elise's positive actions and of her own work helping to free slaves.

With the war finally over, Joshua and Elise have a sweet, passionate reunion and determine to head north the next day. Michael easily convinces Sarah it's time to go to New York and meet his parents and son.

In a final confrontation, Thomas again pulls a gun on Elise and accuses her of the ambush. Joshua comes to her rescue and talks Thomas down in a wars' end peaceful truce. A better future beckons them all.

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