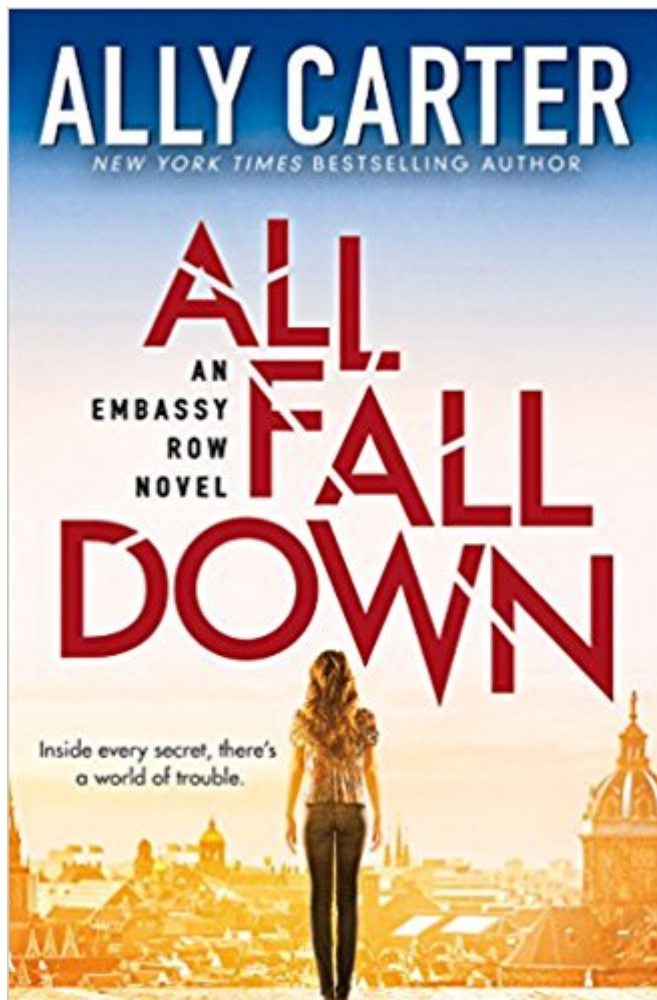


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# All Fall Down (Embassy Row, Book 1)



## Synopsis

Grace Blakely is absolutely certain of three things: 1. She is not crazy. 2. Her mother was murdered. 3. Someday she is going to find the killer and make him pay. As certain as Grace is about these facts, nobody else believes her -- so there's no one she can completely trust. Not her grandfather, a powerful ambassador. Not her new friends, who all live on Embassy Row. Not Alexei, the Russian boy next door, who is keeping his eye on Grace for reasons she neither likes nor understands. Everybody wants Grace to put on a pretty dress and a pretty smile, blocking out all her unpretty thoughts. But they can't control Grace -- no more than Grace can control what she knows or what she needs to do. Her past has come back to hunt her . . . and if she doesn't stop it, Grace isn't the only one who will get hurt. Because on Embassy Row, the countries of the world stand like dominoes, and one wrong move can make them all fall down.

## Book Information

Series: Embassy Row (Book 1)

Paperback: 320 pages

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Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 211 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #67,105 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #52 in [Books > Teens >](#)

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[Mysteries & Thrillers > Thrillers & Suspense](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up  
Carter fans will not want to miss this series launch. Sixteen-year-old Grace Blakely is sent to live with her grandfather, a diplomat stationed in Adria. She is determined to solve the mystery of her mother's death three years prior. Despite what the evidence and witnesses prove, Grace is sure of one fact: her mother's killer is out there, and she is going to prove it. The story

introduces many characters who do not hesitate to assist Grace with her covert plan, but many of these relationships are not fully developed, thus promising more to come. A subtle hint of romance between Grace and one of the male characters will encourage readers to anticipate the next book in the series. Eileen Stevens does an excellent job of portraying the stuffy character of Grace's grandfather, the ambassador, as well as the various prime ministers and their family members. Her characterization of Grace is well presented; at times, Grace appears brave and fearless—but not always. VERDICT This mystery keeps listeners intrigued and interested in Grace's future visits to Embassy Row. —Sheila Acosta, San Antonio Public Library --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Praise for All Fall Down: "Action packed and meticulously plotted — Readers will be clamoring for the next book in the series." -- Booklist "Carter knows how to construct a gripping thriller." -- Publishers Weekly "With its intrigue and clever plot twists, this series opener will leave readers hungering for more." -- School Library Journal

\*Review posted on Page Turners Blog on 4/9/2015\* All I have to say is that Ally has out-Allyed herself. Seriously, she has given us everything we expect in an Ally story -- smart (in this case, also a very feisty and determined) heroine, stakes that are sky-high (who is her mother's killer and why was she killed?) and family ties (oh, how I love those because in almost everyone's life, their family means the world to them). Ally's setting is the most unique part of the story. The fictional city of Adria and its Embassy Row provide a perfectly tricky setting for diplomatic ties and intrigue. As I read the story, I kept thinking about what it would be like to be dropped into this rather sheltered world where expectations are high and one move could lead to one heck of a diplomatic mess for all countries involved. Let me take a moment to talk about stakes. I've been reading a number of stories lately where the stakes are just not high. I know that they don't always need to be heart-poundingly crazy, but they do need to be there. Ally is the master of high stakes. You never, ever forget what is at stake and what needs to be resolved. You guys know I loved Cammie and Kat, but honestly, Grace has my heart. There is a complex pain and fierce pride that wraps itself around Grace. Every move she makes is to resolve the one thing that keeps her going -- to find her mother's murderer. Oh and yes, kissy scenes. Boy oh boy, can Ally ever write those. There are two potential love interests, well, kind of because as usual, I've picked one and I declare myself firmly Team Alexei. Simply put, this is one heck of a good story.

I just finished this book last night in one go. I've never read anything by Ally Carter and this is the first in her Embassy Row series. I am so glad that the other books in the series are already out because I plan to spend the next few nights finishing them all!!! I really could not put this book down. Grace Blakely makes for a very compelling character. The book tells you in many different ways that she is an unreliable narrator but you fall in love with Grace in such a way that you still won't believe it. The more other people say or make Grace feel that she's crazy, the less you agree with them. Grace is a beautiful disaster but she becomes our beautiful disaster when she uncovers the plot (and tries to foil it) for what might be yet another murder by a man from her dark past. Grace's battle with mental health after the tragic death of her mother are at the forefront of the book but the book doesn't wallow in it. It definitely colors her thoughts and actions. It's been three years and she can't get past it though everyone seems to wish that she would. Grace insists that her mother was murdered but everyone around her says quite the opposite. It gets to the point that Grace doesn't know who to believe or trust, herself or her grandfather, the powerful ambassador she's meant to live with while her military man father is on tour and her older brother attends West Point. She plays it a little too close to the vest because of this and that will hurt her later on in the few friendships she's able to make with the nearby embassy kids. Carter does an unbelievable job on showing us what grief and loss look like. Anyone who has ever suffered from either or suffer from anxiety or PTSD will see a bit of themselves in Grace's struggle. The problem is that while Grace is a fully formed character, the friends---her own Scooby gang--that she picks up on Embassy Row are mostly caricatures in this first book. I hope that we get to know those friends more deeply in the next books, particularly her brother's best friend Alexei, "the Russian boy next door." The book is a fast-paced race against the clock once it gets started. I highly recommend having the next book in the series-- See How They Run (Embassy Row, Book 2)--on hand because you will be begging for more when you hit the [spoiler alert] cliffhanger at the end. I can't imagine any book that's handle grief and espionage so well.

I did not know what to expect going in to *All Fall Down*, and I went in blind| what a pleasant surprise! International politics and a murder mystery never looked so good. Some aspects to this storyline had me just about rolling my eyes--apparent "spy-like skills"--some of the characters conveniently possessed. A higher degree of difficulty could have really added some authenticity to the narrative instead of the ease by which some of the teens countered their investigation. The formation of a "Scooby Gang" felt a little cheesy. And finally, how

the grown-ups kept things from our protagonist, Grace, for her own good. Can you think of a book where that has ever worked, like, ever? Yes, those aspects lowered my rating a little, but only because it is thrown under the genre of realistic fiction. I did like the formation of a crack bunch of self-appointed teen spies with abilities and technology they had

“borrowed” from their diplomat parents. It was all very exciting and took me back to the days of watching *The Famous Five* on television. Grace annoyed me at first, her sarcasm, her frequent flashbacks and episodes. Mainly because none of it made a whole lot of sense. But as we get to know her, more things clicked into place. She has a lot of witty lines that had me laughing out loud. Maybe her bipolar fluctuation between daring, adventurous, and fragile to mentally unstable prevented me from connecting with her in the beginning. But by the conclusion of *All Fall Down* I was eager to read more of her story. Can I mention the cliff-hanger the book ended on! Ay Currumba! Ally Carter you tease me so. All of the *Super Crack Teen Spy Squad*, as I call them, are likeable, even Grace, crush Alexei, though there seems to be a lot more to his story. I’m guessing in the following books we’ll discover more. Rosie, Noah and Megan are all the crew I want as my best friends, they have Grace back even when she behaves in a way that she shouldn’t deserve it and vice versa. The Embassy Row kids stick together. As for the mystery of who killed Grace’s mother – well, I’m usually pretty good at sleuthing out the answer well in advance in these types of books, but to be honest, didn’t see this one coming at all. Carter’s narrative style has a way of moving the story forward without dropping obvious clues, but enough to throw suspicion on lots of other characters. I was guessing right up to the reveal. I was first attracted to this series because of fellow reviewers, and the colourful cover. Plus Carter seems to have a pretty great catalogue of titles. I’m really glad I decided to give this a go. It has tones of movies like *The First Daughter*, *The Prince and Me*, *What a Girl Wants*, and *Chasing Liberty*, with a murder mystery thrown in. Fun reading and I’d recommend it to those who want a light YA read with an angsty heroine, political intrigue and a mystery to solve.

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