



# How to Ruin a Queen: Marie Antoinette and the Diamond Necklace Affair

*Jonathan Beckman*

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In 1785, a sensational trial began in Paris that would divide the country and captivate Europe. A leading Catholic cardinal and scion of one of the most distinguished families in France stood accused of forging the queen's signature to obtain the most expensive piece of jewelry in Europe: a 2,800-carat diamond necklace. Where were the diamonds? Was the cardinal innocent? Was, for that matter, the queen? The revelations from the trial would bedevil the French monarchy as the country descended into a bloody revolution.

In *How to Ruin a Queen*, award-winning author Jonathan Beckman tells of political machinations and enormous extravagance; of kidnappings, prison breaks, and assassination attempts; of hapless French police in disguise, reams of lesbian pornography, and a duel fought with poisoned pigs. It is a detective story, a courtroom drama, a tragicomic farce, and a study of credulity and self-deception in the Age of Enlightenment.

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