



# **A Flight of Fancy**

*Laurie Alice Eakes*

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# A Flight of Fancy

Laurie Alice Eakes

## A Flight of Fancy Laurie Alice Eakes

Cassandra Bainbridge has twice set aside her scholarly pursuits--once for the London Season and once for her wedding preparations. Love seems a wonderful alternative to study, until disaster strikes. When an accident brings an end to her betrothal, she heads for the country to recover from both her injuries and her broken heart. There she pursues her love for ballooning and envisions a future for herself as a daring aeronaut. But when her former fiancE slips back into her life, will she have to choose between him and her dream?

Filled with the mystique of London society and the charming beauty of the English countryside, *A Flight of Fancy* explores what it means to find the true source of happiness and love amid the distractions of life. Readers will love the next installment in this rousing Regency series from accomplished author Laurie Alice Eakes.

## A Flight of Fancy Details

Date : Published October 2012 by Revell Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group

ISBN : 9780800734671

Author : Laurie Alice Eakes

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Christian Fiction, Romance, Christian, Historical Romance, Regency, Fiction, Christian Romance

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## From Reader Review A Flight of Fancy for online ebook

### Jocelyn Green says

If you like Regency novels, Laurie Alice Eakes is your go-to author. I'm giving Flight of Fancy five stars for several reasons: top-notch storytelling, impeccable historical integrity, believable characters, rich sensory immersion, and fascinating details, especially related to hot air ballooning. If you want to lose yourself in a story, and feel smarter at the end of a novel, pick up this novel, and any of this author's other works.

~Jocelyn Green, author of Wedded to War

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### Lonnie says

Another spy story...Let's count how many attempts can be made on one person's life:

- 1) Mob, fire
- 2) Mob, shot
- 3) Stabbed
- 4) Blown up with saltpeter
- 5) Fall to death in sabotaged hot air balloon

Whittaker was by far my favorite character. You can't help but love and feel for him too. He's torn between conflicting responsibilities: protecting his family honor, his livelihood, his love. Cassandra is daft not to realize how much he loves her. He is constantly trying to protect her (He blames himself when she gets sick because he prayed for rain to try to save his mill). He is not interested in marrying her for her dowry (even though he could use it). He loves her intellect and thinks she beautiful (despite the spectacles :-)) And, his respond when Cassandra finally told him what she feared the most, was perfect. No matter how many times she ends their engagements, Whittaker keeps coming back. If that's not love, I don't know what is.

My favorite line in the book: "He was competing for her affections with a balloon." :-)

Cassandra has 2 reasons for breaking off the engagement...One, I could understand, the other I thought was just stupid (it's the very reason why they should get married!)

I liked Honore better in this book. She was good to Cassandra. But, she made the same mistake she made in the first book...fell in love with the wrong man! We'll see if she gets it right the third time around!

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### Christine Lindsay says

Nobody can write Regency England Romances better than Laurie Alice Eakes. And her latest in that series, Flight of Fancy, is just like the title suggests---a delightful, fanciful flight into romance. The main character Cassandra Bainbridge---of the Daughters of Bainbridge series---is a real hoot. She made me laugh. Oh my goodness, she made me laugh.

I loved Cassandra's somewhat imperfect nature, her slightly less than perfect looks, her mildly uneven temperament. I get so tired of perfect heroines with stunning looks. Instead, I love a heroine that rises above her disadvantages, and Cassandra Bainbridge is all that.

Deep down Cassandra is a really sweet girl and quite pretty, but bless her . . . she wears spectacles. And thanks to a tragic accident, walks with a painful limp throughout the book. Now this is a character I can

relate to.

Due to this accident, Cassandra isn't thinking as clearly as she used to. To give her sore heart a rest, she rejects the man who wants to marry her, and she escapes into her private world of academic and dangerous interests, including the fanciful one of ballooning.

Throw in a truly wonderful hero, Lord Whittaker, her former fiancé, who is also not perfect, and you have a romantic romp that takes you away from your worries for several hours. Lord Whittaker doesn't know how to handle his spirited but wounded love, Cassandra, but he tries so hard, and wins my heart as well. At the same time, he is trying to save his mills and his workers' livelihoods, as well as his mother's reputation.

I loved this story for its fun, purity, its story where I just want to see the two characters together. The author uses the brilliance we've come to expect from her, as she weaves historical detail into the plot, adding depth without pulling the reader out of vivid scenes. At times I really felt like I was up in the clouds in a balloon with Cassandra and Lord Whittaker.

Another big thumbs up to Laurie Alice Eakes for a delightful romance that I recommend for female readers between the ages of 13 and 89.

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### **Toni says**

Enjoyed this book. I'm glad to find another author to follow. Her style is fun and exciting. I enjoyed the time period.

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### **Tamara Tilley says**

The constant back and forth between Cassandra and Geoffrey in *A FLIGHT OF FANCY* became tiresome and tended to frustrate me more than it captivated me.

We first read of the volatile relationship between Cassandra and Geoffrey in *A NECESSARY DECEPTION*. Their passion for each other consumes them, and is the center of their up and down relationship. *A FLIGHT OF FANCY* picks up after Cassandra's tragic accident. An accident that has left her scared and convinced that she and Geoffrey are no good for each other.

Geoffrey is beside himself with guilt but refuses to give up on the love of his life. He has every intention to prove to Cassandra that they are meant for each other.

Cassandra on the other hand decides to do everything in her power to convince Geoffrey they have no future. And her fascination with balloon flight is just the thing she plans to use to show Geoffrey she will never allow him to control her again.

The next three hundred plus pages is an ongoing tennis match of back and forth between Cassandra pushing Geoffrey away, and Geoffrey's persistence that Cassandra is the only woman for him. Throw in rioters burning down mills, a Major injecting himself into the family for a yet unseen reason, balloon trials and travels, Cassandra's younger sister following in her footsteps when it comes to men, and a murderous plot,

and you have A FLIGHT OF FANCY in a nutshell. I finished reading the book because I wanted to get to the bottom of who was trying to kill Geoffrey and why. But towards the end, I found myself doing a lot of skimming because quite frankly, I felt the author over estimated the patience of her readers and I could only handle so much back and forth between the heroine and hero.

Book provided for review purposes.

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## **Heidi says**

I enjoyed this book more than the first in the series. I think mostly because I loved the hero. I wanted to rap the heroine on the head through most of the story though. :) I was completely and utterly confused with the ending as well...I read it several times...trying to make sense of it...but still felt like I missed something. BUT...they still got their happily ever after so I was surprisingly okay with being clueless. :) Can't wait to read book 3.

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## **Melanie says**

Review on Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/review/R2DYL93X...>

Review to be posted on my blog 10/29

Prior to A Flight of Fancy, I've read two books by Laurie Alice Eakes and enjoyed both - this book was no exception, as I really liked it, too! It was a great read that kept my attention throughout, I only wish I wouldn't have had to take breaks while reading it. :)

I LOVED the characters! Geoffrey was probably my favorite character, but Cassandra was a close second - one reason being I could relate to a lot of what she was feeling. :)

The story was really good and I liked the little bit of suspense that was in A Flight of Fancy along with the romance. I found myself really caring about what was going to happen in the story and "on the edge of my seat" more than once!

A Flight of Fancy was a great historical read! I look forward to reading the next book in the "The Daughters of Bainbridge House" series when it releases! If you enjoy historical romances, then I think you'll like this book as well. Although I don't think it's necessary to read the first book in this series before reading A Flight of Fancy, you might want to because then you'll understand fully what happened earlier. :)

\*I received a complimentary copy of this book for my review. I was not required to give a positive review, only my honest opinion - which I've done. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.\*

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## **Kathleen E. says**

Sunday, October 28, 2012

A Flight of Fancy by Laurie Alice Eakes, ©2012

Book 2 in The Daughters of Bainbridge House series ~ Filled with the mystique of London society and the charming beauty of the English countryside, A Flight of Fancy explores what it means to find the true source of happiness and love amid the distractions of life. Readers will love the next installment in this rousing Regency series from accomplished author Laurie Alice Eakes.

A Flight of Fancy

Date Released: 10/01/2012

Her head is in the clouds. His feet are planted firmly on the ground. Can love cover the distance?

Our story begins in August of 1812 in London, England. Cassandra Bainbridge may be a bit of a bluestocking ~ an educated, intellectual woman, but when Geoffrey Giles is near, love seems a fine alternative to passion for Greek and the physics of flight. With his dashing good looks and undying devotion to her, the earl of Whittaker sets Cassandra's heart racing with his very presence. It seems his only flaw is his distaste for ballooning, the obsession that consumes so much of her thoughts.

Cassandra has twice set aside her scholarly pursuits--once for the London Season and once for her wedding preparations. Love seems a wonderful alternative to study, until disaster strikes. When an accident brings an end to her betrothal, she heads for the country to recover from both her injuries and her broken heart. With time on her hands and good friends to help her, she pursues her love for ballooning and envisions a future for herself as a daring aeronaut. But when Lord Whittaker slips back into her life, will she have to choose between him and her dream?

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. --Psalm 34:18

Are Cassandra's good intentions marred by others around her? Is her father who he appears to be? Is Geoffrey free to live his honor or be blackmailed into the somber actions he would not choose?

Every kingdom divided against itself is ruined. A house divided against itself falls. --Luke 11:17b

A page-turner to find out the turmoil brewing in these turbulent times erases any presumption on the part of the reader. A Flight of Fancy is deeper than the balloon sketching and math calculations to keep it afloat. Laurie Alice Eakes has a depth of discovery to be explored as this pair travels ~ separately, or together? And what of her younger sister who is waiting in the wings? Honore is watching and waiting... It is to be seen if she lives up to her name. Her story is next. But, before we go there, enjoy A Flight of Fancy as we continue from Book 1 to find out the happenings of The Daughters of Bainbridge House and their travels. Each book can be read as a "stand-alone" as the action within is enough to keep you busy connecting-the-dots. A family or two to be reckoned with. A tale of suspense and love tied into one in this Historical Fiction novel set in the times of upheaval for all, however hidden by their daily lives.

Laurie Alice Eakes

Laurie Alice Eakes is the author of The Midwives series: Lady in the Mist, Book 1, Hearts Safe Passage, Book 2, and Book 3, Choices of the Heart, being released in January 2013; A Necessary Deception, and several other novels. Laurie Alice Eakes received a Bachelor of Arts in English and French from Asbury University and taught two years of high school English. She prefers, however, to teach adults to improve their writing craft, and in January of 2012, began the coursework to augment her Master of Arts in Writing Popular Fiction with a Master of Fine Arts in Writing. Laurie Alice writes full-time from her home in Texas, where she lives with her husband and sundry dogs and cats. A Flight of Fancy is Book 2 in The Daughters of Bainbridge House series. Book 1 is entitled, A Necessary Deception.

When young widow Lady Lydia Gale helps a French prisoner obtain parole, she never dreamed he would turn up in her parlor. But just as the London Season is getting under way, there he is, along with a few other questionable personages. While she should be focused on helping her headstrong younger sister prepare for her entrée into London society, Lady Gale finds herself preoccupied with the mysterious Frenchman. Is he a spy or a suitor? Can she trust him? Or is she putting her family in danger?

Readers will enjoy being drawn into this world of elegance and intrigue, balls and masquerades. Author Laurie Alice Eakes whisks readers through the drawing rooms of London amid the sound of rustling gowns on this exciting quest to let the past stay in the past and let love guide the future.

Honore, the third sister in the Daughters of Bainbridge series: Honore's story, A Reluctant Courtship, will be released in the autumn of 2013.

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Thank you to Revell Blog Tour for inviting me to join the blog tour for Book 2 in the Daughters of Bainbridge House series, A Flight of Fancy. I received a copy of this book in exchange for my review in my own words. Revell, a division of Baker Publishing Group, began over 125 years ago when D. L. Moody and his brother-in-law Fleming H. Revell saw the need for practical books that would help bring the Christian faith to everyday life. From there, Fleming H. Revell Publishing developed consistently solid lists which have enjoyed the presence of many notable Christian writers over the years. This same vision for books that are both inspirational and practical continues to motivate the Revell publishing group today. Whether publishing fiction, Christian living, self-help, marriage, family, or youth books, each Revell publication reflects relevance, integrity, and excellence. They publish resources from a variety of well-known brands and authors, including their partnership with MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) and Hungry Planet.

Enjoy Chapter 1

A Flight of Fancy

The Daughters of Bainbridge House Series- #2

By Laurie Alice Eakes

1

August 1812

Crowds swarmed around and jostled against the Whittaker carriage, slowing its progress from a trot to a crawl. Thick, oily smoke from torches penetrated the interior. Velvet curtains and cushions reeking of pitch felt ready to smother Miss Cassandra Bainbridge, who was already hot on this August night.

"I think we would be better off walking in the crowd than riding in here." She clutched her rose satin reticule in one hand and gripped her fiance's arm with the other, as though ready to spring from the vehicle at any moment, which she was. "Perhaps we could take refuge in someone's drawing room until these bacchanalians go home."

Beside her, Lord Geoffrey Giles, Earl of Whittaker, chuckled and covered her hand with his. "Only you

would use a word like bacchanalian to describe a crowd of drunken debauchery.”

“It is the proper word for those who have celebrated too freely with drink.” She glared at him down her long Bainbridge nose, though she could see little of his face in the gloom inside the carriage. “What should I call them?”

“The right word, of course.” Whittaker shrugged, then moved his hand from her gloved fingers to her nose, to the place where her mirror warned her a crease was already forming between her eyes. Not that what her mirror said mattered much to Cassandra. That crease came from hours of honest study. She gripped her reticule more tightly, as it held the efforts of her latest project—the design of a balloon—and leaned toward Whittaker’s hand. Since the renewal of their engagement in June, the slightest brush of his fingertips came close to distracting her from thoughts of ballooning and Greek translations, and most definitely from wild, celebratory crowds worked to a fever pitch over Wellington finally winning a decisive battle against Napoleon’s troops in Spain. If Whittaker moved his hand to her cheek—

A throng of young men slammed against the side of the carriage, tilting it onto two wheels. The horses whinnied and the coachman shouted. Cassandra screamed, a short burst of a cry, and Whittaker wrapped his arms around her, upsetting her elaborate coiffure and sending her hair tumbling around her shoulders. Her hair and Whittaker’s shoulder shielded her face against his coat lapel.

“Le’s ‘ave a tide,” the drunken youths shouted in speech so slurred as to be scarcely comprehensible. “Don’ be shelfish, arishtocrat.”

“Lord Mayor’s already stingy with t’luminations.”

“More light. More light.” The chant grew deafening.

Cassandra shivered now despite the heat. The men sounded angry, not celebratory. “They’re angry over too few illuminations to celebrate the victory?”

“C’mon, Whittaker, open up.” The rattle of the door handle accompanied the command. “We ‘card yer lady.”

“They know your carriage.” Cassandra raised her head. “But why would they assault you over too few lanterns and torches and such?”

“It’s not me personally. The celebration seems to have gotten a bit rough, is all.” Whittaker stroked her hair. “Hush now. The doors are locked, the coachman and footman are armed, and I have a brace of pistols here in the carriage.”

Shots rang out at that moment, the crack of a pistol, the boom of a blunderbuss fired into the air. Whinnying again, the horses lurched forward. Without Whittaker’s arms around her, Cassandra would have slid to the floor. She grasped his shoulder with one hand and twisted her fingers through her reticule strings with the other.

The jostling and demands ceased, though the crowd did not disperse.

“Perhaps we should have gone home with Christien and Lydia,” Cassandra said, maintaining her hold on her fiancé and folded plans. “Christien is a trained soldier, after all.”

“But this was the first opportunity we’ve had to be alone together for a week.” Whittaker flashed her a smile, then kissed the crease between her brows. “This wedding is keeping you from me so much I think we should have eloped like your sister.”

“They did not elope.” Cassandra rubbed her head against Whittaker’s shoulder. “They simply got married by special license. But this is my first marriage and Mama wants everything just so.” She shuddered. “[I] hate every dress fitting and shopping excursion as much as I dislike this crowd.”

Her ears strained for signs of the rough youths returning. She could distinguish nothing of them over the general din of the throng.

“Where will I wear all those gowns in Lancashire?” she added.

“You will need them when Parliament is in session and we are in town.”

“But that’s not until spring.”

“With the Americans declaring war, it is going to be this autumn.”

“But you promised.” She started to pull away.

“I did not declare war.” Whittaker tightened his hold and kissed her cheek.



“And all spring the Luddites kept you away.”

“I did not go smashing up looms either.” He kissed her lips.

She decided to stop arguing with him for the moment. She forgot about the rowdy revelers outside the carriage. This, after all, was why they had taken Whittaker’s equipage instead of sharing one with her elder sister and her new husband—to be alone with her fiancé for a few minutes of tenderness, for some time of forgetting that Mama wanted her to buy one more fan or pair of gloves, that Whittaker’s mama needed to introduce her to half a dozen more relatives, that Cassandra herself wanted to talk to her fellow aeronaut enthusiasts about her design. She simply wanted to remember this man whose glance, whose smile, whose touch, turned her heart to tallow. She needed moments like this like she needed nourishment for strength and air for breath.

Except he robbed her of breath.

Gasping, laughing, she drew back from his embrace—and began to cough. Nearby, something larger than torches blazed, the smoke heavy and sharp, thick inside the carriage. Around them, laughter and cheers had turned to bellows and protests, commands and threats.

Cold perspiration broke out beneath the sleeves of her pelisse and trickled down her spine. “Whittaker ... what’s wrong?”

“I cannot be certain.” He leaned forward and lifted a corner of the window curtain. “A fire. That is obvious.” He sounded calm.

Cassandra moved to the other side of the carriage so she could peek out the curtains too. Fire indeed. A carriage blazed in a side street. Men and women swirled around it, roaring incomprehensible but angry-sounding words, as though about to burn a body in effigy—or worse.

“This was a celebration for Salamanca,” Cassandra protested. “Why the anger?”

“Too many people and too much spirits combined can cause trouble.” He knelt before her and took her hands in his, letting the curtains fall over the window, leaving them in darkness—a private, sheltered cocoon despite the smoke. “We will be out of it soon and safely back to Bainbridge House.”

“I was hoping we could go to the Chapter House. It’s perfectly respectable, and I have my plans to give—”

“I am not taking you to a coffeehouse tonight. Your friends will have to wait for their balloon plans.”

Beneath the tumult around the carriage, Cassandra thought he muttered, “Forever.”

They had enjoyed such a pleasant evening with Lydia and her husband, she did not want to argue with Whittaker. He did not like her ballooning enthusiasm, but she would change his mind once they were married. Then she would have more freedom to move about, not constantly under her mother’s eye.

Whittaker, not Father, would dictate her movements, and Whittaker was no dictator. Unless he did intend to stop her from pursuing aeronautics.

She pursed her lips and squeezed his gloved fingers with her own, then released one of his hands to clutch at her precious reticule. “I think Lancashire will be perfect for ballooning once the harvest is in. All that flat land and the sea breezes.”

“I think,” Whittaker said, “you will have no time for balloons once we are wed. Mother intends to leave the running of the house to you. She wants to travel, visit friends, but with the trouble with the Luddites, she has been afraid to do so.”

“But—” Cassandra released his other hand. “I know little of household management. I thought she would be there, help me. Geoffrey, when were you going to tell me this?”

“Mama was going to when she takes you to Gunter’s tomorrow.”

“Oh, that.” Cassandra did not admit she had forgotten the engagement. “One of my ballooning friends—”

“Enough about balloons. It is as much a passing fancy as was your translation of Homer.”

“Homer was not a passing fancy at all.” Cassandra raised her chin. “I finished it. Then I saw the balloon and aeronautics—”

He silenced her with another kiss.

“What was that for?” she asked when she could catch her breath.

“To ensure I am no passing fancy.”

“You know you are not.” Because she had broken off their betrothal in the spring, she leaned forward this time and pressed her cheek to his, slipped her arms around his shoulders.

He drew her off the seat so they squeezed into the footwell between the two benches. The cacophony of the crowd, the oiliness of smoke, and the jostling of the carriage ceased to matter, may as well have ceased to exist. Always he won her attention this way, sending the world packing, even her scholarly interests and now her enthusiasm for flight. If he was in the same room, she could not bear to be more than inches from him and felt as though a piece of her were missing every time he left.

“I love you so much it scares me sometimes,” she murmured into his ear.

A shudder ran through him. She understood why. He felt the same. Their profound attraction had gotten them reprimanded more than once, mostly by Cassandra’s sister Lydia. But now seven endless days stood between them and their wedding. She wished it were seven hours, or, better yet, seven minutes.

They would reach Cavendish Square in little more than seven minutes unless more crowds stopped them. Chaperonage and separation. Annoying, dull dressmakers would crowd between them. Tea and cakes with his mother and embarrassing conversations with her own . . .

Cassandra dropped her reticule so she could bury her fingers into Whittaker’s thick, dark hair. “Only a week,” she whispered.

“Too long.” He drew her closer.

Her hair tumbled over his hands. His cravat and her gown would be hopelessly crushed. Mama and her companion, Barbara, would lecture about proper conduct for a young lady. Her younger sister Honore would give her sly glances and giggle. Father would scowl at Whittaker and draw him aside for a “manly” conversation about propriety and dishonor. Cassandra did not care. Whittaker loved her despite her need to wear spectacles most of the time, despite her eccentric interest in Greek poets and flying machines. Surely once they were wed, he would understand she would die of boredom overseeing the household and stillroom and all those country housewife things, or, worse, being the London hostess for a member of the House of Lords. She accepted his proposal when he was plain Mr. Giles, a younger son. His becoming the earl due to an unfortunate accident to his elder brother did not change her. It certainly did not change his feelings for her. Alone in the carriage, every time they were alone, he made that amply clear. Marriage would be even better. So much—

The carriage rocked again. More drunken voices shouted through the panels. The door handles rattled.

Cassandra gasped. “Geoffrey.”

“Stay down. I’ll fetch my pistols.” He started to rise. A strand of her hair caught on his cravat pin, halting him for a second.

And in that moment, the window glass shattered.

Cassandra screamed and ducked. Whittaker grabbed for his pistols. His feet tangled in Cassandra’s skirt, and they fell against the door—the door at which several revelers tugged. With their combined weight pushing and the bacchanalians pulling, the latch gave way. The door burst open.

And Cassandra tumbled into the arms of a torchbearer.

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## **Cass says**

### **Authentic Historical Story**

A Flight of Fancy by Laurie Alice Eakes felt like watching a movie set in the Regency era. The vivid imagery, society details, and historical accuracy left this reader amazed at the depth of research that must

have gone into writing this book. The story gently transports the reader back in time to a grand country house. The hero, Geoffrey Giles, Earl of Whittaker, inherited the responsibility to maintain a family heritage that he really doesn't want. Smitten with the intelligent "bluestocking", Cassandra Bainbridge, he presses his suit even after she suffers a horrific accident that disfigures her.

Feeling far less than perfect, she assumes he won't want her and breaks their engagement throwing herself into her fancy to fly in a balloon.

Meanwhile, a villain lurks behind a series of mishaps designed to bring down Geoff, but hurts Cassandra.

This reader found *A Flight of Fancy* provided many hours of fascinating reading. This Laurie Alice Eakes historical romance reminds one of a George Bernard Shaw's play in that it captures the era so well.

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### **Melissa says**

I liked this book. I didn't like it as well as the 1st book. I think the thing that turned me off the most was the heroine's constant pity party. I realize she suffered from low self esteem, but it was somewhat agonizing to read about her constant guilt and lack of beauty because of her burns. Hoping the last book will be better. I really like this author. This just wasn't my favorite.

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### **Maria Thomas says**

Rounding up from 2.5 stars.

I read this series out of order and have to say that I liked this one the least. The third was much better. I think this one went back and forth from not telling us enough to telling us the same thing too much. Lots of repetition. The repetition was in the religious and moral elements of the story. All the guilt and inability to forgive oneself and one being so immoral that one cannot control oneself. And scarring is so hideous no man can ever love someone who looks like this. God is punishing me for being bad... on repeat...

Some of the stuff left out wasn't obvious until the reveal. People working both sides when only one side was really shown to the reader and no real hint of the other side. Some confusion as to the motives of people. And really the father is shown to be an ogre of a father in the first two books and then at the end he is suddenly soft and loving. I didn't find it very believable. The real bad guy was obvious because there wasn't really anyone else it could be. Not any decoy possibilities.

Another thing unbelievable to me was Honore and Major Crawford. Did I miss something that bridged the gap between Honore thinking he is dull to being totally twitterpated? It felt like a giant leap.

And perhaps the biggest problem I had with the book started in the first book. I never really liked Whittaker. He seemed too much a cad. In this book he proves himself to be truly in love but my dislike for him carried over a bit so I kinda hoped someone else might prove to be a better choice.

The idea of ballooning was an usual plot point for a regency era book as is having an Earl in trade so that made for an interesting story line. The book was good enough for me to continue reading it but had I read

this one first, I am sure I wouldn't have bothered with the rest of the series.

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## **Rachel Brand says**

GENRE: HISTORICAL ROMANCE

PUBLISHER: REVELL

PUBLICATION DATE: OCTOBER 01, 2012

RATING: 4 OUT OF 5 – VERY GOOD

**PROS:** Plenty of suspense and adventure; great details about ballooning; realistic presentation of a young couple struggling with temptation; continuity about family from previous book

**CONS:** Spiritual themes sometimes felt a bit forced and could have been integrated better; conclusion was a bit rushed

Cassandra Bainbridge's courtship to Geoffrey Giles has been shaky at best, between him unexpectedly inheriting his late brother's title and being made an Earl, to his disapproval of her ballooning pursuits, to the passion they just can't seem to contain. When an unchaperoned carriage ride leads to an accident that results in Cassandra being badly burned, she can't help but wonder if God is trying to keep her from marrying Geoffrey. Breaking off their engagement, Cassandra escapes to Geoffrey's old family home in the country to recuperate from her injuries. Geoffrey's mother has assured her that Geoffrey won't be present during Cassandra's visit, but he keeps making unannounced visits, often in unusual attire and with long, lanky hair. Although Cassandra knows that Geoffrey is keen to win her back, she can't help but suspect that he has another reason for his visits to the country, one that may relate to a family secret and his business enterprises with the local mills. Will Geoffrey be able to win back Cassandra's affection, or will her interest in scientific pursuits and his responsibilities with his family's industry keep them apart?

Having loved Laurie Alice Eakes's *Lady in the Mist*, I eagerly requested a review copy of *A Flight of Fancy* even though I hadn't yet had the chance to read the first book in the *Daughters of Bainbridge House* series. But when I did finally get around to reading this novel's predecessor, *A Necessary Deception*, I was slightly disappointed. Despite the intriguing plot, I struggled to connect with the characters and found the action scenes rather more clunky than suspenseful. Despite my qualms about this series, I decided to continue on to the next book in the hope that it would improve with time. And I'm glad to say that it has! I may not have loved *A Flight of Fancy* as much as I did *Lady in the Mist*, but Laurie is definitely back on top form with this book. There was so much to appreciate about this novel, from the underlying suspense to the fascinating details about ballooning to Cassandra's realistic struggles with sexual temptation.

Cassandra's character intrigued me in *A Necessary Deception*, and not just because of the unconventionality of her scholarly pursuits. I appreciated that Laurie dared to write about a character who struggled to resist temptation when alone with her fiancé, especially in a time period when even kissing was frowned upon prior to a formal engagement. Although she struggled with guilt over how unchaste she had been at certain points in her relationship with Geoffrey, I appreciated how Cassandra later came to realise that passion itself wasn't sinful, if it was kept within the bounds of marriage. Considering the society Cassandra grew up in, and its strict social rules, I can see why she would think she was wanton for experiencing emotions for Geoffrey that no one ever talked about or admitted to. It must have been difficult being a young woman in Cassandra's time, particularly if you were fortunate enough to marry a man you loved, rather than having a match arranged by your parents, yet not understanding the feelings you had towards the man you were to

marry. Laurie handled this aspect of the plot very well.

As with its predecessor, *A Flight of Fancy* contained a healthy dose of suspense, relating to Geoffrey's secret mission with his uncle's mills. While at times I did find some of the scenes surrounding this part of the plot slightly confusing, I didn't feel that they overshadowed the main romance in any way. Although I'd already got to know Cassandra in *A Necessary Deception*, Geoffrey's character still felt a little vague at the start of this novel, so I appreciated the chance to get to know him separately from his interactions with Cassandra and her family. And while I mentioned earlier that I found the action scenes in the first book rather clunky, this wasn't the case for *A Flight of Fancy*. My only real complaint would have been that although I appreciated the suspenseful lead up to the unveiling of the villain of the story, the conclusion was slightly rushed, and I had to go back and reread the final chapters again to make sure I'd understood what had happened.

Along with my appreciation for Cassandra's character development and the suspense in this novel, I also enjoyed being able to catch up with characters from the last book, particularly Cassandra's younger sister, Honore. I felt a bit sorry for Honore in this book, as she always seems to be attaching herself to the wrong sort of men. I hope she gets her happy ending in the final book in the series.

The details about ballooning were also an added bonus, and I could tell that Laurie had done a lot of research into the topic. I honestly can't say I've ever read a historical novel where the heroine creates scientific formulas for making a coating to cover the silk on a hot-air balloon, but it's a lot more interesting than it sounds. Considering that I've not taken part in any scientific experiments since I was fifteen, I was pleased to discover that all the scientific talk in this book didn't go right over my head, so don't worry if you're not at all scientifically minded. And even if you do feel a bit bored by the scientific conversations in this book, the scenes in which Cassandra rides in her balloon are sure to catch your interest. Even though I'm not fond of heights, I would rather like to take a trip in a balloon after reading this book.

If I have to comment on one flaw that I've found in all of Laurie Alice Eakes's novels, it's that the spiritual themes aren't terribly well-integrated. I found this with *Lady in the Mist*, *A Necessary Deception* and now *A Flight of Fancy*. As with Laurie's previous novels, the sections of *A Flight of Fancy* where Cassandra considered her spiritual dilemmas didn't always feel like they'd naturally arisen from the story, and they often seemed a little tacked-on and thus took the reader out of the main plot, almost as a distraction or tangent. I'm not sure if this is a result of the author having previously written for the Heartsong Presents category romances, in which I've often found the spiritual messages to be more overbearing than those in longer Christian romances, but either way, I felt that the spiritual aspects of this novel needed to be more deftly woven into the main body of the story.

*A Flight of Fancy* is a definite improvement on the first novel in the *Daughters of Bainbridge House* series, and I'm greatly looking forward to reading the concluding novel. Although I had a couple of minor complaints with this book, I was captivated by Cassandra's dilemmas and her fascinating exploration of ballooning. Combined with the suspense surrounding Geoffrey's secret mission, I found it nearly impossible to put this book down. I hope that the third and final novel is just as enthralling.

Review title provided by Revell.

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## **Debbie Lynne says**

This is a Regency romance that you won't want to put down. Laurie Alice Eakes takes you back in time to

experience the Regency period and I do mean experience it! I love being drawn into a story so much that I feel like I'm there with the hero and heroine and Ms. Eakes does that superbly. The story drew me in from the beginning and I fell in love with both the hero and the heroine. My heart ached for them. If you like a story that has spiritual nuggets but isn't preachy, a story that puts you back in history and lets you feel the time period, a story that has not only a well fleshed hero and heroine but secondary characters as well, a story with intrigue, romance, biblical truths and a unique aspect of ballooning than this book is a **MUST** read. This is one of the best books I've read in 2012. My only complaint was that I had to say good-bye to the characters. But I hold hope that I'll see them again in her third book of The Daughters of Bainbridge House.

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### **MaryLu Tyndall says**

Two things I loved the most about this story were the great characters and the ballooning! Let's start with the characters. As in all of Laurie Alice's books, her hero and heroine are beyond compare. They are deep, unusual, interesting, flawed, yet extremely loveable. Cassandra Bainbridge is a bookish sort, highly intelligent, very compassionate, and not the belle of the ball. She feels she's too smart and quirky to be loved by any real gentleman. She is, after all, obsessed with hot air ballooning and flying through the sky! Not exactly a past time of women in the Regency era. The hero is equally interesting. An earl who doesn't wish to be an earl, who would rather go back to being the second son of an earl without the title, inheritance or the responsibility. An accident early on deforms Cassandra and makes her feel even less worthy of love. That same accident creates incredible guilt between her and the hero that keep them apart. The hero gets involved in some nefarious business to help save his wool mills but which also puts his and Cassandra's life in danger. So, you see this isn't just a romance. As in all of Laurie's books, there is great adventure and suspense. Now, add in the ballooning and it's all too fascinating! I loved learning about the Hot air ballooning! Laurie Alice's research is perfection and the scenes in the balloon had me biting my nails. Well done. A great story you won't want to miss!

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### **Dina Sleiman says**

I really enjoyed this book. I had been waiting for it ever since reading book 1 in the series. Loved Cassandra and her zeal for hot air balloons. I really related with this character, and the book definitely lived up to my expectations :)

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