

Love in the Balance

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Handsome cowboy or debonair tycoon--how's a girl to choose?

Molly Lovelace dreams of a life without cares in Lockhart, Texas. She also dreams of handsome wrangler Bailey Garner, her ardent but inconsistent beau. The problem is, with Bailey's poor prospects, she just can't fit the two dreams together.

Then mysterious stranger Edward Pierrepont sweeps into town--and her life--and for the first time Molly wonders if she's met the man who can give her everything. But he won't be in Lockhart long, and while it certainly seems like he talks about their glorious future together, she can't quite get Bailey out of her mind.

What's a girl to do with all these decisions when love is in the balance?

Love in the Balance Details


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From Reader Review Love in the Balance for online ebook

Michelle says

I'd have to say the best part of the book was at the very end, though I enjoyed reading the whole thing. But the ending was sigh-worthy. Plus, it had a lot of spiritual depth to it. I've not read any historical novels where the man pointed out to some of the critics that it was easier to blame the woman, when often the man was at fault as well. I loved Bailey's honesty and how he shared that just because his sins were hidden didn't mean they weren't as bad. Then, of course, there is the sin of pride, and we all know how ugly that one can be.

I had a love-hate relationship with Molly's parents. I won't say a word about Edward beyond the fact that he was a heartless snake. Okay, I didn't like him either. I won't even elaborate on the reasons I didn't care for him, but would rather let the readers discover that for themselves.

Anyway, many of us have made poor choices to please others only to discover that we should have listened to our hearts, and prayed about our motivations, rather than caving into the pressure around us. I loved the way this book addressed second chances and how despite our flaws and the stupid things we do, Jesus still wants to have a relationship with us. Bailey's love made me think of that. Only Bailey had manly desires that were refreshingly shown. When it came to the spiritual analogy, Bailey's love expressed God's love for us.

Maybe I am over-spiritualizing things a bit, but when I read about the smile on Bailey's face, I thought about how the Lord is waiting for us like a man waits expectantly for his bride. It made tears fill my eyes. And the cleansing of the past (in the river) and new starts that happen when we confess our sins... well, they are removed as far as the east is from the west. That was a beautiful illustration.

Throughout most of the book I felt Molly's pain, and her shame, but I also sensed the healing and maturity that took place in both of their lives. The Lord worked in their hearts during those difficult times. That's was beautifully shown over time and through the progression of their characters arcs. Nicely done!

Stephanie Landsem says

Regina Jennings's second novel in the Ladies of Caldwell County series is just as delightful as her first.

Molly, the heroine of Love In The Balance, had me squirming in my comfy reading chair from the very first page. Now Molly isn't your typical romantic heroine. She's selfish, sometimes petty, and more than a little stuck on herself. As the novel opens, her only redeeming quality is that she's also stuck on Bailey Garner, a sweetheart of a cowboy that you (and Molly) just can't help but love.

Molly is a diamond in the rough. It will take some serious conflict, soul-searching, and ultimately a mistake of heartbreaking proportions to make this girl into the jewel that we all know she can be. I kept the pages flying, rooting for Molly to strip away her old self and become the girl that Bailey deserves, even as she resists change every step of the way.

Bailey has his own battles to fight and he fights them well. He might not be all that Molly thinks she wants, but it's clear from the get-go that he is everything that she needs. As he loses hope in his chances with Molly, we are drawn into his struggles and suffer right along with him, hoping against hope that he can somehow find happiness, even when it seems like all is lost.

Regina manages Molly's transformation and Bailey's struggles with grace, style, and her trademark humor. She is adept at creating down to earth characters—real people who make mistakes, search their souls, make more mistakes, and FINALLY become the people that we know they can be.

I'm looking forward to more Ladies of Caldwell County and I have every reason to believe I won't be disappointed.

I received a free copy of Love In The Balance from Bethany House Publishers in return for my honest review.

Brittany says

I am always impressed when an author can take a character that I truly did not like in one book, make them the main character in another book and bring me around to like them by the end of that story. I was not sure if it would be possible in Love in the Balance for Regina Jennings to make me care about what happened to Molly, because I really, really, really did not like her in book one of the series!

And I will admit that I really did not like her during the first portion of this book. I felt sorry for her and confused about choices that were being made between two people who obviously loved each other. I felt frustration with Molly and with a certain hero in the story...but liking Molly...nope...not going to happen!

Except that it did!

Another thing that impressed me with this story is that it had a big twist to it that I really didn't see coming. This twist is something that I hadn't encountered in any other books that I have read. It is pivotal to the story and brings about the events in the book that made me really start to care about what happens to Molly.

Love in the Balance illustrates the impact that the choices we make can have on us, as well as the impact of not truly trusting God to take care of things in our lives and instead trusting in our own devices. This is a great story of redemption.

You can read this review on my blog at:
<http://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.co...>

Elle says

Molly Lovelace has grown up with the knowledge that she would be marrying someone for her families convenience, someone that would be able to contribute to her family and give them financial stability, someone that would bring Molly into society. Always with the latest fashion trends and never with a hair out of place Molly knows what her family expects, what they don't expect is Bailey Garner. Bailey who is constantly switching jobs, with barely a dime to his name has captured Molly's heart. lifelong friends and have recently become much more, Bailey attempts to keep his distance from Molly in an effort to gain the things that would gain her families approval and give Molly the life she expects.

When tragedy strikes her family, Molly finds herself choosing between Bailey and Edward Pierrepont, a man that can take away her families problems and provide for them all. However, Edward has a few secrets of his

own that cause Molly to return to a town where she is no longer accepted and scorned for what has happened.

Regina Jennings has created such strong characters that you cannot help but love the story as you watch Bailey and Molly's transformation and growth throughout the book. Jennings has such a vivid writing style that you can imagine the town and people and you feel as if you are a member of the community. Jennings has written a captivating story about truth and love and acceptance and how many times the people that we least expect will teach us the most valuable lessons.

Emilee says

This book is about a girl who is torn between doing what she wants and what her parents want. She is in love with Baily Garner, her childhood sweetheart, but her parents just don't think he is quite good enough for their family. It's all about money and prestige to them. When a very handsome, very wealthy man tries to sweep her off her feet she has to make a decision. Although she wants to do whats right she makes a decision that will haunt her.

I really enjoyed reading "Love in the Balance" and I look forward to more books by Regina Jennings!

Shantelle says

Love in the Balance was not anything I had expected. But it was so good! Regina Jennings is quickly proving to be a new favorite author to me.

This was a tenderly redemptive love story. It wasn't just a light, sweet romance that made you sigh and feel warm and fuzzy; it was a sweet romance with a deep, big lesson. It was about forgiveness, trusting God, recognizing one's faults, and loving even when mistakes had been made. It was about how kisses and caresses are special and meant to be within the holy covenant of marriage.

Bailey and Molly both had things to learn and sins to be forgiven; and yet, even when there seemed to be no hope left for them, God showed them He had bigger, better plans. Even when it seemed they had messed up too much for redemption, God's love shone through, enabling them to love with His love and have a beautiful romance.

I loved this book and the message it had... A thanks to Regina Jennings for writing it! :)

There are some heated scenes that were edgy, and adult content, so caution to readers under eighteen. I tagged it as such.

Jessica says

Okay, so I've been looking at this book on my kindle for a while now. I admit, the cover is gorgeous. Who wouldn't be enticed by this great book cover? I mean, come on. There is the pretty parasol, a beautiful blue dress... so you get it, the cover is great. If only the contents of a book could be as amazing as the covers they are given, you'd never have to pick up a book and find yourself reading the, for lack of a better word, crud

that was in this book.

I skipped reading the first book of the series mainly because I just wasn't interested in the storyline. Normally I wouldn't but for some reason, it just didn't appeal to me.

I will say that before reading, I perused the back cover to see what "Love in the Balance" was actually about. In my opinion it was misleading. There was nothing written that indicated the degree of filth and adult content within this book. You are basically lead to believe that it's going to be an entertaining, and possibly slightly amusing, lighthearted book about a girl trying to pick between two guys. Innocent enough right? Yeah... maybe not.

For anyone, like me, who doesn't want to read a plot and story like this, here is the gist of what this book contains. It's a plot where the girl unknowingly marries an already married man; where the male lead gives into temptation and tries to force himself on the girl he loves; where that same girl's family and church turn their backs on her because she now has a tarnished reputation; where every kiss is taken or given in secret; where women's husbands are abandoning them to live their own lives; where a man will attack his wife and turn on an innocent girl only to be shot and killed by his bitter wife; where a young man can enlist his father's help to steal from an already suffering employer; and where a girl's family will push her into marrying a wealthy man and then blame her for choosing wrong.

Of course I know bad stuff happens in the world. But when I sit down over the weekend and open up a fiction book – specifically Christian Romance – my goal is always, without fail, to be swept up in a light, romantic, adventurous story about two main characters that I can root for. Sometimes there will be a mild faith message. Sometimes it's a much deeper one. But either way, I tend to enjoy reading more lighthearted stories and stuff like this just isn't my thing. It was so bad that I almost wasn't able to withstand finishing reading it.

I will say this. "Love In The Balance" does have some great faith messages in it. There were some things that I could relate with. Granted, I've never experienced them to quite that extreme, but I would chance it to say that most people know what it's like to have someone look down on them for decisions they've made. In that respect, the book was okay. It touched on the topic of God's love for us and how sometimes we can find ourselves with only God to lean on.

However, if I had known ahead of time what the REAL plot line of this book was, I wouldn't have started reading it.

Chrissy says

"If you want to help your father," her mother said, "go back to Lockhart and find a man with income."

For as long as she can remember, Molly has been trained to seek a man who could adequately provide for her financial needs for the future. Although Molly does have have job and her own steady income, she was advised that it is important not to be proud and to let her job stand in the way of her decision making processes. She will grow up and find a man who can support the family, and there will be no exceptions made to this rule.

So, although Molly is in love with a kind, honest man in town named Bailey, she is destined not to accept his hand in marriage. He barely has a job and cannot secure enough income to really support himself, let alone Molly. So, while Molly sneaks around with Bailey, privately expressing her feelings with the man she

adores, she must publicly seek a more serious man for her future.

Her parents have suggested marrying her off to Mr. Fenton, a rich banker who is already smitten with Molly's good friend Prue. Although Molly convinces Mr. Fenton to play along with the scheme, letting the town think he and Molly are together while the meanwhile spends her private time with Bailey, the arrangement causes great concern both for Mr. Fenton and Prue. And, after Bailey announces to the entire church congregation that she can no longer withstand the temptations of Molly and must instead abstain from her entirely, Molly decides she must seek another path for her future.

Molly becomes acquainted with a fabulously wealthy man, Edward, who proclaims his affection for the young beauty. At first, Molly intended to carry on with a fake relationship for long enough for Bailey to obtain a steady source of income, but might it be time to seriously consider another man to be her husband? But, something feels off about Edward, like maybe he is hiding something huge that he definitely does not want Molly to discover.

I don't need any distractions, because until I can support Molly, it's clear that God has said, "Not yet."

Bailey begins to wonder if he can really suppress the desires of his heart for long enough to choose the right path and make the best decisions for the future of his family. And at the same time, Molly starts to think that maybe it's not actually part of God's plan for her to wait around for Bailey -- especially with her father needing financial help with keeping his struggling business from crumbling around him. Can Bailey and Molly each learn to wait on God's guidance to ensure they don't go astray from the narrow path?

Although historical, religious fiction isn't normally my genre of choice, I found this story to be surprisingly charming. It really had a Pride and Prejudice-ish feel to it, especially with the focus on marriage as a means to financially support families more than a more individualized decision based on personal passions as we may view it today. At times, it was a bit hard to relate to the historical views of women and marriage, but there was something about the old fashioned vibe here that really added a warm, cozy feel to the story.

I honestly had a bit of a hard time connecting to our main character, Molly, though. Although I understand that she was raised in such a manner that she was expected to consider a man primarily from a financial standpoint, this trait unfortunately worked to create distance between the character and me. She seemed surprisingly aggressive and haughty, which left me feeling a little less invested in her future, I admit.

I liked the ending and was pretty happy with the way that everything wrapped up. For anyone who loves a clean, heart-felt historical romance, I definitely urge you to give this novel a try -- although I probably wouldn't recommend it as much to those who feel repelled by descriptions of old fashioned relationships. It is sweet, thoughtful, and just plain charming -- and just in time for Valentine's Day.

Laura A. Grace says

The verse taken from 1 Corinthians 13:7 describes the theme of this book perfectly! "Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."

(As a side note this review is going to be hard to write without giving away any spoilers!)

"Love in the Balance" was nothing like I expected! From the first chapter I was enraptured by the life of Molly Lovelace and her beau Bailey! When I read about Molly in "Sixty Acres and a Bride" I had a very low opinion of her, but as the story progresses that slowly began to change due to the expectations/ideas of her

family and the horrible circumstances she endures later on! The grace that she receives from God changes her to show that grace to others resulting in a completely different Molly who shows us not only the power of love, grace, and forgiveness God gives us, but also that same power in relationships!

One of the things I loved most about this book was that the characters were humans! I say that because I could relate to them, especially Bailey's struggle of being the man he is and being the man God/he wants to be. I also could relate to Molly her ideas of thinking she is better than others until she is lowered to that same level of people she was previously judging. I felt compassion for these characters in the events they went through because in life we experience events that sometimes leave us feeling unloved, used, and heartbroken!

If you are looking for a novel that can remind you of a love that endures all things as well as the power of forgiveness and trusting God then you are definitely not going to want to miss this novel! Regina weaves this theme through this novel excellently and left me wanting to be reintroduced to the love God gives us so graciously through Himself as well as through others around us!

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review!

Angela says

Honestly, I struggled with this story in the beginning. I thought Molly was silly and shallow. I wasn't sure how I felt about Bailey. I didn't like Molly's parents at all. I didn't like Edward. It was difficult for me to get into this book and care about the characters..... then halfway through the book everything changed and I was glad I had continued reading the story. What I do like is the raw honesty of Molly and Bailey's relationship. Despite all the confusion in trying to love each other by avoiding each other because love is sacrifice, ect, these two still experience emotionally charged moments when around each other and I like that! The self righteous hypocrisy and outright jealousy of some of the characters was a little overwhelming at times but it added the extra antagonism that the story needed and I liked that too. I also liked Molly's efforts to befriend the other social outcasts after her own humbling experiences and I particularly like Anne Tillerton. I like the way story ended also. This is the second book in this series and the fifth story I've read by this author. I like her writing style enough to continue reading the rest of this series.

Sara Cardon says

Wow! I'm so surprised by this story, it's unlike one I've read, which is really neat.

The beginning completely caught my interest, and made me laugh.

Molly and Bailey are head over heels for each other. They also create sparks every time their strong personalities go head to head. They'd walk down the aisle ASAP, if only Bailey made enough to live on.

Molly feels pressure from her unrelenting parents and from the quietly struggling family business - to marry very well. Standing by Bailey takes a lot of unrecognized strength.

Bailey needs time to get his feet underneath him financially. He worries in quiet moments that he won't do well enough to care for Molly and a family, certainly not at the level she expects... deserves... will be happy with?

If only they could get married soon, rather than drag the timing out. Because as comfortable as the two are together and as much as they love each other - the passion that sparks between them makes the wait more than hard, it's morally dangerous.

But Bailey has a plan to get them back on track. It just accidentally makes Molly look bad, plus confuses her and tests her trust. Molly's resourceful with her own ways to speed things along. But she slowly gets boxed in. It's a mess.

So many thought-provoking issues get weighed in this story. The meaning of security, public opinion versus peace from God, and repentance - from God, another person, and yourself. Few authors could tell this particular story and have it come across as well and as intended.

I love high-maintenance, intelligent, brave Molly. She's paired with the best man for her, who with all his faults she can forgive. He sees her flaws and loves her anyway. This is a cast of imperfect, real people. The ending is great. The last line is even a favorite concept made wonderfully fresh. I'm now a fan of Regina Jennings.

Becky says

Love in the Balance stars Molly and Bailey (who we first met in *Sixty Acres and a Bride*). Molly is a smart, independent, and feisty working girl. Bailey's a former cowboy searching to find his way in the world. They were both raised in the same small Texas town. (I have to confess I have a soft spot in my heart for love stories that begin with childhood friendships.)

In an effective flip-flop of the way things usually progress in a romance novel, the hero and heroine are a happily dating couple on the first page. Things quickly unravel! Molly's head is turned by a wealthy suitor. Bailey struggles to find the calling that the Lord has placed on his life. Over the course of the story, the reader follows Molly and Bailey through their good and regrettable decisions both and waits eagerly to see whether they'll make it back together by the final page.

Regina's voice as an author beautifully suits the Old West setting. She's funny and you can tell, reading her books, that she's a southern girl herself. There's a down home flavor to her writing that brings to mind church picnics, quilts, and churning butter. Fans of Karen Witemeyer and Mary Connealy should definitely give Regina a try!

Melanie says

Review on Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/review/R19WCMH9...>

Review on my blog: <http://christianbookshelfreviews.blog...>

I've heard a lot of great things about Regina Jennings debut novel, *Sixty Acres and a Bride*, and looked forward to reading her newest book, *Love in the Balance*. It was a really good read and I can see why people enjoy her books.

Although the characters were great, I have to say I was really annoyed with Molly Lovelace for the first 15 chapters or so. After that, I started to understand her and felt sorry for all the things she was going through. My favorite character was Bailey. He was just such a great hero and I definitely felt for him - hoping he'd get a happy ending.

I loved the redemption story in Love in the Balance. It was very moving. Also made me think about people's perceptions and how they are so quick to judge and put other people down - not even thinking about how *they* would want to be treated if they were in the same situation.

There were some curve balls in Love in the Balance... I liked how it wasn't so predictable.

Overall, I really enjoyed Love in the Balance. While I liked the first half of the book, the last half won me over. If you're a fan of historical romances, I think you'll also enjoy Love in the Balance. You might want to read *Sixty Acres and a Bride* first (I wish I had) as the main characters from that book are also in this one, but it's good on its own. I look forward to reading more of Regina's books in the future.

I received this book for free 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.

Rambling Readers says

Anyone who read "*Sixty Acres and a Bride*" will recognize some familiar faces in Regina Jennings' new novel, "*Love in the Balance*." While the book was a fairly quick read, I had difficulty connecting to the main characters, Molly in particular. Throughout much of the novel, Molly is self-centered, haughty, and too focused on status and wealth. Her decisions ultimately lead her down a path of heartache and scandal, which Jennings uses to soften Molly's character. Towards the end of the novel, Molly is more likable, but her change does not occur soon enough for me to form a connection.

Bailey remains devoted to Molly despite her choices and the pain that they cause. He commits himself to finding a way to provide Molly with the lifestyle she desires, while she remains fickle in her commitment to Bailey. I often wondered why Bailey allowed Molly to string him along, and why he was so drawn to her. Unfortunately, my irritation with the characters hindered my enjoyment of the novel and kept me from engaging fully.

Jennings throws in a few unexpected twists to veer the plot off of the path of predictability. The novel progresses steadily, and there are plenty of reasons to question whether the love between Molly and Bailey will ever come to fruition. Jennings gives life to the Texas setting, this time focusing on town life more than ranch life. "*Love in the Balance*" didn't strike the perfect balance for me, but Jennings is a talented author; so it may prove to be perfectly in balance for other readers.

I received a complimentary e-copy of this novel from NetGalley, courtesy of Bethany House. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions expressed above are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Amy Bradsher says

Love in the Balance contrasts begs the question: does forgiveness, does grace exist for those who make mistakes? I've often thought that part of our society's problem stems with everyone's unwillingness to call others to the carpet when making immoral decisions; isn't that how we end up voraciously watching celebrities' personal drama play out on the evening news? Yet Molly's circumstance isn't right, either - we shouldn't judge others based on our perceptions of their actions, without having the whole story, or be unwilling to offer grace. Love in the Balance forces you to consider what you might do with an uncertain future, family pressure, and limited options for providing your own livelihood.

At times reminiscent of *The Scarlet Letter*, many parts of *Love in the Balance* seem harsh. Molly's circumstances aren't fair. Her parents are cruel. Her co-worker is catty. The dramatic love triangle in which she's snared may be pleasing others, but it's confusing her. Honestly, it sounds rather depressing, except ... Jennings throws humor in at just the right time - a sweet glance, an amusing circumstance, a strange reaction from another - the perfect touch to lighten the mood and keep you guessing as to which suitor Molly chooses.

You will guess. You will be wrong. I never would've predicted this ending, and yet it was the perfect one for Molly. It's one that our society needs, too: our mistakes do not define us forever. They are mistakes, and if we are wise, we can use them to deepen our faith, strengthen our witness, and move on. We can be forgiven. Grace exists.

I loved Molly's story because, sooner or later, for one reason or another, we all need it.

I received a free copy of *Love in the Balance* from LitFuse Publicity in exchange for an honest review.

<http://anestinthetocks.blogspot.com/2...>
