



## A Heart's Rebellion

*Ruth Axtell*

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Dutiful Jessamine Barry is tired of waiting patiently for a man to decide her future. So even though Lancelot Marfleet, second son of an aristocrat, is taking an interest in her during the London season, she refuses to consider him as a suitor. Instead, she's ready to take fashionable society by storm--and finds a rakish young man all too willing to help her do it. When things go too far, Jessamine will learn that the man who is faithful through thick and thin is more worthy than the one who speaks pretty words. But will her disgrace keep Lance from reconsidering her as a wife? And when tragedy strikes and Lance becomes his father's heir and a titled gentleman, will he think she only wants him now because of his title?

## A Heart's Rebellion Details

Date : Published March 4th 2014 by Fleming H. Revell Company (first published February 25th 2014)

ISBN : 9780800720902

Author : Ruth Axtell

Format : Paperback 347 pages

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



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## From Reader Review A Heart's Rebellion for online ebook

### Rachelle Cobb says

#### What I Loved

This Regency picks up where the first book in the series left off but it can safely be read as a stand-alone. I liked that the characters I knew from the first book appeared in this one but I got to know them from Jessamine's point of view--and they were not friends right away. In fact, neither were Jessamine and Lancelot!

Quite the contrary.

Jessamine is still suffering from being freshly jilted. Lancelot, recently returned from the mission field, is at a crossroads. They meet awkwardly, they form distorted impressions of each other, and they are equally intrigued and put off by the other throughout the better part of the book. Reminded me of Pride and Prejudice in an amusing and interesting way.

#### What I Didn't Like As Much

Though the first part of the book was interesting, it moved slightly slowly. No matter, for this was soon forgotten when disgrace and scandal enveloped Jessamine and tragedy tore through Lancelot's family.

The glittering opulence of the era and the entanglement of two hearts unsure whether each can trust the other make for a combination sure to entertain historical fiction lovers like myself!

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### Kristine Hansen says

Here's an example of why I get fed-up with Christian romances and quit reading them for long stretches - there just isn't any genuine passion in the books. Even Christians feel it. I know that for a fact. I honestly felt in this book that there was more passion felt between our heroine and a would-be rapist than that was between her and the hero - and I say that ONLY because she at least was curious about kissing the predator, but didn't seem to have the same curiosity for Lancelot.

(and Lancelot? I shook my head at the name...I do so again now as I write this)

Without any level of passion (which can be portrayed as physical attraction without having to run down the path of erotica willy-nilly) I found it hard to believe that our couple even wanted to be together by the end of the book. Granted they were 'fond' of one another...but it's not enough to base a lifetime on. Ugh...I have to avoid getting on a soapbox here...

The thing is, I felt her love for Rees at the start of the book. That was genuine emotion. Why did she become so flat from there? Why was he never more than a cardboard cutout who can spend a little time with his Bible and be cured of wanting to hurt the man that had tried to destroy the woman he "loves"? It just isn't realistic. Any of it. And while I know we read romance for a bit of happy escapism, if I don't care about the characters or feel their pain OR their passion...then what good is the story? It just becomes a diversion for a

hot summer day. Sorry, that just isn't good enough.

I'm giving 3 stars because there was a lot of potential there. I liked the characters of Megan and her beau and Rees and his very pregnant wife.

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### **Emily says**

I enjoyed getting into these characters, though some of it was a bit long-winded and repetitive. I did NOT expect the directions the plot took, and kept reading because I was quite invested in Jessamine's character. I wanted her to be happy. It's a good message for young women who try to forget who they are in order to follow popular behavior.

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### **Katie Skaggs says**

A Heart's Rebellion is the second book in Ruth Axtell's London Encounters series. I didn't care for this book what so ever, I had to force myself to keep reading it. There were times I wanted to throw it in the corner but I managed to finish it. One of the things that made this book difficult for me to read was the extensive details about botany, something the characters bonded over through the story. They used many words I didn't understand and didn't even really care to know. It was very confusing and I wanted them to move on. I did not care for the heroine Jessamine Barry, I found her annoying and couldn't connect with her. She spent most of the book trying to break men's hearts because she'd had hers broken a couple years before. I found this an odd direction to take the story in and thought it to be very childish of Jessamine. She is also very selfish, focusing only on herself most of the book. Lancelot Marfleet is the hero in this book. Though he is an okay character and I connected with him more than Jessamine he is not a favorite of mine. He is geeky, but loyal to Jessamine, though I must admit that I often wondered why. There were a few times I wanted him to give up on her but he never did. One of my main complaints is the lack of chemistry between Jessamine and Lancelot, though they fall in love at the end there didn't seem to be much attraction between them. I wanted their relationship to have more depth to it. Another thing that really bothered me was a specific sexual scene that was very descriptive which I did not appreciate at all. Jessamine also drank so much at one point that she ended up with a hangover the next morning. Something else that disappointed me was the spiritual content, it seemed almost forced, even though Lancelot was a minister. As the book went on it seemed to become less important. The best part of this book was Celine, one of the secondary characters. She had a very strong faith in God. She is also sweet and very kind, even when Jessamine was rude. All in all I give this book one star and do not recommend it. I received this book through The Book Club Network for my honest opinion, which I have given. I was not required to give a positive review and all opinions expressed are mine.

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### **Emma says**

It was really hard to relate to the female protagonist, so this book ended up being rather frustrating.

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### **Heidi Pack says**

I like this author's works, I really do, but I tried to read this a year ago and again this week. I just couldn't get into it. Maybe I don't love how determinedly displeased and snidely catty the main character is. I know they change throughout, but I just have no attraction to these characters.

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### **Cara Putman says**

This was a nice addition to the series. It was fun to see Celine back in this book. But I really enjoyed watching the evolution of Jessamine as she pushes away Lancelot Marfleet for all the wrong reasons.

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### **Shantelle says**

*A Rebellious Heart* is a sequel to *Moonlight Masquerade*, continuing the Regency saga. It was a heart-rending story of deep hurts spurring foolish decisions. –A desire to prove oneself beautiful and popular, giving way to rejecting an upstanding, truly caring suitor, and instead flirting with the dangerously rakish ones. *A Rebellious Heart* taught an important lesson through Jessamine's actions.... First and foremost, run to God when you're hurt! Don't try to mend your heart by yourself. And don't give up on love, God can heal even the most messed-up life if you let Him.

There were a few parts of *A Rebellious Heart* that had me bored. I suppose I just didn't relate. One such time was the picnic scene, which was a very long scene, and had much to do with flowers and plants and other specimen. That might be your thing, but I just didn't get into it. So, I few scenes like that made *A Rebellious Heart* drag on a little for me. ...Though it might be just the thing for another person!

But overall, *A Rebellious Heart* was a touching, bittersweet, ultimately very sweet(!) story with grave lessons and deep spiritual matters involved. I applaud Ruth Axtell for making her novel more than a fluffy, supposedly "Christian" romance. She added spiritual depth, which always makes the book much, much better for me!

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### **Beverly says**

Regency romances encompass a world all their own. The setting is unique as is the manner of speech, way of thinking, clothing styles and belief system. I started reading books of this genre back when I was in high school. I also enjoyed some Victorian era literature. It was easy to recognize that this author is immersed in the culture. The effortless use of the vocabulary, idioms, government conflicts, and popular public figures used in this book demonstrate this. It made slipping into the story much easier. There were even some terms in this book I was not familiar with. I found it to be a refreshing change from those who write of the era but only throw in terms and well known historical figures from time to time to add authenticity though it feels forced. For me, the author's attention to detail made the story come alive.

Jessamine Barry grew up in the country, the only daughter of the small town minister and his wife. Her quiet

life was tranquil and ideal until her best friend's brother broke her heart. In her efforts to recover, Jessamine and her friend Megan decided on a change of pace--a season in London with Jessamine's godmother, Lady Bess, who kindly sponsored both young ladies. Once they had arrived, Jessamine tried to affect a change of appearance and behavior, to throw herself into having as much fun as possible. She would reject the familiar. In her efforts to experience the whirlwind social life, she made some errors in judgment.

One of the young men Jessamine and Megan became acquainted with was Lancelot Marfleet. He had recently returned from two years as missionary in India, recovering from serious illness. Not having been out in polite society recently, his first blunder while observing the doleful expression on Jessamine's face was the mocking comment, *"Your frown could crack marble."* He was only commiserating with her sentiments about the parade of people she and Megan were watching at an event, but she took offense. Since that opening gambit, they seemed destined to clash wherever they met, especially when she discovered how similar he was to her father.

Lancelot was facing issues of his own. He had wanted to return to India, but his poor health made it currently impossible. He was living in his parent's home, and they were applying pressure for him to marry and produce an heir, since his older brother had not. He was concerned about his brother's reckless lifestyle. But he reluctantly attended a few events where he met Miss Barry and Miss Phillips. In spite of Jessamine's antagonism toward him, he felt attracted to her.

At first, the introductory set-up for the two main characters seem to drag a little bit. However, I realized it was an appropriate way to convey the tediousness of the social life of the ton and their endless rounds of social events showcasing the young women presenting themselves for "the marriage mart." In writing this, the author has demonstrated a contrast between the idealism that many of the young ladies held, while at the same time exposing some of the unsavory underbelly of those who preyed upon the naive.

The author also effectively draws the reader into the inner conflict of Jessamine's heart as she struggled for affirmation. I felt that her efforts to fight against the invisible restraints from society and parental expectations was realistic and something many readers would feel kindred to. Many can remember times when we tested the boundaries to determine where we stand in the world. She was also dealing with the loss of her first love. When she finally met Rees's new bride and saw for herself how much they loved each other, the finality of the situation caused her pain but also released her to move on with life. But as is often the case, it took a near tragedy to wake her up to the real world and the opportunities she had been passing by.

When all is said and done, the love story is stormy yet sweet, Jessamine and Megan's friendship is heartwarming, the overall pace is comfortable, and the resolution is satisfying. I enjoyed the book and can recommend it to anyone who enjoys Christian Regency romance books.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a complimentary review copy of this book from The Book Club Network on behalf of Revel, a division of Baker Publishing Group. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed 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."

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### **Dorry Lou says**

I found this book to be a little unlike the regency I usually read. It was enjoyable as you wondered what

Jessamine will do next. Life had not been too good for her before her year in London.

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### **Elise says**

I didn't like this one as much as her other book I read due to it feeling a bit on the immature side. Still a pretty good read.

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### **Brittany says**

What a wonderful regency novel! Don't worry if you haven't read the first book, *Moonlight Masquerade*. *A Heart's Rebellion* can stand alone just fine. However, I have read *Moonlight Masquerade* and it was such a pleasure to get to visit with Celine and Rees again! Now on to my review of *A Heart's Rebellion*.

The beginning of the book started a little slowly for me. This is not actually a complaint. I felt the author did a great job of setting the scene. Jessamine Barry had been horribly hurt approximately a year earlier when the man she had been in love with since childhood broke her heart. After waiting patiently and doing everything that a dutiful daughter should, she felt jilted and unlovable. When the chance comes to have a London season and remake her image, she takes it.

Lancelot Marfleet feels drawn to Jassamine, but also very frustrated with the way she rebuffs him. He does know that he feels protective of her and is concerned with her reckless behavior. Lancelot is not the typical "hero" described in most romance novels, however, that does not diminish him in any way. His strong character and caring personality quickly made me root for him to win Jessamine's heart.

I truly enjoyed *A Heart's Rebellion*. London society and all of the trappings that make regency reads enjoyable are present in this book. The author points to the importance of putting God first in your life. Jessamine had a real problem with blaming God for her disappointments instead of trusting that He would guide her and perhaps had a better plan for her than she could envision. The romance blooming between the main characters was sweet and satisfying and I loved the way the author ties up everything at the end of the story with a big romantic "bow" on it. Such a delightful read!

I received a complimentary copy of *A Heart's Rebellion* from Baker Publishing Group in exchange for an honest review, which I have given.

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

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### **Abigail says**

This was a nice little book. I got into the story and characters. There was a moment, towards the end, where I found myself rolling my eyes and I wasn't the biggest fan of how things turned out. But it was a nice bit of mind popcorn to occupy a few hours of my time.

The one thing I really liked about this book was that it didn't feel like the second in a series. In fact, I didn't even realize that some of the characters appeared in the first book, until I got to the end and there was an ad in the back for the first book with a synopsis. So the author did a wonderful job of not contriving meetings, or awkwardly mentioning characters just for the sake of world building. It felt quite seamless.

The only other issue I had with this book is it sometimes felt like the character dialogue slipped from being Regency to more modern, but it didn't bother me enough to quit reading. All in all, this was a good book.

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### **Lyssa says**

I did not realize that this book was a sequel until I was already knee deep in it. While it stands alone fairly well, I wonder if my perception of a few key characters would have been different if I had read the first book.

As it was, Jessamine and I did not get on. At all. She spent a good portion of the book being caught up in whining, self-pity, and pining after another woman's man. Oh my. It was difficult to swallow. Like a raw egg.

Her behavior toward Lancelot was just awful. She was shallow and stuck up, immediately dismissing him because of his looks. After realizing who he was, I expected her to be mortified and humbled. But no, she was all pride and conceit, thinking herself better than him.

As the story went on, her self-involvement reached a peak with her blaming everyone else for her feelings and obsessions, as if she is purely a victim of her circumstances. She may have been at one time, but at this point she is choosing her own self destructive path. She is no victim. Even when Megan tries to gently direct her to God, telling her to trust in His plans for her, she hardens her heart and persists.

Jessamine's attitude and actions may be an accurate representation of how some people really think and behave but they are not people I could respect or stand to be around much.

That being said, I did sympathize with her on a few points; overhearing the brief words between Rees and Celine was humiliating. I cannot even imagine. Rees in general seemed to be rubbing it in her face from the beginning all the way to the end with his talk of wishing she had found a love like he had with Celine. Why did he feel the need to compare the two? Why talk about himself at all?

I also understood the root of her insecurities, the cause and effect; her comparing herself to Celine and trying to compete, her seeking out what consoled her bruised ego, even why she was repulsed by a man who seemed too timid and was too similar to both her father and former intended, both of whom she blamed. What I didn't understand is why she thought she was superior to him or even equal to him, why she was so confident in her own appeal that she felt the need to rebuff his advances from the very first.

It was her total lack of humility and over abundance of insecurities (which I believe drove her constant defensive position at every interaction with Lancelot. I prefer characters who have a sense of humor; Jessamine was constantly irritable and offended.) that kept me from being able to connect with her or believe in their romance.

As a side note, I wasn't sure what to make of the drugging episode. Initially it rubbed me the wrong way

because it seemed way too modern and out of place. Did that really happen back then? It would seem so, considering that Lancelot referenced a drug he was aware of. The author must have done her homework here. If that's the case, it just seemed too extreme and poorly contrived that he would have the nerve to drug her and make off with her in public. Perhaps he'd thought her defenseless before, but after Celine's arrival, and their connection, I'd have thought the former Lady Wexham's position and influence would have been enough to end any dishonorable schemes.

This is the first book I've read by Ms. Axtell and though I would have preferred to closely follow Megan's story rather than Jessamine's, and I will likely not read the next book (Delawney?), I might just go back and read the first book. Celine appears to be a protagonist who is classy, intelligent and generous. She fell in love with a man because of his honor and respected that, rather than trying to dissolve it- my kind of heroine, my kind of love story.

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### **Erin says**

This Regency story is a sequel to *Moonlight Masquerade* and features several of the same characters. This time our heroine is Jessamine, a vicar's daughter who is having a season in London thanks to the generosity of her godmother. Jessamine always planned to marry her best friend's brother, but when he chose someone else Jessamine was heartbroken. Now she's determined to catch the eye of a fashionable, wealthy man while she has the chance. Taking her cues from London's elite, Jessamine lowers her necklines and her inhibitions in pursuit of being found desirable.

Having spent time in India as a missionary, Lancelot Marfleet is unimpressed with his return to English society. He desires to find a parish and continue learning about botany, but his parents are insisting it is time he find a marriage partner. When Mr. Marfleet first meets Jessamine he accidentally offends her, and his quest to make up for his blunder brings them together at further parties and dinners. At first he is drawn to her because she is different and has a genuine interest in his life experiences, but soon he's dismayed to see the drastic changes to her person and the questionable decisions about her choice of acquaintances.

Jessamine doesn't realize that as a young lady with very little protection in town she is perfect prey for those of a less savory character. She only wants to be sought after and admired. While Mr. Marfleet is proving himself to be a friend, Jessamine doesn't want to further his attention too much. The last thing she wants is to end up with a man so much like her father.

I confess I found this story quite hard to get into, but once I came to care about the characters I could hardly put the book down. I would caution that this story does contain a few scenes which might be triggering for victims of assault. I would recommend the novel for die-hard Regency fans, especially if you enjoyed the first book in the series.

This review originated at <http://reviewsbyerin.livejournal.com>

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