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Laura Frantz

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Ellie Ballantyne, youngest child of Silas and Eden, has left finishing school. But back at her family home in Pittsburgh, Ellie finds that her parents are away on a long trip and her siblings don't seem to want her to stay. When she opens a day school for young ladies, she begins tutoring the incorrigible daughter of the enemy Turlock clan. The Turlocks are slaveholders and whiskey magnates, envious of the powerful Ballantynes and suspicious of their abolitionist leanings. As Ellie becomes increasingly tangled with the Turlocks, she finds herself falling in love with an impossible future--and Jack Turlock, a young man striving to free himself from his family's violent legacy. How can she betray her family and side with the enemy? And will Jack ever allow her into his world?

Masterful storyteller Laura Frantz continues to unfold the stirring saga of the Ballantyne family in this majestic tale of love, loyalty, and the makings of a legacy. With rich descriptions of the people who settled and civilized a wild landscape, Frantz weaves a tapestry of characters and places that stick with the reader long after they turn the last page.

Love's Awakening Details

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From Reader Review Love's Awakening for online ebook

Becky says

Another beautifully written and historically rich novel from Laura Frantz!

This novel, 2nd in the Ballantyne Legacy series, tells the story of Silas and Eden's daughter, Ellie. She's a Ballantyne through and through, but her heart is won by Jack Turlock, son of a man and woman who loathe the Ballantynes. I haven't read many multi-generational series recently, so it was lovely to delve into Love's Awakening. The opportunity to revisit characters from a previous book 20+ years later lends a story so much depth and all the cozy bonds of family you could hope for. I found this story poetic, gripping, and also informative as it deals with the flight of slaves through Pittsburgh to freedom.

I highly recommend this series!

Alexia says

I want to give this a 4.5. I liked it so much better than the first book, which felt so dark and dreary, especially with Elspeth. I liked Jack and Ellie. I was really into the story and the suspense with the slaves. I found that I didn't care so much about the love aspect and was really into Silas and Ellie's relationship and Ellie's relationship with Chloe.

Danyelle says

Ellie Ballantyne leaves finishing school in the spring of 1822 and returns to her family home in Pittsburgh. When she arrives home, she finds that her parents are away and her siblings don't seem like they want her around. Determined to stay and find her place in the world, Ellie opens a day school for young ladies. She has no idea what her school will lead to or how it will effect her future.

Jack Turlock isn't glad about the sea of his sister going to a day school, in fact he's out right opposed to it, especially with the school being run by none other than Ellie Ballantyne. With slaveholder and whiskey magnates as a calling card, Jack knows that Ellie could never be involved with someone like him. His father is a sworn enemy of Silas Ballantyne and is envious of his power and suspicious of his abolitionist leanings. If only Jack could stop thinking about something that will never be.

When Ellie gets the opportunity to teach Jack's little sister she takes it, not knowing how involved with the Turlocks she will become or how attached to Jack she will get. When life seems to try and rip them apart Ellie must make a critical decision to either pick her family or cross enemy lines and side with the enemy, Jack. Jack must also realize that the way that works is God's way and must find a way to break the chains of his father's past.

Can Ellie find her place in life or will she be lost and alone forever? Will Jack be able to realize that he isn't his father or will he carry his guilt to his grave? Can Ellie fall in love with Jack and still keep her family or

will she have to choose one or the other? Can Jack find God or will it be over before he has the chance?
What will Ellie's parent's think when they find out about Ellie's love for Jack?

After reading Love's Reckoning I knew that I would have to read the next in this series and that it would be even better than the first. I was right. This book tugged on heart strings and actually made me cry! I can't believe the emotions that were packed into this book and the tender yet passionate romance that wrapped around it. I was captivated yet again by the craftsmanship of Laura Frantz and I absolutely can't wait for Fall 2014 to read the next book in the series.

The romance in this novel was one of the best I've read. It combined an emotional connection and some passionate moments and just made the romance seem realistic, heart-tugging, and beautiful. The romance in this book was similar to the first in the sense of theme. They both were about forbidden love, which for some reason captivates and moves us all. I can't believe how well this romance was put together.

The storyline was impeccable. I got caught up in the story and was disappointed when it was over. It was full of intrigue and suspense, not to mention the awesome romance. It also gave a glimpse into the lives of those that smuggle slaves out of danger. I learned a lot and felt emotions that I very rarely feel from a book and I loved it so much. I absolutely have to read more from Laura Frantz!

The thing I liked most about this book was Ellie. Her character is rich and has always been, has gone to finishing school, and has every extravagance known to man yet she's a very down to earth character and I loved her. She never came across as spoiled and I never once felt like she felt better than anyone. Because of that her character was very much a lovable character to me and I felt that she had amazing character development and was a strong character despite her appearance.

Laura Frantz captured me again! I'm shocked at how well she put together tis book and got my emotions involved. Any book deserves a great rating if it can make me cry. That's a feat not many have accomplished. Laura's impeccable storytelling skills and understanding of human emotion made me never want to put tis book down. This book, series, and author come very highly recommended.

Overall, I loved this book! I don't even have any complaints about it. I wouldn't change a thing. Tis book is perfect for someone who wants a historical fiction romance about forbidden love. This book is best left to adults. My rating of this book is five out of five.

I received a compliment copy of this novel in exchange for this review. All opinions expressed are my own.

Anne Osterlund says

Ellie Ballantine is homeward bound, finished with finishing school and fleeing the hounding of the Philadelphia Matrimonial Society. She heads west toward her esteemed family's estate of New Hope. Then runs headlong into a massive storm. And Jack Turlock.

As the son of one of the largest whisky makers in America, *trouble* is Jack's heritage. He is more familiar with the inside of taverns and the local jail than he is with any form of gentility. But when he sees the stranded young woman in a Pittsburg tavern, he feels compelled to intervene. Because once long ago, his

neighbor, Ellie, crossed the creek and brought him a sheepdog pup to replace the one he had lost.

Oh, I loved this book! Especially Jack, who is stubborn and self-loathing and incredibly certain that he doesn't deserve anything resembling joy in his life. Along with the romance, the book centers around the hazards of the abolition movement in early America--the very real peril for people helping slaves escape north at a time when the law both permitted them in Pennsylvania and dictated they be sent home. The conflict throughout the entire novel is fabulous.

Note: While this book is the second in the series, I highly recommend it regardless of whether you have read the first novel.

Ruth says

Elinor "Ellie" Ballantyne, just twenty years old and the jewel of her father's heart, flees finishing school and the matchmaking mamas of Philadelphia society, hungry for home and purpose. She is determined to shed some measure of her sheltered upbringing and embrace the Ballantyne steel of her heritage, vowing to make her own way in the world. But much has changed in her absence, and Ellie is ill-prepared for the simmering tensions between the pro-slavery and abolitionist movement, nor the depth of her family's involvement in the latter. However, the greatest danger may hail from the most unexpected quarter -- losing her heart to the son of the enemy -- the enigmatic, and wholly unsuitable, Jack Turlock.

The rivalry between the Ballantynes and unscrupulous, whiskey-making Turlocks hails from Silas Ballantyne's early days in Pittsburgh, becoming further embittered when Isabel O'Hara, daughter of Silas's one-time friend and mentor, marries into the Turlock clan in a fit of pique when Silas chose Eden as his bride. And from that point, the die was cast: the Ballantynes respectable and virtuous, the Turlocks and their famed hell-raising ever a thorn in their -- and all respectable society's -- side.

Jack would like nothing more than to shed his family's unsavory reputation and start afresh. But ever aware of what he's seen and done, he was resigned to the burden of his familial heritage of violence and deceit, until a chance encounter with Ellie awakens feelings he'd long thought buried. Ellie's innocence and guileless acceptance of him as he is awakens in Jack the audacity to hope for a finer, better life. When his father and brother's plans threaten to destroy everything Ellie holds dear, Jack is left with a choice: the life he was raised to or faith in the God the Ballantynes claim and His promise of redemption.

While I like to stay current with favorite authors, it has been such a treat to lose myself in each successive installment of The Ballantyne Legacy without that pesky year-long wait between releases. Though the much-loved Silas and Eden are absent for half the novel, their presence is ever felt, underscoring Frantz's thesis of the heritage of faith, inherited through generations.

The Jack and Ellie relationship is not only one of my favorite tropes in romantic fiction -- adversaries to lovers -- but it is a gorgeously-wrought exploration of inheritance and choice. Colored with shades of Romeo and Juliet's warring families, Jack and Ellie's blossoming attraction is, at first blush, nought but an impossible dream. Separated by a gulf of familial rivalry and distrust, political ideologies, and most crucially, faith, here Frantz sketches a love story all the more memorable because of the transformative power of faith at its heart.

Love's Awakening has a two-fold meaning -- Jack and Ellie, certainly, but also the agape love of one human being to another regardless of race or creed. The sacrificial love those who claim Christ are called to live each day is woven throughout each page, as Frantz places her characters in the eye of the storm brewing over slavery. The Ballantynes and Jack participate in the early skirmishes between pro-slavers and abolitionists in Pennsylvania of the 1820's seeds of the great conflict to come later in the century that would rend the nation in two. As Jack quickly discovers, the Ballantynes' abolitionist efforts are a call to action, a study in the cost, danger, and rewards of putting faith in action.

Frantz has always delivered emotionally intense novels. Her heart-stopping romances are a hallmark of her work, as is her unparalleled ability to bring the past to life on the page, all on display here. But in *Love's Awakening*, in the final oact of Ellie and Jack's story she delivers her most action-packed epic yet. It is no exaggeration to say that my heart was racing as I breathlessly turned the pages, eager to see the finale unfold in all its high stakes, cinematic grandeur.

Like it's predecessor, *Love's Awakening* is a story of inheritance, both for good and ill. The Ballantyne Legacy is an unflinchingly honest study of faith and choice and the power of both to resound through future generations. A stunning romance, suspense, and heartbreak -- this is Frantz at her finest. I cannot wait to discover what's in store for the final Ballantyne installment!

Megan says

4.5 stars

Jennifer says

A wonderfully written, historically interesting, and poignant tale of redemption in Christ and staying true to one's convictions.

Engaging as always, this Laura Frantz book hooked me with an easy to read style, multiple povs, and complex family dynamics. My only complaint is that the characters who were very judgmental were a little single faceted. Frantz tried to develop those characters more, but most were caricatures.

Aside from that minor quibble, there was much to enjoy in this book. The slow developing romance between the MCs was a delight. There was no real OP drama. The historical context was eye opening and the anguish that the H felt about being a part of his family was gripping. I appreciated the fact that things weren't resolved overnight for him, but rather slowly over the course of many months. He decided to change his life on his own, not because he saw a beautiful girl and had to have her. The change seemed hard fought for and genuine. The feeling that I have upon finishing this book was one of encouragement.

So why only 3 stars? The H's struggle with self hatred and loathing was a bit depressing. (view spoiler)

Overall, I enjoyed this book. If you're a believer and enjoy historical romance give this book a try.

Casey says

I love words that take you by the hand and lead you deeper into the story-what reader doesn't? "Love's Awakening" is one such title I have been hording until just the right reading moment and that moment presented itself to me...and it was so worth the wait.

I didn't expect anything less than what I received between the gorgeous covers of this historical romance. Characters that brim with spice and spunk and a determination to do what is right in the eyes of God. History is rich in filling between the cracks of the character's lives, but in a way that does that detract from the story at all but only adds to the fullness of every minute spent within the story.

Ellie and Jack's love story is no conventional one...fall in love with your father's enemy? The town's professed villain? And yet their attraction is so pure...and so passionate. Jack is such a noble hero with the burden of the world on his shoulders which I wanted desperately to see released. And for Ellie to come truly into all her character's potential.

There is never just one layer to a story like this. Too many between characters, story world and secondary contributors to mention in one simple review and I can't begin to do the book justice. I can promise it is fully worth the read.

Susan Snodgrass says

This book, second in the Laura Frantz's 'Ballantyne Legacy', is just wonderful.

I was provided with an early copy and decided to re-read the first in the series, "Love's Reckoning", which brought it all back in wonderous beauty.

Love's Awakening takes up when Silas and Eden Ballantyne's youngest daughter, Ellie, is 20 years old and back home from finishing school. She feels that she is definitely in the way at home, her parents off on a trip, and her siblings are busy, so she decides to start a day school for young women. Chloe Turlock wants to be her student, but the Turlocks have always been mortal enemies of the Ballantynes and will stop at nearly nothing to ruin any of the Ballantynes.

Chloe's older brother Jack tells Chloe this is a bad idea but Chloe has ideas of her own to bring Ellie and Jack together. Will this bring further heartache and torment to both families? Is there even a slim chance that peace, even a small peace, can be achieved between these families?

Laura Frantz has the unique ability among writers to plop the reader smack dab right into her story, setting and all. The way she described the lilacs blooming at Ellie's house made me nearly smell their fragrance. She describes the interior of houses so well, I feel as if I could walk into them and be at home.

I have read every one of Laura's books and this never changes. She is a supremely gifted author, a talent given by God, in my opinion, and her books have pride of place on my bookshelves. I give them as gifts, too.

It doesn't take long after opening the pages of a Laura Frantz book to be drawn in completely. I was in tears, gasping in disbelief and sighing in peace during this book.

She brings back Silas and Ellie from the first book and they are as in love as ever, still putting God first in everything. They have grown into remarkable parents and seasoned in grace with God's love.

This book also goes into detail about the Underground Railroad during the early 1800s in the Pittsburgh history. Laura always goes on research trips and her historical research is impeccable. Reading her books makes you want to go back and delve into the history yourself, which I have indeed done. She doesn't embellish with the facts, either, but presents them as they actually happened. I was amazed at her research. As I was at the history of my country.

The Ballantyne Legacy is a sweeping saga, rich and full as any you'd ever want to read. These books would make a wonderful mini series! They are full of love, happiness, heartbreaking misery, the love of God to pull His children toward Him in their despair and redemption when no hope of redemption was found.

I loved this book and now I am bereft as I must wait another year for the next one. I just don't know how I'm going to stand the wait! If you miss these books, you are indeed denying yourself a wonderful experience. This is not just a book. It is an event that you will remember long after you turn the last page. I carry these characters around with me and think of them often. They're not like characters on a written page, but friends I know well and love.

Faye says

Ellie Ballantyne comes home from boarding school to find that her life has gone along without her and that her skills are not wanted by her siblings, so she opens a day school for young ladies.

One of her young student's is Chloe Turlock, the daughter of her family's old rival who has always been jealous of the Ballantynes. Ellie finds her self growing more and more involved with the Turlocks, especially Chloe's handsome older brother Jack. Will she be able to bridge the gap between the feuding families?

A fantastic addition to The Ballantyne Legacy that stands strong as a novel in its own right, but I would strongly advise against missing Love's Reckoning!

Both Ellie and Jack were strong and showed their mettle by breaking free of their family's prejudices. Love's Awakening drew me in from the page, sweeping me away to a young America, fraught with taunt tensions running high and young men and women forging their own futures.

Overall, an epic historical drama that took me with Ellie and Jack every step of their journey, and was nearly impossible to put down--it really made me hate my homework more than usual! Ms. Frantz brought to life a world from years gone by, that realistically brought to the life the struggles and heartaches of the human condition. Highly recommend!

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received one or more of the products or services mentioned above for free in the hope that I would mention it on my blog. Regardless, I only recommend products or services I use personally and believe will be good for my readers. 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."

Beth says

I was thoroughly convinced that Love's Awakening wouldn't come close to the first book, Love's Reckoning, but I quickly realized that was a wrong assumption! Laura Frantz always writes such sweeping stories - Ellie returns home from being "finished" at school, eager to do more than be a pretty pawn in a marriage. Though quiet and genteel, Ellie has a strong spirit. From her to decision to opening a day school to her realization of her families abolitionist activities, the plot points of the story was beautiful and steeped in historical detail.

Ellie Ballantyne might be my favorite lead of all of Frantz's book - never did she imagine that she would fall in love with the son of her father's enemy. "Gentleman" Jack is Ellie's opposite in every way, and their relationship is never easy or conventional. Jack is a somewhat reformed son of the roguish Turlock family and is caught up in the schemes of his family, but longs to change. Though the story is about their relationship, it is also about them as individuals. They both carry their own burdens and must ultimately must make decisions that carry heavy consequences.

I was so happy that Eden and Silas played a big part in the story - I loved them in Love's Reckoning and was glad to see them back. The other surrounding characters were multifaceted as well, especially Ellie's siblings. I love how Frantz weaves hints of whats to come in the final book with Ansel's part in the story. And I'm not sure if Andra was supposed to remind me of the dangerous Elspeth Lee, but either way, I loved that slight similarity in their personalities (though I don't think Andra would ever deliberate harm Ellie in the way that Elspeth did Eden!).

Frantz penned another beautiful romantic historical - full of lush period detail - the river landscape of Pittsburgh in the 1800s, the gorgeous details of Ellie's birthday ball and a climatic courtroom scene - this has all of the elements that I look for in the historical fiction I read. I am so eager to read the conclusion to the Ballantyne Legacy - I almost didn't read the sneak peek in the back of the book. I knew it would leave me wanting more, but I read it anyway because I couldn't stand not reading it!

Superb world-building, gorgeous historic details and a love story that both broke and repaired my heart - Love's Reckoning will definitely be a favorite of the year!

Loraine says

SUMMARY: In the spring of 1822, Ellie Ballantyne leaves finishing school and returns to the family home in Pittsburg only to find that her parents are away on a long journey and her siblings don't seem to want her to stay. Determined to stand her ground and find her place in the world, Ellie fills her time by opening a day school for young ladies.

But when one of her students turns out to be an incorrigible young member of the Turlock family, Ellie knows she must walk a fine line. Slaveholders and whiskey magnates, the Turlocks are envious of the powerful Ballantynes and suspicious of their abolitionist leanings. As Ellie becomes increasingly entangled with the rival clan--particularly the handsome Jack Turlock--she finds herself falling in love with an impossible future. Will she betray her family and side with the enemy?

Masterful storyteller Laura Frantz continues to unfold the stirring saga of the Ballantyne family in this majestic tale of love and loyalty. This is the Ballantyne Legacy.

REVIEW: The second in the Ballantyne trilogy continues with action, adventure, and romance. The Ballantynes continue to struggle with problems within the family as well as with their fellow Pittsburg citizens as they take their stance as Abolitionists. Frantz again keeps your attention from the first to last page with a detailed and intense storyline.

Jack and Chloe Turlock come across as strong characters trying to escape from their family's legacy. They each fight in their own way but life doesn't necessarily turn out as they had hoped. Sadness and tragedy continue to haunt the Turlock family. Well developed characters with all sorts of problems including even the minor ones add to the richness.

The story brings a depth of emotions, the joy of redemption, and the sadness of judgment woven through with Christ's love that shines just like the light in the cupola of New Hope that called out to family and wanderers. I look forward to reading the conclusion of the Ballantyne Legacy.

Renee says

After having read five books by this author, I'm of a mind that nobody has mastered the craft of weaving a delightfully entertaining and romantic tale better than Laura Frantz. From the very first chapter to the very last line of every book, and possibly none more so than with her latest, *Love's Awakening*, I have been hooked. The second book in the Ballantyne Legacy is a winner!

With complex and engaging characters, historic Pittsburgh has been brought to life as I've never seen it before. Being a native to the area, I couldn't help but be half in love with this story before I even turned the first page and I'm happy to say it lived up to, and greatly surpassed, my already high expectations. I'd love to think that some of my ancestors could have easily traveled the paths that Ellie did in this story. *Love's Awakening* is by far my favorite of the series and sweet Ellie Ballantyne one of my favorite heroines brought to life by Frantz. It was easy to picture a genteel lady struggling with love and faith in a rough, rapidly evolving city. Our hero, Jack Turlock, is as equally an impressive character. Without giving anything away, let's just say he's a delish reformed rogue. Who doesn't love a bad boy? I never thought anyone could top Red Shirt from her previous novel *Courting Morrow Little*, but I think he may have a rival in Gentleman Jack! ;-)

Everything about *Love's Awakening* captures the essence of great Christian fiction. Perfectly balanced with love, just a bit of adventure, and a lot of history I could not find a thing I did not enjoy when it came to this book! If you're looking for a story that engages the mind and the heart definitely consider this book and this series!

*I receive complimentary books for review from the publisher. I am not required to write positive reviews.

The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.*

Diana says

Once again, author Laura Frantz has crafted a literary masterpiece that sweeps the reader along the banks of the weeping willow and poplar tree-lined Allegheny River---to the elegant surrounding plantations shrouded in secrecy, deceit, betrayal, and hidden passions.

The lovely Ellie Ballantyne decides it is high time to return to her family's plantation, New Hope, after spending time at a finishing school in Philadelphia. As she encounters a dangerous storm on her way home, who should offer to escort her home but the equally dangerous, Jack Turlock...the son of a wealthy whiskey magnate and sworn enemy to the Ballantyne family. As Ellie opens a school for girls, she finds herself traveling often to Jack's plantation, River Hill, to teach his 13 year old sister the fine art of becoming a lady.

Futile feelings begin to smolder between the two of them, as Ellie and Jack realize her family would never allow her to marry a Turlock...with their pro-slavery views and dealings in the whiskey industry. Ellie finds that things have changed at New Hope since she was away, discovering secrets that could endanger and destroy her entire family if discovered. As Jack prepares to leave River Hill to rid his heart and mind of Ellie Ballantyne forever, she receives crushing news concerning him, plunging her life into darkness and despair. Can she find love again with Daniel Cameron, a man who has been wooing her incessantly and surely more worthy of a Ballantyne?

Laura Frantz has done it again! She is truly a master storyteller who interweaves as many twists and turns in her stories as the Allegheny River. I was mesmerized as this story played out and even as terribly brooding as Jack Turlock was, I instantly fell in love with him...as I do with all of Ms. Frantz's handsome heroes. This author is one of the best at creating romantic tension and I found myself catching my breath more than once while reading. With a spellbinding historical plot, this is one beautifully written novel you won't soon forget. Guaranteed to evoke powerful emotions in the reader...this one goes at the top of my 2013 list of favorites!

Christy says

I took a chance on another new author to me and it was certainly worth it. This read was full of excitement, love, encouragement and unfortunately sadness. Unwavering hope and trust in Christ certainly prevails itself in this read. This book was some-what like a roller coaster; in life with it's many up's and down's. I did feel like something was missing at the end of this book though; and I think for me it was Chloe.
