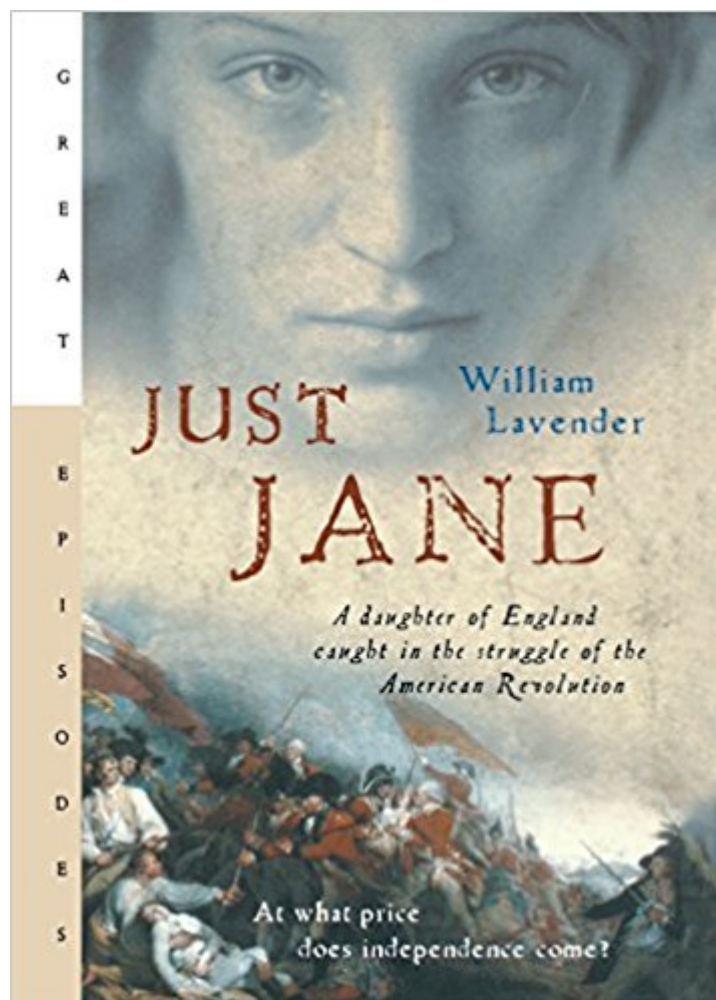




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Just Jane: A Daughter Of England Caught In The Struggle Of The American Revolution (Great Episodes)



Synopsis

When Lady Jane, orphaned daughter of an English earl, arrives in Charlestown, South Carolina, in 1776, she finds herself in the middle of a heated war--a war not only between her former country and her new home but one between the members of her own family, whose loyalties are strongly divided in America's fight for freedom. Torn by family feuds, the war, a secret romance, and her own growing need for independence, Jane struggles for the courage to become the person she wants to be: just Jane. Includes a reader's guide.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (17 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Since my name is Jane, I could not resist buying this book when I saw it. It lived up to my expectations and Jane Prentice is very worthy of the name Jane. When Lady Jane Prentice at 14 arrives in America from England, she is already able to take care of herself, because she had been w/o a mother since the age of 3 and her father (a penniless earl) never paid her much attention. She is met by her Uncle Robert's brother-in-law, Arthur Ainsley, and his family. Jane immediately becomes attached to "Uncle Arthur" and "Aunt Harriet". The Ainsley's son, Brandon, is romantically interested in Jane. Jane stumbles upon the schoolmaster, Simon Cordwyn, and he invites her to join

his school, because he sees in her an intelligent and inquisitive mind. People question Simon's political standing, but he maintains his neutral position in the rising rebellion. Jane is annoyed at how everyone treats her like a child. She believes she is capable of understanding the upcoming conflict between England and America. Finally, Simon Cordwyn explains the situation in full to her. She slowly begins to sympathize with the Patriots but is still loyal to England. Meanwhile, there is strife in Jane's family. Uncle Robert is a staunch Loyalist but Cousin Hugh is a dedicated Patriot. Jane is not allowed to even visit her cousin Hugh because of his Patriot leanings. However, she manages to meet him with the help of Simon Cordwyn. As war breaks out, Jane finds herself torn between her family; half of which are Patriots, and the other half Loyalists. Jane tries to remain neutral, but finds it harder and harder to do so. Jane is pursued not only by Brandon Ainsley, but the British officer Captain Flemming. While receiving their advances, she wonders about the whereabouts and her strange feelings concerning Simon Cordwyn. Telling all to refer to her as "Just Jane" instead of her formal title, Lady Jane, Jane Prentice is an endearing heroine with courage, intelligence, kindness, and the presence of mind to decide for herself where her sentiments stand: with loyalty to England, or liberty for America.

As an avid reader of young adult fiction, I was immediately drawn to this interesting and beautiful book. The writing was good, the history interesting and informative, and the characters intriguing, but I had a few concerns. My biggest concern is that adultery is made to look understandable and sympathetic. While the female, married counterpart is held accountable and punished for her part in the affair, Simon (the hero and love interest to our heroine) needs only tell Jane he has ended it in order to receive her forgiveness. This man is regarded as the moral compass of the entire book, and yet never once is his part in the affair discussed in any way other than part of a misunderstanding which makes Jane jealous. We don't know how far this affair has gone, but isn't a romantic relationship with a married woman something that should at least be considered a flaw in this hero's past? Shouldn't we see the morally sound and defiant Jane actually consider that maybe he isn't quite her match (especially since the affair was with her aunt, old enough to be her mother)? This is one of the many moral contradictions I find in Jane. She talks big, but can't back it up. She is horrified to find Simon is having an adulterous affair, but really only because she is jealous. She refuses to indulge the attentions of an advantageous connection for whom she has no real feelings to those who ask it of her, but then she does it anyway because she's having a good time. In fact, she continues to indulge the attentions of her cousin Brandon as well, each time only telling the truth when it suits her. And yet the other characters continue to consider her a remarkable and moral

woman. The biggest problem with this is that it is written for ages 12 and up. These are adult issues. I don't think we need to be telling 14 year old girls that it's fine to have hopes and dreams of marriage with their much older and adulterous teachers. What kind of morality is that? Even if this double standard of allowing men to get away with what makes a woman completely outcast IS historically correct, is THIS what we want to teach our teenage daughters? I'm really horrified that a middle school teacher would be recommending and actually assigning this book to the children. I hope a letter is sent home to the parents explaining the issues contained in the book so they can make their own moral judgments and teach correct principles to their children. It may be easy to look past these issues and applaud this novel for its other good qualities, but with considering the impressionable minds it was written for, I can see it as nothing other than an morally deprecating agenda. It should not be read by children.

I love this story and how the timeframe is set during the American Revolution. Jane has a lot of issues to deal with. Having to choose to be loyal to the king or become a patriot for America is one major issue in this book. And there is the issue of her hand in marriage. Her relatives want her to marry the man who's "perfect for her considering that he's loyal to the crown" or if not him then the soldier that fights for Britain. But she falls in love with the smart school teacher; who happens to fall in love with her as well. There is some much within this book that I would highly recommend reading it. A must have for any book collection.

"Just Jane: A Daughter of England Caught in the Struggle of the American Revolution" holds the status as best Revolutionary War book, in my eyes. Finally, an author who wrote a female character as not rebelling against her female roles in society. Finally, an author who did not sugar coat what happened to torn families or captured men. Finally, an author who didn't need to end everything on a happy note. The beginning may seem slow, but once Jane matures and the war progresses, the story picks up speed, it will make you never want to put the book down. I recommend.

Just Jane is a fantastic read! Not only do you learn a lot about the revolution, but you have a wonderful story to get caught up in. This book lets the reader see both sides of the war, loyalist and patriot. You end up falling in love with the patriot characters and the loyalist characters. You feel everything that Jane is feeling, the confusion, the frustration, the longing for something that may never come to be. William Lavender has given us the chance to take a tiny glimpse into the struggle that the revolution caused in a divided family. Five stars for William Lavender!

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