

A Bookish Affair Readalikes: *Rebel* by Beverly Jenkins

A Bookish Affair, LOPL's romance book club, meets monthly to discuss the diverse, inclusive world of romance novels! Did you love the family relationships, witty banter, historical detail, and social justice work of Beverly Jenkins' *Rebel*? While we all stay home and stay safe, we've got you covered with some *Rebel*-lious readalikes. This list was compiled by Shandy (sdickinson@lakeoswego.city).

The *Loyal League* series, Alyssa Cole

The author of A Bookish Affair's inaugural pick, *A Princess in Theory*, doesn't just write delightful contemporary romance about royals who'd rather be regular folks. She's also known for her historical romances that shine a spotlight on strong women in African American history. Fans of Jenkins will love Cole's bold heroines, attention to historical detail, and strong sense of justice. The three books in the series focus on brave, brilliant heroines and heroes connected to the Loyal League, a network of Civil War spies.

- *An Extraordinary Union* features the brilliant Elle Burns, a formerly enslaved woman who returns to slavery as a Union spy. Her work puts her in terrible danger -- but when she meets Pinkerton agent Malcolm McCall, she realizes her heart is at risk, too. Elle and her eidetic memory were inspired by a real-life spy!
- *A Hope Divided*, follows Malcolm's brother Ewan, a Union interrogator who escapes a Confederate prison camp, and Marlie Lynch, the talented herbalist who conceals him in her own home. But when the revelation of a shocking secret sends them both on the run, they'll have to trust their hearts in order to survive.
- The trilogy winds up with *An Unconditional Freedom*. Freed by the Loyal League and heartbroken when his true love falls for another, Daniel Cumberland joins the spy network -- only to find himself entangled with Janeta Sanchez, who's infiltrated the League as a double agent forced into spying for the Confederacy.

If you loved the hilarious, big-hearted LeVeq family of *Rebel*, you may want to return to some of Beverly Jenkins' earlier work to read their backstories.

- ***Captured*** features Drake's privateer grandfather Dominic -- from whom he presumably inherited that pirate blood so memorably discussed in *Rebel* -- who kidnaps the beautiful, headstrong Clare, only to find that she's captured his heart.
- Drake's brother Raimond and his wife Sable have a significant role in *Rebel*, advising Drake and taking Valinda under their wing, and observing their marriage gives Valinda a glimpse of what her life might be with the right partner. But how did Sable and Raimond find each other? ***Through the Storm*** is a tale of love and trust lost and found in the tumult of the Civil War and Reconstruction.
- Drake LeVeq has a *lot* of brothers. ***Winds of the Storm*** gives us the story of former spy Zahra, out of retirement for one last mission in Reconstruction-era New Orleans. But she didn't count on meeting Archer LeVeq again. The last time she saw the handsome hotelier, she was saving his life...but now, she'd better guard her own heart.

Beverly Jenkins -- or Ms. Bev, as she's known to her legions of loyal fans -- has been writing historical romance for decades, and the books listed above are only a small fraction of her impressive *oeuvre*!

If you're looking to check out a few new authors, why not try an anthology? ***The Brightest Day: A Juneteenth Historical Romance Anthology*** collects novellas from four African-American romance authors. While each takes place in a different era of American history, they're all connected to Juneteenth, the American holiday that celebrates the end of slavery. Lena Hart, Piper Huguley, and Kianna Alexander are featured, as is perennial A Bookish Affair favorite Alyssa Cole! And if you can't get enough of these short-but-sweet stories, the four authors reunite in ***Daughters of a Nation: A Black Suffragette Historical Romance Anthology***.

Piper Huguley's ***Migrations of the Heart*** series has its roots in small-town Georgia, but as you might guess from the series title, its characters are part of the Great Migration of the early twentieth century. The first novel, ***A Virtuous Ruby***, pairs an activist heroine who finds herself drawn to an out-of-town doctor despite their differences. If you enjoy inspirational romance, try this or Huguley's ***Home to Milford College*** series, set in post-Civil War Georgia.

If you can't get enough of heroic teachers like Valinda Lacy *and* justice-seeking spies like Elle Burns, try ***Lady of Secrets*** by G.S. Carr. Henrietta Wright is a free Black woman who's passionate about her work teaching former slaves and poor immigrants to read and write -- but she soon finds herself in another role altogether, this time as a spy for the Union Army. Her student Elijah Byrne knows that Henrietta is out of his league, but when she asks for his help, he's powerless to say no. The future of the country -- and of their hearts -- may be at stake.

