

Forever Lovely

A Regency Time Travel Romance

Book Two of the Forever in Time Series

Linore Rose Burkard



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FOREVER LOVELY: A REGENCY TIME TRAVEL
ROMANCE

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Praise for *Forever Lovely*

In *Forever Lovely*, you'll be immersed in a love story that spans two very different eras but can't be broken.... You find adventure, love, family, friendship, and sacrifice in a way that makes you want to just *keep reading*.

Samantha DeWitt (Rivera) Readers' Favorite 5 Star Review

All I can say is, I wish I had a time-travelling shaw! I loved this book, and you will too if you adore time-travelling romances with a little bit of mystery included. In this second book of the Forever in Time series, [Burkard] takes the reader on another magical journey through time.

Laura J. Davis, Interviews and Reviews

It was wonderful! Time travel gone askew... Wonderful second in the series. Entertaining and fun while being a quick read. I couldn't put it down.

Joyce Reavis, Reviewer

Burkard never disappoints with her Regency love stories, and this one is no exception. How to move between centuries without disturbing the time continuum is handled deftly in this fast-paced three-day whirlwind that never slows. Will there be a 3rd book in this series? I'm already waiting!

Author Donna J. Shepherd

Oh, my! The twists and turns and traveling back and forth in time kept me so engrossed, I read (this) in record time. I could see this becoming a movie or television series.

Highly recommend!

Gerald E. Greene, Reviewer

Such a sweet, clean, time-travel adventure! Easy to read even if you didn't read *Forever, Lately*. Love this author and I can't wait to see if there's more to this series!

Lindsey DeLost, Goodreads

A charming time-travel romance! An intriguing story about the importance of love and sacrifice in any time period.

Don't miss reading this delightful tale! **Elizabeth Allan, Bookbub**

Come! Get swept away! Ms. Burkard does a great job blending (two time periods) into a lovely story that will entertain and inspire you.

Deb Mitchell, Bookbub

“Upon my soul, that was extraordinary!” (The first sentence in Chapter 1) authentically sums *Forever Lovely*... Do some self-pampering and curl up with a cup of cocoa and be carried away—just for a few moments—from the hustle and bustle... You won't regret it!

Ren, Amazon

And Praise for the *Forever in Time* Series

This is such a good book. Pure Magic. It's the best Regency novel I've ever read!

Kristen Malone, Historical Romance Writer

A writer of historical fiction travels back in time—and into the world of her characters. An enjoyable and dramatic era-spanning love story.

Kirkus

Spot on with entertaining language and engaging plot twists. Clean fiction at its very best! A must-read.

Lisa McCombs, ReadersFavorite Blog

Notes

Facts and Fiction in the Book

The actual NYC JASNA Conference was held at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge in 2012. My characters had no business over there, so I kept them close to the New York Public Library, moving the location of the conference to accommodate the story. I kept the conference theme (“Sex, Money and Power in Jane Austen’s Fiction”) and many thanks to JASNA for it. I am especially grateful to Miss Austen herself, who must be perpetually laughing in heaven at (and for the most part delighted by) all the fuss, scholarship, and spin-offs created about her and her work.

Margaret does not recognize Jane Austen’s name because her publications to date (to date for Margaret, that is) did not bear it. While *Emma* was published in December, 1815 (although the title page says 1816), the author is given as, “By the author of *Pride and Prejudice*.” During her lifetime, none of Jane’s works were published under her name, though she was becoming known as the author by an increasing circle of people. (I saw one website claiming that her name was known by 1814, but this is very unlikely to have

been true for the general public, including Margaret.)

The James Hotel really was formerly The Carlton, which is chiefly why I chose it for my characters, both of whom were familiar with the Regent's London Palace, Carlton House. I had to delete a humorous breakfast scene unfortunately, because I wrote it before choosing the hotel, and the James does not offer a free breakfast buffet.

When Margaret and St. John are admiring the view from the James, I gave them a better view than their room actually offers. While their "Empire State View Room" would have indeed allowed them to see the golden pyramid top of the Empire State Building and some of midtown, I wanted readers to feel the effect of looking down upon New York with a fuller view, such as from the Observation Deck of the famed Rainbow Room (which I featured in my contemporary romance, *One Cinderella Night*). I felt it would be a shame to set a book in the heart of Manhattan but not do its beautiful skyline justice. And finally, I added a small refrigerator to the room for the fun of having Margaret discover refrigeration.

The details of The New York Public Library and its surroundings are as accurate as I could make them. My last visit to that museum was in my teens, so I had to go with internet research. **The Pforzheimer Collection**, room 319, is in the library as shown in the book and really does house

the collection of literary criticism for early women writers.

In chapter 5, Stewart is offered a toothbrush that some may feel (based on films such as “Lost in Austen,”) were not available then. But toothbrushes, though much coarser than modern ones, were available as early as 1780, when they were mass-produced by one William Addis, of Clerkenwald, England. Most upper-class Regency homes likely were using them.

Doctor/Mister. A reader asked about the physician, Mr. Wickford, wondering why he is addressed as “Mister” and not “Doctor.” Only a doctor who had studied at University (and most had not!) was addressed as Doctor So-and-so. The others, surgeons or apothecaries, were *referred* to as doctors, but *addressed* as misters.

Glossary

Ape leader: An old maid; their punishment after death for not having offspring (“neglecting increase”) was, it was said, to lead apes in hell.

Bibliothecary – Keeper of a library.

Bluestocking – Bookish, academic female.

Comb, give a comb—a scolding; to give a comb was to scold or reprimand.

Modiste – a dressmaker or milliner; a seamstress who deals with ladies’ fashions.

“My father” (or “my mother”) During the Regency it was standard usage for siblings to speak of their parents as “my” father or mother, not “our.”

“Pluck to the backbone” – brave, bravery.

Chapter 1

It is part of the human condition, and a
recurrent feature of human history,
that what we find is not always what we were looking for,
and what we accomplish is not always what we set out to do.
Wilfred W. McClay

New York City, Present Day

“Upon my soul, that was extraordinary! Excuse me, sir, but my legs have gone weak!”

Miss Margaret Andrews held heavily to the arm of Julian St. John, who had brought her through time from 1819 England to the 21st century. Unlike St. John, Miss Margaret had never traveled through time before. The effect left her breathless.

They were to contact her elder sister Clarissa at Dove Cottage in America so that Margaret could see her for the first time in three years. It was that long since Clarissa had gone to the future and chosen to stay.

St. John patted Margaret’s arm. “You’ll recover in a moment,” he said with the voice of experience, but there was something in his tone that made her look up at the face of her tall relation. A gentleman of vast good looks and taste, St. John was studying their surroundings with a scowl.

Impossibly tall buildings towered over them, nearly blocking the sky from view. Strange equipages of fascinating shapes and colors crawled in the street in a slow, noisome parade, while other discordant sounds permeated the air. Foreign and unidentifiable, the racket

accosted Miss Margaret's 19th-century ears in ways that the busiest thoroughfares of London never had. The equipages looked clean, even pretty with their rainbow of colors, but hadn't improved much for speed, she thought, watching them trickling along like recalcitrant dogs on leads, in stops and starts. The roads were smooth and free of mud, however, which seemed a wonderful improvement. Yet Mr. St. John had told Margaret that Dove Cottage, their intended destination, was in a quiet countryside in Maine. She realized they had arrived in the wrong place, which accounted for his frown.

"Where the devil are we?" he muttered, blinking rapidly to get his bearings, and looking nearly as flummoxed as his young charge. The tallit, the divinely mystical shawl that powered his dizzying leaps through time, had always brought him to Dove Cottage. After Clarissa had torn it in two, he and his wife Claire were able to reach the cottage together, each using one-half of the shawl. But this was a bustling metropolis, not the quiet retreat in Maine.

Turning to Miss Margaret he said, "Something has gone amiss. We must return to the past and try again. I have no inkling where we are, but we'll never meet your sister here."

St. John had agreed to bring Miss Margaret to see her elder sister only after much cajoling and pleading. Margaret claimed that since Clarissa had changed places with Claire Channing—who was now St. John's wife—it was only just that he should allow her to clap eyes on her sister one last time.

It was Claire who first discovered the tallit was magical, enabling time travel when drawn across one's chest. It had transported her from Maine to 1816 England quite by accident, but as a result, she and St. John had fallen in love. Clarissa, who wanted St. John for herself, accidentally

discovered its qualities after tearing it in two in a fit of rage. Eventually, she and Claire agreed to trade places in time. Clarissa assumed Claire's identity as an author in the 21st century, while Claire happily joined St. John in the past permanently to be his bride.

The switch worked out fortuitously, for Claire and Clarissa, to both their surprise, were distant relations (born two hundred years apart) but near twins in appearance! Even their names were similar. But the similitude ended there—St. John loved sweet Claire, yet had only ever tolerated the scheming Clarissa.

Ideally, Claire would have brought Margaret to the future, sparing St. John the trouble. She was very near her lying-in with their first child and would have been glad, she said, for 21st-century “obstetrical” support. But she no longer had an identity here, and St. John insisted, moreover, that she mustn't dare risk the trip for the baby's sake.

Neither Claire nor St. John knew Miss Margaret's real hankering was to accomplish far more than visit Clarissa. Her elder sister, after all, had never been an affectionate sibling. Quite the opposite. What Miss Margaret really wanted was to see the many inventions she'd heard about, such as the analytical engines that St. John assured her surpassed the best upper-class libraries, and even college and university libraries, for riches of information. And the new-fangled devices that allowed people to speak to each other from anywhere in the world! She was simply mad to see these things.

But above all else, hidden in her heart of hearts, was the secret quest to settle her destiny. She had given it much thought, recognized her fate would be that of a spinster in society, and concluded she must go to the future to find some small invention to bring back and claim for her own. How else could she secure her comfort beyond her father's

lifetime? For, upon his passing, his fortune would descend to a distant cousin due to the cursed law of primogeniture. It was unthinkable that she could depend upon the heir treating her generously, a virtual stranger. So, despite good pedigree (including that Lady Ashworth, a marchioness, was her relation) her reputation as a plain bluestocking, or bookish bore (as the nastier members of the *ton* liked to put it), would never go away, respectability and family notwithstanding. No, she was destined to secure her own comfort in the world, and if it meant borrowing a future invention to do so, then so be it.

Besides, Margaret *longed* for recognition. Society granted her a modicum of respectability but never true acceptance. They would grudgingly squeeze her onto their invitation lists—but she would be last on the train of couples for dinner, a wallflower at balls, an outcast in a crowd; in short, a magnet for disdain. Becoming an inventress would change everything!

Or nearly so. It would not make her desirable to the opposite sex; but to this, she was reconciled. With none of Clarissa's beauty or charisma, Margaret knew she must use her brains to make her way. Indeed, her earnest prayer every night was that the Lord would provide her with the opportunity to do just that, to make a splash based on merit. A proper invention was all she needed. And coming to the future was her best hope to find one.

Unbeknownst to him, Mr. St. John himself had given her the idea for he'd "invented" handy leather straps that helped secure passengers in carriages (called "seat belts" in the future, he said) which had already saved countless lives. The Regent was wild for them and had them installed in each of his multitudinous equipages. His example, as usual, set high society on a mad dash to follow and do likewise. St. John

was suddenly not only wealthier than before but welcome at Carlton House and Brighton Palace as a genius of England with the veriest stars of the *beau monde*.

Like St. John and his carriage straps, Margaret's invention would serve society while earning her a place in it.

"Come," St. John said just then, pulling her from her reveries. "We'll return another time, after Claire's lying in."

Margaret's heart sank. The biggest ball of the season was to take place just before everybody left London for their country estates in two months. Everybody who was anybody, that is. Margaret had hoped to have a name for herself by then. If they left now, gone was her hope of gaining notoriety, of blessing society with a new-fangled device, of being *a social success at the ball*.

"Please, sir!" she cried. "We have only just arrived! Do not say you cannot spare me but a few hours. And recall that I have not yet seen my sister. We *must* stay if I am to see her."

He shook his head. "You have not seen her for three years. A few months longer is no tragedy, surely."

Margaret's mind darted in various directions like a mouse trying to escape the claws of a cat. Cannily she said, "Seeing her was only one of my goals, sir. I *long* to observe this fascinating period." She looked around and spread her arms. "The future! I pray you, do not deny me!"

Miss Margaret could be winsome when she was passionate. St. John hesitated. A sudden onslaught of foot traffic engulfed them, moving past like water around river rocks. Margaret gawped at the strange clothing, her eyes widening with amusement. Women showing their legs! Other women in pantaloons! And all with an appalling lack of proper bust support. Men without stockings in scandalously short —were they poorly tailored breeches? —

showing *their* legs! Margaret was no prude nor excessively prim, but a flush rose to her cheeks.

Many passersby noticed their 19th-century clothing with a gleam of interest or a smile, but no one stopped or inquired, and the massive volume of pedestrians continued to sweep by in a nearly unbroken tide.

“Lud! I am all astonishment!” Her father forbade her from using the exclamation ‘lud,’ claiming it was not ladylike, but it escaped her lips now. She laughed as she gripped St. John’s arm. She was often amused by society when surveying the ghastly apparel of some of its members at a ball or rout, but this level of ghastly was utterly unprecedented. “I own I could stare all day,” she said, still rather in awe of how indecent some were.

“I warned you,” St. John said. “Few people have a shred of taste with regard to clothing in this century. Try not to gawp.” He spied a metal signpost, motioned at it, and said, “Come.”

Picking her way through the moving crowd, Margaret reached it first and read aloud when he joined her, “Red Zone. Tow and Fine \$185 minimum.” She turned to St. John. “We are in Red Zone, wherever that is.”

He shook his head. “The sign is for carriages, er, cars.” The flood of pedestrians was slowing to a steady trickle, and he turned to take in more of their surroundings. Behind them stood a long, grand, Palladian-style building upon a raised terrace. Above the arched entranceways flanked by columns were engraved the words: “THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.”

“New York!” he exclaimed. “Little wonder it’s so much busier than Portland.”

“A library!” sighed Margaret in an altogether different tone, as though they’d stumbled upon the pearl of great

price. The dignified Georgian building had three sets of steps, a plaza, and three arched doorways. Two huge stone lions on their bellies sat regally to both sides, as well as a huge stone vase, fountain and stone benches. It looked stately and wonderful. Eagerly she asked, “Will they let me peruse the books, do you think?”

He scowled. “There’s no time for that. I promised you *one* day only.” His plan was simple: contact Clarissa at Dove Cottage (formerly Claire’s home in Maine). With luck, she’d be at her husband’s ski lodge close by already. If not, they’d take a spin in the Jaguar kept there expressly for his use while they waited for her to fly up in a private plane. Once she arrived, they’d all have dinner in Portland, and then he and Margaret would go home again to South Audley Street in Mayfair. He would be back well in time for the birth of his first child, as the doctor assured him just a day earlier that the baby showed no sign of emerging just yet.

It was a neat plan. Miss Margaret would no longer plague him to see her sister or the future. He would enjoy the spin in the Jaguar, though ‘twould be better with Claire beside him, and all would be well. Except they hadn’t arrived in Maine, and his plan could not be followed.

“You did promise one day, sir, one *whole* day,” replied Margaret, still eyeing the library as though it were Aladdin’s cave. And it was, for among its treasures she could surely find her invention and bring it home and then embark upon the delightful prospect of making a wave in society. Her heart swelled at the thought.

St. John frowned. “If I must, I’ll take you to a library in Portland, but we’re in a different state—the Colonies have states, recall—and the one we want is Maine.”

Margaret smiled indulgently. “They are no longer our colonies, sir,” she said, thinking how old St. John must be to refer to them as such.

St. John, of course, knew this but liked the comfort of the old nomenclature.

Two women stopped before them. “Excuse us.” The speaker looked Oriental, and Margaret stared curiously, having only seen one other Oriental woman in the flesh in her span of eighteen years. The woman turned to her companion. “In New York always some people are in costume. I must get picture. Such clothes! Such pretty lady! So handsome gentleman!”

“Pretty?” exclaimed Margaret under her breath. “She wants spectacles, I think!”

“May we take photo, please?”

“Photo—a pho—pho-to-graph?” exclaimed Miss Margaret, her eyes sparkling with excitement. To St. John she said, “Claire told me about pho-to-graphs! I own, I *adore* the idea of a photo-graph!”

The lady laughed heartily. “Actors, too! Brava, brava!” She edged in between St. John and Miss Margaret, and the companion clicked the photo.

Miss Margaret asked, “Is that all? Is it done?”

“One more please,” said the lady, smiling. Then she switched places with her companion, and another click ensued. When they peered into little hand-held devices, one held hers up for Margaret to see. And there she was, an image of her bespectacled self and St. John, right before her eyes! St. John scowled with his usual mien, while Margaret’s face was frozen in an expression of fascination.

“Lud!” she exclaimed.

It was all she could do not to snatch the lady’s device so she could keep staring at the miraculous likenesses.

“But you do not smile!” said the lady.

“Should one smile?” asked Miss Margaret. Every portrait she had ever seen gracing the walls of homes, whether

modest cottages or wealthy estates, showed people staring somberly out. Rarely did one see a smile.

The women laughed and admonished St. John and Margaret to smile, then took more pictures. St. John managed to soften his scowl, while Margaret dutifully grinned, though she felt absurd. She covered her mouth when she saw her smiling face. “How gauche!” she exclaimed. The ladies laughed, thanked them heartily, pressed something into Margaret’s hand, and walked away, chatting happily.

Perplexed, Margaret stared at the green paper in her hand. “Is this—a banknote?” Her face cleared, and she giggled. “Sir, they have given me *money!* They think we are in *trade*, the photo-graph trade!” She rubbed her lips together. “My word, papa would have apoplexy if he knew!”

“Do not let it concern you; things are different now.” He took her arm and turned her toward the building. “Come, let’s find a quiet spot and try again.” He led her to a recess behind the fountain where they were not in plain view.

Margaret turned to him with glowing eyes. “Sir, this is the most diverting adventure of my life! If I may only explore this library, I will never plague you to take me here again.” She looked starry-eyed at the building as if it were the Celestial City.

But the Jaguar waiting in Maine was calling St. John’s name. And, while he enjoyed reading as much as the next man, he did not relish the thought of spending a day among books. He said, “We may have difficulty getting home since something is amiss with the tallit. What if it has gone awry? I suggest we try it at once. With any luck, we’ll arrive in Maine, contact your sister, and while we wait for her to fly up, I’ll take you to the Portland library. It will dazzle you, I assure you.”

He took her by the elbow, but Margaret's face fell. Searching for some straw to cling to, she pouted, "You promised to show me an analytical engine." A woman walking past stared, but they ignored her. "I daresay there are none at Dove Cottage."

He offered his arm and walked them to the far side of the pavement where it was quieter and then withdrew his half of the tallit from a pocket. They had long ago discovered that, no matter how large the tallit was when in one piece and unfolded, the two halves had an amazing capacity to shrink when folded to fit in a pocket or reticule. It was one of its mysteries. "Clarissa has a portable analytical engine," he informed her.

Margaret's eyes widened. "She OWNS one? She owns one of those marvels?"

"As do most people of this day, only—I keep forgetting—they call them computers. Or er—laptops."

Margaret glanced down at her stomach region. *Laptops?*

"Come, come, where's your half of the tallit?"

With pursed lips, Margaret produced the item from her reticule. "Oh, but wait," she said. "Do you suppose I could take photo-graph making back with us? Imagine society hearkening to *me* to get their likenesses made without having to sit for an artist! They will save time *and* expense."

He frowned. "No." St. John had studied the progress of inventions over time on one of his Maine visits. "The process cannot be easily transferred."

"Given time, I could study it," she replied in a subdued tone.

"We did not come to indulge ambition."

Pulling out his half of the tallit, he said, "Shall we? I warrant my wife will rejoice at our return—"

“Or my sister at our appearance in Maine,” she said glumly.

She held up her half of the shawl, admiring the edging of embroidered lovebirds. The tallit was a special Israeli prayer shawl which, as Claire had discovered, had timetravelling capability. Not knowing its power, Clarissa had one day torn it in two in a fit of rage. But this led to the discovery that two people could travel together through time, each with one piece. Claire and St. John had done it many times. Claire had sewn up the ragged edges to make two neat halves, but her work wasn't nearly as lovely as the lovebird design bordering the rest of it.

Margaret gave a sigh to be leaving without a glimpse into the great library but raised the tallit near her bodice. “I'm ready, sir.”

St. John held up his half. “Together, now. At the count of three.”

Margaret moved closer to take his arm. This time she'd be ready for the loss of balance.

He counted, “One...two...three.” Each pressed their half to their chest, but nothing happened. St. John blinked and shook his head. “Let's try that again.” When again nothing happened, he said, “Perhaps if we wrap it about our shoulders and cross the ends.”

They did as he suggested, but still there was no roaring sound in her ears, no dizzying motion, no temporary darkness as had happened earlier. She turned large eyes up to St. John. “What has gone wrong, sir? What shall we do?”

He shook his head, his lips compressed, then rubbed his chin. “Try it again, as tight as you can.”

Margaret carefully drew her half of the shawl about her shoulders, pulling it tightly, watching as St. John did the same. He'd done it this way many times with Claire, Margaret knew, to visit this century. He enjoyed the

occasional spin at top speed in the Jaguar, while Claire enjoyed visiting her home state and century. The tallit had always brought them through time—surely it must do so for her and St. John now.

Only it didn't. When the last attempt failed, the cold truth niggled at Margaret's brain.

They were stuck. They were stuck in New York in the 21st century.

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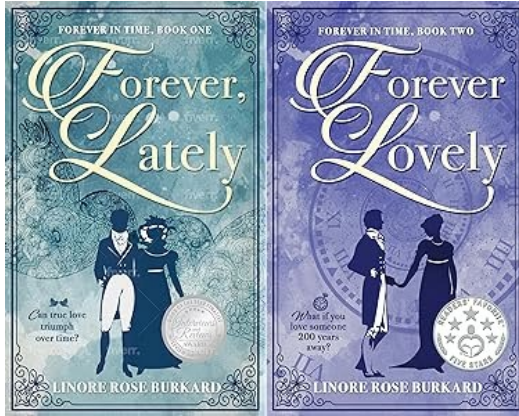
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