



False Colours

Georgette Heyer

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The young Earl of Denville was missing. Handsome and eligible as the titled elder of the renowned Fancot twins was, no one would forgive him if he failed to appear before his fiancée's family. For even though they did not love each other, he could hardly embarrass the charming Cressida Stavely at her own engagement party. And if the match were wrecked, it would dash the last hope of getting his lovely, improvident mother out of debt.

With an uncanny hunch about his twin's predicament, the younger brother, Kit, appeared at the party just in time to double for the missing Earl. With his intelligence he succeeded in deceiving all present. And with his superb manners he not only charmed Cressy's formidable grandmother, but made Cressy herself wonder if she didn't love the Earl after all . . .

False Colours Details

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Romance

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From Reader Review False Colours for online ebook

Siria says

The couple in this, Kit and Cressy, were likeable enough, but this was definitely not one of Heyer's better efforts. I didn't find her humour as sharp or as well-paced as in other works, and in its absence, the gender politics just became too strong for me to ignore.

It wasn't so much the depiction of the constraints and roles which were forced on women in Regency England--it would be hard to read historical fiction at all if you couldn't put that to one side a little--it was the depiction of Kit's mother which really irked me. Part of it was Heyer's innate snobbishness shining through; but most of it was this sense of an authorial intention that we should find amusing and likeable a woman so shallow and wasteful. More than that, that we should find amusing and likeable a woman who has raised two sons who think that it is in her best interests that she not only continue to be shallow and wasteful, but that she neither face up to the consequences of her actions, nor fully understand what they are. It left a bad taste in my mouth.

Damaskcat says

Kit Fancot returns home from his diplomatic job in Europe because he feels his twin brother, Evelyn is in trouble. His feeling turns out to be correct as Evelyn has disappeared just after he proposed to Cressy Stavely. He has been invited to meet her relations on the day after Kit's return and his mother persuades Kit to take his brother's place as they are almost identical. What follows is an amusing story of mistaken identities and a mysterious disappearance which turns out to be much more prosaic than expected.

There are some marvellous characters in this book including one of Heyer's best comic characters - Sir Bonamy Ripple, Kit and Evelyn's mother's life-long admirer. I don't think I enjoyed this book that much when I first read it more than forty years ago but I did thoroughly enjoy it on second reading and appreciated the amusing dialogue and the characters.

I have both the Kindle edition and the audio book edition of this book and I found Whispersync for voice worked perfectly between a Kindle Fire, Voyage and Paperwhite and it was very easy to pick up where I had left off from one edition to the other.

Tweety says

This was amazing! I did not think I was going to like this one much, but it was done superbly.

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

This book is about a cute set of identical twins:

. . . no, wait. Cute and *marriageable* identical twins:

Something like this, but in Regency costume. *fans self vigorously*

Anyway. The younger and more sensible twin, Christopher (Kit), senses Something is Wrong with his twin and returns to London from foreign parts, only to find that his brother Evelyn has disappeared without a trace, and it's imperative that Evelyn show up at a dinner to meet his wealthy fiancée's family. Unfortunately for Kit and Evelyn, their charming, lovely mother is a complete spendthrift, and unless Evelyn marries Cressy he won't be given control of his own fortune, and won't be able to pay off Mama's massive debts and rescue the family from certain disgrace, and he and Cressy both understand it's going to be a marriage of convenience.

So of course Kit is pressured by Mama into pulling the old switcheroo, except Evelyn keeps not showing up, and Kit keeps getting thrown into Cressy's company, and you can pretty much guess where it's going from here.

But like most all Georgette Heyer books, the fun is in the ride and the witty dialogue, not so much in whatever surprises there are to be gleaned from a genre so littered with tropes. Unfortunately, the dialogue in this book didn't charm me as much as Heyer's dialogue usually does. Partly it was because this book contained too much talk and too little action and romance--there's 50 (!) pages of exposition at the start. But mostly it was because too little time is spent with Kit and Cressy and their budding relationship, and way too much time is spent with their foolishly extravagant Mama. If you agree with Kit and Evelyn (and apparently pretty much every other character in this book, other than their late and unlamented father) that a lovely, silly, 40-something woman trying to act like a 20 year old, who is utterly unable to manage her finances and who spends money she doesn't have like there's no tomorrow, is charming and delightful, and that she needs to be coddled and understood, but in no case put on a strict financial budget, then maybe you'll enjoy this book more than I did.

It's too bad, because I thought the basic plot had real potential, and I thought Cressy and Kit were a clever and entertaining couple, other than his unfortunate tendency to indulge his mother.

A weak 3 stars. There were some fun parts, but too few and far between.

Abigail Bok says

There are many things I love about *False Colours*—the hero, Kit, is one of my favorite among Georgette Heyer's men; his mother, Lady Denham, is one of her most perfect wigeons; and the Dowager and Sir Bonamy are delightful secondary characters. But the novel makes its way only into my second rank of Georgette Heyer favorites because of the plotting.

Kit Fancot, the younger of a pair of identical twins, comes home to London from his diplomatic post in Vienna because he has sensed that something is wrong with his brother, Evelyn, Lord Denham. He discovers that Evelyn is supposed to turn up the next evening at a gathering of the relations of a woman he has proposed to, Cressida Stavelly; but Evelyn is missing. Kit agrees reluctantly to impersonate Evelyn at the party in order to keep Evelyn's engagement to Cressy from being derailed.

It turns out that Evelyn is absent longer than expected, so Kit has to take his place for more than just one evening. In the process he learns a lot about his mother's disastrous debts and chaotic life, and he forms an inappropriate attachment. He must unravel the mystery of Evelyn's disappearance and disentangle the scandalous sequelae for the story to reach its happy ending.

The setup is well crafted and the first half unfolds very promisingly. In the early going I would have liked to have seen more scenes showing the untenable situation that Miss Stavely is in, rather than simply being told over and over that it is untenable; there was a missed comic opportunity in that situation, and the scenes would have attached us more to the heroine. In the second half of the book, the story becomes trapped at a country house and the action flags; comic minor characters such as Ambrose are underused. One or two other characters with crucial roles to play, such as Lord Brumby, never appear in person. There's even a slightly uncomfortable undertone to the character of Evelyn, who seems almost bipolar to me. The final dilemma doesn't seem to be as major a problem as it is made out to be, and its resolution—again described and not acted out—is only partial and feels like a letdown.

Nevertheless, my love for the hero and delicious scenes like Sir Bonamy's final undoing carry me through and make this a very pleasurable read. Cradled by Georgette Heyer's delightful prose and hilarious dialogue, I notice the flaws only in retrospect.

BJ Rose says

What a delightful romp!! Kit Fancot comes home unexpectedly from Vienna because he 'has a feeling' that his twin is in his trouble – and he's right; Evelyn has not been seen or heard from for almost 2 weeks, and no one knows where he is. To make matters worse, he's supposed to attend a family dinner the very next night – the family of the woman he recently proposed to! The twins' Mama decides that Kit should masquerade as his brother 'just for the night', and Kit has the devil of a time trying to persuade her that it just won't do. Of course he's not successful, so off he goes the following night to be Evelyn, having been assured by his Mama that the only person he really has to fool is his betrothed, who has only briefly met him. Love is not the reason for the marriage-proposal; Evelyn needs to marry to prove to his uncle that he is settled down enough to be put in charge of the inheritance that should have come along with his succession to the title of Earl of Denville. Evelyn is the older, titled twin, but Kit has always been the more reliable one, and all his skills are called upon to pull off this masquerade. He is successful with that on the night of the dinner, but the following day Evelyn still has not shown up, and Kit knows that he'll never be able to maintain the masquerade in town, so he decides to repair to the estate in Sussex, but – you guessed it – Cressy's grandmama decides on the perfect idea of having the two of them come for a visit so that Cressy & Evelyn can get better acquainted. Now Kit is really in the soup!

The twins' Mama is such a lovable widgeon that it is almost too easy to forgive her propensity for getting into serious debt, which is really what's behind Evelyn's need to marry. But since her sons have forgiven her, who am I to cavil?!

And then there's Sir Bonamy Ripple, a "grossly fat and elderly dandy" of sedentary disposition – *he does so love his food* – but he's always been there for Lady Denville and honestly cares for her, so this reader cared for him as well, and chuckled about the "wary look in his eye" when she told him he was her "best of friends" and he was very afraid of where that would lead!

Oh! Lest the reader worry – all the romances in the book work out happily!

QNPoohBear says

The Honorable Christopher Fancot takes leave from his diplomatic post to return to London because he has a feeling something is wrong with his twin Evelyn, Lord Denville. Their mother reveals Evelyn hasn't been home in over a week and she is very worried. Evelyn is due to visit his potential bride's family soon and if he isn't home in time then Kit will have to take his place. Kit and his twin used to change places frequently as children for a lark but this is different. Kit agrees believing the masquerade to last only one night. He is surprised to find his brother's intended an intelligent and interesting young lady and her dragon of a grandmother not so formidable as he had feared. He almost regrets that Evelyn must marry this girl out of convenience. When Evelyn still doesn't return home, Kit and Lady Denville head to their country home to search for clues. When Cressy's grandmother invites herself and her granddaughter to visit, Kit has no choice but to continue the masquerade. Can he convince everyone he's his brother? Does he really want to? Is there someone he would rather reveal his true self to?

This is a story of deception Georgette Heyer style. I normally hate that kind of thing because I believe in honesty and plain speaking. However, I found this book largely enjoyable, if not predictable. The second half was funnier than the first and contains a lot more of Heyer's trademark period cant. I found it a little excessive and annoying in this novel. It didn't quite flow as seamlessly as it does in some of her other books. I liked the romance a lot and was impressed that there was (read between the lines) passionate kissing in the middle without explicitly stating so. I didn't remember that from my first reading.

I'm not super crazy about the characters in this novel. Kit seems like a better man than Evelyn. Evelyn is rakety and though not exactly rakish, he's careless and forgetful which causes him to appear like a rake. Kit is more thoughtful and intelligent than his older brother but I wasn't enamored with him either. He's too indulgent of his mother and even his brother's bad behavior. I thought he was a bit too close to his mother. Their relationship was more like friends or close siblings than mother and son. He improved a lot, in my opinion, once he met Cressy and got to know her better.

Amabel, Lady Denville, is the most annoying, immature mother of a main character in all of Heyer's novels. She's so flighty and unintelligent that she drove me crazy. I wanted to be sympathetic because she wasn't brought up to understand money and debt and that sort of thing. She was married at a young age to a man who didn't love her but plenty of other characters in the Regency world as defined by Heyer make do and learn. Amabel is very similar to Nell in *April Lady*.

Cressy is the one character I really liked. She's sharp, intelligent and not a typical gently bred young lady. Her experiences living alone with her father make her more aware of the gentleman's world and how women fit into it. She isn't phased by anything and has a great sense of humor.

As always, Heyer's secondary characters really shine. Bonamy is a great character. He's a portly middle-aged follower of the Prince Regent and should therefore not be all that likable. In the hands of Heyer, even a character other characters dislike can be a delight. His constant raptures over food were a bit much but he's a kind and loving friend and his dialogue is funny, especially at the end. My second favorite secondary character is Clara's mother. She's clearly not quite the thing and an extortionist but too too funny. I can easily conjure up a mental picture of her. My third favorite secondary character is Cressy's grandmama. If this ever makes it to TV or film any time soon, she will be played by Maggie Smith. She's the Regency version of Lady Violet Crawley - a tough old lady who seems scary but has a good heart inside and wants what's best

for her family.

I bumped this book up from 3 to 4 stars for a second reading. I enjoyed it more than I remembered.

Nick Imrie says

Read it very quickly, in one afternoon if you can, it's such a frothy confection that there's no chance you'll be overwhelmed by it. It's best read at speed, because all the joy of this book is in the very silly twin-swapping masquerade and the ridiculous secondary characters like corpulent Sir Bonamy Ripple (what a name!) and fierce, old, match-making, dragon, Grandmama (I forget her name already, but if you've ever read a Heyer then you know the character I mean!). If you stop to think about it you'll realise that the plot is ridiculous, the pacing uneven, and the central romance mysteriously absent.

I liked it very much - but I always like best the light-hearted ones, where Heyer is as fond of her own characters as you are. Everybody here is adorable, despite not deserving to be so at all: airheaded, spendthrift mama; self-indulgent aristocrat; bipolar brother; possessively devoted servants: I love them all. That's much better than the sourer Heyer's where the servants are stupid figures of fun, the love rivals are joyless bluestockings and spoilt brats, and the heroes are cold and masterful. The hero here is the exact opposite: thoughtful, responsible, humorous! Despite spending no time at all with the heroine it's clear that she has to love him. He's the only man in the entire Heyerverse with his head on his shoulders!

This is very much the fun of the book. Poor Kit's entire family is tangling him in a web of well-intentioned deceptions, and Kit's working like the dickens to extricate them all without a scandal. It takes every particle of his diplomatic powers and it's simply delicious to see him bluffing his way gracefully out of some difficult social situations! It's clearly a hereditary skill - just watch his mama twisting everyone around her fingers, despite being 'a perfect widgeon'. How can you not love them?

Daisiemae says

When I picked up *False Colours* by Georgette Heyer, I knew to expect a well-written, regency romance filled with laugh out loud humor and well developed characters. This is a fast-paced book of misunderstandings and mistaken identities that kept my interest until the last page.

Christopher "Kit" Fancot has a nagging feeling that something is very wrong. While on leave from the Army, he decides to surprise his family with a visit. When he discovers that his twin brother, Evelyn has disappeared and has been gone for several days, he becomes determined to find out what happened to him.

When Kit is told that Evelyn must marry Cressy Stavely to pay off the mounting gambling debts that his mother has accumulated, he is shocked. In order to keep from embarrassing Cressy and both families, he finds himself reluctantly talked into masquerading as Evelyn at the couples engagement party.

Cressy Stavely has no idea of the deception surrounding her. She can't understand why suddenly she is enjoying Evelyn's company so much more than before. He is more fun and interesting to be around, and she finds herself quite taken with her intended. She is a very likeable, intelligent heroine who is no spitfire, but definitely holds her own with Christopher.

As a general rule, I am normally not a big fan of reading about one twin assuming the identity of the other. But, I will admit that because of the circumstances that Kit finds himself in, and the relationship that develops between he and Cressy, my mind quickly changed about the deception that Kit must portray. Maybe it was his character itself. He is a noble, honorable, funny and well-likeable hero that any person would be drawn to. No wonder Cressy can't resist him. I certainly wouldn't!

Another thing I really like about Georgette Heyer novels is that it is so easy to visualize the era in which the characters live in. The setting and mannerisms of all of the characters literally bring you into Regency England. From the way the characters speak, to the descriptions of their surroundings, it immediately draws you into an interesting, realistic interpretation of the Regency Period.

Filled with some very unexpected surprises and quirky characters, I kept a smile on my face several minutes after I finished the novel. *False Colours* is not only a book written about the romance between Kit and Cressy, but also about relationships, duty and the power of love that sends a strong, warm message throughout the book.

For more information about Georgette Heyer, her website is: www.georgettehey.com.

Mela says

When I think of this novel as a romance (Heyer's romance) I give 3 stars. The story of Kit and Cressy has some amusing points and the idea of twins is well used. But... Let's say, it isn't the thrilling story like (for example) in *Devil's Cub* or *Cotillion* (and in many other Heyer's novels).

When I think of this book as a funny book I give 4 stars. Lady Denville is ridiculous. She is a perfect example of a classic character of Heyer's Regency romances. She is so incorrigible almost preposterous. Add to that: Sir Bonamy, Challow, Fimber and the Cliffe and you have humour which makes you smile many times.

When I think of this story as a social (those times) analysis I give it 4.5 stars. I don't know if Heyer did it on purpose but:

- 1) in the *Lady Denville* we have a sad satire of ladies of upper class from that period.
- 2) we have really many about the custom of having mistresses. In other Heyer's book we can read that someone has or had one (or many) mistresses, but in this novel it looks like almost everybody has one (sons, fathers, grandfathers). I don't judge it. It only shows the other side of those times. I couldn't stop thinking that maybe Heyer tried to remind us that the sweet Regency times aren't so sweet as we want to believe.
- 3) we see here the real sides of some marriages and so called everlasting love.

'My father—years older than she was!—fancied himself to be in love with her! Love? He was dazzled by her face, and her captivating ways, and had no more love for her than I have for Cressida Stavelly! That was soon over! Everything in Mama which makes her so lovable he disliked!'

'You don't wish to marry me, do you?'

He pulled himself together, declaring valiantly: 'The one wish of my heart!'

'Well, you didn't look as if it was! Confess, now! You've been shamming it—all these years!'

He rejected this playful accusation with vehemence. 'No, that I haven't! How can you say such a thing, Amabel? Haven't I stayed single for your sake?'

A provocative smile hovered about the corners of her mouth; she seemed to consider him. 'That's what you say, but are you perfectly sure it wasn't for your own sake, abominable palaverer that you are, my dear?'

So, as a Regency romance - 3 stars, as a story which has something to tell us (about people and those times) - 4 stars.

Phrynnne says

A lovely light easy read just like all Georgette Heyer's romances. This one stars one of her best male leads in Kit who is half of a pair of identical twins. Identical that is in appearance but not apparently in character and charm. Her books are still the best Regency romances out there and they are certainly standing the test of time. To me they are the literary equivalent of comfort food:)

Jenna says

Omigod this book was SO FUN. It was just pure delight and put a smile on my face more than once. Which felt a bit silly because I was listening to an audiobook, usually on public transport, and sitting there grinning to myself. But I didn't care because it was awesome. What could be more fun than twins switch places?

Oh right, HOT twins switching places. In Regency England. And having to pretend to be engaged. And actually falling in love. And all the many complications such a situation entails. But, importantly, this story isn't mere farce, thanks largely to the touching and genuine-feeling relationships.

Suzanne says

I read all of Georgette Heyer's books in my teens and enjoyed most of them thoroughly. Now, twenty years later, I've decided to re-read them since they've been enjoying an upsurge in popularity and have been re-released in such an attractive format. I could not remember if I'd read this one or not, and now I realize why I found False Colours so forgettable. The main character, Kit, spends most of the novel, not in witty banter with his lady-love, but with his mother. I'm 110 pages into the book and he's spent about five pages in conversation with Cressy, the so-called heroine, and about 95 pages in conversation with good ole' mom. I'm about ready to give up on it completely, because I now find myself skimming through the same conversations about Lady Denville's extravagant purchases that I read on pages 1-30. I am stopping here to write this review because I do know that Heyer wrote much more gripping novels than this one, and readers shouldn't waste their time on a mediocre book like False Colours when they can choose another of her works that would prove to be a far more enjoyable read.

Jacob Proffitt says

It's always hard for me to review a Georgette Heyer book. She's one of my favorite authors and I've read most of her books many times. Which makes it difficult to feign objectivity or even to avoid gushing like a little girl.

In False Colours, like other of her adventure-flavored romances (The Unknown Ajax, The Toll-Gate, or The Talisman Ring for example), the central romance is resolved between half and three-quarters through the book (60% in this case, I checked). Unlike those others, however, the adventure side of False Colours is pretty tame—indeed, there isn't much for the heroes to do besides wait for Kit's missing twin to show up. And there's no malignant force to contend against. Indeed, all the factors of the dilemma they must extricate themselves from are caused, directly or indirectly, by the Fancot twins themselves or their mother.

So you'd think this book would be less enjoyable than others of its kind. As you near the end of the book, there's no real urgency or threat or danger. And the romance is resolved—quite satisfactorily, thank you very much. Yet the ending, while a slower pace than you'd expect, is not only *not* a dead bore but is really quite enjoyable all the way to the very end. Indeed, though I've read the book more times than I can confidently state and I know very well how things will resolve, I'm not even a little bit tempted to simply stop reading once Kit and Cressy declare their devotion to one another or when even Evelyn shows up to tell them where he's been.

The thing is, Heyer has populated the book with such engaging characters that you really aren't ready to be done with them until *everybody* is reasonably well-settled. The magic of the book is that you *like* Lady Denville, the Dowager Stavely, and Sir Bonamy even as you have to acknowledge the faults that cause so many difficulties. And Lady Denville shines as a character you can't help but love. Her love for her sons and basic good-natured care for others is endearing even as you understand that her inability to control her impecunious habits is at the heart of Evelyn's difficulty.

Add Heyer's deft hand with dialogue and the book is fun to the very end. While not her best work or my most loved, this continues to be on my high rotation list because I simply enjoy spending time with these characters.

Anne says

Love, love, love!!

This novel was so *cute*! Ah, I just want to give it and everyone in it a big hug! <3

False Colours seems to be one of those less popular Heyers, because I had rarely heard of it, knew nothing of what was going to happen, and generally did not know what to expect beyond twins switching places and family shenanigans. But it was all *so* much fun!! What a wonderful ride!

I just loved the feels of this book: so sweet, soothing, heart-warming and gentle, all interlaced with Heyer's signature wit and humour. The family bonds were so strong and so touching, too! The Fancots were such a united family, wanting the best for each other and trying to out-kind the others, it was so sweet!!

Every scene was basically:

Lady Denville : Oh my goodness my sons are the best!! I feel SO sorry for all the other parents out there, who can't possibly have sons as awesome as mine! Ah, I am SO lucky! (No joke though, she really says that at some point)

Kit : Aww, I missed you, Mama! *hugs* Let me help you with anything I can, even though I hate this masquerade of taking Evelyn's place!

Evelyn : Mama!! *more hugs* Let me settle your debts! Let me help you! And Kester, thank you so much for helping me!

Lady Denville : Oh, my sons!! I love you both EQUALLY! Let's have some QUAILS to celebrate the return of Evelyn!

Kit : Eve, it's okay bro, I can handle Mama's debts!

Evelyn : No, no! It's *my* responsibility!

Kit : No, seriously, I got this!

Lady Denville : Wait! I have a better idea, but let's *not* have quails after all.

Evelyn : Oh, oh, Mama is wearing her mischievous face again!

Kit : Oh by the way, Eve, sorry for falling in love with your fiancée. I know she's technically yours, so...

Evelyn : Oh noooo! It's okay! You can have her :)

Lady Denville : Ah, I LOVE MY SONS! GROUP HUUUUUG!

Seriously, it's like that the whole time. They loved each other so much, and they were all so kind! Lady Denville seriously stole my heart though, she was the sweetest, most adorable Mama ever and she was *such* a crack-up! Still relatively young (she's 43), the widowed Lady Denville is incredibly beautiful, has an incredible amount of suitors dangling after her, spends an incredible amount of money, and has an incredible amount of debts. True, she is also incredibly silly, and she's not terribly bright, but also has an incredibly big heart, and incredibly engaging manners. She's the perfect definition of a lovely pea-goose. Super cute, and impossible to hate. And her notions of economy, oh my gosh, please, we must take a moment to appreciate them.

Spending Your Money Wisely

by Amabel Fancot, Lady Denville

1- The first rule to remember is that, if you can pay your interest, YOU ARE OKAY! Interest paid = life is GOOD. =)

2- Economy is so super overrated. Did you know that the less you try to spend, the *more* you will actually end up spending? Think about it. If you buy a cheap, ugly dress to save money, you'll find yourself totally incapable of actually wearing it, so you'll end up buying that expensive gown anyways, and thus have paid wayyyy more than you would have in the first place if you'd only stuck to the expensive gown. Cheap gown + expensive gown = more expensive than just expensive gown.

3- Let's also not forget the element of luck here. For all you card-players and gamesters out there, THE LUCK WILL TURN ONE DAY. I mean, it just has to, right? It can't stay bad forever!

4- Okay, so if you *do* actually find yourself indebted at some point and you have nothing more to stake, be sure to have some copies of all those ugly heirloom brooches and family jewels that you never wear. Life savers those, I tell you.

5- And finally, well, remember some principles of kindness. When you already owe a *ton* of money to your milliner and she's trying to sell you *another* hat that you really can't afford? You buy the hat. Because it's only *nice* to spend more at those places where you already owe a ton. Like, oh yeah, sorry I owe you hundreds and hundreds of pounds, let me compensate for now by adding *another* one of your charming creations to my collection.

#ladydenvillelogic

The book is FILLED with her hilarious little comments and notions on spending money, and you're just there like "oh my goodness, she can't be serious!" but it makes you laugh at the same time, because she's just so adorable!! And her devotion to her sons! She would literally die for them if she had to. And the best part? Her sons so totally feel the same way, heck they are at their wits' very end trying to find a way out of the enormous mountain of debts without creating a scandal.

False Colours is a lot more "comedy of manners" and family-oriented than "romance", but I loved Kit and Cressy a lot nonetheless, and thought they made a charming couple, definitely perfect for each other. The story is almost entirely told through Kit's point of view, and Cressy only plays a secondary role in the book, but she was definitely admirable, and everything I saw from her, I liked. She was bright, intelligent, wasn't afraid to stand up to people and speak her mind, but remained lady-like and proper the entire time and never crossed the line of becoming a hoyden. I also loved her sense of humour, she was always ready to laugh and thought everything a good joke rather than becoming offended at every turn (a good thing, since the family she got tangled with most definitely loved a good laugh!). I wish the romance had been a bit more developed, for it wasn't much beyond "we took a few walks in the rose-garden and fell in love" type of thing, but as it wasn't exactly the point of the story and since Cressy wasn't exactly a main character, it made sense that it was a simpler, less all-consuming romance.

Some parts were a little slow, and the overall pace of the book isn't very fast, but it made for a charming, sunny and appealing little story, and Lady Denville's romance with Sir Bonamy was just icing on the cake. Seriously, it was the cutest and most hilarious thing ever.

"Will you think me very saucy if I say that never did a knight more thoroughly deserve to win his lady than you, dear sir?"

'No, no!' protested Sir Bonamy, much discomposed. 'Nonsense! Very obliging of you to say so, but no such thing! As a matter of fact, I'm a baronet.'"

Such a fun, lovely Regency romp set in the country, one I whole-heartedly recommend to fans of the genre. It's completely delightful and loveable!

Group read with the Georgette Heyer Fans group for September 2015.

Carol ?? says

4.5*

I'm gratified to say that Georgette Heyer's books hold up so well for me (I never liked *Charity Girl* & hadn't read *Why Shoot a Butler* before) as I work through my goal of rereading all of them on Good Reads. (well

maybe not My Lord John & Helen – a reader can only suffer so much)

This is one that has improved with time & I have now given it a rating of 4.5*

GH shows her trademark careful plotting & tying up of loose ends. Kit is one of my favourite GH heros – kindly, witty, handsome & resourceful. & he is a GH hero with a career - & one of her rare younger sons.

The sensing something is wrong with older twin Evelyn (now there's a name!) is deftly done.

For me this is a fast moving plot – partly because I wolfed it down in a day! Reviewers who like more action in their historical romances may prefer GH's Georgian romances or Beauvallet. GH's Regency world is generally an unruffled, ordered one.

The characters' amusements in this book may be sedate by our standards but Kit & Cressy are always busy.

They play battledore & shuttlecock (as an ex, not very good, badminton player I always pick up on this when it's mentioned)

& billiards.

Kit also rides & goes shooting.

But there are a couple of flaws which do detract from the story (The Grand Sophy spoiler ahead as well)

(view spoiler)

As usual with GH Arrows this edition is Typo City. Next time a pre GH's death copy turns up at my work (I volunteer at an op shop) I'm going to bring it home & go through the book with a red pen!

I do like the stock painting Arrow has used on this cover but my favourite remains this one. This is how I always picture Kit & Evelyn looking.

One of my all time favourite GH covers.

Edit; Sorry for all the typos - even worse than usual!

Adrianna says

This is one of those Heyer novels I remember being disappointed in, my first run through. I just finished reading it again, and I see now why it didn't rate high amongst the list of glittering Heyer works- it was boring! Way too much dialogue (and I LIKE dialogue)- most of it between mother and son, and while the mother is a delightful disaster, the discourse between them isn't nearly as interesting as the verbal exchanges between Kit and his brother's fiancée, or even between Dowager Fancot and her devoted cavalier servente. However, I must give credit to the more mature plot. Compared to some of her other works, there was very little swordplay, abduction, cross-dressing, etc.

I would have loved to have seen more of Cressy- she really shines in the few scenes she makes an appearance in; especially when she foils the mercenary plans of the matron of "easy virtue".

Having Evelyn play least-in-sight until the end of the novel was poorly contrived, I think. More twin hi-jinx would have been deeply appreciated and would have enlivened the plot. In the end, the resolution seemed a hurried, patched up thing that was not at all satisfying.

Better than I remembered it, but not at all my favorite.

Pauline Ross says

There's something magical about an identical twin story, and this one is about as good as they come. Kit Fancot, as the younger brother, has taken up a diplomatic career. When he returns to England, he finds his brother Evelyn has disappeared, while on the brink of a very sudden betrothal. All the lady's relations have been gathered to meet Evelyn, and to save his brother from embarrassment, Kit agrees to impersonate him.

He scrapes through the meeting and retires to the family estate to hide away until Evelyn turns up again, but the young lady's formidable grandmother invites herself and her granddaughter to stay with them. This is a crisis, so Kit's widowed mother invites some starchy relations and one of her beaux to join them. Thus begins one of the most awkward house parties ever, not helped by Kit and the young lady, Cressy, beginning to fall in love.

Of course Evelyn eventually turns up again, having fallen in love himself, and the brothers have to dream up some ingenious way to swap back their identities and pair up with their chosen ladies, without creating a scandal. The whole book is delightful, and one of the funniest Heyers ever. As with many of her tales, the principal characters are perfectly rational people, but the side characters are gloriously over the top.

Lady Denville is clearly based on the outrageously extravagant Duchess of Devonshire, completely dippy about money but so charming that nobody ever minded. Well, except her late husband, who was a hard-nosed sort of bloke and gave her a rotten time. Sir Bonamy Ripple, her vastly overweight but very wealthy admirer, is no doubt based on the Prince of Wales, or Prinny, himself. These two, and the formidable grandmother, provide most of the entertainment, and the dialogue is utterly brilliant. The scene where Lady Denville persuades perpetual bachelor Sir Bonamy to marry her is masterful.

Naturally all's well that ends well, everyone ends up with the most suitable partner (yes, even Sir Bonamy!) and scandal is averted. Five well-earned stars.

Seema Khan says

Well, according to "The Georgette Heyer Theory of Regency Romance" assuming a very many constants in people's beliefs and perceptions and assumptions based on absurd coincidences and the unfailing and obviously expected conclusion of a happily ever after, False Colours is truly Georgette Heyer personified! Though this one is not my favourite of the lot, it has a few things I much admire. Kit, for instance, with his ingenuity and tact is a superb character. Secondly, The Fancot Twins together do capture my fancy. But one "feeling" what the other goes through is 'doing it much too brown!' But again, as I said it is 'The Georgette Heyer Theory of Regency Romance' and there ought to be the unbelievable and outrageous to make it an out and out endearing story!

It seems impossible to believe in many things happening in the story in today's times, but taking things with a pinch of salt, why not?? After all it is fiction, and fiction is supposed to be just that: Fantastic!

Kit is definitely one well thought after character. I liked him to say the least! He is intelligent, witty and has a sense of humour; all the things that are really appreciable. Plus the love for his mother and twin is kinda cute. For all his simplicity, you just can't ignore him! He is worth a dozen Evelyns!

I read at many places about people's opinions regarding Lady Denville being really annoying; but I for my part found her amazing! I mean she is just so different. She sure must be difficult to bear with in real life circumstances, a challenge even; but there is no denying her being quite adorable! For all her carelessness she does love her sons! And she can cook up ingenious plans (read scarlet fever!) just to get her way. And how she takes things lightly is what really surprises me for how can a person with tremendous debts ever feel so light n without a jot of discernible care I couldn't fathom!

Cressy is not one of my favourite Georgette Heyer heroines. I couldn't make up her character well (as I could say of Frederica or Sophy or Venetia or Kit from Cotillion). Could be my mistake or fault at reading between the lines, but being described as reserved in the beginning she is anything but that! Please correct me if I am wrong!

Bonamy Ripple was fun to read about! What a couple he should form with Lady Denville! The scene of his undoing was hilarious! What a spot he is in! I did like him a lot!

I also do like the twins' chemistry and love for each other. I am much inclined to accept the unbelievable gut feelings, or whatever those may be that they feel for each other, to be true because it gives the story the impetus necessary.

I liked the Dowager excessively and she was very true to such real life tormentors that do exist! Also, I liked the secondary characters of Fimber and Challow.

Overall Georgette Heyer took good care to plan and plot the story amazingly, just so that you are persuaded to believe in the unbelievable! No one can match her wit and humour with the pen.

What I could actually want was an ending where everything was further elaborated and not just with Kit's plan for the same. Also how Evelyn's pursuance of Miss Askham is taken care of could of course give us the happily ever after details of Evelyn's story, but then Kit was the hero and he was shown to be achieving that! And then some things are best left on their own to be understood by the clever reader

Christina says

How can False Colours possibly be considered a romance novel when the main character spends eighty

percent of his time with his mother, fifteen percent with his valet, servants, and friends, and a pitiful five percent with his beloved?

I actually enjoyed the first eighty or so pages of this novel, but by the time it became abundantly clear that the novel would consist of Kit spending his days with his mother, the novel quickly took on a nails-on-chalkboard feeling. It's extremely slow and lacking any sort of propelling force to keep the reader interested in the story.

Kit's mother, Lady Denville, reminds me of how Lydia Bennet would act when she was older and had children – frivolous, racking up debts left and right, and always, always eye on the prize (in this case, marriage to someone wealthier). The couple in *False Colours*, Kit and Cressy, were in reality quite likable, but they get so little time together, so little play in the novel that the whole point of the story is lost.

And I quickly lost interest in Heyer's novel, and wound up skimming the last one hundred pages because I couldn't stand it any longer.
