

Dear Reader,

I got married in 2021. The day itself was a joyful, delirious blur and a release of almost two years of stress. Wedding planning, in my experience, entails coordinating a thousand moving parts—and wrangling family members as if you’re some sort of diplomat who’s been cursed to disappoint someone at the cost of pleasing someone else. Somewhere along the way, I thought: this pain is fresh! Why not channel it into a book? And so, Jack—the male lead’s overbearing older brother, the prince regent, and an antagonist of sorts—came to me. He is a harried, type-A planner desperate for things to go right; the kind of guy who believes that under his exacting supervision, by God, things will go right. Which meant, of course, everything had to go terribly, terribly wrong.

*A Fragile Enchantment* bloomed after a long creative fallow period. It was a book I wrote in pursuit of joy, and through Niamh and all her starry-eyed, scatterbrained whimsy, I found it. I loved researching the Regency era and all the time I spent trawling through fashion prints and recipes. I loved writing about candlelit ballrooms and emotion-fueled magic and the seething iniquity that the Regency’s glittery facade tries and fails to conceal. I especially loved the banter between Kit and Niamh and their ruinous, forbidden love.

I love this book for its playfulness, but I love it just as much for the ways it cut me open, then stitched me whole again. Each character underwent a journey that surprised me. Niamh confronts the cost of prioritizing others’ needs over her own, as well as her misguided belief that because her life will likely be short, it is not worth experiencing fully. Kit learns that it isn’t better to be alone than to risk being hurt and hurting others. Even Jack reexamines his horrible missteps while acting in what he believes to be the best interests of the people he cares about. I think what this book allowed me to articulate is that love, in every shape it takes, will hurt. Pain is unavoidable, but life is beautiful all the same—and it’s yours, no matter what pressures you’re under, no matter what you’ve survived, no matter how short it is.

I am so excited to share *A Fragile Enchantment* with you! I hope it makes you laugh (and maybe cry a little). Thank you so much for reading.



Allison Saft



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