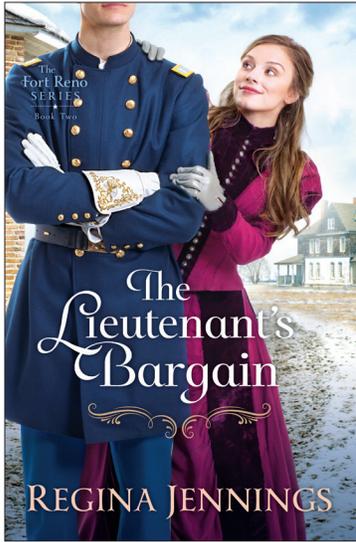




**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH REGINA JENNINGS**



***The Lieutenant's Bargain***

THE FORT RENO SERIES #2  
by Regina Jennings

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**1. Did you have a specific reader in mind when you wrote this?**

Yes! Actually, this book was written for the late bloomers of the world—those of us who were awkward, nerdy, and maybe spent too much time with books to have much social acuity. Everyone feels like they've been underappreciated and there were times when people didn't bother to notice them. This story is a salute to them.

Although Jack Hennessey was a puny bookworm in his childhood, his years in the cavalry have rounded out his character and filled out his lanky frame. The only thing he hasn't succeeded at is forgetting the girl from back home who never took any notice of him.

Years later, when he rescues Hattie Walker after a stagecoach robbery, Jack can't believe his luck. Now she'll appreciate him and give him the respect he's always deserved. If only he hadn't ruined both of their lives with a colossal mistake.

**2. What inspired *The Lieutenant's Bargain*? Is there any history behind it?**

This period in American history is full of conflict and missteps by the U. S. government concerning the Indian tribes. Many policies were long debated, then enforced, then repealed and then enforced again as the government tried to cope with the challenges they'd created for themselves.

The inspiration for *The Lieutenant's Bargain* came from the laws pertaining to marriages between the two cultures. At this time, white settlers were not allowed on the vast lands of Indian Territory without a connection to the tribe. Unscrupulous men often courted and married Native American women for access to the tribal funds and land. All too often, these speculators would decide to seek easy money elsewhere and leave behind a wife and children, claiming that the Indian wedding ceremony wasn't binding on them. Over time, the government enacted different policies trying to prevent the exploitation of the tribes, but it remained a problem for decades.

The insistence that cavalry officers honor the Arapaho's ceremonies is what gets Lieutenant Jack and Hattie into trouble when they unwittingly participate in a banquet.

**3. Can you give us a brief preview of the story?**

Sure! Hattie Walker dreams of painting the Rocky Mountains, but her parents want her to settle down and marry. They make an offer—she has two months in Denver to place her works in an exhibition. If she fails, she comes back home and gets married. But her journey is derailed when a gunman attacks her stagecoach and leaves her to be rescued by a group of Arapaho. Unfortunately, she's too terrified to realize they're friendly.

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Cavalry Officer Lieutenant Jack Hennessey has two passions—the girl back home who never gave him a chance and helping Arapaho children prepare for their changing world. When a message arrives about a recovered survivor, Jack heads out to collect the victim and is stunned by who he finds.

Hattie Walker, the girl who shattered his heart, needs his help. This is his chance to impress her. When his plan gets tangled through translation, Jack and Hattie end up in a mess that puts her dreams in peril—and sets Jack's two passions at odds.

**4. So, if the heroine, Hattie Walker, is an accomplished artist, what is the extent of your artistic talents?**

Hmmm...I would say my best work has been with the mediums of Shrinky Dinks and Etch A Sketches. My most recent attempts have occurred during games of Pictionary with the family, but they don't appreciate my talent. Maybe I've found another way to be a very late bloomer.