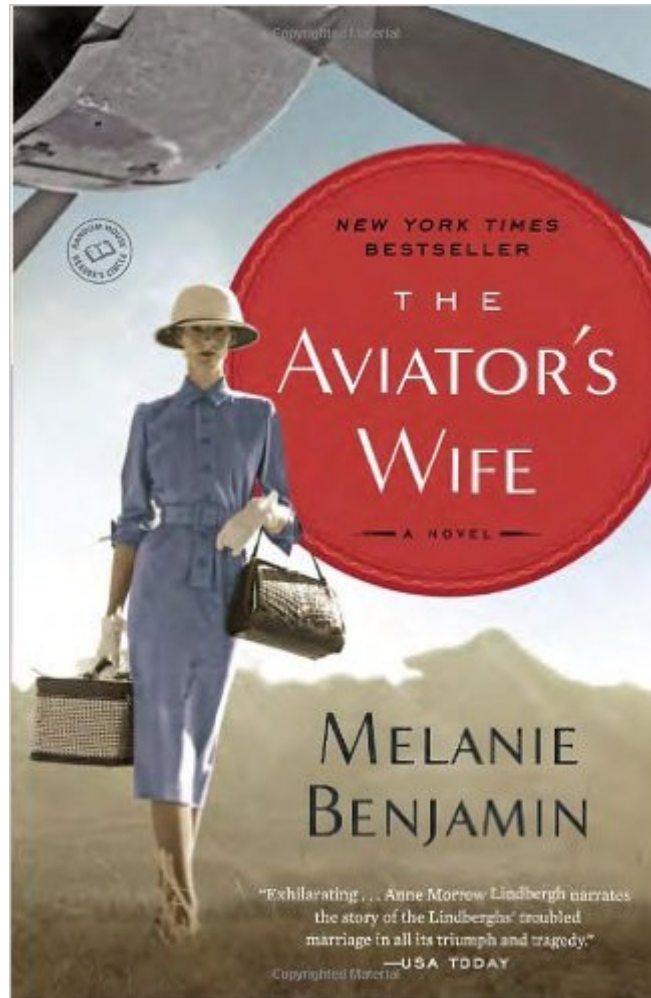


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The Aviator's Wife: A Novel



Synopsis

In the spirit of *Loving Frank* and *The Paris Wife*, acclaimed novelist Melanie Benjamin pulls back the curtain on the marriage of one of America's most extraordinary couples: Charles Lindbergh and Anne Morrow Lindbergh. "The history [is] exhilarating. . . ." *The Aviator's Wife* soars. "USA Today" NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER When Anne Morrow, a shy college senior with hidden literary aspirations, travels to Mexico City to spend Christmas with her family, she meets Colonel Charles Lindbergh, fresh off his celebrated 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic. Enthralled by Charles's assurance and fame, Anne is certain the aviator has scarcely noticed her. But she is wrong. Charles sees in Anne a kindred spirit, a fellow adventurer, and her world will be changed forever. The two marry in a headline-making wedding. In the years that follow, Anne becomes the first licensed female glider pilot in the United States. But despite this and other major achievements, she is viewed merely as the aviator's wife. The fairy-tale life she once longed for will bring heartbreak and hardships, ultimately pushing her to reconcile her need for love and her desire for independence, and to embrace, at last, life's infinite possibilities for change and happiness. Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more. Praise for *The Aviator's Wife* "Remarkable . . ." *The Aviator's Wife* succeeds [in] putting the reader inside Anne Lindbergh's life with her famous husband. "The Denver Post" Anne Morrow Lindbergh narrates the story of the Lindberghs' troubled marriage in all its triumph and tragedy. "USA Today" "[This novel] will fascinate history buffs and surprise those who know of her only as 'the aviator's wife.'" "People" "It's hard to quit reading this intimate historical fiction." "The Dallas Morning News" "Fictional biography at its finest." "Booklist (starred review)" Utterly unforgettable. "Publishers Weekly (starred review)" "An intimate examination of the life and emotional mettle of Anne Morrow." "The Washington Post" "A story of both triumph and pain that will take your breath away." "Kate Alcott, author of *The Dressmaker*

Book Information

Paperback: 448 pages

Publisher: Bantam; 10/27/13 edition (November 26, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0345528689

ISBN-13: 978-0345528681

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.9 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2,576 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #10,248 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Biographical](#) #63 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Biographical](#) #389 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Family Saga](#)

Customer Reviews

Melanie Benjamin takes on one of the greatest heroes of the twentieth century in her new book, "The Aviator's Wife." The story is told by Anne Morrow, soon to become Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Colonel Lindbergh is as handsome and boyish as the newsreels have shown him to be when Anne meets him. She is sure he will fall for her older sister, but to her surprise, he enjoys her quiet company and her willingness to chance an adventure. Though her life as an ambassador's daughter has prepared her for society, Anne is much more comfortable out of the spotlight. The same is true of Charles. The excesses of a celebrity-mad culture disturb them at every turn. Charles and Anne have to fly to find their peace, their time to feel united in a cause. Once they are on the ground, photographers and reporters make their lives a misery. If they aren't given an interview, they make things up. Benjamin ably handles the heartbreak of the loss of their first-born son, Charlie, when he is kidnapped. The fog of grief, the lack of privacy, and her husband's determination that he alone can solve the mystery contribute to the crisis in the household. Once the child's body is found, Charles instructs Anne that they must go on. They must not stop and grieve, for it will not bring him back. Lindbergh comes off as a highly disciplined and yet naive man, one who loves airplanes and adventures. He is not someone to hand out compliments or try to feel another's pain. All the while, Anne continues at his side: co-piloting, writing, visiting foreign countries. The Lindbergh accused of being anti-Semitic and a Nazi sympathizer is someone she wishes she didn't know. He brings more trouble to the household.

I found this book remarkable from the beginning to the end. It's the story of a woman trying to find her own voice and her own life. She wanted more than to be the "Ambassador's Daughter", the "Aviator's wife" or the mother of her six children. She accomplished many things on this road and endured tragedy beyond comprehension. In the end, she took charge of her life and responsibility of her actions. She became a mature, grown-up woman. Anne married a hero and that was a tough choice. The Lindbergh's were hounded by the press in a way that only Princess Di could have empathized with them. She virtually became a prisoner in her own home unable to go out to the

theater or to shop. The only time they were free of scrutiny was when they were flying. In the earliest of airplanes, Anne became a pilot, a navigator and Charles' trusted one man crew. They soared before there were Tower controls, other planes, or radio communication. They planned airline routes and explored places that were hard to get to. They were a close couple and Charles called all the shots. Anne just obeyed. Then children came along and Anne wanted to be with them. Her first child was kidnapped from her home and found murdered months later. They were innudated by well wishers, charlatans, police and, of course, the press. It was an event that marked their lives and forever changed them. They fled America and moved to England. Then Charles became enamored of Germany and Hitler. He spoke out in support of the Nazis and briefly flirted with the idea of living there. By the time the Lindberghs returned to America disillusioned of the Nazis they were shunned. His repeated requests to assist the government were denied until Henry Ford came to his aid.

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