



The Match of the Century

Cathy Maxwell

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Match of the Century

Cathy Maxwell

The Match of the Century Cathy Maxwell

In *New York Times* bestselling author Cathy Maxwell's glittering new series, wedding bells are ringing... until the return of a rake throws a bride's plans— and heart—into a tailspin

Every debutante aspires to snag a duke. Elin Morris just happens to have had one reserved since birth. But postponements of her marriage to London's most powerful peer give Elin time to wonder how she will marry Gavin Baynton when she cannot forget his brother, Benedict.

Already exasperated at being yanked from the military to meet "family obligations," now Ben must suffer watching his arrogant sibling squire the only woman he has ever loved. Joining the army saved Ben from sinking into bitterness, but seeing Elin again takes him back to the day they surrendered to their intoxicating desire.

As the wedding draws near, Elin tries to push Ben far from her thoughts. When danger brings them together, there is no denying their feelings. But can Elin choose love over duty...?

The Match of the Century Details

Date : Published November 24th 2015 by Avon

ISBN :

Author : Cathy Maxwell

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction, Regency

 [Download The Match of the Century ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Match of the Century ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Match of the Century Cathy Maxwell

From Reader Review The Match of the Century for online ebook

Lover of Romance says

This review was originally posted on Addicted To Romance *Summary*

Elin Morris has been betrothed to the Duke, Gavin Benton since she was born. It is expected of her to marry Benton. But there is one reservation she has....she fell in love with his younger brother Ben many years previous. But after sharing a passion filled night, he left the next day with no word and she felt betrayed. But she doesn't feel its right to marry Gavin without letting him know the truth. But on the night of the betrothal announcement, Ben arrives when his brother takes his military career away from him to get him home from the war. Ben is outraged when he is forced back to England, which is the last place he wants to be just to be around as the "spare". But then he is confronted with his painful past and the woman who has always been a part of him. When Elin's life is in danger, Ben is the one that saves her life and protects her while they live in the woods on the run, trying to stay ahead from mercenaries who want her dead. Ben and Elin reconnect with each other and confront the past...but there is one issue they still need to face, how to tell the Duke that Elin will need to jilt him so she can marry the man she loves.

Plot and Story Line

Marrying The Duke is the first full novel of the latest series by Cathy Maxwell. I have been a fan of this author for many years. But I will admit I was nervous about this one, but when I obtained a audio copy through my library, I was thrilled!!But it was so worth it, and even though Maxwell's previous series wasn't a favorite...I truly loved what she did with this story. This is a second chance romance and one of my all time favorite tropes to see happen. I really loved these two together, and once they become honest with each other and misunderstandings about the past---the story really picks up. The romance that develops between these two is quite emotional and a bit of a tear jerker in moments. When they were younger, they fell in love. But other parties stepped in to separate them so the "betrothal" could go forward. This part of the book, is what is truly heartbreaking. Its also a bit frustrating with Elin's parents. Now their love story is the novella that started off this series. They defied convention and scandal to be together. So I just had a hard time with understanding why they were "okay" with their daughter not marrying for love just so she could marry the Duke. It felt quite a bit selfish on their part. But it does get resolved in the end I loved the brothers....now at first they are at ODDS!! Literally, most of their lives they have fought and battled with each other and never agreeing with anything. But as the story winds down, we see them come to a truce and I truly loved seeing them work together in the end and build a strong relationship. I can't wait for book two!!

The Narration

Mary Jane Wells did a fantastic job with the narration here!! I was so impressed, so authentically real in the british accents and I loved the way she implemented the story. I just wanted to hear more of her. She is definitely a new favorite now.

The Cover

What a beautiful cover!! I just love her dress here and the tone of colors that are used!! So classy and pretty.

Overall View

The Match Of The Century is a perfect start....a romance that delves into deep emotion, reconnecting two lovers and finding a happy ever after against odds that are stacked against them!! **SPLENDID!!**

Click On Image For Buy Link

[foogallery id="23089"]

BookLover says

Giving this extra points for originality. I truly had no idea what direction this story would take from one moment to the next as it didn't seem to follow the normal formula we often see in romances. Aside from feeling Elin's parents were **COMPLETE** hypocrites, I really enjoyed this!!!

Jen (The Starry-Eyed Revue) says

Another chance on a new author that paid off...mostly. I know it's kind of awful, but I do enjoy a story that pits brothers against each other for the hand of the fair maiden. ;0) I had a really awesome theory about the kidnapping plot that didn't pan out, but I think the story would have been that much better had it done so. I think this was more like 3 1/2 stars because the way that plot played out was kind of boring and way less dramatic than I'd hoped, but I'm rounding up because I did enjoy the writing and the characters.

Donna says

I loved this book! It was fast paced and I didn't want to put it down. The heroine is Elin Morris, the daughter of the couple in "A Little Thing Called Love", the novella that started this series. At the end of the novella, her parents engage their baby daughter to their friends' heir, the future Duke of Baynton, Gavin.

Gavin and his twin, Jack, were older than Elin and were at school much of her childhood. However the youngest son, Ben, was tutored at home and he and Elin were friends who fell in love.

The wedding is planned but gets delayed. Ben returns from soldiering. Elin is in danger. I don't like to write plot spoilers, so I hope this is enough to convince you to try this book. I can't wait for the next one in this series to discover which brother finds his HEA.

I admit to liking Cathy Maxwell's books. Her last series was good, but I did not like it as much as her earlier works. This book lived up to my high expectations.

SOS Aloha says

Life is so constructed, that the event does not, cannot, will not, match the expectation. - Charlotte Bronte

Elin Morris is expected to marry a duke - a marriage constructed by her self made father to fulfill a prophecy. Yet Elin has spent little time with her fiance as he fulfills his duties among the ton. When Gavin calls his brother Ben home from the army to help with these duties, Ben's abrupt arrival sends the entire family in to a tailspin. Ben resents his brother's interference in his military career. Elin resents Ben for abandoning her after their indiscretion as teens. Both mothers worry over the rekindled attraction between Elin and Ben. Gavin remains oblivious to the his family's turmoil.

Each character brings emotional baggage to the story. Elin loves her parents, and wants to be a dutiful

daughter, but she prefers her family's country home. She does not fit in with London's hustle, bustle, and gossip among the ton. Elin knows her parents are a love match and resents that her own marriage is a business deal. She is no wilting flower when faced with a challenge ... and the smoldering eyes of her lost love, Ben.

Maxwell often features a military hero in her novels. A Navy veteran herself, her heroes are both honorable and jaded. As the younger son in an aristocrat family, Ben was sent off to the Army to make his own way. He rose to the challenge, only to be as the heir apparent to the new duke, his brother. Ben resents that his brother received attention from his father ... and was betrothed to his childhood friend, Elin. He arrives disheveled at the engagement party, disregards his mother's instructions to keep out of trouble, and challenges Elin to be true to her heart. He is a rogue to cheer.

Maxwell delivers an emotional story which ventures outside the London ballroom to the pastoral countryside. Yet danger lurks over them hills, giving Ben and Elin the opportunity to test their mantle, trust each other, and recognize their love. Maxwell explores peer pressure, family relationships, and discovering self worth. She adds a dash of Regency pageantry, Gothic mystery, and her own trademark humor for a page turning adventure. What started as the "Match of the Century" between two powerhouse families ends as the "match of the century" between two fated lovers. Maxwell whet my appetite for the books to come in this new series ... alas, there are two more brothers to marry off!

I received a print copy from the author for an honest review.

TheGeekyBlogger says

Read for Fun (Kindle)

Overall Rating: 3.25

Story Rating: 3.50

Character Rating: 3.00

First Thought when Finished: The Match of the Century was not my favorite Cathy Maxwell book but boy am I looking forward to Gavin's book!

Quick Thoughts: Cathy Maxwell is one of my favorite authors and I was really sad I didn't love The Match of the Century more. I just never connected to Elin or Ben. I liked them as a couple at the end but it just took to long for me to start rooting for them. My problem was while I waiting to fall in love with them, I found myself annoyed with them more. They had lots of thoughts that they just needed to share with each other but alas the road to romance is not always straightforward. I did like the action and the mystery surrounding Elin. The side characters in that part of the story were fantastic. In other words, that part was pure Cathy Maxwell fantastic.

In the end, I fell in love with Gavin (Ben's Brother) and I am REALLY looking forward to his book. Though next we get Jack (Ben's other brother) and that should be downright FUN! That final invitation was just bloody FANTASTIC! So overall while this was not my favorite story by Cathy, it did introduce a couple of characters that I am really looking forward to spending more time with.

Part of my Read It, Rate It, File It, DONE!

Addie H says

- All of London, even down to the riffraff, already knew what the ball's special announcement would be.

That's right, even Aladdin, had heard Elin Morris would marry Gavin Baynton to merge and create the ultimate dukedom.

What they didn't know was that Elin had already given access to her portal (the author's words not mine) to Gavin's little brother, Ben, 8 years earlier. He "left" her the morning after the deed, and she hasn't seen him in 8 years. On the night of the ball he conveniently returns, and he has opinions.

After reading this book, I have a lot of feelings. They all come from these gems:

- Elin flew into the garden. Ben was on her heels.

- Elin had always enjoyed Ben's brows because they said louder than words exactly what was going on in his mind.

- Maturity had added to her beauty. She had always reminded him of the wood sprites his Nan claimed inhabited the forests around Trenton. Elin was delicate, finely made, and yet full of spirit.

- Grabbing his coat, Ben gave him a shake. "Who sent you?" The answer was deep, guttural laughter, the sound the devil must make in hell.

- "What is the meaning of all this?" Her arms moved to encompass the forest before she crossed them to hug herself tightly. "Of life? It doesn't make sense to me. We just die? One moment a person is here, and in the next gone?"

- Ben leaned her against the stone wall, wanting to cover every inch of her body with his, wanting to be in her body, wanting, wanting her. And Elin was answering with a woman's desire.

- "I didn't hurt you, did I?" He would pull his whiskers out one at time with his bare hands if it would please her.

- He felt himself rise to her. She was his north star.

- “No,” he said hoarsely. “We can’t.” “We can,” she countered, and her gaze dropped to his impudent head, the bane of every male because it had a mind of its own. Elin looked up at him. Her lips curved into a smile. “It’s a bit darling.”

- Ben settled himself between her legs. She cradled his hips with her thighs. And then he was at the portal.

- There was no sound or sight of his mother or brother in the house. Ben wasn’t disturbed by this. He was a man on a mission. He was calling on the lady he loved.

- The sky was clear, the air brisk—the sort of day it felt good to be alive. Ben walked with purpose.

- A jolt of lightning could not have had a stronger effect than when his finger slipped inside her.

- Coop threw his considerable bulk onto a tufted settee and pulled off his shoes. He began scratching his feet, sighing happily as he did so.

This book also has an obsession with italics – there are words in italics littered on every page. Sometimes whole sentences are in italics.

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

3.5

Review completed...

The Match of the Century has intrigue, adventure, passion, and humor.

Blurb...

Every debutante aspires to snag a duke. Elin Morris just happens to have had one reserved since birth. But postponements of her marriage to London's most powerful peer give Elin time to wonder how she will marry Gavin Baynton when she cannot forget his brother, Benedict.

Already exasperated at being yanked from the military to meet "family obligations," now Ben must suffer watching his arrogant sibling squire the only woman he has ever loved. Joining the army saved Ben from sinking into bitterness, but seeing Elin again takes him back to the day

they surrendered to their intoxicating desire.

As the wedding draws near, Elin tries to push Ben far from her thoughts. When danger brings them together, there is no denying their feelings. But can Elin choose love over duty?

There were things I loved, things I liked, and things I wish had been included, but all-in-all it's a great start to Cathy Maxwell's new historical romance series, *Marrying the Duke*.

Gavin's story is next and I'm excited to see him get his much deserved and long past due *happily ever after*!

An ARC was provided by Avon Books. In appreciation I'm giving them an honest review!

Caz says

I've given this an A- for narration and a C+ for content at AudioGals.

Elin Morris has been betrothed to Gavin Whitridge, Duke of Baynton for as long as she can remember, the match engineered by both sets of parents when they were little more than children, and viewed by society as **The Match of the Century**, an alliance of great wealth on both sides. Now Elin is in her early twenties and Gavin a little older, it is time for the betrothal to be announced officially, and to begin preparations for the wedding. Given that Gavin is young, rich and gorgeous, it would seem that this story has nowhere to go – but the problem is that, while Elin likes and respects Gavin, she doesn't love him and knows that while he thinks well of her and will always look after her, he doesn't love her either. To make things even more difficult, eight years ago, when Elin was barely sixteen, she had believed herself in love with Gavin's younger brother, Benedict, and had spent the night with him, although her dreams of a life with him were cruelly dashed when he left the very next day to embark on a military career.

You can read the rest of this review at AudioGals.

Jennifer says

3 stars

It was fine, but nothing special. Both the hero and heroine were decent people, but I found them to be immature and irritating for most of the book. The main reason I kept reading was for the hero's brother/heroine's fiancé. He was easily the most interesting character and I am eagerly anticipating his story.

Lily (Night Owl Book Cafe) says

Elin Morris has been promised Gavin Baynton, but she has a secret she has been keeping. When Elin was around sixteen years of age, she had fallen in love with Gavin's brother Benedict, who took her innocents and

left the next morning without as much of a word. Now Gavin is hosting a ball to announce their engagement, and Benedict shows up on his doorstep no thanks to Gavin who took away his military status. Elin is thrown, she has not seen Ben in so long his presence is a shocker. Midst the confusing feelings, her mother passes away and Elin is given a much needed break to mourn and set out her feelings. But danger looms, someone wants Elin dead, and Ben is the one she runs into the arms of.

I enjoyed this book a lot. Ben and Elin was an amazing, fun and heartwarming duo. I loved their interaction, I loved their heartbreaking story of why they were forced apart and of course I loved seeing how they were going to overcome the fact that she was promised to marry his brother. The romance in this was sweet and exciting.

Ben is awesome, a little rough around the edges, a little cynical from having everything ripped from his life. But he is also protective and wears his emotions on his sleeve.

I loved the little bit of danger that was added into the book, which made the plot line flow quick and more fun. The fact that a lot of the book also took place in them trying to survive the men paid to hurt Elin was also refreshing. I really loved that this one was a really quick read.

The only thing I found odd was that Ben kind of flip flopped with his feelings. He said he was doing this due to lust, but then he realizes that he loves her, and then no soon after he says he always loved her. When at the beginning he was talking all about lust.

Enter to Win a Complete Print Set of

a Rafflecopter giveaway

Don't Miss the Marrying the Duke Novella

A LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE

Amazon | B & N | iTunes | Kobo

This review was originally posted on Night Owl Book Café

I got a copy of this book for free from the publisher in exchange of an honest review.

Sofia Lazaridou says

Match of the Century is the first book in the Marrying the Duke series. A novella that's about Elin's parents

named *A Little Thing Called Love* is the prequel to the series and sets the foundation for this book. If you haven't read the novella I suggest to read it first because it will be easier to get fully into the story.

I was reluctant to begin this book even though I wanted to start devouring it from the moment I got my copy because I wasn't sure if I was going to like the "I am in love with you, but I have to marry your brother thing". And I can't blame Elin for that. Her parents fed her the prophesy Fyclan's grandmother told her and I understand her reasoning. While I was reading the book I was wondering how things would end and I was sort of hoping for Gavin to die so the main couple would get their happily ever after. I couldn't imagine then that by the end of the book I would be half in love with him and I was going to wait anxiously for his book. Which isn't going to be the next one. Which is killing me and I hate it. The sneak peak at the end of the book was so misleading I want to make myself forget I ever read it.

What bothers me is something that happened early in the book. It's hard to see a character I know that belonged to someone else ending up with another person. I don't want to explain with more details because I will spoil something big and I don't want to. I am not sure if I am completely satisfied with that even though I know that what happened happened in real life, is completely normal and is something that many people wish to happen to the people they know that are in similar situations.

Elin is a very good heroine and I liked her. It doesn't happen often, but I appreciate heroines like her. She isn't spineless and goes for what she wants. And she stands up to the hero. Ben is also a good character who has his legit reasons for doing what he did. He is a great match for Elin and I am going to love seeing them in the next book.

Of course and I am going to recommend the book. It has a nice plotline that has action and mystery and it doesn't bore the reader. I am still reading in the high of the epilogue and I couldn't be more happy. I hope the rest of the series will be as good.

AnnMarie says

The Match of the Century by Cathy Maxwell is the first book in her *Marrying the Duke* series.

Elin Morris and Gavin Baynton, a Duke, have been betrothed for years. Their parents wanting the marriage in order to join two wealthy families. Also Elin's parents are determined that she marries a Duke. Circumstances have kept the marriage from taking place but the time finally comes when the couple are able to attend a ball where their official betrothal will be announced. Theirs is to be *The Match of the Century*!

Elin has known Gavin and his brother Ben for years. They have all been good friends, in fact Elin lost her virginity to Ben years ago when she believed herself in love with him. Their parents found out and Ben was shipped off to the military leaving Elin heart broken believing that he had just used her for a bit of fun before joining the military the very next day. Gavin is none the wiser.

On the night of the ball, after a long time away, Ben comes back into Elin's life. He is fuming because his brother has pulled strings and had his military contract cancelled, making sure that Ben comes back into the family fold to be readied for taking on the role of Duke should something happen to him before Elin can have their sons.

When Elin sees Ben all the old feelings for him come rushing back, including extreme anger at the way he left her. Ben has never stopped loving Elin, he knows she is meant for his brother, but he's back, and he's

determined to have her for himself. Is it because he truly still has feelings for her, or does he just want to punish his brother for what he considers ruining his life.

This story could easily fall into the category of just a love triangle, which in itself isn't a bad thing, but this book is so much more than that. Somebody wants Elin dead, and amongst the romance in the book, and the rivalry between the brothers, you have the mystery of who is trying to kill Elin and why. For most of the book I had no idea and it encouraged me to carrying on reading until the very end in just one sitting so that I could find out. Of course I wanted to see which brother Elin ended up with as well.

At the beginning of the book I was all for Ben winning Elin's heart again. Gavin, although a gentleman, and betrothed to Elin, came across as a man more interested in his political career than realising what a gem he has in Elin. He never puts her first and takes it for granted that they will wed. Ben, well I thought he was a heart breaker, a user, and although it's obvious Elin still has feelings for him, I couldn't see anything coming of it.

Later in the book I started liking Gavin, so much so that I really hoped he and Elin would get married. The problem was I really started liking Ben too, and I just couldn't see a way that the story could end with everybody happy. Would Elin marry Gavin but see Ben on the side, would she marry Ben, but horribly humiliate Gavin and have the gossips talking for months about her jilting him. I wanted so much for both brothers to be happy and of course Elin too. Yet another reason to read the book in one session...I needed to know how it turned out. For me, it actually had the best ending I could have hoped for. But I'm not going to give spoilers. You will have to read the book yourself to find out.

I absolutely loved this book, and am definitely going to be reading the next in the series when it comes out. There was nothing I disliked about it so I am happy to fully recommend it to anybody who loves a 'will they, won't they' romance, plus an attempted murder plot thrown in for extra excitement.

I was given a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Caz says

I've given this a C+ at AAR, so that's 3.5. stars.

First in a new series from this much loved author, **The Match of the Century** tells the story of Elin Morris, a beautiful young woman from a loving, wealthy family who has been promised for years to a handsome young duke – and who would thus seem to have it all. But Elin has kept a secret from her betrothed for eight long years, one which, as her wedding draws closer, presses on her mind more and more.

Gavin Whitridge, Duke of Baynton, takes his responsibilities to his dukedom and his country extremely seriously, and is one of the most highly respected political minds in society. He keen to do his duty and marry Elin, the young woman to whom he has been unofficially betrothed for a number of years, sure she will make him an excellent wife. Elin is lovely, she will bring him an extremely large dowry and he looks forward to gaining her as his helpmeet as he navigates his way through political circles, confident that the liking they already have for each other will soon blossom into love.

Gavin's younger brother Benedict (Ben) has been in the army and out of the country for the past eight years, but has been summoned back to England in order to fulfil his duties as Gavin's heir, until such time as he and Elin have sons of their own. Ben, who hates the fact that his brother is engaged to the only woman he,

Ben, has ever loved, is utterly furious at his brother's high-handedness at arranging for him to be relieved of duty, and tells him so in no uncertain terms. Elin is present during their row, but before things can escalate, tragedy strikes when her beloved mother is suddenly taken ill and dies, necessitating the postponement of her wedding to Gavin.

Ben takes himself off to who-knows-where after that to lick his wounds, and Elin is dismayed to find herself feeling bereft at his absence. The secret she has carried for so long is that, before he left to join the army, she and Ben had fallen in love and had spent the night together. Her mother had dissuaded Elin from telling Gavin the truth about why she would not be going to the marriage bed a virgin, and Elin, hurt and betrayed by Ben's departure immediately after that night had agreed. His reappearance opens up all those old wounds and brings back the old attraction in full force – but Elin is promised to Ben's brother, a man who has never shown her anything but kindness and courtesy, and is reluctant to cause him pain – and scandal – by throwing him over.

Matters are taken out of her hands, however, when Elin is kidnapped by people who, she learns, are intent on murder. She has no idea who they are or why they want to kill her, but she manages to escape, running to the nearest shelter which happens to be a rather unsavoury-looking inn, peopled with even more disagreeable-looking men. Incredibly, one of these unkempt ruffians is none other than Ben – who is naturally concerned at Elin's unexpected appearance and even moreso when she tells him the reasons behind it.

I raced through the first few chapters of the book almost without noticing it, which is always a good sign; and which I hoped was an indication that the rest of the book would be just as engaging. But that whole “in all the bars in all the world and you had to walk into mine” thing was just too much of a coincidence for me to swallow, and stopped me dead in my tracks. Elin is rather an ineffectual heroine, and I wasn't convinced by the resurgence of her love for Ben, which hadn't seemed to bother her while he was out of sight. The rest of the story is taken up with Ben and Elin's journey to safety as they evade the would-be murderers and then, with Gavin's help, with their working out just who was behind the plot to kill Elin and why. Other than the massive contrivance I've mentioned, the story is well put-together, but the romance between Elin and Ben is lacklustre and despite her best efforts, Ms Maxwell isn't able to turn Gavin into the boring, unengaging figure she needs him to be in order for the reader to want Elin to choose Ben instead. In fact, I'd venture to say Gavin is the more attractive character. He's upstanding and responsible, honourable and kind, and it's clear that he very much wants to spend his life with a woman for whom he feels a strong and deep attachment and love; whereas Ben hasn't quite grown up yet and isn't above throwing a tantrum or two or sulking when he doesn't get his own way. It's not until near the end of the book that the brothers come to a greater understanding, and it's at that point that Ben finally begins to see that perhaps Gavin hasn't always had it easy and to start to understand the pressures he is under. The best line in the book comes from one of these later scenes, when, in response to Ben's comment that Gavin hasn't always been true to himself, Gavin replies: “I didn't create the world. I just happen to be very good at operating in it”, showing just how self-aware Gavin really is, and reinforcing the differences between them.

Actually, I found the relationship between the brothers to be more interesting than the romance, and am intrigued by the fact that there is a third brother – Gavin's younger twin, Jack – who disappeared some years ago, and whom Gavin refuses to believe is dead. (The first chapter of the next book which is included at the end of the novel will quickly settle that matter for anyone who Needs To Know!)

I'm not saying that I disliked **The Match of the Century**, just that it fell a little flat for me when all's said and done. Ms Maxwell is an accomplished writer, the pacing is good and the characters, while not stellar, are engaging, decent people. But the subplot is weak and overly melodramatic and the romance lacks that certain spark that would have truly brought it to life. As a result, I'm going to switch to listening to this series in audio, as it's narrated by Mary Jane Wells, who is someone I can always rely on to really round-out a story. I'd like to find out how Gavin finally meets his match, and exactly what happened to Jack; but I'll be listening rather than reading, I think.

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyrarkyker says

"What do you offer Elin, Ben? And don't play the poet and say something ridiculous like 'your heart'. She is an intelligent young woman. One I shall be glad to call daughter. You say she deserves more than what Gavin can give her. I say she is worthy of more than a man who pouts."

That ladies and gentleman is a mom burn and how on target she was. If you follow my updates you'll know the first 30% or so was an engaging jammed pack story of childhood loves separated, a long standing betrothal to the wrong brother, murder attempts, and a serendipitous meet-up. The story was there, the characters just turned out to be shallow, bland, and whiny little things. Our hero is the younger brother and if this was a contemporary, he would have been dressed in blacks and listening to emo music. He pouts and whines about how his older brother the heir has all the advantages in life and is so lucky. He doesn't bother to recognize the pressure and responsibilities the brother also has. So with a woe is me hero, I turned to the heroine. Her parents push her to accept her betrothal to the duke because they think it is her destiny. She kind of blindly goes along with it and after she gets over her anger at the hero due to a sort of misunderstanding and she declares she luvs him, she still doesn't bother to tell the duke she wants to break the betrothal. She lets him cater to her all the while thinking about the brother (who she told she would break it off with his brother immediately).

These characters were put into a tough position of being star crossed lovers but the execution of them falling in love (since there isn't any flashbacks to their childhood and growing to love one another, it really felt like this couple just were in "luv" all of a sudden) and finding a way to be together was done in a way that had me being extremely unsympathetic to them. The murder mystery was meh, with it being pretty obvious and obviously thrown in there for a suspense touch but it wasn't drawn out enough. The shafted duke brother felt like more of the hero of the story. The elements for a dramatic emotional story was there but the characters execution was not.

Because I liked the duke brother so much I looked to see if his story was next, it's not, his missing twin brother is the next star. I read the excerpt and the duke has a love at first sight moment with the heroine...who is obviously going to be paired with the hero of the story, the twin. So again, the duke thinks he loves (he was attracted to and found himself fantasizing about the heroine in this book) someone, only to have them go to his brother. I don't think I'll be continuing with this series, not my cup of hot chocolate.
