



## Begun by Time

*Morgan O'Neill , Cary Morgan Frates , Deborah O'Neill Cordes*

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In the final days of World War II, Catherine Hastings meets the man she wants to marry. Flight surgeon Jonathan Brandon isn't just handsome?he's everything Catherine could hope for in her betrothed. But her dream of a happily ever after is shattered when Jonnie vanishes before their wedding, leaving Catherine bereft, broken-hearted, and with a lifetime of unanswered questions.

Arthur Howard is smitten with the lovely Catherine the moment he sees her. He's certain he's found the woman he wants to marry. Yet behind Catherine's sparkling green eyes is a haunted look?the look of a woman who has known loss. Can he love a woman who still grieves the loss of her fiancé? Arthur must find answers to the mystery surrounding the man Catherine intended to marry. What he discovers is a truth far stranger than fiction.

## **Begun by Time Details**

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## From Reader Review Begun by Time for online ebook

### Carolyn says

This is the prequel story to "The Thornless Rose" about Catherine and Jonathan. Great back story to how they got together and events leading up to and after that event.

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### Monique says

BEGUN BY TIME was not at all what I thought it would be, and it is splendid! London, March 1945. Catherine Hastings is a volunteer in the Women's Voluntary Services, she and her friends are doing their job when the Luftwaffe drops a bomb, and their leader, Rose Gordon, is killed, among others. At Rose's funeral, Catherine meets Rose's son, Jonathan, whom she knew about. Jonathan is a surgeon in the RAF, recuperating at the moment from an injury. They start talking, then dating, and soon realise they are truly in love. Jonathan asks Catherine to marry him, and life is perfect until Jonathan literally vanishes into thin air the day of their wedding.

Although the title says it's a time travel novel, I wasn't exactly sure when it would come into account, and it's only at the very end that we get to know how. I'm not exceedingly fond of time travel tropes, but I'm a WWII buff, and I love 1940s movies, so I gave the book a go. Morgan O'Neill recreates the London of the 1940s with such accuracy and care, I felt the book had been written during that time. The vocabulary is impeccable, and the author's attention to detail is extraordinary: little things such as Pears soap, ration tickets, blackouts, absolutely nothing is missing; what joy! The characters are engaging, the romance entirely believable, and the prose, O the prose! Seldom have I read such magnificent writing: flawless, elegant, descriptive yet light and ever so easy to read!

Upon reading the blurb, and while reading for a good while, I thought that most of the story had been told, but I was so wrong, and so glad I was! It would appear to be the first book in a series, and I hope so, because although it does not end on a cliffhanger, I would definitely want to know what the future holds for Catherine Hastings. I most highly recommend BEGUN BY TIME if only for the superlative writing and the nearly perfect historical accuracy.

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

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### Julie says

Begun by Time by Morgan O'Neill is a 2015 Entangled Publication. I was provided a copy of this book by the publisher and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

This book is the prequel to "The Thornless Rose", which was originally released in 2014. I loved that book so much, I was thrilled to discover we were invited to learn the back story which will be Catherine and Jonnie, and to some extent, Arthur's story.

In 1945, as the war is coming to an end, Catherine falls in love with Jonathan Brandon, and they embark on a whirlwind courtship, become engaged and are planning a wedding, when suddenly Jonnie disappears, simply vanishes into thin air, leaving Catherine confused and deeply saddened, but ironically, she is not angry because she knows Jonnie didn't back out on her. Something terrible happened to him, but the worst part is not knowing the circumstances of why he vanished or what happened to him, leaving Catherine in an odd state of limbo.

When a few years pass, Catherine meets a wonderful man named Arthur Howard and for the first time in a long while she feels like living again. But, she is still haunted by Jonnie, so Arthur, wishing to give Catherine some kind of peace of mind begins a discreet investigation into Jonnie's disappearance. But, what he uncovers is shocking and only leaves them with more questions than answers.

Time travel romance is one of those hit and miss things with me. It has to be done just so or I end up rolling my eyes at the absurdity of it. But, this storyline is smart and well written with realistic situations and characters.

The historical setting in post war England was obviously researched , creating a very authentic atmosphere, giving the reader an idea of what it was like to live in this era of time.

Catherine is a sensible girl who is nice, caring, responsible, and head over heels in love with Jonnie. His disappearance changes her noticeably, even though she remains a sweet girl, her character takes on a new dimension and her innocence seems to disappear right along with Jonnie, and her character seems to become more cautious or wary, and she gives off a palpable vibe of sadness and grief.

Jonnie is obviously in love with Catherine, and the reader will certainly wonder about his sudden disappearance. There is never a doubt in Catherine's mind or in the reader's mind that Jonnie is an honorable man, one who would not have simply walked away from Catherine without an explanation. His story is central, but in this prequel we are only introduced to him and given a hint about what is to come later.

Arthur arrives at a pivotal time in Catherine's life and the chemistry between them jumps off the page. It's a different sort of feeling this second time around though, and a slower, more mature relationship develops between the couple as Catherine grapples with moving on after Jonnie's disappearance since she still has no idea what happened to him, and I guess the obvious question would be, what if he suddenly reappeared?

I think Arthur senses this in Catherine and while he knows she is in love with him, he also understands her conflicted feelings, which is why he seeks answers. He is a wonderful and patient man who must love Catherine very much because not every man would want to seek out answers concerning his future wife's former fiance.

Now, if you have read "The Thornless Rose", then you already know what direction this story is going to take. You also know what happens in the future, so for me at least, there were no real twist or surprises. In fact, if I'm remembering correctly, Catherine tells some of this story in the next book, but it was a great idea to write out a prequel so we can better understand the events of the past, because there is an assurance now, that while things didn't work out quite like they were supposed to, Catherine was happy in her life with Arthur. I must also confess, that while I really like Jonnie, in this book , I was very drawn to Arthur, maybe even developing one of those 'book boyfriend' situations.

The real enjoyment I gained from the book came in getting to know Jonnie a little better, but mostly from meeting Arthur whose role is more critical than is stated. I enjoyed the in depth portrayal of the events

leading up to "The Thornless Rose" and the insight into Catherine's mind set, her personality and feelings in 'real time' as opposed to her looking back on these events in "The Thornless Rose". It was interesting to see how her relationship with Jonnie compares to her relationship with Arthur and why the couple felt so strongly about learning the truth behind Jonnie's disappearance.

Jonnie's experiences and episodes with the paranormal are not chronicled in any minute detail, but we are there when he has his first encounter, so to speak, and are privy to his thoughts, and fears when he starts having these odd episodes.

Does it matter which book you start with? Well, truthfully, you would be just as well off either way, but in this case I recommend starting with "The Thornless Rose". If you have not read that book, and want to start with this one, then you will want to keep in mind this book is simply a gateway to the next one. "The Thornless Rose" is one of the best time travel books I had read, and this one, for me, made my understanding richer and deepened my love for this story. I recommend reading both books, because they certainly compliment one another and make great companions to each other. Either way you will love this story!

I do hope there will be future installments in this plotline. It is certainly a unique twist on the time travel trope and is really very absorbing. I recommend this book to those who like historical, paranormal, and time travel romance novels.

4 stars

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### **Micah Persell says**

I've been eagerly anticipating the next book in this series, so imagine my delight to find there's a prequel while I wait! And that the prequel reveals some of the mystery as to how Catherine was able to move on from the tragedy of losing Jonnie. Arthur was the perfect hero: never jealous of Jonnie's place in Catherine's heart, a perfect gentleman, dashing and handsome. He certainly didn't disappoint, and I didn't know how I was going to feel about the man who "replaced" Jonnie. I certainly didn't expect him to be able to hold his own against the man this reader had fallen in love with in *The Thornless Rose*, but that's exactly what he did. The authors also did the breathtaking job I've come to expect from them in their handling of historical context. World War II comes to life on *Begin by Time*'s pages, and now I'm looking forward to the next book even more!

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### **Erin says**

Find this and other reviews at: <http://flashlightcommentary.blogspot....>

Yeah... no. Morgan O'Neill's *Begin by Time* didn't work for me. I've a penchant for WWII lit and jumped into the novel without thinking twice, but I made it only a few chapters before realizing I'd picked up something I wasn't going to enjoy.

My first issue was the characterizations or more accurately, the lack thereof. Cookie cutter character drove me up the wall and there was simply no depth to Catherine, Jonathan or Arthur. They appeared to be going

through the motions, but there was nothing genuine about their sentimentalities which made it incredibly difficult for me to buy into the relationships they were meant to experience.

My second issue was the structure of the novel. The story unfolds chronologically, but as a reader I found the presentation awkward. Why bother to illustrate the relationship between Catherine and Jonathan when you intend to rip them apart? It's a bloody waste of ink, especially since anyone who has read the blurb knows their wedding never takes place. Honestly, the book should have started with Arthur meeting Catherine and followed their relationship as he sought to unravel the mystery that haunts her heart.

Last, but not least, is the lack of historic detail. *Begun by Time* is an exceedingly light piece and that's well and good for those who appreciate vague references, but I favor meatier pieces with extensive worldbuilding and calling an end to the greatest conflict of the twentieth century with little more than "It is unconfirmed as yet, and there are no details, but Germany announced late last night that Hitler is dead" didn't pack the punch I was looking for.

I'd no real interest in reading *The Thornless Rose* prior to picking up its prequel, but I'm definitely not interested now and can't say I see myself recommending *Begun by Time* to my fellow readers.

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### **Gigi staub says**

In 1945, a man disappeared into thin air...

In the final days of World War II, Catherine Hastings meets the man she wants to marry. Flight surgeon Jonathan Brandon isn't just handsome—he's everything Catherine could hope for in her betrothed. But her dream of a happily ever after is shattered when Jonnie disappears shortly before their wedding...leaving Catherine bereft, broken-hearted, and with a lifetime of unanswered questions.

Arthur Howard is smitten with the lovely Catherine the moment he sees her. He's certain he's found the woman he wants to marry. Yet behind Catherine's sparkling green eyes is a haunted look—the look of a woman who has known loss. But can he love a woman who still grieves the loss of her fiancé? Now Arthur wants answers about the man Catherine intended to marry.

But the truth about Jonnie's disappearance is far stranger than fiction...

Review:

I loved reading the story of what happened between Catherine and Jonathan before he disappears and "*The Thornless Rose*" begins. I am so glad that they wrote this prequel, after reading Anne and Jonathan's story I was intrigued by Anne's grandmother, Catherine. This story shows the burgeoning romance between Catherine and Jonnie and what happens to Catherine after he disappears. There are quite a few times in this story that I felt myself wanting to cry for Catherine, for me it was a very emotional story. You think you found the love of your life and then he just disappears when you are supposed to be married. Then Catherine is lucky enough to find love again and she almost throws it away over her guilt. I think they did a wonderful job of giving a backstory and working the two stories into a cohesive series. This is a heart-warming story and while it maybe low on the sizzle scale it made my heart melt. I heard there is going to be a third book and I cannot wait to see what happens next.

A very engaging period romance. I know that it is a time-travel romance, but since Jonnie is the only one time-traveling and Catherine and Arthur do not, I am not sure I would necessarily call it that. It is a great WWII romance.

4.5 Stars

\*Received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review.\*

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### **Harini says**

I do not read time travel romances in general. However, having said that, this book was a good and a light read. Written very well with adequate amount of historical research, this book works because for one the author has managed to bring alive 1945 England vividly. The characters are also as well-etched as can be in romances.

In terms of romance, whether one believes in time travel or not, what happens to Major Jonathan Brandon is interesting as a mystery. Both the love stories are written believably, Catherine's guilt and mixed feelings before she commits to Arthur Howard is believable.

I did not know that this was a prequel to Thornless Rose - maybe that's why I felt a little dissatisfied at not knowing what really happened to Major Brandon! However, in the light of that, this much detail and revelation of the mystery works.

Not a fan of this genre and may not read the Thornless Rose, but would say that this book is definitely recommended for readers of this genre. Thanks to Net galley for providing me a review copy.

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### **Mei says**

This is the start of a trilogy, so if you start take care to have all three books, otherwise you'll have to live with cliffhangers! And I hate them! :-)

In this book we're given a kind of prequel to the book where the real time travel will happen. Here we're given just a glimpse here and there!

This is a story, happening in 1945, where a young Catherine falls in love with Jonathan, who suddenly disappears a week before their wedding! Catherine is distraught! Where did Jonnie disappear? What's happening? Did he run away? Been killed and thrown in the Thames? Or did his disappearance have something to do with his disturbing sensation of fading?

After a few years without any news of Jonnie, Catherine is resigned, but she's still grieving.

She accidentally meets Arthur, a nice man who is the first to stir something in her broken heart. But, even if Arthur is a darling, patient and sweet, she feels that she's betraying Jonnie. And nothing everybody around her keeps saying will convince her to accept Arthur's marriage offer.

So Arthur, to help her and convince her, involves Interpol in his search for Jonnie. But what they find is a big fat nothing concrete and a big lot of incredible speculations!

Arthur finally manages to convince Catherine that her life must go on and to accept him and be free to love him.

As I said before, the books ends on a cliffy! So jump right in the second one!

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### **Pat says**

Mesmerizing story about the last months of WWII in London. A young woman falls madly in love with an RAF physician and he with her. A love of a lifetime. But, it's not to be.....read it in one day and it totally grabbed my heart. Full review to follow!

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### **Brenna Chase says**

Catherine Hastings thinks she's found her one true love during World War II and its aftermath, but time has other plans for her and Commander Jonathan Brandon, leading to both terrible heartbreak, and questions that no one can answer. Enter the dashing and determined Arthur Howard, who helps her find answers, as well as happiness. I loved this prequel to The Thornless Rose very much. The heroine is strong, even during the darkest days she faces, and Arthur Howard reminded me so much of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., I felt as if I were watching a wonderful classic movie. And the pacing and temper of the novel made me feel that as well, because it flows as well as the best movies of the time period, with the dialogue to match. There's so much to love about this novel, the juxtaposition of innocence in a time of war, the hope, and the determination to "carry on." One thing that I especially loved was that one of the major turning points involved one of my favorite movies too. So to borrow from an old movie trailer: you'll laugh, you'll smile, you'll cry tears of sorrow and joy, as you follow Catherine toward her destiny. I wish I could give it more than five stars.

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### **Ø???? [Punya Reviews...] says**

**My review contains spoilers and they're mostly my thoughts as I went with the book... for more, visit Punya Reviews...**

Morgan O'Neill's latest offering, Begun by Time, was a lovely prequel to The Thornless Rose (Elizabethan Time Travel #1). TBH I'm not a big time travel theme enthusiast (I have my reasons) yet this series got me hooked since I read the blurb of book 1. I've enjoyed it so thoroughly that I've been eagerly waiting for the next installment...

The Thornless Rose begins at 1945 when Dr. Jonathan Brandon, a member of RAF in his early 30s, goes to a favorite inn of his for a bite, where he simply vanishes into the thin air. At that time, he was engaged to Catherine Hastings, their marriage only a handful of days away. No clue was ever found as to what happened to him, including his body. There were wild speculations about his disappearance, though nothing was ever proved; just how can a living, breathing man vanish into thin air!

Years have passed since then. At present time, Anne, Catherine's granddaughter, is visiting London to spend some quality time with her 80+ yrs. old grandmother. She had no idea of Catherine's past and her association with Jonathan, who went by as 'Jonnie' to his loved ones. This seemed like secret that was just waiting to be unearthed when Anne finds the hidden boxes full of articles and documents in Catherine's attic and becomes instantly intrigued by this mysterious, yet fascinating story of the missing RAF Doctor Brandon. Surprisingly enough, her now deceased grandfather Arthur's involvement was also prominent in the investigation. From there, before Anne could even take everything in, an incredible journey is put into motion for which she was in no way prepared. She certainly didn't think about being thrown 400yrs. back in time where she'd be able to meet Queen Elizabeth I, in search of Jonathan. Neither did she ever think that not only she'd find him, but also fall in love with him madly.

I've never been particularly interested in the history of Tudor England. Apart from its contemporary setting, this novel connects and heavily relies on that without being made to feel like taking a History lesson. The fusion of the historical facts with the fictional was done *very* well. In the course of the story, some key historical figures such as Robert Dudley, Thomas Howard, the first Duke of Norfolk, Lettice Knollys, not to mention the venerable Queen Elizabeth I, were introduced. They played their roles as needed throughout, which is why I had to research online to find out who was who and how they were connected. The authors' knowledge of Tudor history was admirable.

I won't spoil anymore as *The Thornless Rose* was absolutely brilliant. But honestly speaking, I didn't think I needed to read any backstory per say because whatever was told there was enough for me to piece together a timeline of the incidents since Jonathan's disappearance. Even though the story largely jumps to the present time and then proceeds to narrate the terrific adventures of Anne and Jonathan (including some great smexy times ;)) full of lies, betrayal, plotting and murder, enemies who came to haunt Jonathan more than once putting his and Anne's life in danger. In short, every Tudor court intrigue imaginable. The story ends in sort of a cliffhanger. Not the type where the story abruptly ends, but just that there was no resolution to Jonathan and Anne's fate. We had no idea if they'd be permanent residents and guests of Queen Elizabeth I or would Catherine have a chance to see her beloved Jonnie once more.

I know some had a problem with Catherine and Jonathan being engaged but TBH, the whole premise of the story was so very complex that it didn't bug me as much as I thought it would. Besides, even though they were engaged, Catherine and Jonathan were never lovers. This and much more is explained in the prequel, *Begun by Time*, shedding lights on the events that has gone on before Anne became an active part of it.

*Begun by Time* starts in midst of the destruction of WWII. Catherine was just a young girl in her early 20s, working as a volunteer with some of her friends, under the friendly but watchful eyes of Rose Brandon. When Rose dies in a tragic bomb blast, Catherine, a witness to the whole thing, becomes despondent. It's on her funeral that she meets Rose's whole family; her husband Nigel and son Jonathan, who was already an RAF Doctor. Jonathan was recovering from a wound of his own, something Catherine has heard, alongside many other good things about him from Rose. The small yet loving, tight-knit family of 3 was devastated by Rose's passing and there was nothing Catherine or anyone else could say or do to console the bereaved father and son.

Yet from there, with Catherine's own small and tight-knit family of 3, forms an attachment; the friendship that she had with Rose extended to Nigel and Jonathan. Catherine's mom and dad accept this and Nigel and Jonathan become regular guests at their humble abode, and vice versa. With the war still raging and deaths everywhere, both Catherine and Jonathan very soon come to realize that they don't want to waste anymore time take their friendship to the next level. With both their parents' blessings they even get engaged.

But what Jonathan never confided in anyone was his secret troubles; flashes of pictures and scenes that he's been getting ever since his head injury. He's been distraught as it is, in no way wanting this to hinder his relationship with Catherine. I've always wondered why and how Jonathan got entangled in the phenomenon of time travel and where does Catherine's own family falls into this whole scenario. For that matter, why Anne was the one pulled in and not Catherine. *Where is that link?* Even though I didn't get a complete picture yet, we had an answer to Jonathan's entanglement. All it took was a tour to a museum... When he suffers an 'incident' there, Catherine and Nigel become very worried. It's then Jonathan decides to tell them about the flashes of olden times and a sensation of zoning in and out of the present time where he feels himself almost vanishing!

Catherine, though not sure what's going on, is very understanding, her only intention to be supportive. With her encouragement, Jonathan begins seeing a psychiatrist just to be on the safe side. Things even seem to have been going well for a while, not only where Jonathan's condition is concerned but also, their blooming relationship, with the plans for their upcoming nuptials full on. The time is set at the New Year's Eve of 1945. Unfortunately, it's then the unthinkable happens, shattering Catherine's happiness into millions of pieces. I knew what was going to happen, even that didn't help the dread I felt knowing what's to come next. Simply put, it felt like the death. Jonathan missing, no words of where he is, his body never found in the next months. The police giving up with many dead ends and wild speculations of him 'vanishing' into thin air. Nigel broken-hearted again, losing his only surviving loved one this way, never knowing what happened to his son. Though Catherine and her family tried their best, he gave up on living and finally slipped away a year after Jonathan's disappearance. Those few chapters were full of this never-ending barrage of sad events, one after another. The war had come to an end right before the disappearance but it seemed there's no happiness in Catherine's life. It felt as cold and empty as it was before she met her dear Jonnie.

Fortunately, finally in 1947, things began to turn around for her. The memories, though they still haunted her, Catherine was trying to pull through. She was eking out a life for herself though she didn't know where it'll take her to. Certainly not to Arthur Howard! It was a chance meeting that clicked on spot and Catherine is once again swept away by the beauty of love and friendship from another beautiful spirit. At first, she doesn't tell him about Jonnie, scared how he'd interpret the whole incident. But Arthur is a lawyer. He's also rather good in what he does. There was that notion that he may even have been a spy for the government, nonetheless, has great influential friends in the upper circles. The point being, Arthur Howard, though young in age, is more experienced in the ways of the world. And he doesn't shake and give up or give in that easily by a disturbing, seemingly implausible incident.

There were times when Catherine was greatly reluctant to Arthur's suit but that wasn't because she had no feelings for him. It was frustrating but understandable seeing her brush with misfortune. She was scared of losing the man she loved for a second time. Arthur understood, which is why he was a total keeper. His understanding and patience all the while helping Catherine find answers, not to mention his interest of opening up the investigation and getting involved personally if only to make her happy was so exemplary that I couldn't help but sigh a little. There was a hint that Arthur pursued it for a long time and not entirely without result. They do find a link to Jonathan with inkling to what might've happened to him. You'll find the mention of this 'link' both in here and in book 1, where it played a major role (I just loved connecting those dots!). No doubt, Catherine needed Arthur's support big-time to finally put the past behind, move forward and grab the happiness that beckoned them. She knew Jonathan would always have a place in her heart, but Arthur was her *true* love, her future.

As mentioned before, though I didn't think I needed a backstory, the authors proved me wrong because I absolutely enjoyed reading *Begin by Time* and think I would've missed out on knowing Catherine and Jonathan's life together if I hadn't. I would've missed out on the life in and after WWII and how people were

coping with the life-altering situations that they were put through. In fact, I would've missed out on how Catherine coped with Jonathan's disappearance, definitely her meeting with Arthur and the events thereafter. The narrative also gives a nod to the classic films of that era. It was so well-done that I couldn't help imagining the whole story playing out as one. In the end, it all mattered because this prequel helped me get a good idea of the storyline in general and whetted my appetite for what's to come in the final installment of the series, *Ever Crave the Rose*.

You can read *Begun by Time* either before or after *The Thornless Rose*. Whatever it is, it won't hinder your enjoyment. But be sure to pick up book 1 too if you want to know more about Jonathan's fate and how Anne found her fate entwined with a man who was robbed off a future with her grandmother. Trust me, it's as intriguing as it sounds. 4.25 stars.

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**I received this ARC, courtesy of Entangled Select, via [netgalley](#) which didn't influence my review and rating in any way.**

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### **Leslie G. says**

Different and original! How wonderful to see Catherine as a young woman and to share her version of the story. A worthy prequel to the excellent novel *The Thornless Rose*. I received an advance copy in return for an honest review. Thank you.

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### **Leslie Garcia says**

From war-torn England, suffering under the onslaught of German bombers, to Elizabethan England, only a writer as talented as Morgan O'Neill (Deborah O'Neill Cordess/Cary Morgan Frates) could maintain a series as engrossing as their current Elizabethan time travel series.

*Begun by Time*, the prequel to *The Thornless Rose*, introduces us to Catherine Hastings, as a courageous young woman dealing with the uncertainties of life in England during World War II. A bomb strike as she and her co-workers are on their way home leads to tragedy and love, as she meets Dr. Jonathan Brandon, a RAF Major whose mother dies in the bombing.

Catherine and Jonathan plan a life together—but he disappears, opening the way, eventually, for Catherine to meet her true soul mate, Arthur Bertrand Howard, a British attorney, or solicitor, and former intelligence officer. Still devastated by Jonathan's disappearance two years earlier, on the eve of their marriage, Catherine resists falling in love with Arthur, but he shows himself to be a man big enough to deal with her sense of loss and her difficulty in starting over when so much from her past still remains unfinished.

Morgan O'Neill paints the possibility of time travel and the intricacies of history in vibrant hues that capture readers and create belief—belief that Jonathan's fading and encounters with the past before he disappears are not only credible, but a gripping experience that could change their own lives given the necessary circumstances. Her characters are charismatic and unforgettable, and the reader will look forward to meeting some of them again in *The Thornless Rose*.

There are always meticulous details and precious mementos for characters and readers to treasure in a Morgan O'Neill work, and *Begun by Time*, and *The Thornless Rose*, left me smiling over “the Royal touch.” Revealing that would be a spoiler, but finding it in both books will warm your hearts.

Another stellar fabrication of history, triumph and love through time from Morgan O'Neill!

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### **Joanna Lloyd says**

If you read *The Thornless Rose* and loved it as I did, then you'll want to read the prequel, *Begun By Time*. This is the amazing story of how it all began. The story of how Catherine Hastings meets the dashing Major Jonathon Brandon, a flight surgeon with the RAF, and the unexplainable circumstances in which she loses him. An event which leaves her and his family shocked and grief-stricken. Set toward the end of WW11, this personal tragedy is echoed in the greater tragedies of the war, portrayed with vivid descriptions of the horrors of the London bombings, the constant loss of life and the small miracles that kept hope alive.

As the war finally comes to an end, Catherine meets Arthur Howard. A man who is kind, strong and debonair – he wears a bowler hat, no less! The reader can only rejoice at this second chance at love for Catherine. Two heart-warming love stories in one book.

As always, Morgan O'Neill have researched this era scrupulously and given us an experiential portrayal of the events around WW11 and its aftermath. The surroundings, clothes and language seemed so realistic and the story was beautifully written. Of course, now I can't wait for the next book in the series, the sequel to *The Thornless Rose*!

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### **Lillie Roberts says**

*Begun by Time* is the prequel the story of Catherine and Jonathan touched upon in the first book in the series, *The Thornless Rose* (love, love, love this story!!). Catherine and Jonathan meet due to a horrific outcome of the bombing of London. When they meet, even through the horror, love blossoms.

But, there are other factors at work in our young lovers' lives. When Jonathan disappears, Catherine spends months, years even, trying to understand what has happened to him. The enigmatic Arthur Howard walks into her life, and with him, she finds a purpose, possibly a new role in life.

Will he help her in her struggle to find Jonnie? Can he? Jonnie seems to be lost to time, but the machinations of wonder begin and a historical find urges our players further into the events that could change what is held as true.

And excellent addition to the Elizabethan Time Travel series!!

Five out of five fairy kisses for this reader.

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