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He would do anything to protect her. Even marry her...

The son of a cold-hearted duke, Nicholas St. Mauer isn't one to involve himself in society...or open his own heart to anyone. But driven by honor, the reclusive Earl of Somerton feels obliged to keep a watchful eye on Lady Emma Cavensham. She possesses a penchant for passions unbecoming a woman that finds Nick in constant peril of losing his well-structured solitude. She even dared kiss Nick once?an utterly unladylike, and delightful, lapse...

Emma can't deny the appeal of the earl's attention, and occasional affection, but she has no need for a man. There are worse fates than spinsterhood, as Emma knows too well. She still mourns the loss of her dear friend Lena, and is determined to prove Lena's husband responsible for her death before he lures another innocent woman into a brutal marriage. But as Emma pursues her prey, a compromising moment upends all her plans. Now, with gossip swirling and her reputation in tatters, Nick may be the only man brave enough to join in Emma's cause.. and fight for her heart.

The Bride Who Got Lucky Details

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Author : Janna MacGregor

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From Reader Review The Bride Who Got Lucky for online ebook

Mei says

DNF at 50%...

I'm sorry, but it was so dry that I just couldn't go on... It took me the whole day to read half of it!!! O_O

Juliana Philippa says

"Explain to me why I am any of your interest? You're not my keeper."

He stiffened, and a muscle clenched in his jaw. She'd shocked him, and it delighted her he failed to have a ready answer.

Slowly, one of his devastating, incandescent smiles—the ones designed to melt a woman's heart—transformed his face. "Because you're one of the very few people in this world I enjoy."

I did end up enjoying this better than Book 1, but it would have been difficult not to—I DNF'd the first one (read my review). This still wasn't great though, and I'm a little befuddled at the high average rating. In my opinion, Janna MacGregor needs to mature a bit as a writer and get tighter in her storytelling; the base and potential is definitely there, but I hate to say this ... at times, it read quite amateurish. And it was the same issues as with Book 1, though again, it was better this time around, so maybe Book 3 will be even better and maybe Book 4 will become a favorite (one can hope!).

Summary. Lady Emma Cavensham (25), daughter of a duke, has no interest in ever getting married; rather, she wants to open a bank specifically for women. She is devastated when her best friend dies at the hands of her husband, after suffering years of domestic violence, and is determined that he will pay for his crimes. Nicholas "Nick" Mauer, Earl of Somerton (32) has had an on-again off-again kind-of-flirting with Emma, though for the most part he stays pretty isolated. He is estranged from his only living relative (that we know of), his father. His best friend married Emma's cousin (their story was in Book 1) and so whenever he *does* spend time with anyone or when it comes to the winter holidays, he always spends it with his best friend and by extension, Emma and her family.

Emma is a bit of a wildcard; she has no interest in Society and lives life to her own tune (is that an expression? I think not, but I can't remember the correct one). On several different occasions, Nick ends up playing a type of guardian role to her and is put in the position of protecting her from herself, for lack of a better phrase. The relationship between them develops progressively throughout, but there are still many doubts on both sides. Unfortunately, one of these occasions ends up have repercussions that forces their hands, and they have to decide whether to take a chance on love, giving up the structured and somewhat-lonely lives they had both settled on for themselves.

Praise. I'm going to preface by saying that everything I'm about to say has a big "but" that will follow. I liked Emma's independence and her spitfire attitude; Nick is a total contrast from that, but from the beginning he's a very sweet guy that your heart goes out to, because he's had a rough go of it and has isolated

himself so much—just wanted to cuddle him! The book focuses a lot on domestic violence and I thought it dealt with the issue very well; it took on a heavy subject that not many romances deal with. The chemistry between Emma and Nick was sizzling and all the supporting characters were very three-dimensional and made for a nice, full cast of characters.

Criticism. Okay. So. Now for the but's. I ended up skimming through some parts and the whole thing seemed to drag a bit, I don't know if that's because it *was* more drawn out than it needed to be, or if it just felt that way because I was bothered by so many small issues. My issues with the book were for the most part not plot-related, and that's important to understand; it also makes it difficult for me in some instances to explain succinctly and clearly what the problem was, but I'll try.

In some instances, I had no idea what the characters were feeling and was super confused, because the clues we're given are inconsistent and/or conflicting. When Emma comes back from one of her escapades, for example, I was completely unclear on whether she was nervous about seeing her parents because she thought they were going to be angry or because they would have been worried. At the beginning, I also couldn't tell from how the Duke and Duchess's reactions which way it was going to go either. And this wasn't an issue of them feeling both—it was clearly supposed to be in one direction or the other, and it was just a confusing mess. Or after an exchange between Emma and Nick, I was completely unclear on what each was thinking and what had driven them to act the way they did; one could guess, but there were several different possibilities that would have made sense, so ...??

There were also smaller things, like him calling her "sweet Emma" way earlier in their relationship than it seems appropriate; it ends up sounding super corny and awkward, because they haven't progressed to that point yet. Another few times, he stands so close to her that his lips "brush her cheek" or some shit like that and given the scene, that just seems awkward and physically impossible, or it's when they're on the dance floor or somewhere totally inappropriate where this would SO not happen. Then there's an exchange between them and with her parting phrase, he reacts by laughing ... but there was nothing funny, why is he laughing? It was like the dialogue had been edited, but MacGregor forgot to update the response. That was, a lot of times, the problem—it either seemed like certain edits had been made and other jarring parts left in that didn't match, or that she couldn't decide in which direction she wanted to go for something and so instead kept zig-zagging between multiple options. Or he says something super sweet, she throws back a very mean and sharp volley ... and that makes *him* then feel apologetic and he sees how he handled that badly; what??

And to throw in a random last one, at one point Nick thinks she's "breathtakingly beautiful in her grief" ... wtf?? That's just weird.

Bottom Line. It wasn't my cup of tea. I ended up skimming certain sections and looking back, I wish I had used my time to read something else. There was definite promise, but I couldn't stop myself from getting hung-up on the amateurish feel of several aspects. It was definitely far better than Book 1, which I couldn't even get 1/3 of the way through, so MacGregor is improving; I'm hoping Book 3 will show the same improvement and hit it out of the park (for me). ... And writing this review makes me think I should give it 2.5 stars instead of 3, but oh well.

***This review is of an ARC provided by Net Galley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review**

Barbara Rogers says

Series: The Cavensham Heiresses #2

Publication Date: 10/31/17

I have read several other reviews for this book and I appear to be in the minority with my rating – so take that for what it is worth. I read the first book in the series and liked it much better than this one. Janna MacGregor is a new author – I believe this is her second book – and I feel she is still finding her writing legs. All-in-all, I liked the book okay.

There are things I liked about the books and things I didn't. I'll cover some of them below. I think the pacing was pretty good and the writing was good, but I don't think it was as good as in the first book in the series. I think there are some odd word choices, odd phrasing and maybe some awkward transitions, but this is an ARC and I'm sure a good editor will find and help fix those before publication.

I liked the hero, Nicholas St. Mauer, Earl of Somerton and heir to Drake St. Mauer, Duke of Renton. His mother died giving him birth and his father just couldn't get past that, so he was very aloof from Nick as he grew up. Nick was sent to school at five and was moved from school to school because he was so smart – but that kept him from forming friendships. At the age of 15, he was at Eton and his father delivered a shaming rebuke to him – in front of his schoolmates. You'll just have to read the story to see what gosh-awful things the old reprobate said, but it certainly defined Nick's life from that point on. That is quite a burden for an already lonely young man, so you can see why he is cold, aloof, and set revenge on his father and the boys who ridiculed him at school after his father's rebuke. He ran pretty true to character throughout the book and it was nice to see him grow and learn that he wasn't worthless and that he really could love. I got really upset with him at about the 80% mark and thought he had really blown it with Emma.

Unlike everyone else, I didn't care for the heroine so much. She actually set my teeth on edge! She was written about as being full of sunshine and light and everybody loved her as soon as they met her. I don't doubt that she had the capability to love and that she was deeply upset about the death of her friend in such a horrendous manner. However, I also think that she is like so many of the heroines I read about in historical romances. She's portrayed as brave – but is that really the case? I see her as more totally unaware and uncaring for her safety, the safety of others and the worry and heartache she causes others. She cannot be so naïve as to think that nothing could possibly happen to a lone woman meeting a man at a pub or even traveling to another city. She surely has to know that her family will be horribly upset to find she's gone to another city – requiring overnight stays – totally alone. Surely she understands that, aside from the hurt and worry she's causing them – they could pay a price socially if she is caught. Evidently, none of that mattered to her. Also – while I totally support (in today's society) her feminist stances, I don't believe for a minute that she would have been so vocal or outspoken in that actual time period. Then, there is the matter of her bank – great idea – but – men of the aristocracy weren't supposed to be in 'trade' during that period and women weren't allowed any sort of employment. She would have been shunned and ostracized.

Lady Emma Cavensham is the daughter of a duke. Her home and family is filled with love and respect for one another. Her parents are totally in love as is her cousin and her husband. She has many, many examples of happy, loving, equal-partner marriages right in her own family. However, her friend Lena married a monstrous man who murdered her. So, from this example, Emma ignores all of the love with which she is surrounded and believes that marriage is a prison and she will never give up her freedom and marry. She is hell-bent on bringing the villain to justice but feels powerless to do that. And, in that time, I'm sure she would have been. What I didn't understand though – her family adores her, dotes on her and they are extremely powerful – they saw her deep sorrow and would do nothing to help her get justice – I just don't buy that. Doesn't run true to what they are supposed to be as a family.

After her brothers and parents leave for various destinations, she sneaks off to the coast to investigate and find a first-hand witness to Lena's murder. The trip is a full day's travel away and requires staying overnight – but she thinks maybe she'll stay a bit longer. She's very close to the villains home and all alone – no maid – no chaperone – no able-bodied male for protection – so we all know that the villain will never find out – right – he'll never cause trouble – right . . . I'm sorry – she just seems to be one of those TSTL heroines to me. But – here comes the hero to save her.

Nick has loved her for a long time and wants to protect her – but he doesn't want marriage because he feels she deserves better than him. Of course, they end up having to marry and they both love each other. It is nice watching them grow and learn and become better people.

Emma becomes a much more likable character after the marriage. She gives up her reckless behaviors and concentrates on her bank where she helps women get the loans that they could not get at another bank. She shows her understanding of what drives many women and makes solid judgments on who can be trusted to repay – even if there is little if any, real collateral for the loan. She provides a service that is much needed. I loved how she explained it to Nick.

Please check out my blog at: <https://flippinpages.blog/>

"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Stacey is Sassy says

Emma is on a mission to find justice.

I really enjoyed *The Bride who got Lucky*. It was packed with all the things I've come to adore in my historical romance. The characters, while stubborn at times, were also lovable. Both the hero and heroine have faced hurt and frustration which has made them the people they are. What made this story interesting, was their growth from the characters they were at the beginning.

It's amazing what humiliation can lead you to. In the case of our hero, at a young age, his father made certain that he knew he was not wanted. Dumped at boarding school when he was five, he felt alone. With each hurt dealt by his father, a brick was added to the barrier around his heart. Eventually, he learnt to ignore feelings and focus his mind on his work. That helped him...until a kiss was offered as payment for a book.

Our heroine is on a mission to make women matter. It hurts her heart knowing that women are treated as possessions and used as commodities of trade and advancement. Her aim is to help women and if she can succeed, hopefully, she will reduce her feelings of guilt. One of her dearest friends died and she's convinced it was at the hands of her husband. If only the men in her life would stop getting in her way when she tries to bring the dastardly man to justice.

There were times I shed a tear while reading, frustrated with the injustices of the time. Women were treated so badly and men who claim to love them allowed it to happen. It can seem quite appealing when decisions are left to a strong man who has good intentions. Bossy husbands can have their appeal when it is done with devotion, love and protection behind it. Where it loses its appeal, is when choice, individuality and safety is

compromised. It was enlightening to see it shown so clearly in these opposing ways. Definitely a case of seeing the plusses and minuses.

Now talking about stubborn, these two knuckleheads were a wee bit frustrating. I could see where they both were coming from and understood their determination. Each time they butted heads, neither was willing to compromise. What made it more frustrating for me was the time it took for them to realise the errors in their ways. Her expectations of him to forsake his rules and convictions that lead him to be the man he is. His determination to keep her a step away from the barrier around his heart. I wanted to knock their bloody heads together. Eventually, they come good.

This was an extra steamy read and even I found that there was a wee bit more than needed. But who am I to complain? I'll take too much than none at all.

This series keeps improving and *Janna MacGregor's* voice gets stronger with each instalment. I will definitely be going on in the series to see how March and Michael get along.

Stacey is Sassy, received a complimentary copy of this story. The copy provided is not the final copy and may be subject to edits and changes.

Vintage says

This fell incredibly flat for me which is disappointing as it had a lot of promise.

The hero is brutally abandoned by his father at fifteen and has to make his way on his own, vowing to make even more money than his father the Duke. Lots of Dukes here. For an embittered hero with Daddy issues, he is remarkably lighthearted and charming.

The heroine is women's right activist with the need to avenge her BF's death at the hands of her husband and a strident reluctance to get married. Her father is a Duke too. As a Duke's daughter she should know better that when you place yourself in a compromising position, you must be married or else be ostracized. I wanted to strangle her. (view spoiler)

Despite periods of beautiful writing, the slow pace, the irritating heroine, some anachronisms (*It was the least he could do for the lousy dinner*), and major character betrayal the story derailed for me.

Character Betrayal(view spoiler)The hero:

The sister of the man that bullied the H horribly as a kid needs a loan so she won't have to marry the murderous man that killed the h's BF. The H is steadfast that he will not lend any money to the man that made his life a misery even though it means the sister will have to marry a murderer. It makes no sense as up until now the hero was actually a sane and kind man.

The hero's father:

He's been writing his son for years although the H refuses to read his letters. Daddy Duke shows up a beaten man, eaten up with remorse because of how he abandoned his son so many years ago. He knew as soon as he

left the school. So? Why not turn around or reach out at any time in the fifteen years?

Oh well.

Top marks for a nice seduction on the wedding night and a duel.

Ann says

Ugh, where to begin?

The entire book was a political speech about women's rights and marriage!

I don't mind some politics and social debates in my romance books, but this went on for pages after pages! It took away from the romance as well as mystery subplot. I got bored. Another thing was, I disagreed with some of the points made (not going to talk about them) so that also took away from my enjoyment of reading this.

If the author was going to put so much time (the entire first half of the book) into debating women's rights and marriage she should have carried it through until the end. The heroine got married but was so against it! There was no mention of her change of opinion or views on the matter. She just got married! The end. Oh can't forget the pregnancy.

Susan says

I love reading historical, regency romances just for the pure enjoyment of it. If the author captures my interest from the start, and the book has me neglecting other things because I just can't seem to put it down, or I refuse to go to bed til the wee hours of the morning, I think it's pretty much a winner. "The Bride Who Got Lucky" was that and more! Great story, well written, with so much to offer. Just the right mixture of passion, drama, danger, and most important, love and romance.

Emma is such a strong beautiful lady, a true champion of women who find themselves alone with no one in their corner. Nick is an honorable gentleman, with a kind heart and giving spirit. He's a friend to the Langham family, so their early interaction is one of social meetings, a growing physical attraction, and combative, yet somewhat flirtatious, banter resulting from his natural inclination to protect her from what he sees as her own independent recklessness. They each have deep emotional struggles that will threaten the feelings beginning to build between them.

I love the layers and depths to this writer's characters, not only with the H/h, but also those within the circle of family and friends appearing in this and the first of this series. Enjoyed the interactions among all these amazing characters. A great read from the beginning to the turn of the last page.

I received an ARC from NetGalley for an honest review. Definitely recommend reading, and anxious for what comes next with The Cavensham Heiresses.

Anna Swedenmom says

BUY BUY BUY BUY BUY BOOK!

Riveting, enthralling, sweet, funny, touching, ... it has it all!

This novel was one that has every single level you could desire in a great great book! From it touching every single one of my emotions to the way it caught held and captivated me in reading. I was touched by the way it portrayed a horrible side of even now domestic violence but still keeping the focus on important issues. From the start to the finish I was enthralled by the way the writer has of forming the movie pictures in my mind while reading. My heart was totally happy at the end and I will be rereading this book for another wonderful night of enjoyment. I will also keep my eyes on this author for more! I was given this book in return for an honest review. Anna Swedenmom

Pamela says

3.5 stars. Very likeable characters. They have both been hurt and they are both stubborn, but the growth in their characters is nicely done. There is a lot more steam in this "Bride" book, maybe a little too much for me. A pretty satisfying read though.

I do feel that Ms. MacGregor is getting stronger with this series, so I look forward to the next one.

Thank you to the publisher and Net Galley in exchange of an honest review.

Juliette Cross says

5+ STARS!

One of those rare books that touched all of my emotions. It made me laugh, cry, swoon, and left me with a heartfelt happily-ever-after. I fell so deep in love with Emma and Nick. MacGregor has written a beautiful, spellbinding story to rival my favorites by Lisa Kleypas and Eloisa James.

I completely connected with Emma. When she was frustrated, so was I. When she was angry, so was I. And when she swooned, falling in ocean-deep love with Nick Somerton, SO DID I. He is the perfect combination of gentlemen and alpha male, trying to resist his woman, and failing miserably. I loved every single minute of this one. Another winner by MacGregor! And I cannot WAIT for the next one.

Recommended to any and every historical romance lover.

Melanie says

The Bride Who Got Lucky was an absolutely charming romance featuring a strong-willed heroine, a noble hero and a quest for justice.

Nicholas St. Mauer, at the behest of his friend Lord Pembroke, keeps an eye on Lady Emma Cavensham who has a tendency to get herself into unfortunate situations despite her innocent intentions. While Emma admires the reclusive Earl's efforts, she doesn't need a man to look after her and simply wishes to go about her business in her own way. However, while seeking to avenge the death of her best friend Lena, Emma is caught in a compromising position and the Earl may be the only one who can help her.

Emma is firm in her belief that women should have a better place in society and sets out with the goal of helping women have more choice in their lives. I admired her goal of opening a bank for women and enjoyed watching her work towards her goal. Emma feels a lot of grief over the fact she couldn't help her best friend escape her marriage and I understand why she would be so stubborn about righting the wrong of her death. Her anger over Lena's death also gives weight to Emma's fear of marriage and helped me understand why she felt the way she did.

Nick was cut off by his father after a misunderstanding in his youth and has dedicated his life to becoming a successful businessman with the goal of surpassing his father's wealth. This confrontation with his father also reinforced Nick's beliefs about cutting those who wronged him out of his life. Nick became an incredibly reserved individual and he avoids closeness with anyone in order to avoid ever being hurt again.

At the start of the story, we see the onset of Emma and Nick's friendship that builds naturally over the course of the book. Nick is intrigued by Emma's spirit from their first meeting and Emma sees in Nick a kindred spirit willing to fight for what they believe at all costs. Their friendship was one of my favorite aspects of their relationship as romance couples don't always start off with that foundation. From the start Emma and Nick have great chemistry and an attraction that's obvious to anyone but them. When things progress the physical aspects are very steamy and incredibly well done.

Overall, *The Bride Who Got Lucky* was a very past-paced read that improves upon the first book in the series and I can't wait for the third book in the series, *The Luck of the Bride*, to release next year.

I received an advance copy of this book from Netgalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Maida says

Three stars. There are aspects of *The Bride Who Got Lucky* that I liked and there are things about it that I hope the publishers addressed before the publication date.

I liked that the heroine Lady Emma is very passionate about her causes - her fight to get justice for the death of her friend Lena and her desire to help women in need by setting up a bank. I liked that she's brave and that she loves to read.

I liked that Nick is a self-made man, that he amassed his own fortune. I liked that he is so protective of

Emma even though he kept fighting his feelings for her. It is admirable that he stands firm on his principles and is not wishy-washy.

I appreciate that Ms. MacGregor has them waiting until they got married to consummate their relationship.

I also liked that the whole family gets involved and although I haven't read the first book, I appreciate that the story of Alex and Claire gets an update.

There are things that are questionable. The reason for Emma's banishment is flimsy. Getting caught sneaking off to meet someone to buy a rare book from him is hardly worth the punishment she received. Nobody outside of the family knew about it so there wasn't any scandal.

The forms of address among the nobility are inconsistent. I've read hundreds of historical novels and never have I seen two Earls address each other as Lord so and so except here. The way the Duke addressed his kids didn't sound right as well.

The transitions between scenes don't flow smoothly. Why would you put a conversation about the hero's estrangement with his father right after a love scene? It doesn't make sense. The emotions go up and down within the course of a conversation, it was difficult to follow.

The deus ex machina of that duel that killed the villain is an unsatisfactory way of resolving the main conflict. Also, the villain is a caricature. He's not a compelling character, he was just a prop necessary to follow the formula.

Some of the word selections (gavotting?) and phrasing (... the Duke overtook the room ...) are awkward, but that's nitpicking and may have been changed already.

Overall, *The Bride Who Got Lucky* is a good read.

NetGalley requested my honest review of this advance copy.

Donna says

This is Janna MacGregor's second book and I loved it as much as the first one. It can be read without reading the first book in this series though some of the characters from *The Bad Luck Bride* appear in this one. Lady Emma Cavensham loves to read and covets rare books. While sneaking off to buy a rare book, she is stopped by reclusive Nick St. Mauer, Earl of Somerton. Her cousin Claire has sent Nick to find her and prevent a scandal. (Nick's best friend is Claire's husband Alex.) As punishment, her parents are sending her to their country estate, but before she leaves Nick gives her his copy of the book she was trying to obtain and her first kiss.

Nick is the Duke of Renton's son and heir, but they have been estranged since Nick was sent to school as a child. Nick's goal is to amass more money than his father and never let anyone into his heart.

Three years later, Emma is grieving the death of her best friend, Lena, who fell down the stairs while pregnant. Emma believes Lena's husband killed her and is determined to find proof as Lena's brother is off fighting Napoleon. Emma wants justice for Lena. She sneaks off to Portsmouth to find Lena's maid and

while dining at an inn, Lena's husband threatens her. Nick has discovered where she went and follows her. Found by her brothers in her room at the inn, they inform her she'll have to marry Nick. Emma has her own ideas of what she'd like to do but Nick convinces her to wed.

There is a lot more going on in this book and I hope I've said enough to entice you to read it without ruining the story. I highly recommend this book. Best line: "Books could take you on the grandest adventures." Thanks to Janna and her publisher for giving me this ARC. No one asked me to write a review.

Carvanz says

Emma is a wild, independent character, allowed to be so by her parents. She has known Nick for a while although only on the sidelines of her most recent years. However, when he intercepts one of her wild adventures and the repercussions have her sent off during the season, they find themselves afterwards growing a bit closer.

Now that Emma is seeking justice as well as absolution for her best friend's death, Nick is adamant that he will stop her from her foolishness. The end result is not what either anticipated but what both ultimately desire.

I enjoyed the relationship between these two characters. Emma needed to be free to help women who suffered and Nick was capable of giving her that freedom up to a point. However, when it crosses a line that he dug into the sand as a young man, they both struggle to find a solution to their uncompromising ways.

The first three-fourths of this book was quite entertaining and I adored getting to know not only the main characters, but the secondary ones sprinkled throughout. However, I did anticipate some action as the story progressed and was disappointed to find that this was all character driven. The resulting answers to their issues were all based on how they evolved as individuals as well as a couple. Many readers will love it but I just needed a little more "oomph" to my story.

This is an honest review of an advanced copy provided by NetGalley and St. Martin's Press

Dual POV

Safe

Possible Triggers – heroine's best friend was abused by her husband

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

3.5 stars

*****I won a copy from First Reads GoodReads giveaway. First US resident to pm me I'll pay it forward and mail my copy to them.*****

Claimed

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or

the content of my review.

Ever since his father coldly rejected him in front of his peers, Nick has closed himself off from any semblance of love. He devotes himself to his business and stays clear from any marriage market shenanigans.

Blaming herself for not helping her dear friend Lena, Emma is determined to never marry and provide women with an opportunity to be at least somewhat self-sufficient.

Nick and Emma have danced around a friendship for years but when reputations are on the line, they find themselves forced into a situation they never wanted. Or so they thought.

Second in the Cavensham Heiresses series, *The Bride Who Got Lucky* stars Nick and Emma. They were introduced in the first and while the author starts us off from a situation that developed there, new readers would still have no problem starting here. You'd miss how Emma's cousin and husband came together who are featured here but otherwise the author does a great job showing how Emma and Nick's friendship started to develop.

With a deep sigh, he lay on his back and draped an arm across his forehead. His other rested beside hers. She dared to slide her hand over his, and he wove their fingers together. Her fear gradually receded little by little like the outgoing tide.

What I loved the most about this story was the beginning friendship that Nick and Emma shared. Right off the bat they captured me with their sensual tension that blazed from their back and forth conversations and crackling physical closeness. They danced around each other beautifully in the beginning that had me highly anticipating their journey. The resolve came much too quickly for me as their relationship started full steam ahead at around the 30% mark and fairly soon rushed to a higher sexual degree. I was settled in for a more gradual build and was a bit disappointed in how the heroine became pretty sexual and drove the focus to bedroom scenes instead of teasing tension filled hesitant touches. The bedroom scenes were well written but they became the focus for too long and took away from their friendship and the plot that brings them together.

"Sometimes, if you're lucky, a woman consumes you."

Nick was a pretty great hero, he gives Emma a book!, and the opening prologue where his father crushes their relationship provided a solid base for his contained, bury the pain personality. He had moments of sexiness and caring but also paled a bit in comparison to the deeper flushed out Emma. Emma feels deep guilt over not being there for her bestfriend when her husband was abusing her. This leads to her having a fear of marrying (an often used trope but felt real and believable here) and wanting to open a lending bank to women. Her thoughts and feelings she relays and conversations she struggles to be understood in will have you joining in with her frustration. She's a believable regency feminist who is fearful and angry about what happened to her friend and how she doesn't really have any recourse for justice or protect herself from the same fate.

While I liked all the themes and relationships happening here, there was also a bit of a disjointed feel to all the storylines. I couldn't help but feel that a feminist heroine box was being checked and the heavy sexual tone and number of sexual scenes not only disappointed me in the lack of time given to a more tension filled build-up, it also seemed to overly cover up the justice for the bestfriend thread. The heavy emotion from domestic violence and how it affected Emma and the women of the time doesn't get its due and the danger from the villain wasn't able to be fully felt because of how it is pushed to the side, in what seems to be, in favor of more sex scenes.

The writing veered at times to flowery, I would have liked more tension build-up, and the ending was a bit too pat. However, the author's ability to write great chemistry between her leads and such wonderful multifaceted relationships between family members and friends will definitely have me continuing on in the series. She has introduced a couple secondary characters that I can't wait to see how their story unfolds.

*His darkness gave way to her, like the night to the day.
She had found him and brought him home.*
