



Dearest Rogue

Elizabeth Hoyt

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HE CAN GUARD HER

Lady Phoebe Batten is pretty, vivacious, and yearning for a social life befitting the sister of a powerful duke. But because she is almost completely blind, her overprotective brother insists that she have an armed bodyguard by her side at all times-the very irritating Captain Trevillion.

FROM EVERY DANGER

Captain James Trevillion is proud, brooding, and cursed with a leg injury from his service in the King's dragoons. Yet he can still shoot and ride like the devil, so watching over the distracting Lady Phoebe should be no problem at all-until she's targeted by kidnappers.

BUT PASSION ITSELF

Caught in a deadly web of deceit, James must risk life and limb to save his charge from the lowest of cads-one who would force Lady Phoebe into a loveless marriage. But while they're confined to close quarters for her safekeeping, Phoebe begins to see the tender man beneath the soldier's hard exterior . . . and the possibility of a life-and love-she never imagined possible.

Dearest Rogue Details

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From Reader Review Dearest Rogue for online ebook

Alp says

4.25/5

“You’ve ruined me. I don’t know if I can breathe without you. I don’t know how I can ever live without you.” –James Trevillion

Much better than my expectations. Thoroughly beautiful!

I postponed reading this book for so long, considering I wasn’t impressed with Phoebe's character in the previous book. I found her quite stubborn, so I was afraid she would get on my nerves in this installment. But oh, how wrong I was to think of her that way! She was nothing like I thought she would be. Honestly, her courage and her strength utterly surprised me. I can tell she’s pretty much my kind of heroine!

Dearest Rogue captured me from the first page and I found myself unable to put it down till the end. The story was very well-written, full of passionate romance, exciting action, and engaging suspense.

In this book, we meet Captain James Trevillion and Lady Phoebe Batten.

During Captain James Trevillion's patrol shift in St. Giles, his horse was shot and she fell atop him. He suffered a horrifying broken leg and it immediately ended his army career in the dragoons. The Duke of Wakefield offered him a job as his little sister's bodyguard. The more time he spent by Phoebe's side, the more he grew to care about her. She became something more than duty to him. Even though he knew deep down inside that it would be impossible for him to deny that she'd already occupied every corner of his heart, she was the Duke's sister, born and raised aristocratically. He was just a former dragoon with a lame leg and he knew he had nothing to offer her. Without a doubt, he wasn't good enough for her.

Because of her blindness, the sister of the Duke of Wakefield, Lady Phoebe Batten was treated like a little child by everyone around her. Her brother believed that most outings were too dangerous for her and she needed someone to accompany her everywhere, so he hired James as her bodyguard to keep her safe. At first, she wasn’t at all happy with James’s constant presence, but the longer she knew him, the more she realized how much she enjoyed his company and felt comfortable with him. All she wanted was for James to see her as a *woman*, not a precious thing that needed to be protected all the time.

After Phoebe was kidnapped from her house, James knew immediately that he needed to do something in order to save her, and then he swore to protect her life with his own.

Although this isn't my favorite in this series, still it was a good and enjoyable read. I loved both James and Phoebe, and I was actually satisfied with the ending. I’m so happy I decided to pick up this one.

Fans of historical romances and forbidden love stories shouldn’t miss this book.

“You’ve brought the sun into my lonely, gray life.”
“Lonely no more,” she whispered back.

Jen says

Another sexy, suspense filled, and romantic read! In this one the heroine is blind, and she falls for her bodyguard; who we have come to know in the past books as Trevillion. He takes things in his own hands when it comes to protecting his charge...and his life and hers will never be the same.

I am still loving this series, and I definitely recommend this one for anyone who is interested in Historical Romances. Elizabeth Hoyt does a brilliant job of creating a steamy and exciting romance!!! This series is a must read!!

Sher♥ The Fabulous BookLover says

****3.5 Stars****

It's no surprise that this is my favorite historical series. Only a few authors are on my "auto-buy" list and Elizabeth Hoyt is one of them. This story was sweet...which is not bad but I'm so used to the action, suspense and intrigue from the other books that I kind of missed it in this one...and I'm especially missing the Ghost of St. Giles. I really wish there could be a fourth one!

This was a sweet read, and my first book where the heroine is blind. EH is such an amazing author that she somehow made it work, but I just wanted more. I also didn't like all of the kidnappings and the Duke of Montgomery was starting to annoy me, but overall, if you're a EH fan, a Maiden lane fan, then you'd enjoy this book. Just know that is a bit different from the others. It's more about the characters and what drives them, than all of the action packed stuff. Buy sometimes in a book that's all you need.

Steven Walle says

This romance was very well written and a delight to read. An old soldier is hired to protect a young blind lady. During their relationship they fall in love and have a beautiful romance which was fraught with perils from kidnappers, and the young lady's brother who is a Duke.

It has a very happy ending.

Enjoy and Be Blessed.

Diamond

Choko says

***** 4 *****

A buddy read with the Romantics at the MacHalo Freaks :) Because we love love!!!

Yes, we are back in 18th century England, Maiden Lane, ravaged by Gin and poverty, crime and filth... Well,

that is on Maiden Lane... In the houses of the Ton, life seems much easier and more genteel... It does not matter where or when you are, money and privilege are always a plus.

*"...“I don’t want you hurt,” he said gruffly.
“I know.” Her smile was winsome. “But falling isn’t the end of the world. I may fall, it’s true—in fact, I probably will fall—but really, one can’t live without falling now and again.” ...”*

Lady Phoebe Batten is the sister of a Duke, comfort, luxury and privilege are a given for her station. For this beautiful and full of life young woman the skies should be the only limit. However, even the greatest families can not always get away from faith and in Phoebe's case, a disease of the eyes at an early age has her vision degenerating with an alarming speed. Her advancing blindness is the reason her Duke brother enlists the recently injured Captain James Trevillion, who finds himself unable to continue with his military duties since his leg was smashed by his dying horse. Both the Lady and the Captain find the situation bothersome. Travillion is the perfect soldier, intense, obsessed with his job, and weary of growing close with his charge. Because he finds this woman, 12 years younger than him and an aristocrat, way too enchanting and appealing for his comfort.

"...“She stood, a little unsteadily, true, but on her own two feet. “It’s not my blindness that cripples me, it’s everyone else deciding I can’t live because of my blindness. If I stumble, if I run into things and fall and hurt myself it’s because I can and I’m free to do so, Maximus. Because without that freedom I’m just a dull, chained thing and I won’t be that woman anymore. I simply won’t, Maximus.”...”

Lady Phoebe, however, sees his distance and composure as stuffiness and a way for him to show her up and display his dislike of her... She is very irritated by him, but despite all that, he makes her feel safe when he is near, more than anything or anyone else. This is even better highlighted when attempts to kidnap her become a reality and no one knows who is behind them. James is steadfast and heroic, putting her well-being above his own life. Until once, when he fails to be the one to save her, he decides that his injury and condition are rendering him unfit and he steps down in order for better men to protect her... Of course, as we all suspected, no one is better at protecting her and she is taken. James finds a way to locate her and from there on, he swears to never leave her side... Even if that means to abduct her himself:):):)

The story was interesting and the romance was very, very sweet!!! I truly liked all the characters, despite that at times Travillion's self pity to get on my nerves big time - I am not a big fan of a big bad alpha dude with such pathetic internal monologue, even if it did get better... The Duke of Montgomery also is on my to kill list at this point, so he really has to gravel until we get to his book!!! I loved Travillion's family and his niece and sister's story tugged on my heartstrings quite a bit! Overall, the book was another solid entry in this very pleasant series!!! Recommend it to all Historical Romance fans!!!

I wish you all Happy Reading and many more wonderful books to come!!!

Caz says

I've given this an A- at AAR, so that's 4.5 stars rounded up.

While I've enjoyed all the books in Elizabeth Hoyt's *Maiden Lane* series, **Dearest Rogue** has been the one I've most eagerly anticipated. In fact, it's one of my most highly anticipated books of 2015. Perhaps that's a little unusual, considering this is the eighth book in a long-running series, but something about the pairing of

the older, world-weary, dour ex-officer with the young, vital but blind sister of a duke is intriguing and completely irresistible. Perhaps it's that whole "bodyguard-falls-for-his-charge" thing – although that's not a plotline I'm fussed about either way – or what's more likely is that the glimpses we've been given of Phoebe Batten and Captain Trevillion in the earlier books, both separately and together, plus their appearance in the short Christmas story that appeared on the author's website a couple of years back showed an already amazing chemistry that I was keen to revisit and experience in a whole novel.

Readers familiar with the earlier books will know that James Trevillion, Captain in the King's 4th Dragoons was injured in the line of duty, his right leg severely damaged when he was crushed beneath his horse. No longer able to perform his military role, he resigned his commission and was then offered a job by Maximus Batten, the powerful Duke of Wakefield, as bodyguard to his youngest sister, Phoebe. Phoebe's eyesight has been gradually worsening since the age of twelve, and now, at twenty-one, she is completely blind. She is not at all happy at the idea of having a permanent keeper, but her brother is an incredibly influential man, and the possibility of her being kidnapped or harmed in order to gain leverage over him is a very real one. Phoebe knows that her brother is concerned for her safety, but he's stifling her; she may have lost her sight, but she wants to live as normal a life as possible, not be wrapped up in cotton wool like a china doll.

It was clear in the previous book (*Darling Beast*) that Trevillion was smitten with his charge, while Phoebe saw him as little more than an inconvenience. She still sees him that way, but he is well aware that the day is not far off when his growing attraction to her will mean he must resign his post. He can't protect her properly if he is overly emotionally invested – and he is already in over his head, Phoebe's courage, tenacity and determination drawing him to her as much as her loveliness.

Following a failed kidnap attempt at the start of the book, Phoebe finds herself suddenly curious about "her" captain and beginning to think of him as a person rather than just as an annoyance thrust upon her by her over-protective brother. A true friendship starts to develop between them as Phoebe comes to know more about the man who is constantly at her side and to finally realise something she's always known – that Trevillion is the one person who will never lie to her or attempt to sugar-coat the truth.

When, following a second unsuccessful abduction, the captain resigns his post because he feels he failed in his duty, Phoebe is distraught. James – as she has begun to think of him – was the one person who truly understood her need for independence. Her brother instead surrounds her with lots of burly footmen, but even they cannot keep Phoebe safe from what, I admit, is her own stupidity when she ventures out to the stables early one morning. Fortunately for her, one of those footmen used to be a soldier under Trevillion's command and quickly seeks him out. This is the last straw as far as the captain is concerned – he tracks the kidnappers and rescues Phoebe, then spirits her away to somewhere she won't be found – and doesn't even tell the duke where they've gone.

They journey to the Cornish coast, to the home Trevillion hasn't seen for twelve years. While Phoebe has managed to prise some of his life-story from him, he hasn't divulged the reasons for such a long absence, and clearly doesn't like talking about his past. His father is simultaneously pleased to see him and angry with him for being gone for so long, but Phoebe is nonetheless made welcome and soon falls into the way of life on the remote horse-breeding farm. It's at this point that she finally discovers the reasons behind James' almost compulsive need to protect her; and while it's not exactly a surprise, it nonetheless makes perfect sense.

I loved the way the relationship between the protagonists developed and especially the way in which Phoebe, unable to see, becomes aware of James as a man in other ways, through touch, scent and the sound of his voice. Despite the difference in their stations, once he realises the attraction between them is mutual, he doesn't hesitate or keep pushing her away for her own good. He pays her the compliment of believing she

knows her own mind – which is a refreshing change – so there is no overly contrived angst.

Even though I loved the book, it's not without flaws. Phoebe is kidnapped so many times, the author even has the character metaphorically rolling her eyes at it and thinking she should be used to it by now! The reasons behind it are a bit wishy-washy, to be honest, although during this part of the story, the author introduces the heroine of the next book, and also keeps the Machiavellian machinations of the enigmatic Duke of Montgomery at the forefront of the reader's mind.

But I was so wrapped up in Phoebe and Trevillion that it didn't spoil the book for me, and in terms of the romance, Ms Hoyt delivers and then some. Phoebe is only twenty-one, but has shown such courage in the face of adversity over the time in which we've come to know her that it's easy to sympathise with her and with her desire to be allowed to live her life in the light she can no longer see. Trevillion is a wonderful hero – deeply honourable and loyal, and possessed of the sort of unwavering devotion and quiet competence that are incredibly attractive. He's not voluble, but has a dry wit and sense of humour that are normally buried, so it's lovely to see him unbending around Phoebe, who, he quips, has “made him into a frivolity”; and incongruous as the pairing may have been at first glance, he's the perfect hero for her. He'll never talk down to her or try to coddle her; even though he wants to keep her safe from harm, he knows that sometimes one has to fall down in order to pick oneself up again.

As I've come to expect from this author, the writing is elegant and richly detailed, and the characterisation is strongly observed all round. The sex scenes are luscious and sensual and somehow, in a genre which is overflowing with them, quite unique. Ms Hoyt manages to imbue such moments with a kind of earthy romanticism that never descends into the overly crude; sex in her books is lusty and honest – emotional but not sentimental.

Dearest Rogue fulfilled all my expectations, so I can't in all good conscience do anything other than make it a DIK, in spite of the small reservations I've mentioned. It's gone straight onto my keeper shelf and I've already read it twice – so it's a good bet I'll be returning to it often.

WhiskeyintheJar/Kyraryker says

3.5 stars

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.

Lady Phoebe has been steadily going blind for the last couple years and as the sister to a powerful and rich duke, her brother hires a bodyguard to keep her safe. Captain James Trevillion used to ride the streets of St. Giles chasing down gin makers until an accident left him lame in one leg but still highly capable he becomes Phoebe's bodyguard. The aristocrat and the commoner find themselves at crossed swords quite often but as they get to know one another, they find themselves slowly lowering all their defenses.

Sometimes Phoebe wondered what Captain Trevillion would do if she reached up and slapped his face. Or kissed him.

If you have read the previous books in the series (focusing on the lead's romance in this book you would be fine without prior knowledge but there will be secondary characters and side storylines that will pass you by)

you would have gotten a little taste of Trevillion and Phoebe's somewhat tense relationship. This story is what many have excitedly anticipated, the progression of all that tension. The interaction between Trevillion and Phoebe was what definitely worked the best for me while the kidnapping plot didn't seem the best put together. It worked to put our couple together but the over and over resurgence of it felt much dragged on.

I'm no longer a fit guard, he thought, I can't keep my objectivity around her anymore. God help me. God help her.

The fear of not being able to see, having her brother stifle her nearly to madness out of love, and exuberance of youth made Phoebe a very likeable and believable character. It was unfortunately, also her youth and sheltered life, at times I felt like the character felt even younger than the age stated and that lost me. There was a lot of "I want, I want" from Phoebe that manifested itself in a very child like manner that wasn't a lot of fun for me to read. On the other hand, the feeling of her desperation to feel alive was so heartbreaking. Trevillion's restraining looks, wanting, and feelings toward Phoebe were what sold me towards his character. Unfortunately, again, what made up a good chunk of his character, stoic and contained, that made him gruff and vulnerable also made him too inscrutable. I couldn't quite feel connected to him as an individual. The first half moved pretty slowly for me, it was when Trevillion kidnaps Phoebe to keep her safe from being kidnapped and they start spending a lot of time alone that I began to really feel this couple.

She was an aristocrat---a world apart from his yeoman upbringing. But here, in this quiet paddock, the only sound the soft thump of the horses' hooves on grass, they were just a man and a woman. That simple. And that complex.

In this second half and particularly in the 60-80% area, this couple will entrench themselves in your heart. The way Trevillion sees Phoebe, past her blindness, will have your eyes watering and the way the air crackles when they are close together will heat your blood. There is a scene involving stockings that will definitely be a nominee for my best scene of 2015; scorching hot. With everything stripped away, the kidnapping plot and mechanism's of secondary characters, Phoebe and Trevillion radiated brightly and emotionally. Their time together, Phoebe's growth from Trevillion's strength and ability to see her as more than her blindness and willingness to let her fall was beautifully romantic. The last 20% or so with what seemed like a lot of forced sex scenes smashed into it and one too many kidnaps had me wishing for the quieter moments of our couple's time spent hidden away.

Overall, there are some truly beautiful moments in this story and if you are a fan of the series you definitely don't want to miss out on this couple's happily ever after. This series and book has a great many fans and there is definitely a reason for it. If looking to escape the regency ballrooms to the 1700s, this would be a great series to pick up.

Robin (Bridge Four) says

I'm going to tell you that I might be a smidge biased about this book as this is really one of my favorite tropes and **I'm a sucker for a Captain, any kind of captain in fact** from Captain Jack Sparrow, to James Tiberius Kirk, to Captain Malcolm Reynolds and let us not forget Captain Thorn (the Lunar Chronicles), Both Captains of the Queensguard, Hector (Girl of Fire and Thorns) and Amon Byrne (Seven Realms) and last but not least Captain America. But this has the added bodyguard who falls in love with his body to guard.

I have been waiting for Trevillions book for a while especially when I learned that Phoebe was the love interest. I have liked her small parts in all of the other books and I've also felt so bad for her that because she has been going blind she is cut off from most of society and while her family loves her they are maybe doing a bit too much to make sure she is safe that it is no wonder she almost feels a prisoner in her own home.

She stood, a little unsteadily, true, but on her own two feet. "It's not my blindness that cripples me, it's everyone else deciding I can't live because of my blindness. If I stumble, if I run into things and fall and hurt myself it's because I can and I'm free to do so, Maximus. Because without that freedom I'm just a dull, chained thing and I won't be that woman anymore. I simply won't, Maximus."

It was so easy to like Phoebe, sure her life has changed and she can't see but it hasn't diminished her in any way and her positivity and good attitude towards every new challenge that comes her way made me want her to find the love of her life and get the HEA that she deserves.

Trevillion is a man of honor and duty. He wants to do what is right by Phoebe and feels like he couldn't possibly be the man for her, he is too old not a noble and has a leg injury that has slowed him down. He wants the best for her since he has over time come to care for her but it is difficult being with her everyday as his feelings grow and her life becomes more and more in danger.

...while you may not be a caged bird, neither are you merely a woman. You're a precious artifact. As long as there are men who wish to steal you, I'll be right by your side."

Someone is trying to kidnap Phoebe and force a marriage on her. If they accomplish that then they can basically hold the Duke of Wakefield in the palm of their hands. Trevillion seems to be the only thing standing between the Kidnappers and Phoebe. But there seems to be someone in The Duke of Wakefield's employ that might be working against him. To protect her he will need to hide her and in that they will both discover everything about the other person.

I loved this story. Okay so Phoebe almost being kidnapped and actually being kidnapped more than once was a little OTT and comical. But I really liked everything about their story and how Trevillion's war within himself to do the right thing didn't stand a chance in the wake of Phoebe.

Only when she sighed into his mouth, a small submission, did he whisper against her lips, "I'm tired of you tempting me."

"I'm not tempting you anymore," she murmured back, her wet lips brushing his.

He nipped her bottom lip in punishment. "Aren't you?"

"No," she whispered. "You've given in."

I enjoyed this book more than most in this series just because of the Trope and the character. It was everything I wanted it to be.

Lady Wesley says

7 May 2015

My thoughts upon finishing *Dearest Rogue*

Warning! Do not begin this book unless you are prepared to stay up all night finishing it. **Dearest Rogue** may be my favorite Maiden Lane book yet. The romance between Phoebe and Trevillion will sweep you up, and besides that there is adventure, mystery, and an adorable child.

29 May 2015

Elizabeth Hoyt's books just keeps getting better! As I noted in my five-star review of her last book, *Darling Beast*, she has taken the Maiden Lane series in a new direction, adding characters while keeping the ones we've met before. Captain James Trevillion first appeared in **Scandalous Desires (Maiden Lane, #3)**, leading a troop of mounted soldiers hunting for an accused murderer known as the Ghost of St. Giles. He wasn't a villain exactly, but his strict devotion to duty put him in conflict with the heroes of the earlier books. Trevillion was invalided out of the army when his leg was badly broken after his horse was shot and fell on him. Now, walking with a cane but still able to ride like the devil, he has taken a job guarding Phoebe Batten, the young sister of a former adversary, Maximus Batten, Duke of Wakefield.

Maximus has decreed that Phoebe must have a guard because she is almost completely blind. Phoebe was not born blind; her sight began deteriorating when she was twelve, and now at age 21, she can detect light but nothing more. The duke is not cruel or ashamed of her; he just wants to protect her from gossip or teasing or injury. And her brother knows that London in 1741 can be dangerous for any lady, even if accompanied by footmen; Trevillion, with his two pistols strapped across his chest, escorts Phoebe everywhere.

Phoebe is sweet, pretty, and charming to everyone – except Trevillion. She detests the restrictions imposed by her brother (although she loves him dearly) and is hostile toward Trevillion as a result (although she has full confidence in his ability to protect her). For his part, Trevillion accepts Phoebe's enmity stoically while occasionally harboring secret tender feelings toward her. He knows that there can be nothing between a duke's sister and a commoner.

The first chapter of this book is so cracking good that it could be a case study in how to set up a plot, introduce the main characters, and hook the reader. . . .

Please visit [Romantic Historical Reviews](#) to read the rest of this review and enter to win one of TEN copies of *Dearest Rogue*.

Mo says

So sweet. Wasn't sure how I would like this one. Trevillion is a bit of a moody character in the previous books ... but he ended up being a real sweetheart.

TREVILLION woke the next morning as he often did: all at once, at exactly six of the clock, and with a stiff cock ...

Of course Trevillion was not of her station so did not feel worthy of her.

God, he was a cad.

"You've ruined me. I don't know if I can breathe without you. I don't know how I can ever live without you."

"Then don't." she murmured into the eternal darkness ...

"I'm so lucky you would have me."

Sam (AMNReader) says

Tosses kobo aside. Steeples fingers. Leans forward. Raises eyebrows

Oh. I've found another for my collection.

Plucks James from pages. Adds to "heroes I want to lick" shelf.

I've enjoyed Phoebe's parts in the books prior to this and her book was not at all disappointing. I also enjoyed the image of Trevillion just moments behind each Ghost. He's a clever and a tenacious one. Apparently he's also the strong, silent, steady type. It doesn't hurt, nope, in fact it helps, that he appears to ride horses like some kind of warrior from Rohan. I can't tell you I've ever drooled about superhuman horse-riding skills, but somehow Elizabeth Hoyt made me do it.

I don't really have a heroes I want to lick shelf, I have the boringly named 'book boyfriends' but I really need to up my naming convention there. Some of these new heroes, it just doesn't suit. (Delicious heroes?)

I felt she was careful in the characters, they were wildly consistent. A wonderfully, superbly, satisfying read. (I enjoyed Cornwall too! It suits them. Lovely.)

oh dear sweet bunny rabbits when he watched her fall three times. My heart.

I'm about to get real weird, so I'm going to just push save on this baby and go off to read Down by Contact In other words, I'll be up till 2 finishing that tonight.

Jilly says

Better than the last one. High praise, indeed. And, sure this couple was also boring, but the story was sweet and actually a little bit believable. There was actual chemistry.

So, we have Phoebe, a blind girl who gets all annoyed when people want to help her walk without falling into a hole. And, James, her bodyguard who is a bit crippled from injuries to one of his legs who gets annoyed if anyone wants to help him in any way. Perfect match.

They fight, she resents him, he secretly loves her, he leaves her, she misses him, he kidnaps her for her "safety", and then...

The only thing that annoyed me about this book, other than the idiotic scene where she convinces him to let her walk unassisted along a hole-ridden, uneven road and she falls over and over again, but hey, "independence", was how utterly stupid James has suddenly become. When he was the captain of the police, he was uncannily perceptive and smart at figuring things out. But, suddenly he can't figure out the most obvious kidnapper ever. The guy practically screamed "it's me" from the start, but Captain Unobvious couldn't see it. Perhaps he also knocked his brain loose when he hurt his leg. I was unimpressed.

willaful says

Like many fans of the "Maiden Lane" series, I've been curious about a story for Lady Phoebe Batten, a young woman who's been progressively losing her sight over the course of the previous books in the series, and one for Captain James Trevillion, who started out as sort of the Sheriff of Nottingham to the previous heroes and then became an ally. Their pairing is a fairly obvious choice for romance -- vulnerable heroine with protective hero. (Who also has his own vulnerability, because of a leg injury.)

In some ways this was better than I expected. In my memory, Phoebe was a fairly meek, dependent person. But perhaps getting older, or losing more of her vision, or being stuck with a full-time bodyguard, or a combination of the three, have made her start to rebel against her sheltered life:

"I know [my brother] cares for me. I know he worries for me. But in doing so, he's constrained me utterly. Even before this attack Maximus wouldn't let me go to parties or fairs or *anywhere* he deemed dangerous. I'm afraid after this that he'll pack me in cotton wool and set me at the back of the cupboard for safekeeping. I... I just don't know if I can *live* like this."

Later she tells her brother, "I deserve to run and trip and fall without having my every move plotted and planned... and *tied down* so that I never, ever risk *living*."

Unfortunately, Phoebe still comes across as helpless for much of the book. Perhaps this is realistic: she hasn't been allowed to learn any tools for taking care of herself. But she wanted more for herself and I'd have liked to see her really get it.

Melanie A. says

5 STARS!

Was she more to him now than simply a duty?

Big smiles, you guys. Big, BIG smiles. Such a solid read. **I loved it!**

Phoebe was a fabulous heroine. I adored her. She was strong, kind, and optimistic in a way that didn't grate on my nerves. I applaud Hoyt for not allowing her blind heroine to flounder around in the deep end of the schmaltzy cheese pool.

"I just want to live."

Trevillion was just as wonderful; strong, noble, and severe in an edgy way that didn't grate on my nerves. :-)

She was twelve years younger than he and a hundred years more innocent, and the daughter and sister of a duke, fresh, gay, beautiful.

He had two loaded pistols, a lame leg, and a hard cock to his name.

And together, they served up everything that makes historical romance great. I devoured every last word.

Plus the set up for future installments didn't feel intrusive, like it was taking page time away from the main couple . . . which leads me to the ever growing enigma that's been brewing over the last few books of the series: **Who the hell does the Duke of Montgomery think he is?**

I can't wait to find out!

Princess under cover says

I upgraded the rating from 4 the first time around to 4.5 rounded to 5 this time. Maybe I'm just in a generous mood.

What I liked about it:

The wounded Hero, gruff, serious, truly a hero and leader of men. He's always been such a stick in the mud from previous books and you know he's one of the good guys but you can't help but think - someone needs to pull that pole out of your ass! So I was curious how EH would treat him in this book, how she'd open him up and get us to fall in love.

She did great. The easiest part of it was just showing us his POV now that he's the main character. And when you know what he's thinking, how he looks at his duty and his charge, you can't help but to like him.

Plus, it doesn't hurt to be handsome - dark hair, blue eyes, tall and broad, soft lips. What's not to like??? And I do love the name James. For some reason, it makes him more elegant, more refined, more sensitive in a way. I like that he loves calling him that and how it makes him feel to hear her call him that.

(EH's fascination with chest hair disturbs me a bit. I'm not a fan of hairy chests myself and have to always skip that part in the description. Thankfully, the cover models aren't hairy!!)

The Heroine I've always liked. And I really like her now. Such optimism and light for someone suffering with such a loss. I've said this many times - I like heroines who go after what they want. They could do it softly or directly or be a hard-ass, but I like that they go for it, and Phoebe sure does!

The rest of it I kind of skipped. I don't plan to reread about Eve and Asa. Seem to recall I didn't like that one all that much. Good to end my streak of EH on a strong note!
