



The Fairest of Them All: Marrying the Duke

Cathy Maxwell

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In New York Times bestselling author Cathy Maxwell's glittering new series, wedding bells are ringing...but which Whitridge twin is the right groom?

The penniless orphan of a disreputable earl, Lady Charlene Blanchard thrives on the adventure of picking the pockets of unsavory gentlemen to survive. But due to her extraordinary beauty and prized bloodlines, she is hand-chosen as a potential bride for the Duke of Baynton, who is on the hunt for a suitable wife to provide heirs. All Char has to do is act the part she was born to play and charm a duke she's never laid eyes on into proposing. Except the duke turns out to be the tall, dark and sexy stranger who just caught her red-handed as a thief!

Or is he? Jack Whitridge is the duke's twin who had "gone missing" over ten years ago. Now back in England, he knows that the supposed Lady who has his brother's love is hardly duchess material—except he needs her to save his adopted country from war. He is willing to bargain with her heart, until he finds himself falling for Char . . .

The Fairest of Them All: Marrying the Duke Details

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From Reader Review The Fairest of Them All: Marrying the Duke for online ebook

SidneyKay says

Twins...I hatesssss twinssss.

In the case of *The Fairest of Them All*, by Cathy Maxwell, I may not have had a problem with the twin trope if only the hero, Jack, hadn't been such a stinker.

Here's the deal: at the age of 15, Jack ran away from school. He did that because he could no longer live with being the second son. It was **allllll** just way too much for the little rotter. He just ups and leaves. His family believes him to be dead. His mother mourns for him - deeply. He eventually lands in America where he has become a self-made man and fallen in love with the open space, which was the new land. He also becomes a politically-minded lawyer. He is gone for over fifteen years - not once during all of that time does he drop a line, give a shout, send a message which tells his grieving family that he is alive. He even marries and becomes a widower and never once does he send word. Then because he wants to prevent a war between the United States and England he returns, crashes a party his family is throwing, says **HEY** I'm back and I need your help meeting the right people. While Jack was portrayed as a kind hero, I could only view these actions as cruel. No matter what he did for the rest of the book, I could not get past his treatment of his family. And, I'm sorry, but the whiny reflections of a fifteen-year-old boy boo-hooing he wasn't good enough didn't excuse his actions. He also falls in love with the woman his brother falls for - although his actions in regard to Charlene I understood and was able to accept. It is the treatment of his family - mainly his mother - I cannot get past. **I did not view Jack as a hero.**

Charlene, our heroine, on the other hand, is a penniless aristocratic woman who is making money by being a pick-pocket. See how realistic this story was/is? She is also in the black book of some local thugs because she has crossed into their territory. She initially meets Jack by picking his friend's pocket. Jack gives chase - she escapes - but neither one of them can forget the other. It's a case of instant love, although, she has no trouble setting her sights on Gavin, the Duke of Baynton (Jack's brother). Charlene and Jack's story was a mish-mash of deceit, love, and missing chemistry. Then there is Gavin - poor ol' Gavin. This is his second jilting.

Gavin. Gavin was the one I became really interested in during the Jack/Charlene romance. **Spoiler:** he's a thirty-four year old virgin. We won't tell him, but he meets his heroine in this book and they hate each other. I'm keeping my fingers crossed. I can feel my expectations rising for their story because it has the makings of a fun read. Here's hoping.

Bottom-line: not my favorite Cathy Maxwell book. I had a big problem with Jack's actions. For me, the reason for his actions were feeble at best. Using his youth as an excuse is not a satisfactory answer, especially when one considers he never made any attempt as he matured to contact his family. Jack never atoned for his callousness, and I need my heroes to be redeemed by the end of the story or it just doesn't work.

KaysBlog

Zeee (I Heart Romance & YA) says

This review first appeared on I Heart Romance & YA

I honestly don't know where to start reviewing The Fairest of Them All. To say that I was disappointed is an understatement. I am INFURIATED. Okay, I'd like to explain why my feelings are this... harsh. I absolutely HATE insta-love! Sure, there are books that can do this well, but this was NOT it! There is just too much insta-love in this book that I cannot... ARRGHH!!

Sigh. Another reason why I am extremely disappointed is because The Fairest of Them All made my books pubbed in 2016 that I didn't get to read list. And yes, I was excited to read this book.

Before you proceed, I will have to warn you that there WILL BE SPOILERS! I am this upset that I may not even try to hide them in spoiler tags.

Reasons why I WAS EXCITED about The Fairest of Them All

1. Lady pickpocket. Lady Charlene IS a pickpocket. She dresses up as a boy so she could pickpockets because her uncle has stopped sending her money. I ABSOLUTELY LOVE this trope!
2. She is chosen as a potential bride for a Duke but then FALLS for his twin instead. AGAIN another FAVORITE trope.
3. ROMANCE. The blurb promises a lot of interesting scenarios where Jack will fall in love with Lady Charlene.
4. A man who will slay your dragons. THIS statement was in the prologue!

Reasons why I am EXTREMELY disappointed by The Fairest of Them All

1. Lady Charlene is a pickpocket. BUT THERE WAS ONLY ONE PICKPOCKETING SCENE! I wanted more! At least another scene that will show that Lady Charlene IS AN GOOD pickpocket! This was also mentioned in the first chapter. She was SUPPOSED to be good, but it wasn't shown. Instead, we are told she is but the only pickpocket scene showed to us was the one where she was CAUGHT?!
2. She FALLS for his twin. There was NO FALLING IN LOVE here! We are made to believe that Charlene and Jack fell in love with each other AFTER they meet a FEW TIMES? WHAT? Did I miss anything? One: He caught her picking his friends' pocket and he runs after her. Two. He glimpses her as she opens the door to her home. Three: They have a heart to heart talk after he followed her meet The Seven. Four: She defends him at a dinner party. Five: He presents her with Leo's hat. Yeah. THOSE were the only times where they "met" and interacted and IT WASN'T ENOUGH to convince me that they were falling in love.
3. Romance. WHAT romance? There was NO SPARK between these two. Heck, he was still in love with his dead wife!
4. A man to slay your dragons. WHAT DRAGONS? I would have been happy had there been ACTUAL dragons flying about in Regency England! All Jack did was threaten and blackmail The Seven so that they will not blackmail Char. I mean, it wasn't even done HEROICALLY!
5. Insta-love. There were TWO people who said they LOVE Charlene. The Duke said he was in love with Char when HE DID NOT EVEN KNOW HER! Jack, the Duke's twin said he loved her when.... see numbers 2 and 3 above. And Charlene said she LOVED Jack when he "slayed" her dragon. Who wasn't even THAT threatening!

As much as I want to love this book, I COULDN'T! If this wasn't an audiobook, I would not have finished it!

Read the full review on I Heart Romance & YA

Marilyn Rondeau says

Now anyone who knows me realizes that Historical romances are at the top of my favorite genre, and I have a whole slew of go-to authors to get my “fix” - let it be known then that Cathy Maxwell is on that go-to list!

Not every heroine in the Regency world is an innocent heiress and I admire the gals who are strong enough to do what must be done to survive. Lady Charlene Blanchard, orphaned daughter of a disreputable earl is just such a woman! Charlene is extraordinarily beautiful with impeccable bloodlines, however, Lady Charlene has been the one person that is keeping her aunt and herself from complete poverty. Unfortunately, her only way of keeping a roof over their heads is to do a bit of pick-pocketing.

The very handsome Duke of Baynton is looking for that special woman to be his duchess and Lady Charlene has been chosen to be that suitable wife to provide heirs and become the next Duchess. All Charlene has to do is charm a duke she’s never laid eyes on before. Check! The duke seems gob-smacked the moment he lays this eyes on the incredible beauty! Unfortunately, his missing twin shows up and had already run into Lady Charlene (after she picked the pocket of his friend).

*** Ah Cathy Maxwell you do know how to craft a fun, sensual and highly exciting romance. I loved the dialogs between Lady Charlene and aunt and members of their small household. It was a true fairytale where the handsome, wealthy duke spots Lady Charlene and time stood still, so to speak. But before he could have his first dance with her - in walked his long-lost twin, Jack Whitridge who was on a special mission from his newly adopted country - America.

Such a wonderful scenario was woven as Jack had to beg his brother the Duke to help him reach out and try to negotiate peace with the British Government before another war breaks out. But more than that was the fact that even though he wanted to build a new relationship with his brother, Jack was quickly falling in love with Lady Char.

Bottom line: This was a very quick read, fast paced with superb dialogs and a great chase to Gretna Green... Can't wait for the next volume in this Marrying the Duke series.

Marilyn Rondeau

Caz says

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

I'm going to confess upfront that the only reason I chose to listen to this second book in Cathy Maxwell's *Marrying the Duke* series is because Mary Jane Wells is the narrator. I was singularly underwhelmed by the first book, *The Match of the Century*, which was where we first met Gavin Whitridge, the Duke of Baynton. That book tells the story of Gavin's younger brother, Benedict, and Elin Morris, the young lady to whom

Gavin had been betrothed for a number of years. Ben and Elin had been young lovers who were torn asunder when their fathers discovered them, and the book tells the story of their finding their way back to each other.

Although he genuinely cared for Elin, Gavin clearly saw that she and Ben were meant for one another and graciously stepped aside. But he is still in the market for a wife, and in the manner of handsome princes everywhere, holds a ball to which all the eligible young ladies of the ton are invited. He is instantly captivated by the most beautiful young woman he has ever seen, Lady Charlene Blanchard, the daughter of an earl who gambled away everything he owned and then took his own life, leaving his wife and daughter practically destitute. Even so, Charlene is lovely, demure, poised and everything Gavin is looking for in a duchess. He quickly secures her hand for the first dance, but things don't get that far because the ball is suddenly interrupted by a group of American gentlemen, one of whom turns out to be Gavin's long-lost twin brother, Jack, who disappeared from Eton when they were fifteen and from whom nothing has been heard for the last seventeen years.

You can read the rest of this review at [AudioGals](#).

Bambi Unbridled says

I was a big fan of the prior two books in the Marrying the Duke series. I thought Jennifer and Fyclan's story in *A Little Thing Called Love* was uplifting and happy, and I had a great emotional connection to Ben in his and Elin's story in *The Match of the Century*. While *The Fairest of Them All* was an okay read, it is not my favorite of the series.

In *The Match of the Century*, I really liked Gavin, the Duke of Baynton. In that story, Gavin was betrothed to the heroine at birth, but she was in love with his youngest brother, Ben, so Gavin graciously stepped aside for his sibling and family friend. So I was really hoping that the Duke would find his bride in this book! At first, it was promising. Gavin was absolutely smitten with our current heroine, Charlene Blanchard, a penniless orphan and (unbeknownst to the Duke) pickpocket. He courted her in his awkward way and it was clear he had no experience with women. But he tried so hard. I love him just as much as I did in the last book.

But then Gavin's long lost twin brother, Jack, returns from the dead and throws a wrench in things. Jack has showed up as an American diplomat trying to prevent the War of 1812, and the only way he can gain the right audience in London is if Gavin intercedes on his behalf. When Jack catches Char picking pockets, then later recognizes her in the company of his brother, he must discover her motive. This starts a series of encounters between Jack and Char during which they develop a tendre for one another.

While I liked all of the characters of the story individually, I didn't care for the love triangle. I felt sorry for Gavin, losing out on another bride to another brother, particularly when he really wanted this one. I liked his character so much that I had a hard time thinking that he was going to be jilted again. So it was hard for me to cheer for Jack because I would have been, by default, hoping that Gavin failed. I was also missing some chemistry between Char and Jack - I didn't feel the grand passion that I would expect for a story in this trope. At least their feelings and desperation didn't match what we got with Ben and Elin in the last book.

I loved Char's godmother, the aging actress who dressed like a peacock and taught Char how to pickpockets. I have mixed feelings about Char's Aunt Sarah, mainly because of something she does in the last quarter of the book that set off a regrettable chain of events. And the worst part of it was that Gavin turned the tables on

me and I started not liking him.

The end of the story leaves us with an inkling of who Gavin's match will finally be, and I'm not quite sure how I feel about the pairing. However, I will continue reading to see if the relationship is as explosive as I believe it will be.

I received an advanced copy of this book from Avon via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. 3 stars / 2 flames. Full review posted at Bambi Unbridled.

Mariana says

2.5 stars

The first half of the book is slow. I almost decided to stop reading. Fortunately it picks up.

This story is a love triangle with twin brothers and Lady Charlene. I have enjoyed books with love triangles before, even involving brothers; but this one not so much.

First of all, the Duke of Baynton was my favorite character. He does what he believes is right. He is responsible. He is wealthy, handsome, and more. I have not read the first book in this series, but he apparently already had another brother take his betrothed. Now his twin wants to take the woman he has fallen in love with.

The hero Lord Jack Whitmore is frequently described as "honorable." I believe in forgiveness and redemption, but it makes it out like he didn't do anything wrong in the first place. He did! He broke his mother's heart, abandoned his family, and then only returns to use them.

All that said, I guess Lady Charlene is a good match for Jack Whitmore. She is a liar and a thief. I get that she is strong and a survivor, but she also does not really believe she has done anything wrong either.

I'm not super stoked about Sarah being Duke of Baynton's match, but I will read the next book just because of him. He deserves a happy ending.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

I received an eARC, from NetGalley and the publisher, in exchange for an honest review.

'The Fairest of Them All' by Cathy Maxwell is book two in the "Marrying the Duke" series.

This is the story of Lady Charlene Blanchard and Jack Whitridge. I do feel this is a standalone book. I have been enjoying this series and was so happy to get the chance to read and review this book.

Charlene is having a hard time after her father gambled away everything they had and is now dead. Charlene is trying to pay off the debts and has started doing so my being a pick pocket and is caught once by Jack. Although Charlene gets away from him he turns up again. We find that he is the twin brother of the Duke that Charlene has been set up to meet and hopefully marry.

I will say it was so hard for me to figure out which brother I liked better at first and was torn with who she should be with.

This was another enjoyable read...loved it.

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SmartBitches says

Full review at Smart Bitches, Trashy Books

Fairest of Them All made me mad. So, so mad.

The thing was, the book was not what I was expecting and the hero was not the right guy, IMO.

Charlene Blanchard is penniless noblewoman who has taken to disgusting herself as a boy and pickpocketing in order to support herself and her aunt. One day Charlene learns that the Duke of Baynton is looking for a wife. The duke, Gavin, is very wealthy so money isn't an issue, but he's looking for someone with impeccable family lines—and Charlene qualifies. She goes to a ball, meets Gavin, and he is smitten.

Gavin starts courting Charlene, but he's awkward all over the place. At thirty-four, Gavin has spent most of his adult life trying to put his estate back in order after his father's death. He's a virgin with very little romantic experience.

Now I am 1000% here for a Cinderella story with an awkward, virgin duke. I will wait in line for that shit.

Problem is, Gavin is not the hero.

Did I mention that Gavin's twin brother, Jack, chose right then to show up? The guy who disappeared from Eton at 15 and everyone assumed was dead? Yeah. Turns out he was asshurt that he didn't get to be a duke so he ran off with an acting troupe and then went to America and now he's there trying to negotiate on behalf of America with the British. Like you do.

And I didn't even like Jack. I mean, the guy ran away with the circus because he didn't get to be a duke? And! His mom faints when he shows up BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD. I watch a lot of Investigation Discovery, and when a teenager goes missing you usually don't assume he's doing fine and just on another continent. Jesus Christ, at least write the woman a letter so she knows you're alive, dude. And he doesn't come back to England because he feels bad or wants to see his family; he does it on behalf of America and he uses his family name to help with the negotiations.

Hey mom! Remember how you probably thought a pedophile killed me and buried me in a shallow grave? Ha! I've really been alive all these years. I didn't come back to tell you that though. You cool with me using our family name to do stuff for 'Merica! ?

What. A. Dick.

I basically spent the entire book feeling really bad for Gavin. Then, at the end, Gavin starts acting like a sexist douche canoe because, I am assuming, he was just too sympathetic. It was totally out of left field and totally out of character.

Great. Now I don't like ANYBODY in this book.

- Elyse

AnnMarie says

The Fairest of Them All is the second book in the 'Marrying the Duke' series by Cathy Maxwell. It can be read as a stand alone story, but as with most series, it can only enhance a book if you read the previous in a series first.

This is the story of the uncommonly beautiful Lady Charlene Blanchard. Her parents are dead, her father, an Earl, took his own life due to gambling debts. Her mother died not long after that. She lives with her aunt Sarah. She has no money and when money is needed for rent, Charlene takes to dressing as a boy and becomes a pick pocket. During one episode of stealing, she was nearly caught. The man chasing after her managed to rip her hat off and was shocked to see that the boy was actually a girl. He didn't get much chance to look properly at her though because she kicked him in his private parts and made her escape. She will admit to enjoying the excitement of being a pick pocket, and also that the man that just nearly caught her was dangerously handsome with his air of power and determination. But she knows she can't carry on this lifestyle for much longer, so when her aunt tells her that a prominent Duke is looking for a wife of excellent bloodlines and that she has been invited to a ball in order to meet him, she realises what she must do. She has to meet him, charm him, and hope that he will end up wanting to marry her. Then and only then will all her aunts money troubles be over.

Unfortunately for her, Char finds out before the ball that the Duke is none other than the man that caught her stealing!! She is dreading meeting him face to face for fear that he will remember her and will call her out in front of everybody. Desperation has her going through with it though, and thankfully he doesn't recognise her at all. In fact as soon as he sees her he is thoroughly smitten with her. His mother has already told him she would make a perfect wife, and after seeing how beautiful and graceful she is, he decides his search for a bride is complete. As he asks her to dance with him he is pulled away by the arrival of an unexpected guest. The guest is none other than the Duke's long lost, thought dead, brother, his TWIN brother. The very same man who caught Char stealing! The same man who unknown to her was intrigued by her audacity to dress as a boy and to steal from others, the one who although only briefly seeing her face was extremely attracted to her.

This puts Char in a real dilemma. She has to woo the Duke, but how can she when she knows his brother will recognise her and have her arrested. For some reason, when he does find out who she is and that she is destined for his brother who is publicly courting her, he keeps his mouth shut. She ends up spending more

time with him because the Duke wants Jack to keep her company at the public engagements they attend while he is busy doing business there. During that time they both realise that they are deeply attracted to each other. Char can't do anything about it because she needs to marry the Duke, and Jack can't do anything about it because he needs his brother's help in securing a meeting that could prevent war between England and his new home America.

Will they be able to stay strong and stick to their plans, will Char marry the Duke, it's obvious to her Jack won't offer for her himself, and if he did, she knows she has to turn him down. The poor Duke is in denial, trying not to acknowledge the chemistry that seems to be between Char and Jack. He's already lost one prospective bride to another of his brothers, he is determined that that won't happen again.

This book was an exciting one from beginning to end. It's one of the ones you just don't want to put down. Wanting to know who Char chooses, and how the brother she doesn't choose fares made me read as quickly as I could. I love that at one moment I was rooting for Char to choose the Duke, but then at the next I was hoping she would choose Jack. One minute one brother was the bad guy in the story and the next minute it was the other brother. Of course I had to feel for Char too, battling her need to be dutiful rather than following her heart. It was all so complicated, and I had no idea how it could possibly end without bloodshed and heart ache. Thankfully the author chose the perfect ending, and the brother that doesn't get chosen will have his romantic story written in the next book of the series. I do love a happy ending, especially when I can't see how there possibly can be one.

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

Susan says

Good book. Lady Charlene is the daughter of an earl but is a penniless one, living with her mother's illegitimate half-sister and trying to make ends meet. She has discovered a talent for picking pockets and uses that talent to augment her aunt's theater income. Her career nearly comes to an end when she is caught by the companion of her latest victim. She manages to get away, but her relief is short-lived. A family friend has managed to get her an introduction to Gavin Whitridge, Duke of Bayton, who is looking for a wife. But he also happens to be the twin brother of the man who had caught her stealing.

Jack Whitridge had disappeared without a trace more than ten years ago. He has unexpectedly returned to England as a member of an American delegation trying to prevent war between England and America. He'd like to reconcile with his family, especially Gavin, but the gulf between them may be too wide to do so. It doesn't help things that he's also attracted to the woman Gavin wants for his wife.

Gavin Whitridge, Duke of Bayton, just can't win. He had been engaged to Elin Morris all his life, until she fell in love with his brother Ben (The Match of the Century). Now he is on the hunt for a wife and settles on Lady Charlene. He is smitten with her from the moment he meets her, and courts her in a sweet, yet awkward way. The reappearance of his brother Jack throws a kink in his plans, as he must deal with his feelings about his twin's arrival.

There was an immediate spark between Charlene and Jack when they met. I loved that first meeting, as Char robs his friend and Jack gives chase. Her escape from him is pretty funny, though not for Jack. Both are stunned to discover that they are linked to the Duke. Char knows that she should pursue the proposed match between herself and Gavin, whom she likes but feels no spark with. Her aunt and godmother are both

pushing her toward him, wanting Char to have the life they feel she deserves. But she can't keep Jack out of her mind. Their connection gets even closer when he saves her from the nefarious plans of a local group of criminals. Jack also can't stop thinking about Char. He is there on a diplomatic mission, which isn't going all that well. He needs Gavin's help to make the connections he needs. Jack and Char are frequently thrown together, thanks to those efforts, and their attraction grows.

Things come to a head when Gavin realizes what is happening right beneath his nose. His jealousy causes him to take action against Jack. A rescue by Char, followed by a run for Gretna Green and a chase by Gavin and Char's aunt Sarah, make an exciting ending to the story. I loved the journey made by Jack and Char as they discover just how right for each other they are. The pursuers, Gavin and Sarah, don't have as amiable a trip, as they constantly rub each other the wrong way. The confrontation at Gretna Green finally has Jack and Gavin talking honestly with each other, leading to hope for a true reconciliation. I liked the epilogue and the update on Char and Jack's life together.

I liked Charlene and her determination to help her aunt Sarah. Her internal conflict as she was torn between duty and love was very real. I ached for her as she tried to find her way. I liked Jack and his loyalty to his new country. He really wanted to help stop the war that he saw coming. However, I thought he was a bit selfish for not contacting his family once he was settled in America and letting them know he was alive and well. I was rather glad that he had to work at reconciling with them. I did like his protectiveness toward Char. The one I felt the most for was Gavin. He had lost his twin, leaving him feeling very alone as he was growing up and dealing with a demanding father. Then as an adult, to lose not one, but two potential brides to his brothers, was especially frustrating for him. He was also pretty complex, sometimes being really nice, understanding and supportive, and at others he was arrogant, cold and devious. I'm looking forward to the next book and seeing him finally find someone to love. If the hint during this book is true, he's in for a wild ride.

Giselle Bradley says

This book.... The plot was less ridiculous than the first but it was still silly. I really liked the characters! I feel so bad for Gavin! It's the second time he gets thrown over for one of his brothers! The characters were fun and they communicated with each other and when something happens they talk to each other about it which is so refreshing since apparently it's a favorite theme of most authors to make their characters not talk to each other!

Blodeuedd Finland says

First, poor poor Duke of Daynton! Ok so I have not read book 1 and see how he was there, but he lost his fiancee there to another man..his brother.

And here, omg, poor Duke! He is loosing again!

You all know the premise. Pretty girl to marry a Duke, but she falls for his brother. And most of the time in those books I do not feel that bad. I am all they are meant to be! Or, he is an idiot! Or, something else. But here, I felt really really bad for him. First he seemed like such a sweetie. Yes he was awkward, strict, cos his dad was so tough with him and he had to be so perfect. And yes he makes mistakes, but then he tells this

secrets and my heart melted, and broke at the same time. I just wanted to hug him.

And look, half this review has been about my crush on a certain Duke. But seriously, when he tells that secret, you will want to hug him..and marry him.

I should say something about Charlene and Jack...but someone else just stole the spotlight!

Charlene picks pockets. Jack is the Duke's long lost brother. He has been staying in America. These two meet and later meet again, alas it is too late and she is promised to another. But they want each other, they learn to know each other...all while another heart is breaking. That would be mine, cos Char should totally have picked a certain other brother. Ok fine, fine, she will be really happy with Jack. They are perfect for each other. And the next book will be about the Duke, and I know his match now. They will fit each other, still, saaaaad! Poor Duke *hugs him*

I have never talked about a side character this much before, I might have a crush.

But hey, the book was good, even if the poor Duke was again heartbroken.

Hasnamezied says

Well Well I didn't like this book. Maybe one of the reason is that I felt Jack character is too selfish. First, He runs away 15 years ago for no clear reason and he did not send his family any kind of letter in this whole time to assure them that he is still alive. He came again because it suited his case and even when he knew that his twin is interested in Char , that didn't prevent him from running away with her. He was not like his brother Bin when he tried his best to gain respect to winning his love Elin. Another reason is that I really like Gavin The duke so most of the time I was interested in him not his brother.

Yes, I am disappointed in this book.

Donna says

Cathy Maxwell does it again. I love this book! It's so entertaining you won't want to put it down. Poor Gavin, Duke of Baynton, again loses the girl he picks to wed, notice no mention of love, to his brother.

Lady Charlene is beautiful, penniless and a pickpocket. She is caught by Jack Whitridge, Gavin's twin who left England years ago. He lives in Boston and considers himself an American. He returned only to have meetings with the Brits to try and prevent a war (1812). This does involve returning to his family as he needs Gavin's help. Char and Gavin try to hide their feelings for each other as her aunt really wants her to marry the Duke. As in all good romance books, love wins out.

Of course, the journey to a HEA is a lot more involved than what I've written. I think you'll enjoy reading this one. I'm definitely looking forward to the next book, "A Date at the Altar" where I hope Gavin finally gets a Duchess he loves!

Lover of Romance says

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

Lady Charlene Blanchard, is a poor orphan from a respectable family. Her uncle abandoned her and she and her aunt are left to their own devices. Her aunt is a actress, but the funds just aren't quite enough. So Charlene has to resort to picking pockets---which she is quite good at especially with her disguise in breeches. But one day, she picks the wrong pocket and has a run in with American Jack Whitridge. Who is the twin brother of the man that is courtin her, the Duke of Baynton. Jack, left home when he was just a lad because he couldn't live under his fathers roof and just be the "spare". He wanted more out of his life, so he leaves his home and family letting them assume he was dead, and lived some adventure before finding a home in America. Jack made a good solid life for himself, but is tasked to do something for both of his countries. His orders are: Go to England and find a truce before war erupts. Jack arrives home, and has to deal with the fall out from his father, most especially his twin, Duke of Baynton. He realizes that the woman Baynton trusts him with, is the woman he is slowly falling in love with. He doesn't want to ruin the slow bond he and his brother have slowly begun rebuilding again, but he doesn't know if he can give up the woman he loves...

Plot And Story Line

I will be honest, I was pretty excited to pick this one up and was able to find it through my library on audio *clapping hands* ...yes!!! I have really loved what Maxwell has done with this series so far. It deals with a "love triangle" trope of sorts. Not a true love triangle, as most believe them to be. Its more you know which characters are going to end up together. I felt so bad for the Duke though....he is my favorite character out of the brothers---I just love him and he always tends to get the short end of the stick when it comes to woman and his brothers win. This story starts out with the Duke of Baynton, having a ball for all the eligible ladies. He wants to marry and find a woman to love just like his brother Ben has found. He is not like most men he knows...he is responsible, loyal and true. I truly loved him and all his outrageousness he portrays in this story. But then we see a new character, a character we thought was dead...his long lost twin brother Jack. Now Jack left England, and is happy with his new life. Although I did feel it was unfair for him to let his family believe he was dead all of these years. Now comes the heroine----who is so lively and fun and I loved her so much. She has spunk and she does what she needs to. But she is in a tough spot. And she needs a special "knight" to save her from the dragon--a den of thieves who want to blackmail her for many years to keep her secret of being a pickpocket. Even though she respects Baynton he is not the man her heart truly desires. Jack makes her feel alive and free. I adored seeing these two together, and at first they have some great chemistry and friendship that slowly builds into something more. The romance is subtle, and not super obvious until the end here. Which I liked quite a bit, because we see that they build a solid foundation before their relationship turns into something more. I think what I adored most was seeing the development of their relationship which seemed so different than anything I have read in HR before. We also get some teasers for Baynton's book and boy I can't wait...That one is going to be a blast to read.

Narration

Our narrator for this story is Mary Jane Wells...and boy she is so fantastic. I just love her voice and does the british accent so well. Her voice reminds me of a character in the movie "Christmas Carol" with Patrick Stewart and I just love how she opens this story up to the reader and draws you into this world of balls, thievery, excitement and some fun bantering. She did the level of emotion so well that I think the author was trying to convey and I got so caught up in this story I didn't want to put my headphones aside.

The Cover

So gorgeous!! My favorite cover of the series. I just love her dress, the elegance and classy feel to it, with the blue and white colors.

Overall View

The Fairest Of Them All is a sensational romance that sweeps you off your feet in desire...adventure...and teaching the importance of fighting to stand by the one you love!!! BRILLIANT!!

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