



My Wicked Marquess

Gaelen Foley , James Griffin (Illustrator)

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To restore family honor the Marquess of Rotherstone faces his most dangerous mission—finding the perfect bride...

To London's aristocracy, the Inferno Club is a scandalous society of men no proper young lady would acknowledge. But though they are publicly notorious for pursuing all manner of debauchery, in private they are warriors who would do anything to protect king and country.

The Marquess of Rotherstone has decided it's time to restore the family's good name. But as a member of the Inferno Club, he knows there is only one way to redeem himself in Society's eyes: marry a lady of impeccable beauty and breeding, whose reputation is, above all, spotless.

Someone quite unlike Daphne Starling. True, she's temptingly lovely, but a jilted suitor has nearly ruined her reputation. Still, Max cannot resist her allure—or the challenge of proving London's gossips wrong. He would do anything to win her hand . . . and show that even a wicked marquess can make a perfect husband.

My Wicked Marquess Details

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From Reader Review My Wicked Marquess for online ebook

Susan says

Nope, not for me. The info dump slowed the story down too much for my taste. And I didn't like the alternating his/her viewpoint chapters either.

May or may not continue with the next book in this series. The stories themselves sound interesting enough. I just didn't appreciate what I read in the telling of this one.

Caz says

I've given this a C- for narration and a D for content at AudioGals.

My Wicked Marquess is the first book in Gaelen Foley's *Inferno Club* series, and having enjoyed reading some of the later books, I was pleased to see this appear in audio format. Annette Chown is a new-to-me narrator (and from reading an interview with her posted on Ms Foley's website, it seems she's fairly new to the world of audiobook narration, too), but I like to give new narrators a chance – everyone has to start somewhere, after all!

Unfortunately, however, **My Wicked Marquess** is a bit of a mess. The pacing is very uneven, the heroine is annoying to the point of being TSTL and there is a lot of info-dumping going on, whether as back-story or setting up future books; and Ms Chown's narration, while decent, isn't sufficiently engaging as to be able to carry the listener through those portions of the story that are, shall we say, less than interesting.

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

♥?elody says

I really REALLY want to give this five stars because it was a really enjoyable fun read and well written. Loved the set up and loved the Inferno Club members. The love story in this was really sweet and nicely done, had a lot of passion which I wasn't expecting and is why I loved it all the more. I just had some problems with the heroine in this.

This is the first book in the Inferno Club series. The Marquess of Rotherstone, Max is a leading member of the Inferno Club. He's decided it's time to settle down and get married in order to restore his family's good name. On his hunt for a wife he discovers Daphne Starling, the social butterfly who in Society's eyes has a open forgiving heart and befriends newcomers who are new to Society.

I loved Max. Really loved him! His charm and rakish looks, and sense of humor with a sweet tender heart that nobody knows about was really enthralling. He was just delicious all over. He has a tough cold-wall exterior but inside he fears he will never be loved and is very lonely and just wants someone to love him. You can see how much he struggled to keep his dual identities separate and just wanted somebody to truly love him. So I was rooting for him from the very beginning. Daphne on the other hand was up and down for me. I really liked her in the beginning. Yes she was a sweet girl with a big heart who was dedicated to

helping out an orphanage (it's always the heroines who help out orphanages who are the most holier-than-thou for some reason--why is that?) and friendly to new people but it went downhill for me with how she handled and reacted to Max's steadfast pursuing of her. She morphed into a psycho-bitch from hell after that. I understood her reservations to not wanting to get married unless it was for love. Who doesn't want that? But her persistence in pushing him away, accusing him of wanting to 'control her' and running off to get away from him because she was angry got to be real tiring and a little immature. Plus, plot-wise it dragged the story out and made things go along incredibly slow. I'm not a big fan of plots where the hero has to chase and beg and scheme his way to win the lady's hand in marriage. When the woman is at that point of sneering and yelling in the man's face to get away from her it just makes me cringe. Naturally Max could have handled the whole marriage proposal a lot better but I still understood where he was coming from and it broke my heart how desperate he was to make her happy.

So of course they FINALLY talk it out (after a ridiculous mess of miscommunication and misunderstanding) and get married. I can't say I hated Daphne considering how much she loved Max and just wanted his love in return but those control and trust issues of hers kept flaring up. She kept second guessing Max's real intentions and worrying about giving up her 'control' to him when there was none of that. Max never once tried to control her and was an incredibly attentive adoring husband. I mean where can I get a husband like that? And this is the thing that I had trouble understanding. Yes given the time frame and the society at the time, woman didn't have as much freedom to do whatever they wanted. I totally get that and understand the heroine's fear of not having a choice. Daphne wanted control of her future but her constant fear and accusation of Max and her father wanting to control her I did not understand because it was non-existent. Her father pretty much let her do whatever she wanted and was very lenient on her, her stepmother pretty much ignored her except for her meddling moments. So I felt it was more of an excuse to point against Max when she started to notice he was hiding something from her.

My main problem and the moment that made me cringe was her reaction to finding out Max was keeping a secret. Good Lord. She really knows how to play the victim card. I really felt she was selfish with the way she kept going on and on about being betrayed, how deceitful her husband was, how wronged she was and how she was going to teach HIM a lesson. She never once thought the reasons why Max didn't tell her or thought of confronting him (only for a second but justified not doing it because once again he would 'control her', oh brother give it a damn rest lady!). Trust in a marriage is very important but she acted like he killed her best friend. She goes into a complete rage and runs off once AGAIN instead of a confronting him like any normal person would do. I thought it was melodramatic and just taking it too far. For someone who supposedly had a very forgiving big sympathetic heart, I didn't see any of those shining qualities come out. I thought she was really hard on Max and loved to set rules and ultimatums. Her attitude and how she handled it turned me off completely. Plus another thing that bothered me was the whole time after she found out the truth she was smug and excited about seeing his face to prove she won one over him. Whaaat? I mean really?? She seemed to enjoy getting back at him and not even once did she show signs of guilt or actual heartbreak over finding out her husband lied to her, it seemed more of a contest to her. I found it irritating and unsettling. It just left a bad taste in my mouth how she acted about the whole thing.

Aside from that I would have given this a 5 star. Gaelen Foley really knows how to write a yummy HR with some adventure thrown into the mix. I forgot how steamy her love scenes are. Wooh! Talk about passionate and intense. The romance side of this was 5 stars but for characters I give it a 4.

Zoe says

Classic case of ok writing but no story to tell.

I didn't mind the writing at all. Foley has her way with words. I have read writers whose eloquence really amazes me. Foley isn't one of them but she is definitely not a bad writer.

But this book is a bit thin in the plots for me. Too much spy business with all the spy men (yeah that's what I call them. lol) I had trouble keeping all the male names straight. The good men, the bad men, it is raining men, man!

Then relationship development was hardly original. Max returned from his spy business, decided to get married and set his eyes on Daphne. They met, boom Max must wed Daphne or he would suffer from a fatal problem which is his inflated penis. I think Max wasn't the most high-handed regency hero I have read. He was pretty mild and courteous. I do not mind insta-lust because I think that is how lust works. And I also don't mind if the characters progress quickly as a couple, as long as the story supports that claim. I feel that in this story Max's pursuit came out of nowhere. He can pursue but there have to be other events that legitimize the ardentness. I feel that this is lacking. He was just hot for Daphne every time they met. And I do not know why.

What I really don't get is Daphne. Woman refused to marry Max over and over again. In a way I could relate but it was just irritating when she kept saying that Max wouldn't open his heart and kept pushing for a proclamation of love. Are we in a romance novel or what!? Oh wait, we are. But I thought it a little silly of Daphne to want to hear "I love you" from Max so early on in the book. And if anyone asks me, I think "I love you" is overrated.

I also thought there was too much talking, not enough showing. Max and Daphne talked about things which I thought would be better for the story if those feelings were "shown" in events. Not by the characters saying oh I cannot stop thinking about you. I prefer such feelings to be "demonstrated" than "said". But that's just my thing.

I think it is an ok read. Not bad but also not very memorable. For a fluffy romance it is more than enough. For me it was exactly what Goodreads' 2 stars: it was ok.

Nurhayat Turna says

Bu kadar çok seveceğimi bilseydim sanırım elime aldığım o ilk anda yarım bırakıp köye kaldırmazdım. Başlangıç için durağan olduysa da ilk yüz sayfa sonrasında kitap hareket kazanarak soluksuz ilerlemeye başlardı. Bol aksiyonlu, eksik olmayan gizemi, bitmeyen sergileriyle merak unsuru hep arttı.

Kitap Waterloo Savaşı'ndan sonrasında anlatıyor. Yıl 1815. Tarihi aşk romanlarında genele sıkça rastlanan soylu beyfendilerin bir kulübe üyesi bu kitapta da var. Cehennem Kulübü'den bir gözle ahlaksızlar kulübü olarak görülüp bilinse de durum tam olarak öyle değil. Yaptıkları aslında gizlemek adına dahil oldukları paravan bir kulüp... Ve bu kulübün üyelerinin bir özelliği de, babadan oğula geçen üyesi olması. Cehennem Kulübü üyesi Rotherstone Markisi Max'de küçük yaşta kulübe verilmesinden dolayı babasını affedemiyor, sanıyor ki babası onu kumar borcu için kulübe sattı. Max savaş bitimi, yirmi yıl önce hizmetinden sonra evlenmeye karar veriyor. Amacı aile kurup adını devam ettirmek. Bunun için avukatından kendisine gelin adayları'nı aldığı bir liste hazırlamasını ister. Kulağına oldukça heyecan verici geldi, öyle değil mi?

Daphne Starling üvey annesinin evlenmesi için planlar kuran genç ve güzel leydimiz. Çocuk yaşta kaybettiği

annesinin ardından kendi kararları kendi alm?? bir kadın, hal böyle olunca üçüncü kişilerin evlenmesi için olaya dahil olmaları hazmedemiyor. Yardım sever, altın kalpli olması yan sıra babasının maddi durumunun kötü olması onu yapmayı istediklerinden alı koyuyor.

Markinin onu izlediği bir gün, Daphne'nin çocukları ziyaret ettiği yetimhanenin olduğu, Londra'nın en tekinsiz sokaklarında ikili kavgaları. Max zor durumdaki Daphne'yi kurtarmak için sarhoş taklidi yaparak tehlikeyi üzerine çeker. Yaşadıkları bu olaydan sonra güzelliği ve ??lt'sına kapıldı?? Daphne aklından çökmaz ve onunla evlenmeye karar verir. Max gizli sırları, devlete olan görevini Daphne'den saklarken kaybettiği arkadaşları hiç beklemediği bir anda görür. Sonrasıysa dillere düvecek bir macera...

Kurgu olarak beğendiğim bir kitap oldu ?eytan Diyor Ki. Her bir karakteri sevdim. Max bağı döndürücü bir adamdı ama Warrington Dükü Rohan Kilburn aklımı çelip kalbimi çalmayı bağırdı ama yine de kayıp üye Driven Westwood, yani Drake en merak ettiğim karakter oldu. Onun hikâyesini daha bir merak ediyorum ve en çok onu okumayı istiyordum. Umarım en yakın zamanda da okumak kışmet olur.

Dolu dolu bir kitap okudum. Akın bol olduğu, entrikanın eksilmediği, bitmeyen savaşı, cesur casusluk hikayesiyle harmanlanmış eşsiz bir serüven, kesinlikle tavsiye ederim.

Inferno Club / Cehennem Kulübü

1. My Wicked Marquess (2009) / ?eytan Diyor ki
2. My Dangerous Duke (2010) / Davetsiz Misafir
3. My Irresistible Earl (2011) / Küllerinden Doğan
4. My Ruthless Prince (2011)
5. My Scandalous Viscount (2012)
6. My Notorious Gentleman (2013)

<http://sonsayfasiask.blogspot.com.tr/...>

Laura the Highland Hussy says

This is the absolute hardest book I've ever had to rate, because I really loved our hero, Max, I liked the plot, but I hated our heroine Daphne.

I went from wanting to like her, to trying to like her, to not liking her, to downright hating her at one point. She doesn't really do anything wrong, per say. When we first meet Daphne, she is helping out orphans. Our hero Max is in a secret society that battles evil. He is in the Order of St. Michael, they are the Council of Prometheus. he is basically James Bond meets Knights Templar but in the 1800s. The back story was good- Max has finished his duty, they saved Wellington, defeated Bonaparte, and he wants to find a wife. His solicitor sends him a list of 5 suitable girls, Max sets his cap on Daphne, and let the games begin. He spots her helping orphans, sees her at a ball, falls for her.

Now onto my issue. Daphne is an idiot. She is supposed to be a saintly, good-hearted girl who loves to help everyone. She comes off as an unintelligent heiress who does charity work on the side. When it is 1815, your stepmother wants you out of the house, your father indulges you, your stepsisters are ill-bred brats, and you've jilted 3 suitors, AND a marquess who you are attracted to who your father likes, and says you'll marry...you marry him!!!! WTF Daphne? She kept saying that Max had this control-freak personality (he didn't) and that he wanted to control her (he didn't). She had control issues that were never explained more than just after her mother died, she felt her life was out of her control-she was 10!!!! Whose life is in their control at age 10? Really, that was stupid. And she kept telling Max she wouldn't marry him, or she couldn't, etc. And it was like 2/3 of the book were dedicated to her wanting Max but not agreeing to marry him. In fact she only agreed to marry him after he finally quit chasing her and said he was done. Then she made him

grovel for not being "open and honest enough" for her taste.

It got old.

They got married, and she kept seeing him as holding back, while we keep seeing him as opening up more and more. She one night catches him at spy business, writes LIAR on the mirror in rouge and takes off...again.

He then catches a Promethean and has to apprehend him in front of Daphne. So she gets dragged in. I almost began to like her once she started thinking clearly, but then she became selfish again. there was never an acknowledgement of Daphne realizing that the world does not in fact revolve around her, and that Max kept her out of his spy business because the last time a wife was let in on the biz, she was tortured to death. It was for her own protection, and she never got that. He couldn't tell her these things. I feel he could have told her some of it, or at least it could have been handled better, rather than it's your secret spy gig or me.

I almost couldn't finish the book. I gave it a 3 star, because the story itself and our hero were great, but really it was more of a 2.5 star rating.

So, Max, I loved, the story was actually really good, and the stories it set up definitely sound great. but then again this book sounded great too, soo...I'm not sure if I'll read on. I feel like I have to continue on since the last few pages are the heroine of the next book being kidnapped.

But 2.5 stars is the best I can manage.

? Irena ? says

2.5

While *My Wicked Marquess* has all the expected traits of a historical romance featuring a rogue and an almost perfect woman, this one has a couple of things added into the mix. They may make or break the reading experience for a reader. Personally, I found the origins and the mission of the Inferno Club interesting enough to continue with the series. Yes, there is that pesky requirement of suspending your disbelief, but everyone knows that.

I liked Rotherston. Now, he may annoy a particular group of readers who tend to forget what they are reading, but I liked him. He doesn't really know how to behave properly.

Next, his background story is sad and infuriating. After reading about it, I am still not sure how his side is the good one, but never mind that for now. His friends are an interesting lot too. One can see where the rest of the series is going and I don't mind that direction.

There is another, a bit darker story that will get its resolution in one of the future books (the fourth book in the series). I can't wait for that one.

I hated Daphne. She starts interestingly enough. She goes against the flow, she visits an orphanage in a dangerous part of the town, she doesn't feel the need to accept just about any creep who proposes and so on. Promising start, right? I wish.

Think of the most annoying thing a character could do when in danger or close to it anyway, and I bet you won't get even close to Daphne's behaviour. I won't get into any particular situation since it could be a spoiler. The thing is, for the rest of the book you only need your suspension of disbelief as far as the Inferno Club goes, and a bit of understanding when it comes to Rotherstone. In her case, I don't think anything could help. Or, I just couldn't get into her character.

Overall, I liked the rest of it enough to continue with the series. I just hope there won't be any more Daphnes.

Kate says

This book was being given away by my local library, and I picked it up despite the godawful cover because, as a mortal human female, I am constitutionally incapable of passing by any novel with "Marquess," "Duke," or "Earl" in the title. Besides, I thought, how bad can it be?

Mmm. Yes. About that. *My Wicked Marquess* REALLY IS THAT BAD. To take one of many demonstrative instances from the opening pages: our heroine Daphne, we are informed, takes a special interest in the plight of orphans, because she is one herself. Except that she lives with her father, who appears to be quite alive. Two options, clearly: 1. The author didn't bother to check the definition of "orphan"; 2. Daphne, unable to cope with the death of her parent, keeps his corpse in the house and interacts with it as if it is alive.

Sadly, it is not option number 2.

I sometimes feel that it's unfair to pick on bad romance novels, but then I remember that there are brilliant authors working in the field who deserve better than to have their reputations yoked with the likes of Gaelen Foley, and any compunction leaves me. Gaelen! Do better!

Ezinwanyi says

I was excited about this one because I could tell from the start the main characters weren't the run of the mill characters. The hero and heroine were two socially conscious rebels in a time when the ton is preoccupied with material things and outward appearances. In fact, they seemed to be too perfect and selfless, but I knew Max and Daphne's flaws would soon show.

Max St. Alban, the Marquess of Rotherstone, had returned to the ton after years as an agent for a governmental agency that doesn't exist on paper. He needed to marry a woman with reputation above reproach to be his bride. He intended to rebuild his family's reputation as well their coffers. Max's list of possible brides included the slightly odd maiden Daphne Starling. What elevated Daphne to the top of his list was the fact that she turned down the proposal from Max's rival. Further investigation into Daphne showed a humanitarian who is devoted to helping the orphans in the London area. That, among other factors gained through investigation leads Max to decide she is the one. The problem now is how to convince Daphne to accept his hand when she has no intention of ever marrying. Plus, when Max's past life intrudes on the new life he has built for himself, how can he explain the lies and secrets he must perpetuate? Can Daphne accept who he was and is?

I looked forward to how Max was going to win Daphne's heart and I was waiting for when Daphne would truly see Max and appreciate the man he is. They had a lot of miscommunication and Daphne just couldn't see Max for more than the Demon Marquess so it made things drag a bit. The writing was okay, I wanted Daphne to be less wishy-washy and Max to be more upfront. It's my first book by this author, so I don't feel like I have gotten a good feel for her writing style. The narrator did a good job, but I still felt quite unresolved. Overall, this one was okay for a series beginner, I look forward to the next installment in the series.

***I was provided this audiobook at no charge by the author, publisher and/or narrator in exchange for an unbiased review via AudiobookBlast.com.*

Juliana Philippa says

Has the right ingredients, but unfortunately falls a little short (3.5 stars)

Setting: London and Worcestershire, England, 1815

My Wicked Marquess is the first book in Gaelen Foley's new series "The Inferno Club." Foley is generally a hit or miss author with me - I absolutely loved *Lord of Fire* and *Lord of Ice*, Books 2 and 3 from her Knight Miscellany Series, however I had a lot of problems with *The Duke* (the first Knight book) and *Prince Charming* (the last in her Ascension Trilogy) - they are two of the few HR books that I have actively disliked.

After reading this book's excerpt on Foley's website a few weeks ago I was excited and looking forward to its release ... and I'm sad to say I was somewhat disappointed. It's odd, because the book is by no means bad and it seems to have all the right ingredients - wonderful leading characters with great chemistry, an interesting mystery/action subplot (which doesn't conclude here, but will continue in the other books of the series), and compelling supporting characters who promise to be wonderful future heroes and heroines. However, the book falls short in several areas and I feel like if a few things had been different, it could have been fantastic.

SUMMARY

(I know, I know - this section is so long I've practically rewritten the book - sorry, bear with me!)

Max St. Albans, Marquess of Rotherstone, is finally back in England following Napoleon's defeat, ready to become a civilian again after having given 20 years of his life to the Order of St. Michael, a highly secretive group that has been engaged in a fight of good vs. evil (evil being the Prometheans) for hundreds of years. His next "mission" is to find a suitable wife, settle down, and produce children, and he approaches this endeavor as he does all others: with careful preparation and reconnaissance work (is all quite amusing). Armed with a list of the five top candidates who fulfill his criteria, he is ready to pick a wife and get started. ... However, he finds himself intrigued and attracted to the one woman included on the list who, due to unfortunate recent happenings, may no longer be "in the running" - since one of the requirements is a "stainless reputation."

Miss Daphne Starling is daughter to a Viscount and the darling of the ton (seriously, no pun intended with the rhyming - and what was up with the name Starling anyway? Made me always think "Silence of the Lambs" - not exactly mood material). She is known as the "patron saint of newcomers," due to her tendency to befriend those in Society who feel out of place, are newly arrived, don't know anyone, etc. When we meet her, Daphne has recently rejected an offer of marriage from Mr. Albert Carew (a sorry excuse for a human being), who, in an effort to get revenge and salvage his pride, has been going around spewing his mouth off to anyone who will listen to his claims that Daphne is actually haughty and a cold-hearted jilt, as opposed to the sweetheart everyone thinks. This has unfortunately started a small scandal and is proving to be an increasing threat to her reputation.

However, Daphne is determined to continue on and ignore the unpleasantness, not knowing that a regular weekly visit to the orphanage she supports will change her life - and introduce her to the most interesting and compelling man she has ever met ... though the fact that he stumbles drunk out of a brothel does not leave much to recommend him - even if it is at an opportune moment when she is about to be attacked by one of the local street gangs. But Daphne has a sneaking suspicion that it might have all been a ruse in order to distract attention and save her, but then who is this handsome enigma who is such a good actor and can go

from sloppy drunk to lethal fighter in the blink of an eye - and why would he go out of his way for her?

Daphne is relieved to see the man unharmed at a ball two evenings later (which Max attends on purpose, of course, knowing she will be there thanks to his detailed file on her) and delighted to finally speak to the man who has now saved her not once, but twice (the second being a nice little maneuver on his part at the ball to manipulate Albert and then warn him off). Max is equally intrigued by the vivacious and friendly young woman and determined to gain her as his wife - though in usual Max-fashion, he goes about it somewhat high-handedly (and that's putting it lightly). And so starts the relationship - and the pursuit! After having a small - though admittedly highly charged - encounter and chat at the ball, Max basically disappears from polite society and Daphne is convinced that he has forgotten about her, only to be presented two weeks later with a marriage between them as a *fait accompli*. (His marriage "proposal" - if one can even call it that - had me laughing out loud and cringing at the same time, bringing up memories of Darcy's painful first proposal to Elizabeth - what IS it with these guys?!) Daphne is understandably confused and angry; she feels manipulated by both her father and Max, who have taken away any control she might have in the matter and not even deigned to ask her what SHE wants.

Max begins an aggressive campaign to woo Daphne and make her forget her qualms (and yes, calculating man that he is, his methods leave something to be desired). Daphne finds herself torn between her obvious attraction, unwilling fascination, and increasing affection for this remote and complex man and the fear that he means only to control her, add her to his collection of beautiful things and then basically forget her, never really letting her into his life or his heart. Of course, things don't improve when she finds out that well-meaning her father is having money problems and basically sold her to Max, that Max is secretive and intends to remain so, and that he thinks dangling his money and title in front of her will be enough to lure her into marriage. ... All of this takes place in the first 250 pages of the book and essentially makes up the core of the story (with the action subplot going on at the same time - see below for more details). Daphne and Max's marriage and further development of the Promethean-Order battle (which goes hand-in-hand with the set-up for the next book) take up the remaining ~120 pages. (The development/pacing of Max and Daphne's relationship was the main problem, see "CRITICISM" below).

SPY/MYSTERY/ACTION SUBPLOT

Occurring simultaneously with the romance relationship is the Promethean-Order subplot and I thought it was one of the better and more interest aspects of the book. The series is called "The Inferno Club" because that's the name the Order uses to disguise itself from the world, appearing to be just a harmless rakehell/devil-may-care pleasure club. Despite Napoleon's defeat and the hiccup this causes in their plans, the Prometheans are ready to do what is necessary to achieve their goal once and for all - some type of benevolent (said ironically by Order members) world domination, which is all overly-dramatic, but whatever, use your imagination. Even as the evil-doers continue to seek power they have to contend with warring factions within the organization due to the recent setbacks. One faction's advantage is that it has captured and kept alive a member of the Order - Drake - whom everyone in England assumes to be dead. He has been held and tortured for many months and they now hope to sway him into revealing the Order's secrets.

Foley does a great job with Drake's character - he is extremely psychologically damaged after being extensively tortured and has withdrawn into himself, forgetting his past and who he is (and then starting to suffer a little Stockholm syndrome). All of this leaves the reader unsure of what he will do in the future books - will he succumb to the Prometheans and join their ranks, or will he remember who he is and what he fought for and help his "brothers" from the Order take them down? Personally, I hope he gets his own romance (would make SUCH a great hero!!) - and of course comes down on the side of "good." I think that Foley has added a nice and unusual touch by not resolving the Promethean-Order battle in this book and instead having it continue throughout the series. This will allow the subplot to unfold more slowly and build up to a big (and hopefully satisfying) finale.

MAIN CHARACTERS, Daphne and Max

Daphne (21) is a wonderful heroine and extremely easy to like; she's friendly, generous, amusing, and intelligent. She's beautiful and although she lost her mother at a young age (10) and has had to contend with her kind-of-but-not-really evil stepmother since, she has led a pretty charmed life - however, she was *not* written at all annoyingly, as is sometimes the case with heroines who are the "belle of the ball" type and come off as somewhat haughty, self-involved, and basically not very endearing. It was easy to see why Max was so drawn to her and considering his character and what he is seeking, she really is the perfect partner for him (see next paragraph).

Max (33) is one of those "tortured heroes" the HR genre (understandably) loves so much - he feels resentment towards his family for basically selling him off into psychologically and physically brutal training at such a young age, even though he knows that it is his family's legacy and that his male ancestors have been involved with the Order since its inception. He feels somewhat lost and basically has no ties or relationships outside of those he he's formed with his "brothers" from the Order; he is "painfully lonely" and what he really yearns for is to belong and feel loved. However, Max fears that what the Order has made him into has also made it impossible for someone to love him, due to all that he's done and seen, all that he's had to be and pretend to be. This is one of the main reasons he finds himself so attracted to Daphne - she is loving and generous to everyone and he thinks/hopes that if anyone could love him, it could be her - this woman who is so giving and has such a big heart. With himself, Max is upfront almost from the beginning about this and that was a nice change; although he is resistant for a long time to speak of his emotions to Daphne, with himself (and therefore the reader) he is very open about his desire to belong and feel needed, loved, and admired by someone.

CRITICISM

Although the book had the ingredients for a strong and engaging read that could have really sparkled, it fell short (IMHO) for several reasons, the main and most important one being that completely uneven progression of the book, and more specifically Max and Daphne's relationship. It's a complete stop-and-go production that leaves the reader feeling confused and unfulfilled:

1) They barely know each other when the courtship goes into full-swing - or rather, Daphne barely knows Max, since apparently he has a whole file on her and has gotten to know her that way. I will say though that it was luckily *not* one of those lust-at-first-sight relationships, which I always hate (though there is definite chemistry which they are both aware of - scene at his house in the portrait gallery ... whew, get out a fan, honey, and be prepared ;-).

2) I love the possessive alpha-male as much as the next girl, but Foley makes a significant mistake. Although WE know he is at times high-handed and manipulative only because he is afraid of losing (or rather not winning) Daphne, whom he sees as his salvation and a beacon of light when he's lived in the darkness, the fact is she DOESN'T know this. He acts this way for so long with her that when the scene in the hayloft occurs and he finally reveals his feelings to her, confessing his need to be loved and etc., I felt like it came out of *nowhere*! Page-wise it was well-placed, but not at all relationship-wise: there was no easing into it, no progression as he slowly reveals this side of himself. Instead, it's like wham-bam and next thing you know, they go from Daphne running away in the middle of the night to escape him to them being all lovey-dovey and getting married. All of this makes their closeness seem inauthentic and hard for the reader to truly believe.

3) The ending - ugh, the ending was completely unsatisfactory! Throughout the book there's tension surrounding Max's secret association with the Order and his inability to tell Daphne about that side of his life. Suddenly, we're practically at the end of the book, circumstances are such that he reveals all to her, she's happy that he told her and admiring of what he's done, he vows to end the whole battle soon and she promises to support him, they have great make-up sex there at headquarters ... and then suddenly it's the epilogue, everyone's at a ball, and we get a hint of where the story is going from here with Book 2 - THE

END. It was *so* abrupt and there was NO chance to savor the HEA!!

BOTTOM LINE

I'm not sorry I read the book, just sorry that I bought my own copy - get it from the library and look forward to the second Inferno Club book, *My Dangerous Duke* (release date unknown), since I think that the series definitely has potential. We're set up for Book 2 with the end of this one and I'm hoping that the story featuring Rohan Kilburn, Duke of Warrington will be as good as *My Wicked Marquess* promised - but failed (SUCH a harsh word, I know!) - to be. I'm also looking forward to Jordan's story and though I had hoped Carissa (Daphne's friend) was Rohan's heroine, maybe she'll be Jordan's ... or get her own?

Jacob Proffitt says

Way too much . . . stuff is tacked onto this story for me to go on. I kind of like Daphne, though Foley lards on enough drama sauce for any ten story pies. I mean orphans? *And* a wicked stepmother? *And* done wrong by a man? *And* family newly in financial distress? It's like a party with a live band, jello wrestling, acrobats, *and* a dancing bear. Save some of that for the next story! Gads.

And she does the same thing to Max, only he doesn't have any charm or kindness or caring to draw me in. He's just a super-secret agent man who has been trained (*trained I tell you!*) in the wilds of Scotland to brood! And glower! And make people awkward at parties!

Someone take Foley's ladle away, she obviously has no portion control.

Frankly, the whole secret war thing was tedious from the first time it came up. And I kind of hated every time it was mentioned. *And then we get a half-dozen pages from the PoV of one of their councils.* Which included a murder and casual discussion of torture. Srsly?!?

Oh, and did I mention that both the good guys and bad guys are populated by titled noblemen (mostly British)? Earl was the lowest title mentioned! Max's team is a marquess leading an earl and a duke in covert operations that are both secret and deadly. Good thing they trained from their youth in Scotland (because lots of nobles sign their heirs up for brutal training to participate in a shadow war across Europe).

Also, they invented the clandestine cell system a good century early. So they are very, *very* smart and talented. Obviously.

Anyway, this is all breathless drama with little relatable content. I suppose if you want over-the-top broody angst, this might appeal. Personally, I was starting to laugh. But not in a good way...

?Karlyn P? says

Started out great, and initially I really liked Max and Daphne. They had great chemistry in the beginning. But then the story itself didn't really go anywhere - it was mostly laying out the good vs. evil background story that will follow into other books. It was interesting, but still not much happens. And then Daphne started to become annoying, but not TSTL (thankfully!). And it had a long, drawn out ending just to set up the next book. In summary: I loved the opening, started to get bored about halfway, and struggled to finish the last 50 or so pages.

This book is clearly the start of a series as there are lots of unresolved loose ends that no doubt will get wrapped up in future books. I will likely continue with at least one more book in this series, but I don't expect this series to be as good as the Knight series. But maybe the next book will prove me wrong.

Corrine says

There were some spots I loved and some spots I disliked, and too many spots that were just mediocre in this uneven beginning to this series.

Max, Lord Rotherstone, has just returned from his successful mission during Waterloo, and he is dead-set on doing his duty by his title and making his family name more respectable. To do this, he asks his lawyer to draw up a list of potential brides who are beyond reproach. The fifth name on the list, Daphne Starling, intrigues him because she has just rejected a proposal from Max's boyhood nemesis, and so Max begins his investigation. What he finds is that Daphne is kind, generous, and stunningly beautiful, and his search for a bride goes no further.

Daphne is bemused when the Demon Marquess flirts with her and steps in several times to protect her. She finds him attractive and mysterious, but his reputation precedes him. He's a member of the infamous Inferno Club, he traveled the whole world during war for nothing more than a whim, and she herself saw him leaving a brothel. Nonetheless, she can't stay away, and though she is furious when she finds out that her father has accepted Max's proposal on her behalf after only a few meetings, she can't say no to his charm. Until she begins to realize that there is something that Max is keeping from her and she can never really know him or trust him until he opens himself to her.

Daphne skirts the edge of begin TSTL: visiting bad parts of London to help orphans, running away from home, visiting an infamous man's house without a chaperone, but I couldn't really dislike her. She jumps to conclusions like it's a pasttime and is very naive and managing. It's clear, though, that all she really wants is Max's whole heart, and when he won't give it to her, she goes to great lengths to dissuade him from his goal.

I didn't even dislike Max. He was a good hero, if a little too autocratic at times and definitely deceitful, but he was trained to be that way from a very young age. He held a lot of bitterness and hurt, and wanted more than anything for Daphne to love him.

The main problem I had with this story was it seemed very choppy, and like too many stories blended into one. It had the do-gooding protector of orphans like London's Perfect Scoundrel by Suzanne Enoch, the rakish-but-hurt and somewhat overly-dramatic hero like Lord of Scoundrels by Loretta Chase, and a spy storyline very like the **Liars' Club** series by Celeste Bradley. Had I not read any of these books previously, I'm sure I would have enjoyed this one much better. In fact, had I never read a Gaelen Foley novel before, I probably would have enjoyed this one better as well, because compared to the **Knights Miscellany** series, this one falls far short. Although I will probably read the rest of the series. :D C+

Bü?ra Öztürk says

San?r?m ilk defa bir Tarihi A?k roman?nda erkek karakterden çok kad?n karaktere hayran kald?m.

Daphne sen nas?l bir Kral?n yahu!

Ana kurgu a??r? sa?lam, romantizm dozunda, karakterler muazzam.

Özellikle kad?n karakterin hikayenin ba??ndan sonuna kadar geli?imi beni mest etti bee!

Kendi dü?üncelerini sonuna kadar kabul ettirebilen, gerekti?inde hayat? için çirkeflik yap?p kurguya yön veren bir karakterimiz var ve erkek karakterimizin bütün hatalar?n? yüzüne yüzüne vurup adam? yontmas? kitap boyunca okumas? en zevkli ?eylerden biriydi.

Al??m???m erkek görünce uslu han?mefendi tribine giren Tarihi a?k k?zlar?na, Daphne'yi okuyunca ?a??rd?m, sevdim, bir miktarda hayran kald?m.

Hellllaaalll olsun be

Desi says

leído en Dic 2010

Me encantó este libro.... y los personajes principales!!
