



Murder at Marble House

Alyssa Maxwell

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With the dawn of the twentieth century on the horizon, the fortunes of the venerable Vanderbilt family still shine brightly in the glittering high society of Newport, Rhode Island. But when a potential scandal strikes, the Vanderbilts turn to cousin and society page reporter Emma Cross to solve a murder and a disappearance. . . Responding to a frantic call on her newfangled telephone from her eighteen-year-old cousin, Consuelo Vanderbilt, Emma Cross arrives at the Marble House mansion and learns the cause of her distress-- Consuelo's mother, Alva, is forcing her into marriage with the Duke of Marlborough. Her mother has even called in a fortune teller to assure Consuelo of a happy future.

But the future is short-lived for the fortune teller, who is found dead by her crystal ball, strangled with a silk scarf. Standing above her is one of the Vanderbilts' maids, who is promptly taken into police custody. After the frenzy has died down, Consuelo is nowhere to be found. At Alva's request, Emma must employ her sleuthing skills to determine if the vanishing Vanderbilt has eloped with the beau of her choice--or if her disappearance may be directly connected to the murder. . .

Murder at Marble House Details

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From Reader Review Murder at Marble House for online ebook

Marley says

I love the idea of a mystery that featured Consuelo and Alva Vanderbilt, but this book didn't do it for me. Actually, I like to see them as the detectives. What a team. The plot was good enough, but it just went too slow and dry. I'm willing to try another Golden Newport Mystery, though.

QNPoohBear says

Only a few days after Emma Cross solves the mystery of the murder at The Breakers, she receives a mysterious phone call from her cousin Consuelo Vanderbilt. Consuelo is distressed and needs someone to talk to. Upon arriving at Marble House, Emma is confronted by Consuelo's mother Alva who insists Emma persuade Consuelo to marry the Duke of Marlborough... or ELSE is the implication. Cowed, Emma tries to reconcile her cousin to the idea of marrying the Duke. This only succeeds in alienating her eighteen-year-old cousin. Consuelo wants to be free to marry the man of her own choosing, a much older "old money" friend, Winthrop "Winty" Rutherford. Alva has even hired a fortune teller to tell Consuelo's fortune the way Alva wants it ... or ELSE is the implication... When the fortune teller ends up dead with Alva's new maid Clara standing behind with the murder weapon, Emma is distressed. She was the one who helped Clara find the job and is certain the girl didn't do it. When Consuelo goes missing, Alva begs Emma to find the girl and be discreet about it or else the Vanderbilts' reputation will be tarnished. Emma plunges head long into an investigation which brings her into close contact with Derrick Anderson once again. She can hardly deny her feelings for him, but she's determined to be her own woman.

This is another excellent book set in Gilded Age Newport, Rhode Island. The mystery has so many suspects with plausible motives yet they have alibis so I was unable to figure out who the murderer was. I did figure out they were lying about something but I didn't guess the extent of their perfidy. I was really surprised. I was also surprised at Consuelo's plot. I didn't really like how the author tweaked history a bit. It makes the story improbable, but I liked it anyway.

The setting is amazing. It's very different from the tourist Newport I know. I especially like that the author takes us to different parts of the island where tourists don't usually go. Since I visited Marble House over the summer, I loved the descriptions of the house, which is slightly different from the way the museum is decorated today. I have a love/hate relationship with Alva. I admire her dedication to women's rights but she scares me. I was looking forward to seeing Emma go toe-to-toe with Alva and I was not disappointed. Emma is the only one strong enough to stand up to Alva. I love that about her. I also love that Emma is determined to be an independent spinster. I admire her very much and like to think I would be like her if I lived in 1895. There's just enough romance to satisfy my inner romantic. Derrick is a bit cocky and I am not sure I like him but I think he is a good match for Emma and they could work things out. Consuelo is a sympathetic character. I felt bad for her but at the same time, I felt she was just so naive and sheltered, she wasn't able to make her own decisions. I just read her memoir *All That Glitters* so I'm aware of her story. I think readers will empathize with her and feel for her.

I'm super excited to read the next entry in the series *Murder at Beechwood* because Beechwood was my all-time favorite mansion. I loved their living history tours and I went there often before it was sold. I'll be extra picky about the accuracy but so far, the author seems excel at research.

Kim says

My review of the first three books in the *Gilded Newport Mystery* series is here: <http://wp.me/p18IIL-2BS>

Julie Barrett says

Murder at Marble House by Alyssa Maxwell

Have read other works by the author and this series and enjoyed learning about a city nearby, all facts from long ago.

This one has me captivated as I know of other places around the area that have the built in steps from the harbor but not the one mentioned.

Rum runners on Rose Island brought a smile to my face as other relatives tell me their stories of the nearby town they lived in and it was going on in their lifetimes.

Hope to get to visit these summer cottages one day-yes it's on my do me list

Story starts out when Emma's cousin is to wed someone she doesn't want to wed and runs away after a murder is committed. Like interactions with others she dated and the newspaper reporters and police.

So many of the same streets still exist and I can just picture some of the structures in their original form.

Other mysteries arise that also need solving and Emma is right there to ask questions.

Between the smuggling, extortion and the mystery around the petal of a flower there is much to keep the story moving along.

More murders and lessons for self defense are learned. Can't imagine a wooden staircase leading down to the waters edge at Forty Steps.

Love a book that teaches me new things, new places to explore in my back yard. Love mention of the Paradise Avenue area into the plot of things. Murder at Beechwood will be out in May 2015.

I received this book from The Kennsington Books in exchange for my honest review

Natalie says

I love reading books set in Newport RI because it is a place I know well and often visit so was very easy for me to imagine the setting.

It is also very obvious that the author loves Newport. That really came through in her writing.

The mystery wasn't the best I've ever read but it was pretty entertaining with plenty of red herrings. I'm still not wild about the romance though.

Overall pretty good, especially if you like Newport as much as I do!

Ronda says

I enjoyed this venture into the world of the 1890s elite, with all the rules, stricture, and etiquette. While I still can't speak to the accuracy of voice and action, this installment felt more in tune with the times than did the first. I particularly enjoy learning more about Aunt Sadie, and how she had found her ways around the

"gilded cage"--and how her bequest has allowed Emmaline to start finding her way. I hope that successive installments include the historical notes at the end.

Judith says

Another page turner

Just love the mystery and intrigue of this series and the setting in Newport. I've been to Marble House and the Tea Garden so it's nice to be familiar with the locations

Cheryl says

I really enjoyed reading this book. I traveled with my husband to England this past spring and we visited Blenheim Palace. The tour guide told us that Consuela Vanderbilt married the Duke and lived there, and had a hand in decorating the beautiful palace. Of course we knew who the Vanderbilts were and were pleased to learn that many Americans helped preserve beautiful homes in England. It was a surprise then when I looked for book two in this series, having already read the first one, to see that it was about Consuela. I enjoyed Emma solving the murder mystery and even more, enjoyed her romantic notions with Derrick, although I'm disappointed in her decision not to marry him (again). I hope to read more romantic entanglements between the two in future books. I was surprised with who the villain was, and I love being surprised.

Linda says

Loving this series. The mix of real life characters and fictional situations based on fact is really fun.

EuroHackie says

In this book, we head for the other main branch the Vanderbilt family - the formidable Alva and her beautiful daughter Consuelo, whose eventual marriage to the impoverished Duke of Marlborough opened the floodgates of American heiresses buying their way into English aristocracy in the early 20th century.

Just as in real life, Consuelo has no desire to marry the Duke, but her mother will brook no argument. Alva even brings in a fortune teller to soothe Consuelo's fears, but it all backfires when the fortune teller is found dead and Consuelo disappears.

Emma has been brought in to help encourage Consuelo into the marriage, and she's present when the fortune teller is killed. Alva implores her to find the missing Consuelo, and Emma can't help but feel like the two events are linked, however unlikely. When another member of the garden party is killed, Emma's fears for her cousin's safety ratchet up threefold.

This books shares the characteristics of the first: wonderful setting, nicely drawn Vanderbilt characters. Emma isn't nearly as stupid as she is in the first book, though she does have her moments (including meddling in her housemaid's romantic liaisons). Derrick Andrews once again conveniently swoops in to

"save" her, and teaches her a few thoroughly modern self-defense techniques that conveniently feature in the climax of the story. There was also a completely unnecessary side-plot about rum smugglers that only dragged the story down. It was too much of a red herring, even with the incredulous denouement of the mystery.

I was angered by Derrick and Emma's relationship in this book. He manhandles her, condescends to her, basically stalks her for the first 1/3 of the book, and then buys her childhood home out from under her. All the while she just totally melts in his arms and feels confused by her desire for him. It's disgusting and manipulative and gross, and I get the feeling I'm supposed to find it all breathtaking and romantic. Um, no. I didn't get a sense of this at all when he appears in Book #5 (Murder at Chateau Sur Mer), so part of the reason I'm continuing with the series is to find out what happened to make him back off.

Kim says

Another murder, another Mansion, and Emmaline Cross is determined to find out who and why. At the same time she tries to support her cousin, Consuelo Vanderbilt who is about to become a victim of a forced marriage.

What appealed to me about this particular book in the series is the honest retelling of the tragedy of Consuelo' Vanderbilt's life. Dictated to by an overbearing, society climbing mother, Alva Vanderbilt tried and successfully controlled her daughter's life in every imaginable way. Unfortunately Consuelo Vanderbilt comes to realize "There are realities that cannot be ignored and rules that cannot be broken, or chaos results."

This is a well written murder mystery that takes time to remind the reader "We are all bound by our circumstances. It's just that some circumstances come with greater possibilities than others."

Laura Carter says

Not good, not bad, just another historical "mystery" with not much suspense. I feel sorry for Jesse, the police guy. It feels like he's been jilted and I wish he had a more prominent place in the story line.

Barbara says

This was an interesting murder mystery taking place in Newport during the gilded age of the Vanderbuilts, Astors, etc.--It is No 2 in the Newport mysteries actually. Emma Cross is our heroine, a poorer relation to the wealthy families. She is intelligent, intuitive, down to earth, andnosey! She sets about trying to solve a murder that took place at Marble House and also find out what happened to her missing cousin, Consuela. It was a great audio book for walking!

Melisa says

DNF. Book slump in full force. Will try this one again later.

Rho says

This is the era I love to read about. We have visited the "cottages" many times and the books in this series are so true to the houses and their residents. This story moved quickly and what makes the series so interesting is the struggle Emma has being so independent.

Laura Bang says

[Derrick starts out the book by following Emma without her knowledge after she told him in no uncertain terms that she did not want to marry him. That's stalking, which is totally not romantic (even though Emma doesn't seem to have a problem with it). Also, there's no chemistry between them and, again, lack of character

Barb says

I can usually put a book down long enough to grab some sleep, but I literally stayed up last night until 3:30 finishing this well-crafted mystery. In the first few pages, I was hooked by the vivid descriptions of buildings and grounds, historical accuracy and the main character's likability.

Emma is a poor relation to the famous Vanderbilts of Newport. Her status means that she is, at once, welcome in the family homes (as long as there are no really important visitors,) yet free to pursue her overwhelming desire to right wrongs and help the downtrodden. Not afraid to face danger as she strives to solve her family's intriguing mystery, she finds herself in some terrifying situations.

As I read, no, devoured this story, I was reminded of "An Old Fashioned Girl" by Louisa Mae Alcott as well as the Irene Adler series by Carole Nelson Douglas. It, too, gives us wonderful insight into the lives of the upper crust in the late nineteenth century.

If you go for historical romance with your cozy mysteries, look no farther.

Sarah Adamson says

I truly loved some parts of this book and really did not like others. A murder mystery set at the end of the 19th century. The star - a female with connections but little money, wanted by two men as their wife but neither are acceptable to her. The murder victim - a clairvoyant.

A nice story with some great twists. Also some incredibly annoying characters who just irritated me and some unnecessary complexities - some of which may be relieved by reading this series in order.

I did enjoy it overall but was irked by some parts of the book so it took away some of the fun factor.

Phair says

I enjoyed this much more than the first book, perhaps because I was more familiar with the cast of

characters. I was surprised to find this one started almost at the moment book 1 ended.. unusual. I would not say the series is outstanding but they are fun cozies and the time period is certainly interesting. Do wish the books included a map and maybe a family tree of the Vanderbilts (color coding the fictitious branches). Appreciated the author note describing the actual history of certain events and explaining her changes to the timeline. Read for f2f mystery book discussion group.

Samantha says

There was more language than I like in my books. Sometimes the characters didn't seem to respond "in character" and it takes time to really get into the flow of the story. But, haha, even with all that it's a decent murder mystery.
