



Heart Mate

Robin D. Owens

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All his life, Rand T' Ash has looked forward to meeting his HeartMate, with whom he could begin a family. Once a street tough, now a respected nobleman and artisan, he has crafted the perfect HeartGift, which, in the custom of the psychically gifted population of the planet Celta, is the way a man finds—and attracts—his wife...

Danith Mallow is irresistibly drawn to the magnificent necklace on display in T' Ash's shop, but she is wary of its creator, despite an overpowering attraction. In a world where everyone is defined by their psychic ability, Danith has little, placing her at the opposite end of the social spectrum from T' Ash. But T' Ash refuses to accept her rejection and sees it as a challenge instead. They are HeartMates, but can T' Ash persuade his beloved to accept her destiny by his side?

Heart Mate Details

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From Reader Review Heart Mate for online ebook

Dana Marton says

This was my first taste of this new series and I'll be definitely coming back for more. T'Ash is a powerful lord on the distant planet of Celta. When divination tells him that he'll meet his heartmate that day, he has a fair idea who the woman might be, and is looking forward to bringing her home that night. Oh, how wrong he is! The most delightful courtship ensues, full of surprises and a comedy of errors at times. He is so not prepared for his lady resisting. A high level of danger adds to the tension of the book. Sensuality level: hot. Discovering this series was a thrill. Wish I could write this well.

Rhapsody says

Excellent paranormal romance, and not formulaic the way almost all the others I've read lately have been. It was a mixture of paranormal, fantasy, and sci-fi. A regency-like society, where those with powerful Flair (magic) are the nobles, lives on a planet named Celtan. T'Ash was nobleborn, then grew up Downwind (in the slums) after his family was murdered. He eventually managed to regain his noble place in society and get his vengeance and now owns a jewel shop, where he uses his particular Flair to work with gemstones. During a divination, he learns that he'll be meeting his HeartMate (relatively standard mate concept) the next day. He discovers she's a middle-class (almost no magic) young woman who has often frequented his shop and purchased some of his cheaper items. Danith rejects him again and again because she doesn't believe a GreatLord like him would be interested in a common, Flairless woman like herself. T'Ash has no idea how to court a woman and makes some fairly amusing mistakes along the way.

This was a very good book, in particular the world/society that the author came up with. The romance was also pretty decent. T'Ash could be aggressive and overbearing and Danith could be stubborn, but they never crossed over into the land of the disrespectful or stupid. My only complaint is that I wasn't all that convinced when Danith finally fell for him. Not to say he wasn't lovable. More like, anyone could have fallen for T'Ash, and anyone could've fallen for Danith, but beyond that, I didn't necessarily see why the two of them were so "meant to be."

This reminded me of Anne Bishop and maybe Dara Joy a bit (but way better than anything I've read by Joy). Any paranormal/fantasy romance fans should check this one out.

Di says

Oh GoodReads, how you have failed me. How could your recommendation algorithm point me to this? Yes, I like romance. Yes, I like fantasy, and science fiction. But this story? The social structure, based on magic power, was the most interesting aspect... and the least prominent. This book reminded me of those cheesy novels where the "mate bond" is inexplicable and immediate, a final authority granting one woman the heart of a super hot, wealthy / powerful / famous / all-of-the-above man without rhyme or reason. Add to that the sci-fi and fantasy elements that seemed to fly around willy nilly, and you're left with a lot to take on faith. Sigh.

Sophia says

I chose this book because I was intrigued by the description in the blurb and was looking for new fantasy romance to try. This one is actually a blend of sci-fi and fantasy and I was enthralled with the world building, the colorful characters, the all-encompassing story and series arc, but at the same time I think there was a bit of first book in a series syndrome that kept it from being as sharp as it could be.

The world building is complex in that the people of the planet Celta are descendants of humans from earth. They seem to all have innate magic of some level. The power of the magic was what determined the class structure and the type of magic determined the houses of nobility. Some nobles seemed to even have more than one magical skill. The best way to describe it all is think Historical Romance set in Regency or Victorian London- rigid class structure, segregated sections of town, social season and coming out for the nobles as well as marriages brokered for convenience or for connection. The one glaring rarity is the Heart Mate (soulmate) connection. This is the version of marrying for love no matter what the other circumstances of the pair. And that is what is at the bottom of this story.

The story begins when a nobleman, T'Ash, finds his heartmate. T'Ash is an unusual noble in that he was born into a noble family, watched his family destroyed by magical fire from a betraying noble house that set them up as rivals, he escapes to survive in the worst part of the city, returns when he is old enough and powerful enough to exact a strong revenge on those who killed his family and is finally restore as Great Lord of his House of Ash. With the help of the Holly Noble House, he re-establishes himself as the sole member of his house, but he never quite fits in and he is suspicious and closed off from other nobles who are condescending and nervous around him. He is uncouth from his years living in the gutter and hides his sensitivity of feel less than by a foreboding manner. Unfortunately, his heartmate is as opposite of him as possible and she wants nothing to do with him even accusing him of seducing her with magic when he was just trying to court her with his heart gift.

Dannith Mallow is middle class and she prizes her independence and control over her life. She has little magic, grew up in an orphanage after her parents were killed and found the strict, cold existence something she never wants again. She only wishes to make her own rules and go quietly through life surrounded by a family. She has even picked that family out and the man who won't jostle her plans at all. She loves his folks, his sister and he is nice- staid, but nice. Into her serene world crashes Great Lord T'Ash and his rough street cat familiar, Zam Foxhill. T'Ash scares her and bewilders her with his smoldering, powerful personality. This man is not made for a calm, even home, relationship or partnership. He won't just accept the trickle she is willing to put forth; he'll push her to open herself entirely and that type of totally trust terrifies her not to mention the strong waves of attraction she doesn't want to feel toward him. He pushes her to accept his forceful courtship insisting they are heartmates and won't take 'no' for an answer. And then he really sends her life in a whirl when he proves that she is actually more gifted with magic than she knew. Between T'Ash, her new status as a noble lady and all the changes she is confused, but most definitely not indifferent to the man with the rough manners and forceful personality. As she gets to know the man behind the title, she realizes that she is not the only one who struggles to open up and share the vulnerable tender feelings inside.

This was a book that I nearly put aside several times. I was only mildly engaged for a lot of it which was part of the problem, but the other part was that the heroine drove me crazy. As brutish and pushy as the hero is, I still liked him. He earned my respect for all that he had accomplished and the fact that he was open to having a heartmate. He was honorable and loyal to his friends. He put their needs first and from the moment he met Dannith, he put her first. Now did he go about things patiently and gently? No not at all. He was a real thorn and I would have been okay with her rejections if she were honestly indifferent instead of just in serious denial. T'Ash didn't meet her profile for perfect hubby with the white picket fence and two point five kids and dog. She waffled between treating him like scum on the bottom of her shoe and freaking out that he was way high above her in status. It was hard to see her rip into him out of ignorance and her own fears, to watch

her hit him where he was vulnerable time and again. She was awful to him and yet he kept trying. Honestly, this is the weakness of fated mates stories for me. I don't mind the device, but yet unless I like both the players; I end up feeling pity that someone is stuck. Dannith finally got her act together somewhere near the last ten percent of the book, but she never really won me over after all the dilly-dallying and lack of spine from earlier.

Now, beyond my issues with the heroine, the rest of the book had great potential. It took a while to get going and could get ponderous in explanation, but yet I'm not really sure how the author could have left it out because it was important much of the time. The world was so complex that the author did a pretty good job of not just dumping info, but the reader/listener does need to pay attention to keep from being confused.

The exciting moments were great. The fight scenes were mostly back alley stuff with street toughs, but I found them pretty thrilling. T'Ash is this huge warrior and I loved the moments in the scenes where he went all lethal protector on those who would attack him, Dannith or his friends. He was also so tender and sweet when he cared for Dannith in the aftermath. Be still my heart! I loved this guy and maybe that is why Dannith's rejections were such a strong irritant. Eventually, they got up to some sexy times. It was near the end that I was resolved to and even liked their pairing. They definitely are each other's ying and yang by the time all was said and done.

Now, even though I had trouble sticking with this story a few times, the narrator, Noah Michael Levine, was actually part of what kept me going over my rough spots. He was a decided strength. He made the World of Celta come alive for me, he made all the details so fascinating and really engaged me with T'Ash and the other characters. His pacing was really good whether it was a quiet scene with T'Ash and his cat, Zam, T'Ash and Dannith having a terse dialogue, a fight scene or a scene of passion. I would definitely listen to other books he narrates.

All in all, this one landed on the side of moderately enjoyable, but also left me with a desire to keep going with the series. I think a different heroine and maybe now that I'm passed all the first book explanations will really make the difference. I loved the blend of sci-fi and fantasy and would recommend it to others.

Suzanne (Under the Covers Book blog) says

Set on the distant planet of Celta, the human colony has grown in to a new world over the last 400 years. All the people there have small magical ability and alot have a Flair, a personal magical speciality, automatically putting them into the Noble class. They also have the potential to have HeartMates, their fated soulmate. GreatLord T'Ash has finally found his HeartMate and he trying to use all his wiles to try and get her to bond with him, but still trying to hide his past of that as a homeless urchin living in the slums. Danith Mallow is just a normal Miz, middleclass and Flaireless, who doesn't think she is good enough for the GreatNoble T'Ash, with his powerful Flaire and grand name and house.

I really wanted to like this book, but I just couldn't. At first I thought it sounded like quite a sweet and romantic story about two people facing what they see as their faults ad their tragic pasts and becoming a strong united front. But, that wasn't what it was like *at all*. By the last page I was relieved that I had finished it, and am glad that I didn't buy it. I found the world a bit strange and nothing seemed to flow quite right. I found the secondary characters to be a bit flat and two dimensional. And mostly I just couldn't stand either

Danith or T'Ash.

Both these main characters just got on my nerves. Danithas she seemed to reject T'Ash for no apparent reason, didn't try to sort any of her problems out, just run away. And T'Ash, because surely not all men are that stupid, he knows how important family is to Danith, so what does he do? He tries to take her away from the self made family that she has!

As well as the characters, the plot and flow of the story was jerky and problems seemed to come and go with no conclusion, events would start happening, then something else would be happen leaving the previous thread unresolved or unsatisfactorily concluded.

I really didn't like this book and I am not going to be continuing this series, I have seen be given such good reviews but I just couldn't see it, the romance wasn't believable, the characters irritating and irrational and the story, well I have yet to find one!

Lizzy says

I was so disappointed with Heart Mate that when I finished reading it I simply rated and tried to forget. Now that I'm trying to expand my reviews on books that impacted me, I remembered it. Yes, it's certainly easier for me to remember crushed hopes than simply good readings. Although I'd never read anything by Robin D. Owens before, I had built great anticipation around her work.

I liked Rand T'Ash, commiserated with his difficulties early in life and cheered for him to fulfill his desire to have a family and to reestablish his name. However, the world building was somewhat lacking. It reminded me of Jayne Castle's Amaryllis (St. Helens #1) and others of her books that share the same scenario. However, it suffered in comparison. Furthermore, I didn't connect with the heroine Danith, she seemed not quite real or believable. And as a couple they failed to show me that they were close to being 'heartmates'. The writing was good, but in the end I was left wanting.

I wouldn't take my not liking it or not recommending it to heart. Liking a book, assuming it's well enough developed/written, is intuitive and basically an issue of taste. The first of Owens' Celta's Heartmates was not for me, so I am not reading forward this series.

pauliree says

It was hard to categorise this book, being that although it is clearly SF, set on another planet and the characters having psy powers, it portrays itself as more a magical setting, with wonderful psy gifts almost fantastical in appearance. Whatever the category, I loved it. This is the second time I have read this, the first much earlier on in my paranormal romance phase, and I had forgotten how much I enjoyed it. I liked the original setting, not a vampire in sight, and the hero is suitably angst ridden, with a terrible background he has to overcome to win his Heartmate. The concept of the Heartmate is similar to soul mate but here the author has formalised it to something that is kind of special.

The psy powers are known as Flair, and a person goes through 3 different passages which release their Flair powers. If they have a Heartmate it is made known to them during their Passage. The male protagonist in this story T'Ash, has known for 17 years that he has had a Heartmate, and he now can finally find her, but he is a

gruff, plainly spoken man, with scars from his days of fighting in his youth and he has trouble expressing his emotions. His Heartmate is a sensitive woman, a healer newly come into her psy powers and wanting a warm family. The miscommunication is rife and seeing how T'Ash will win his love is wonderful.

I love this world, with the links to old Earth and the new cultures linked with Psy powers. Wonderful series

2/4/2015 - Update: I am starting this series all over again in preparation for the new book coming out in November and I was reading other reviews to see if others loved this series as much as me. All of the low starred reviews seemed to have similar problems and that was with the setting, which for me was some of the best stuff about this series. As a long time SF reader, I am used to being thrown in the deep end when it comes to learning about a new culture or world. I don't believe in too much info dumping, the info should come with the story, and a lot of the reviews were complaining that they couldn't keep the world straight. This wasn't an issue for me and I hope these readers persevered because this series is definitely worth the effort.

Lisa Kay says

Posted on Robin Owens' Pinterest board for Heart Mates.

Rating: ★★★★★? (This is a review of the audiobook.) With one exception, I liked Noah Michael Levine's narration. He is a good storyteller, his pacing for the fight scenes are great, and he delivers the humor nicely. However, I didn't like the way he did the hero's voice. I lay some of that at the feet of the author, not necessarily the narrator. The hero, Rand T'Ash, speaks in an abrupt, gruff, staccato delivery. Kind of like Tarzan saying, "You Jane, me Tarzan."

T'Ash' cat familiar, Zanith "Zam" Foxhill, who communicates telepathically, has a similar delivery; but not as deep, and more cartoonish. While I found the cat funny, I didn't like it in the hero. Though, to play devil's advocate, it makes sense, since he grew up on the streets, even if he is a Nobel. If I didn't need the book for a team challenge, I probably wouldn't have continued. I did get used to it, but it wasn't until about 3/4ths of the way through! NML does great with the story, the secondary characters, and pretty good with the women's voices.

I give kudos to the author for an imaginative, futurist world, enchanted with Celtic magic, jewelry, and weapons. Intriguing. She doesn't spend a lot of time on the world-building or community; indeed, I could have used a bit more. I relied on my knowledge of the Celtic culture to fill-in the gaps.

I did enjoy T'Ash; he's a complex blend of too-macho testosterone overload verses a tender, lonely, and giving male. He is *so* looking forward to finding his heart-mate, but hasn't a clue how to go about courting her when she backs away. (One does not have to accept the Heart Bond.) In fact, his awkward efforts are quite humorous. I really enjoyed how T'Ash helps Danith Mallow, the heroine, find her flair (psychic talent), and I'll save what it is for your discovery.

While I liked her, Danith's not my favorite heroine, being a bit wishy-washy. But again, this is due to the continuing series of misunderstandings between the main characters the author implements.

I still haven't made up my mind if I'll continue with the series. Right now, I've OD'd on Sci-Fi Romances. Though... the next in the series looks good!

Linda says

I just re-read this book, it is the first in the series. I love this world that Robin Owens has created. It is different, but not so out there that you don't understand what is going on. If you enjoy the Jayne Castle books I would also recommend this series.

namericanwordcat says

This is hands down one of my favorite romance series and this first book is wonderful. I love this book because it straddles the genres of science fiction romance, fantasy romance, and regency.

The magic system in this world is compelling. The world building excellent and anthropological. The character development superb. The heroine and the heroine always grow. And then there are the talking cats. I LOVE THE TALKING CATS! They are great comic relief.

I have read this book at least 10 times. Every time a new book in the series comes out, I read it and then the entire series again. These are fated mate books but the love is always earned.

The hero in this book is great. He wants a family and love. I adore that in a hero. He is fairly clueless about how to court and get what he wants. He is an big strong alpha artist warrior and lord. He is also tortured and grew up in the streets.

Dainth is of a different class and was treated as if she had little value most of her life as an orphan and someone with little apparent magical talent. She goes through a major adjustment in status during the novel.

The love story is sweet, sexy, compelling, and reread able

I love it each time I read it. Dang. I want to go read it again.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

I don't read much pure romance, but if reading the blog Smart Bitches, Trashy Books tells me everything, this is the purest example of romance you can get:

- + Alpha male
- + Delicate female
- + Big Misunderstandings
- + People Unable to Just Talk to Each Other
- + A Plot that Goes Nowhere

- + Unsexy Sexy times in the last 25%
- + Instalove (or something damn near like it)

Let this tide you over while I write up my full thoughts.

Full Review:

Rand T'Ash is the final member of GrandHouse Ash; he was the sole survivor of a fire, forced to survive the slums called "Downwind". A powerful Flair (think "magic") user, he is now on a quest for his HeartMate. The unfortunate thing? His HeartMate is Danith Mallow, a common woman who already has a gallant (think "boyfriend"). She doesn't want a fancy life; she just wants a family, to belong, to be loved and not abandoned or abused anymore. Can the two ever get past their barriers and become HeartMates?

I really feel the need to start out this review with a few caveats:

- + I don't read much romance.
- + I have little patience for idiotic characters.
- + I have little patience for pushy characters.
- + I read books for enjoyment. I don't open up a book to hate it. I don't open up a book to insult either the author or the people who like the book.

This book was this month's buddy read. It's a stretch beyond the usual science fiction and fantasy reads I typically do, but I like romantic stories. "The Mad Scientist's Daughter" is one of my favorite reads, and you could easily sell that as a romance story (because, duh, it is). But there are a lot of tropes and cliches in the genre (well, in MANY genres) that just on principle I ABSOLUTELY HATE. I hate d-bag alpha male Tarzan types who shove their women aside to protect them and take ownership of their love interest. I hate the heroine who has magical powers she doesn't know, learns them within two days (when everyone else takes a lot more time to come into their powers), is the most beautiful woman in existence, and has some "feminine" power like healing or being a mother. I hate love stories which force the couple too hard and then suddenly, overnight as if someone flipped a switch, the two are madly in love and can't stop clawing clothes off each other.

"Heart Mate", TO ME, was that kind of book. Rand and Danith are that annoying Romantic Couple. He pushes his way into Danith's life, ruining it in the process, never asking or letting her make choices - and Danith has no choice but to let it happen, since he won't take no for an answer. She gets mad (point to her), but Rand never listens, instead forcing himself in her life against her will (consent? What's that?!). Any other characters are flat, 2-D people put in solely so that Rand and Danith can whinge about their problems.

The entire plot is just a series of weird, disjointed events meant to inject drama and try to convince the reader A) these two belong together, B) delay the eventual sex scenes, and C) get this book to its requisite 300+ pages. When you finally reach The Sex Scene, suddenly, the couple goes from barely tolerating each other to full-fledged lovers, aching to be held by the other constantly, swelling manhoods and damp panties galore. Two days after that, the hero convinces himself that she doesn't love him for realies, so he leaves. A week later - almost more time than Rand and Danith have even known of each other - and two pages later, everything is hunky dory. Leaving the reader wondering what the entire point of that delay was.

Well, that's not entirely fair. Because, you see, I can't really HATE this book because there were aspects I liked - smart aspects that I am more upset weren't explored to their full extent.

For instance, I 100% support Danith not wanting Rand butting into her life. SHE should have the right to choose who to include in her life. We as women are constantly forced to smile, to conform to society's body image, to be okay with terrible people so as not to hurt feelings. Danith routinely did NOT want Rand and

told him so - and if he loved her so much, he should have respected her space. (And I ain't buying any of that "Downwind" bullsh!t - he had no problems honoring other people's space in this book.)

I also 100% loved Danith's real crisis about her Flair and her new status as Noble. While I think her rise from Miz to GrandLady (a whopping 2 level jump in class) was rather silly and "Mary Sue", I loved her real, true concern that if she just immediately accepted Rand and became his HeartMate, she would never know who Danith was. THAT WAS EPIC and should have been at the forefront of this book, the real reason Danith kept holding Rand at bay.

While we're at it, both Rand and Danith's hangups about the relationship are very valid. Rand was the sole survivor of a fire and had a rough life - I totally understand why saying "I love you" and "I care about you" are hard on him. I also get why maybe being friendly and approachable for him. Likewise, I totally understand Danith being hesitant about Rand because of his brusqueness and the fact he has no family. And her fear about becoming a Noble with a great Flair? I get it - change is tough on a person, and leaving the life and potentially the friends you had behind is tough.

And lastly, there was Zanth the cat. Zanth is probably what made me stick with this far longer than I should have because he was a freakin' riot. His speaking in choppy English wasn't silly at all, and I could totally imagine my cats behaving similarly to how he does.

But even with those highlights, I can't overlook the serious problems. The lack of boundaries. How Rand shoved Danith behind him every time there was a hint of danger. Danith's ease of learning Flair (she goes through two Passages in the course of the last half of this book, jumps 2 class levels, and is the only person in society to be an Animal Healer - Mary Sue much?). The inability of characters to TALK to each other. The fact so many good things appear (Danith's fear of losing family of becoming a noble, her tendency to run or hide when things get tough, Rand's difficulty with being honest about his emotions) and aren't given the space to really become a great story. Even simple things like the silly way people spoke "Downwind", the unclear borders of this "Downwind" area (apparently really close to Noble properties?! WTF?), the silly lingo for pants (trous) and tins of tea (t'tin). And then, of course, how freakin' long it takes to get to my smut - and how incredibly cliched and silly it was (and unsexy!) when it appeared.

That said, I feel bad writing all this because this book (and series!) is apparently well-loved. The relatively few people who have written 1- or 2-star don't mention most of the things I found irritating, so I think it must just be me and my unfamiliarity with the romance genre. If so, that's OK - we're all different right? Just like Rand and Danith, we can break down our barriers and become HeartMates - I mean, friends - after all :)

Cindy says

Rereading...

Heart Mate is a strong start to the Celtan Heart Mates series.

The hero is a man of the highest class who grew up in the slums after his family and home were destroyed by enemies when he was six. The man he became has destroyed those enemies and rebuilt his home - now he wants a wife, a heartmate who will love him exclusively and help him establish the family and home he so desperately wants. Once he identifies Danith as his heartmate, he expects her to fall into his arms.

Unfortunately for him, it doesn't happen...

The heroine wants a warm, uncomplicated husband who will give her the family she has always wanted. Someone cheerfully peacefully middle class like herself. Not some big and brooding noble with no social

skills...

One of the charms of this series are the fams - intelligent, psychically gifted animals who can choose to bond with humans. Zanth is the hero's fam - a rough, tough feline brawler who came to the hero when he was a child in the slums. When he decides he wants the heroine also, she doesn't have a chance...

One of the strengths of Robin Owens' writing is her believable world-building. She has crafted a fascinating, self-consistent world that she draws the reader into - background information always appears when needed and is never presented out of context. The characters have depth and you see their world, and their stories through their eyes.

Do not read the series out of order...

Celta Heart Mates series

1. Heart Mate (2001)
 2. Heart Thief (2003)
 3. Heart Duel (2004)
 4. Heart Choice (2005)
 5. Heart Quest (2006)
 6. Heart Dance (2007)
 7. Heart Fate (2008)
 8. Heart Change (2009)
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Mary: Harry Dresden's Love Slave says

Well I liked it but it didn't feel like the first book of a series to me. I needed more of an introduction to the world. It felt like a 2nd or 3d book. Like I should already know what a lot of things meant. Not that it was hard to figure out or follow. The cats were funny. I would read more of the series but I don't feel an overwhelming need to rush out and find the rest.

SheLove2Read says

I debated starting this book because it's part of a series and I just didn't want to get invested in a new series....although to be fair, it's almost impossible these days to read a book that ISN'T part of some series in some way. Luckily, I won't have to worry about that. Let me tell you why this didn't work for me: the world building sucked.

First of all, there is no prologue. You would think if you're going to introduce this new world with new characters, there would be some sort of setting up of the story. Nope. You're left to muddle your way through the story interpreting ranks and names and locations all on your own. For example:

-the residents of Celta are descendants of earth. there is no mention of how they got to Celta, why they chose the name Celta over any other name, and why they came in the first place. were they persecuted? were they fleeing war? famine?

-you're left to figure out on your own the difference between Miz, Lord and Lady, Great Lord, Gentle Lady, Grand Lord and Grand Lady. huh? and some of the characters are from "first families". does that mean there

was more than one colonization, or is that the designation for the first families who arrived. (wouldn't that pretty much make them ALL first families then?)

-men all have a T in front of their name, such as T'Ash. a woman will have a D, such as D'Mallow. Why? Why not T?

- everyone on the planet has some form of magick or unusual power. EVERYONE. why? how? again, no explanation.

The hero seemed like a genuinely good guy. His family was slaughtered when he was a young child, and he ran away and raised himself in the slums of "Downwind". (Downwind of what?) But again, the world the author has built leaves much to guessing. How did a 6 year old survive on his own? And what is Downwind? One thing I didn't like about him though was that his overwhelming lust for the heroine caused him to speak in monosyllables when he was around her and aroused, and this was explained that he was "reverting to his Downwind upbringing". Huh?

The heroine I never liked. She was an orphan and afraid to trust anyone. She didn't think she deserved true happiness and was prepared to settle with a man just because he had a family (not the hero). Here's this titled, rich, incredibly good looking man who is strong enough to protect you, wants you and almost begs you to make a life with you and you spend 85% of the book pushing him away. Why? Because she wants a "simple, uncomplicated life". Whatever. If unhappiness and poverty are your thing, you'll love this gal.

The story and the world and the characters all had potential but it never went anywhere and I spent more time frustrated than enjoying the book. I'm glad I didn't invest in more than one book in the series.

1 star / F

The Serendipity Aegis ~ ?Misericordia? ?????? ✨❤️ says

Not sure why I read this. A rather unpolished love story. Stupid premise, though people tend to be rather stupid in general. Especially in the matters of heart. Still I wasn't able to DNF this. Something about this was mesmerising...

The overly courteous language added charm. The dynamics added dimension. And the world-building - extremely cozy and engaging. Just what I needed for a leisurely read.
