



## In the Arms of the Heiress

*Maggie Robinson*

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**In the Arms of the Heiress** Maggie Robinson  
It's all fun and games until someone falls in love...

Independent heiress Louisa Stratton is going home to Rosemont for the holidays, and, at the family's request, she's bringing her new husband, Maximillian Norwich, art connoisseur and artful lover, the man she's written of so glowingly. There's one hitch—he doesn't exist. Louisa needs a fake husband, and fast, to make the proper impression.

Charles Cooper, captain in the Boer War and with a background far from silver spoons or gilded cages, is so hard up that even Louisa's crazy scheme appeals to him. It's only thirty days, not till death do them part. What's so difficult about impersonating a husband, even if he doesn't know a Rembrandt from a Rousseau?

The real difficulty is keeping his hands off Louisa once there's nobody around to see their ruse. And then there's the small problem of someone at Rosemont trying to kill him. Keeping his wits about him and defending Louisa brings out the honor he thought he'd left on the battlefield. But when Louisa tries to protect *him*, Charles knows he's found a way to face his future—in the arms of his heiress.

## In the Arms of the Heiress Details

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## From Reader Review In the Arms of the Heiress for online ebook

### Susana says

You know those books that you start to read and you love the beginning so much that you think you are going to devour them in no time at all...but then you get "hit" by a crazy amount of silliness and you just feel like crying, because you spent your money on that??

Yup, this one was one of those.

Lucky me. -\_-

**Once upon a time** \_ more like in the beginning of the twentieth century \_ there was an heiress \_ well, I guess there were lots of them, but... you know what I mean \_ called Louisa Stratton who was in desperate need of a husband.

A fake husband, after all she is rich, why would she need a husband after all?

So... why the need for a fake husband?

Well, *poor* Louisa has a family from Hell.

Her parents drowned when she was a small child, leaving her at the "care" of an aunt who basically kept her imprisoned until the girl came into the possession of her inheritance, at the age of twenty five years old. Besides the aunt, there's a cousin \_ The evil aunt's son! \_who apparently spent a lot of his time trying to compromise or even rape the girl!

For crying out loud.

Now a year later, and having tasted freedom for the first time, she finds herself being summoned home, because she may (yes, she did that) have written that she had married a handsome devil \_ aren't they all? \_ rich \_obviously \_ and intelligent guy.

When your family already thinks that you aren't the smartest person in the world, telling them that you married an idiot, wouldn't probably be wise...

Now the family wants to meet such paragon, which leaves Louisa in a bit of a situation.

Luckily for Louisa, Mary Eversong the proprietor of the Evensong agency has just the right candidate for the job...

Enter's War hero Charles Cooper...

Okay, I am going to stop right now with the book description.

This story had everything to work, but unfortunately around chapter twelve/ thirteen things started to fall apart.

The whole romance or attraction ends up being developed full speed ahead which was really disconcerting considering that it involved two individuals that were in the presence of one another for about a day. Two days maximum.

Also, apparently suffering a head trauma may be considered as a prelude for having sex, which was also -\_- weird to read...

And after that, it just went downhill with all the soap opera silly moments that ends up taking place.

It goes from, *"oh, after this night of debauchery that we had, we'll keep our hands to one another"*...five minutes later they're in bed.

Every single day the guy is the target of some sort of attack: with all the hits to his head, I'm surprised he didn't go into a coma -\_-

Then there's the *"marry me"* \_ says he, two days after they've met \_ that will be followed by *"no, I am not good enough for you..."*

Make up your mind and stick to it, for crying out loud!

They're a boring lot of characters. All of them.

Louisa as the main character is one of the most boring heroines I've ever read about.

She's supposed to be wild and reckless with her shocking modern way of thinking, but I never "bought it". I wanted to see some character development because the girl starts with no backbone whatsoever... unfortunately she ends up in the same way she started as.

As for Charles, he has a sort of wtf back-story that was supposed to make us see him as a hero, but which was in truth appalling to read about. He was a capt in the Boer war, and during a time responsible for a women's concentration camp (view spoiler)

Why am I not giving one star to this? o\_O

Bottom line: this story has one of the weirdest combination of themes.

Yes, through most of it it manages to be idiotic as hell (with all the failed attempts to Charles' life), but then the author manages to show us what it was like to live in such a time especially for a woman that didn't want to comply with her family wishes. The fear of psychiatric internment was still very much alive back then.

For me the story's setting was better developed than the actual story, or even its characters.

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### **Isabel Almeida (Os Livros Nossos) says**

Um livro fascinante, emotivo, bem escrito. Uma prosa envolvente, dois protagonistas de personalidade vincada e muito inteligentes. Sensual e elegante. Adorei e a autora entra para a minha galeria de preferências em romance histórico feminino. Crítica completa em breve no Blog Os Livros Nossos

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### **Mandi Schreiner says**

Favorite Quote: "What will happen if they discover we're not really man and wife? This scheme might be considered proof of your insanity."

Louisa's brown eyes widened. "Do you think I should be institutionalized?"

"I wouldn't wish that on the other patients."

This book made me smile a lot. The fake husband trope doesn't always work for me, but Maggie Robinson does a nice job with it in this story. Set in 1903, Louisa Stratton is very wealthy, independent and some might say outrageous heiress. She lost her parents at a very young age and was raised by her Aunt Grace. After being caught in an indiscretion with another man as a young adult, Grace locked up Louisa to keep her away from men. This somewhat kills Louisa's free spirit so when she finally comes into her inheritance, she escapes with her maid (who is her best friend) and goes on an adventure. It is during this time she writes to her aunt that she has married the charming and illustrious Maximillian Norwich. When she learns her aunt may be ill, she decides to finally return to her childhood home. The only problem is, Max doesn't exist. And now she needs a fake husband.

Charles Cooper grew up poor but fortunately had a mentor that schooled him and then sent him into the army. He has seen brutality and devastation and comes back to England a broken man. With only one eye that works, he presently finds himself contemplating ending his life. But then he is approached by the Evensong Agency (an agency that hires people to fix problems) to become Louisa's fake husband for a month for a very large sum. With no other options, Charles agrees to become Max. He sobers up, cleans up and then meets Louisa, and realizes this crazy woman is going to be very amusing for the next month or so.

Louisa is such a fun character in this book. She drives cars recklessly, she says outrageous things and she is very forward in the bedroom. She is high-spirited and just goofy sometimes. I loved being able to watch Charles come to know her. His initial reaction to the whole ordeal is that Louisa is a rich and spoiled heiress. But he soon learns that is so not the case. Louisa is treated quite poorly by her aunt her cousin. He learns just how poorly when they arrive at her estate. Worse, they realize someone is out to harm them after a series of events which leaves Charles and Louisa in danger. Charles goes from just playing the part of Max to get money, to invested in Louisa's safety...and her heart. He starts to fall for her hard, and I really enjoyed their romance.

Louisa has this grand notion in her head of how her fake husband, Maximillian would act under all circumstances. He is of course perfect, and at first she often compares this perfect dream she has to Charles, who while handsome in his own right, isn't quite as refined. Even after Charles gets quite injured...

*Louisa poured a cup with shaking hands. "It's probably gone cold by now."*

*"Doesn't matter." He took a loud slurp, something Maximillian Norwich would never do even if he had been hit with a brick or a shovel. Maximillian did all things in moderation.*

*Except in the bedroom. There, he was fiendishly artful, a sleek animal with endless, inventive sensual appetites.*

Also very amusing is how forward Louisa comes to be in the bedroom after they start fooling around. For as randy and devilish Charles can be, Louisa still shocks him a lot. Like when she catches him in the bath tub...

*She was still standing there, making puffy little bunches in the fabric of her nightgown with her fingertips.*

*“Oh, what the hell,” she mumbled, then pulled the nightgown over her head.*

*“Louisa!” He was so shocked her name came out a croak. He closed his bad eye and gazed at her in openmouthed wonder.*

*“I lied. I knew you were in here – I heard you splashing about. Moaning too. You are rather noisy when you seek your satisfaction. It – it excited me. I couldn’t go back to sleep.”*

*Charles knew he must look like a landed fish, even though most of him was still underwater.*

*“May I join you in the bath? I’m not sure what can be accomplished, but I mean to try.”*

*“Louisa!”*

Their romance is very sexy and I really enjoyed how it all plays out. They have great chemistry and a lovely courtship.

A fun, light and very sexy historical from Maggie Robinson.

Rating: B+

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### **Tin says**

It may strike you as strange but, the first thing that came to mind when I was trying to sum up my thoughts on this novel was creme brûlée. There's a surface, and there's the rest of the good stuff underneath. Everyone thinks they've figured out Louisa Stratton: she's flighty and flaky and too rich for her own good -- and everyone in her life has tried to reform her. When Captain Charles Cooper first meets her, he also sees Louisa is a silly little rich girl with a really crazy plan: for thirty days (over the Christmas holidays), Charles pretends to be Maximillian Norwich, a man Louisa had invented and said she had married.

But there's more to Louisa than her daydreams and her eccentric plans, crack through the surface and you discover that Louisa is a person yearning to break free from her Aunt's rigid rule. Her actions make Louisa seem frivolous but, considering the isolation of her childhood, I think she is entitled to make these decisions for herself. There seems to be a dialectic conversation happening inside Louisa, as she tries to figure out her own identity apart from the one her Aunt had created for her. It is a process of trial-and-error, and, unfortunately for Louisa, it's her errors that people pay attention to. I cannot imagine living my life in a fishbowl and Louisa suffered this for a very long time without breaking or losing her spark.

Not to say that our heroine is entirely loveable and perfect in her imperfection -- because I didn't like her lack of courage. Why couldn't she take control of Rosemont? Why couldn't she speak out against her aunt? Why didn't she stand up for herself?

Charles and Louisa's stay at Rosemont was agonising to read and Louisa's Aunt Grace is really quite a dragon. When strange things happen to the couple, their story takes on a sinister element. *Who is responsible for this? And for what reason?* I actually had my suspicions and kept looking for clues to support it, but Maggie Robinson is very clever and never really reveals her hand until the very end. (Did the culprit surprise

me? Yes. Was the author able to justify her choice? Yes.) ^\_^

I have to say, I applaud Robinson's decision NOT to turn this into an investigation. Yes, strange things were happening, but our hero and heroine don't really do much sleuthing in the story. Instead, they focus on their relationship and try to work their way around the situation they are in:

1. They aren't really married, but they are painfully attracted to each other.
2. Charles is, technically, in Louisa's employ. There are a lot of instances in the story where the topic of money comes in the way of their romance building up.

"Well, that's all right then. But I don't think I'd mind at all if you -- if we -- if -- you know."

"No, I bloody well don't!"

"Acted as man and wife. Just for tonight. Who knows what tomorrow will bring? We may be murdered in our sleep." Louisa gave him a dazzling smile, as if the prospect of future death was quite delightful.

"You should be locked up."

"I was. For years. It didn't really work. I am as hopeless as ever. If you agree to perform this extra duty, I will of course make it worthy your while financially."

Charles's mouth dropped open. "You will pay me to fuck you?"

- Chapter 13

3. Louisa may know a lot about Maximillian Norwich but, what does she know of Charles Cooper?

What happens is a gradual unfolding of lives as Louisa and Charles reveal more of themselves to each other. There's a lot of humour in the story, especially from Louisa and her crazy plans -- but there's also a lot of sadness and a lot of it is hinted upon: I wasn't sure what was happening to my heart when I read about Louisa and her corsets and how she isn't really able to eat much (because of her Aunt, *read*: Chapter 20). There really is irony in Louisa's life: it should've been a life of privilege and comfort, but it was not.

Louisa had wished for flags and flowers ad a little crowd at the train station. She'd read of such welcomes when heiresses arrived from their honeymoons, but Aunt Grace would not condone such frivolity. Just as well, really. If she ever came back from a real honeymoon, that greeting would be special.

- Chapter 6

\* \* \*

Louisa had spent her whole life making up stories and changing them around to suit her. In

them, her parents never died, her aunt was warm and loving, Hugh didn't pull her hair or put spiders in her bed.

- Chapter 35

Charles's story is also unsettled when Mary Evensong hires him. He was on the brink of despair and was actually *thisclose* to ending it all. He hadn't just lost his eye in Africa: he had lost himself. He's back, but there really isn't a life or a family for him to return to: Maggie Robinson hints that he doesn't really have a good relationship with his brothers. He's a hero who doesn't feel very heroic. Surprisingly, he and Louisa make a great team: Louisa has never lost the light inside of her, despite all that has happened to her -- and Charles desperately needs to find his way out of the darkness. It is Louisa who guides him out.

"I've told you what happened in Africa. I could not get it out of my mind. Couldn't sleep. Couldn't eat. Couldn't care about anything. But when I'm with you, I care. I think of nothing but you. You've invaded me."

- Chapter 30

I have one complaint: it's about Aunt Grace and Hugh -- they're built up as heartless and cruel and have said really terrible things to Louisa and Charles ... their trajectory is clear from the beginning. But, then, Maggie Robinson pulls back in the end, and this particular bit of the resolution left me dissatisfied. (And I still don't accept Aunt Grace's reason for treating Louisa so poorly.)

Finally, I have to say, I loved the Evensong Agency (Performing the Impossible Before Breakfast Since 1888)! Mary Evensong is such an interesting character, so I went ahead and read Book 2, **In the Heart of the Highlander** (which is Mary's story) after this one. ^\_^

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### **Joana V. says**

2.75\*

Opinião completa em: <http://pepitamagica.blogspot.pt/2016/...>

Esperava mais deste livro. A sinopse pareceu-me interessante e poderia ter dado a uma história criativa...mas acabou por me desiludir.

(...)

É com pena que não dou uma classificação mais alta, mas apesar da escrita ser boa, falta imaginação e alguma coerência.

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### **Joanne Freitas says**

Gostei muito mais do que estava à espera

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## Patrícia says

RATING: 2 stars.

Uma história bastante típica dentro do romance histórico, cuja resolução é fraquita, especialmente porque havia lugar para um mistério interessante, se o mesmo tivesse sido bem desenvolvido.

E a tradução não ajudou. Tenho visto imensos erros de tradução em livros, mas este livro foi dos piores. A tradução literal abunda e faz-me questionar se a tradutora percebe *realmente* o inglês e as suas nuances. Algumas frases foram traduzidas tão literalmente que nem sequer faziam sentido. É por isso que os tradutores devem ser profissionais formados e não umas pessoas quaisquer que fazem barato e "até percebem mais ou menos de inglês" (claro que não sei se será este o caso... mas sei que é esta a mentalidade relativamente à profissão/trabalho de tradução). O resultado nunca é satisfatório e é insultuoso para os leitores, que não pagam pouco pelo livro, depararem-se com uma qualidade que deixa tanto a desejar. Enfim.

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## Patrícia says

Opinião completa, aqui:

<http://pedacinho-literario.blogspot.com>

Penso estar absolutamente intrigada, e encantada, com romances de época – talvez seja do aroma quente do Outono? É verdade que a fórmula não muda muito, mas as personalidades das personagens tendem a ser sempre maravilhosas e o contraste da sociedade, a par com a problemática central de cada narrativa, visa a criar interesse e, no meu caso, a manter-me fiel, completamente atenta, ao texto.

Maggie Robinson foi uma estreia para mim – uma agradável surpresa – e confesso que não poderia estar mais deliciada. A sua escrita é envolvente e pormenorizada, algo positivamente densa até, e de um conforto imenso, e as figuras que apresenta em Um Acordo Muito Sedutor não poderiam ser mais cativantes e engenhosas – principalmente Miss Louisa Stratton, ou deverei dizer Mrs. Norwich?

Herdeira de uma fortuna considerável mas desprovida de qualquer controlo na sua vida, Louisa Stratton decide fugir da sua casa, em Rosemont, e ir conhecer o mundo. Nas suas muitas aventuras por lugares exóticos, deixa escapar a mentira de que conheceu o homem perfeito – encantador, amante singular, e apreciador de arte –, Maximillian Norwich, e que os dois partilham agora uma agradável e prazerosa vida em conjunto. O verdadeiro problema surge quando Louisa recebe notícia de que a sua tia se encontra bastante mal de saúde e que, por isso, deverá retornar a Rosemont o mais brevemente possível, acompanha do seu marido, Mr. Norwich. Mas Mr. Norwich, um cavalheiro de gestos sem igual, não existe. É somente fruto de uma imaginação demasiado fértil e torna-se imperativo encontrar quem tome o seu lugar – quem engane a tia Grace e toda a entourage em Rosemont.

Gostei bastante do mote principal desta história. Toda a questão da invenção de um marido para assim, e em troca, receber uma certa liberdade faz de Louisa uma mulher muito à frente do seu tempo. A sua personalidade irreverente e espírito algo selvagem tornam-na numa protagonista de peso que arrancará inúmeras e deliciosas gargalhadas ao leitor. Adorei a sua independência, a sua genialidade para a mentira e o

engano, e a sensualidade que guarda dentro de si, sempre consciente de que não são precisos homens para se ser feliz.

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### **thegirlwhoreadssbooks says**

This is that kind of book that draws a person attention only by the cover (which is beautiful). And I'm also talking about the portuguese's cover, of course). But what really caught my attention was the synopsis. However, it didn't reach my expectations because I thought that this book would have more action, more danger, by Louisa hire a fake husband. Still, I liked the story. It was addictive, it makes us stay curious page after page. The only thing that I didn't like so much was the low character's development, especially of the character Captain Charles Cooper (the man hired to pretend to be Louisa's husband) that had a lot of potential in my view! I didn't fall in love with this male character, as usually happens in the books that I've read, and that are also similar to this book (romance, or romance-historic).

Nevertheless, it's a good and enjoyable book to read, even addictive in some parts, because I felt myself attached to book's story, with an immense curiosity to find out who was the mysterious Captain / Maximillian's "almost-killer".

The end is not the best, but still was somehow surprising and interesting point.

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### **Miranda Davis says**

First, I'll say right off that I enjoyed everything about this: the Edwardian age which was a time teetering before the great upheavals of the first world war; the heroine, who suffers doubts even as she forges on; and the hero, who is a Horatio Alger born in the wrong country. (His rise does not deliver him into a higher order of English society but leaves him neither fish nor fowl.)

The story is about things and people not being what they seem. It's a breezy read to start that slowly reveals the true characters of the H/h, the challenges of their pasts and the daunting obstacles they must overcome. It begins as the madcap heiress, who's concocted an ideal husband in letters to her overbearing relatives, has to hire herself a temporary stand-in spouse when she decides to return home from abroad to sort out some financial skullduggery. This hired man is not much like the cultured man of her dreams and how she deals with the discrepancies from her fiction is funny and charming. How he tries to inhabit the character she's created is also v. funny, touching and revealing in turns. Most of all, it's those divergences from some supposed ideal that make him the ideal man for her.

In increments, the story's onion-like layers are peeled away and I found myself sympathizing with her and really admiring her gumption, even as I fell for the hero, a broken man in body and soul, who accepts the well-paid position for his own heart-breaking reason. (Memories of the Boer War left him a cynical, self-loathing 'hero.') Nevertheless, their chemistry crackles from the first, unpromising meeting. (And his opinion of her 'ideal' man was v. funny and so right in defining their differences, I smiled for chapters beyond the scene.)

Soon, they're thrown into the 'viper pit' of her ancestral home where his innate chivalry makes him her champion and places him in the crosshairs of dangerous intrigue.

The jeopardy they face both individually and together is not stupid melodrama but comes organically from

their circumstances and their characters. No trumped up hissy-fit misunderstandings or gulf-of-two-worlds false assumptions, though they are of two separate worlds socially and neither's a mind-reader. The more I learned the better I liked them both. But this author didn't just flop revelations out on the page as if we're too stupid to start putting two and two together for ourselves. No, she hinted at menace, fear, and despair and it packed more wallop for how well it's underplayed. So darker elements developed in increments, like their feelings did. And I was pulled into the story and very concerned for the hero and heroine -- not just for their HEA. And I loved them even more for the gallant way they cope (and did so with wonderful humor, too). While I hated the rotters and leeches in her extended family and the unchivalrous neighbor, I had no idea who the true villain was until it was time to unmask the turd.

From here, I'll have to be vague rather than spoil plot twists...

Overall, what I appreciated most in reading this was the way I learned more and more about each, saw how each grew and recovered their essential spirit with the other's help, and how they came to trust and love one another. It wasn't forced, or artificial, their attraction was immediate but their love developed along with deeper understanding as well as some really good mutual ravishing. But it wasn't a foregone conclusion either. Finally, throughout, the humor was genuinely funny and endearing.

I'm going to read the next, about the employment agency owner who set the wheels in motion here. She's a lady with lots of layers and secrets, too.

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### **Pandora Black says**

J'ai hésité entre 2 et 3 donc on va dire que c'est un 2,5.

Ça se lit vite, y a des moments fun, après ça se passe sur à peine quelques jours, ce qui m'énerve souvent prodigieusement, et les problèmes et leur résolution sont un peu du grand n'importe quoi. Le résumé était plus aguichant en fait ^^

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### **Caz says**

#### **4.5 stars**

The plot of **In the Arms of the Heiress** can be summed up fairly succinctly, thus: *Young heiress engages complete stranger to act as faux husband for one month to help deceive her overprotective and disapproving family. Romance and hi-jinx ensue.*

Put like that, the book might not sound like all that promising, but I guarantee it's a thoroughly entertaining read with plenty of humour, romance, sexy love-scenes and the aforementioned hi-jinx; together with some shrewd observations on the changes taking place in society in turn-of-the-century England.

The book's cover proudly proclaims its appeal to fans of Downton Abbey, even going so far as to boast a photo of what looks like Highclere Castle (the 'real' Downton, and family seat of the Carnarvon family). Speaking personally, my heart sank when I saw that, because my immediate reaction was to see a cynical marketing ploy and it actually made me put it a few books down my TBR pile!

Thankfully, however, I was persuaded to move it back up again and all I can say to those of you who think the same way I do and hate that sort of obvious marketing strategy, is – don’t be put off.

Louisa Stratton is a wealthy young woman in her early twenties who lost her parents when she was a child and was brought up by her austere and starchy Aunt Grace at the family home, Rosemont. Being the type of woman to push her boundaries, at the age of seventeen, Louisa engaged in an affair with an older man, and when discovered, was more or less kept under lock and key by her aunt for several years. At the opening of the book, she has inherited her fortune and escaped (with her trusty maid, Kathleen) to Europe, where she has been travelling around for the past year. In order to allay any fears as to her safety, she has told her family that she has recently married the handsome, rich art-collector Maximillian Norwich (I can’t help wondering if the name is an homage to the historian and writer John Julius Norwich). The problem is that Louisa has to return home to see to some business affairs – and her husband is no more than a figment of her imagination.

So she enlists the help of Mrs Evensong’s agency to find her a man who can act as the suave and sophisticated Maximillian for the month she plans to be at Rosemont.

Mrs Evensong engages the services of Captain Charles Cooper, a former cavalry officer and decorated war hero who has fallen on hard times. Or, rather, has thrown himself upon them, preferring to keep his memories of his time in South Africa at bay with gin. Charles is the son of a factory owner and was fortunate enough to have attracted the attention of a wealthy patron who sent him to Harrow and then purchased his commission. As a result, he’s one of those people who falls “between” classes; educated with the sons of the nobility and then an army officer, he’s acquired enough polish to pass for upper class, but his background puts him most definitely in the lower – and as any student of the English class system will know, in the eyes of the society of the time, it doesn’t matter what you’ve accomplished; where you’ve come from is still the be-all and end-all of who you are and where you belong.

At first, it seems to Louisa as though the deception will never work. She first meets Charles when he’s a complete mess, living in a hovel and partially inebriated, but even in that state, he shows he’s quite capable of playing the part of a toff, donning an upper class accent and bearing in the blink of an eye when he needs to.

Once Charles and Louisa have their stories straight, they head off to Rosemont, where Charles is immediately horrified at the way Louisa is spoken of and treated by her relatives. His initial impression of her – as was mine – may have been that she’s a spoiled, empty-headed, rich brat who talks too much, but he has sense and intuition enough to realise that there’s more to her than meets the eye. As the story progresses, I started to like her more and to admire her spirit, because she certainly did have to put up with treatment that would have crushed someone less determined and stubborn.

Charles is a wonderful hero. Traumatised by his experiences during the Boer War, he’s full of self-loathing and feels the only way he can escape his nightmares is to remain in a gin-induced stupor. He’s pretty much reached rock-bottom and his reasons for taking the very well-paid job as Louisa’s “husband” are truly affecting. But cleaned up and sobered up, he’s attractive, charming and quick-thinking; and once he sees what Louisa is up against in the form of her domineering aunt, his sense of justice and honour won’t let him leave her to deal with the situation herself, even when he becomes the target of a number of unexpected attacks which threaten his life.

While the events of the book take place over just a few days, nothing in the story feels rushed or unlikely. The jeopardy into which Charles and Louisa are thrown never feels melodramatic or over the top, and I never

felt as though their relationship developed too fast. Perhaps because the book is set in 1903 rather than 1803, Louisa and Charles are able to be somewhat more familiar with each other in their interactions, which helped to convince me that they could know each other well and fall in love in such a short space of time. The sparks fly between them from their first, inauspicious meeting, and their romance evolves slowly but very satisfactorily, being by turns very sexy and charmingly tender.

I thought the element of suspense was very well handled, too, and although I did have a good idea as to the identity of the 'villain', I only formed it shortly before the reveal, and I certainly had no idea of that person's motivations. If I have a complaint though, it's that those motivations felt rather flat inconsequential after the way the author had so successfully built and maintained the sense of peril throughout the rest of the book.

There aren't many historical romances set in this period, so kudos to Ms Robinson for that, and for the way she has subtly incorporated such a lot of detail about the changing times. The increasing popularity of the motor car, womens' sufferage, women going out to work, the way that the younger generation was becoming less class conscious (as exemplified by Louisa) were all starkly contrasted with the attitudes of characters such as Aunt Grace who remains a stickler for propriety and the settled order of things.

The thing which really made this book a stand-out for me was the humour, which comes thick and fast. At times, I felt like I was reading the equivalent of a 1940s screwball comedy with Charles and Louisa as a raunchier version of Nick and Nora Charles!

But In the Arms of the Heiress is so much more than a joke-filled romp. The horrors that Charles saw and suffered during his time in South Africa are not sensationalised and neither are the things that happened to Louisa when she was younger. If anything, their feelings of horror and despair are understated and I think had much more of an impact because of it. Louisa and Charles are both engaging, fully-rounded characters who reveal themselves by degrees to be other than they at first seem; the story is well-paced and the dialogue truly sparkles. There's a teaser chapter at the end for the next book in the series, featuring more of the mysterious Mrs Evensong, and I, for one, am really looking forward to reading it.

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### **Nanou says**

mouais bof bof... ça alterne avec des passages que j'ai bien aimé et d'autres pas du tout.

le côté bourru de Cooper je le cherche encore xD, pis il s'en prend plein la poire, il finit le roman à moitié mort la pauvre xD

Louisa reste délurée jusqu'au bout (ça en fait un bon point). Un peu déçue de la traduction parfois (nan mais les passages avec le "dirty talk" qui arrive sans prévenir ça fait un peu "WTF qu'est-ce que ça fait là ça xD ?")

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### **Andreia Silva says**

Muito bom . Viciante

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## **Jennifer says**

I'm to sure how I feel about this book. It's my first Maggie Robinson so maybe this one wasn't a good introduction to her work. On one hand it was a light, fluffy, quick read with a very farcical premise. The heroine is a heiress who creates a fantastical husband to please her overbearing aunt. After a year of running wild on the Continent (she's 25 or 26 and the setting is 1903) she needs to return home. But of course she needs to bring home a pretend husband. So she hires a decorated war hero who has the deepest of issues. I understood the PTSD and that was fine, but what he actually did with the Boer woman was too much. That was too over the top for me. So there was this weird imbalance between light and fluffy and deeply troubling hero and for me it didn't seem to work out well.

This novel I'm sure is meant to be a romantic comedy with laugh out loud moment. I mean the hero gets attacked pretty much every day, but its done in a light way that is kind of serious but mostly not. The reveal of the baddie was done in a ok there's 20 pages left here's the villain. Maybe it was suppose to be done in a who dun it style with the classical so and so can be ruled out, but not you sir (or madam)! :points figure:

I liked it, but I didn't. I wasn't able to fully connect with it. Although what I did like was that the tables were turned and the heroine became the seductress and pretty much initiated the love scenes. And even those felt a little over the top. There was a point where the hero didn't want to continue because he felt like she was using him and she even questioned what is the male equivalent to a mistress. He even used the usually heroine used line "I'll lose respect for myself and I'll grow to resent you" line. So in that aspect I thought that was interesting.

The next in the series is about a highlander. I do like my highlanders so we'll see about this next one.

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