



I Love the Earl

Caroline Linden

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A single lady in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a suitor.

Margaret de Lacey has accepted her unmarried state with dignity, if not delight. She had no suitors when she was young and starry-eyed, though regrettably poor, and it's unlikely any man will court her now that she's older, wiser, and still just as penniless. Until, that is, her brother unexpectedly inherits the dukedom of Durham and settles an enormous dowry on her, making her the most eligible heiress in town.

No gentleman in London is more in need of a wealthy bride than Rhys Corwen, Earl of Dowling. He contrives an introduction to Margaret because of her dowry, but she swiftly sets him right: no fortune hunter will win her heart or her hand. Far from put off, Rhys is intrigued. Interested. Entranced. And soon the only thing he needs more than Margaret's fortune...is her love.

I Love the Earl Details

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From Reader Review I Love the Earl for online ebook

Miranda says

4 sweet stars

This is a quick read... just 125 pages I believe. Caroline Linden does a superb job at writing this story. It's short and to the point. Just the right amount of romance and scandal to keep you reading until the very last page.

I'm definitely starting on the next book in the series. I can't wait to see what all is in store for all the characters. Great way to start off a series. I look forward to reading them.

"My intentions..." His slow smile acted like a torch held to her skin. She felt prickly with heat and yet transfixed by the glowing allure of it. "I intend to have you, Maggie, in every way a man can have a woman. I want your hand in mine while we dance. I want you laughing beside me in the theater. I want you lying naked in my arms at night. And I want you standing beside me in church, saying 'I will.'" His gaze scorched her.

Ursula says

This was an ok read. I think it is pretty hard to write a novella length story convincing me that a destitute earl is not marrying the heiress for her money. It didn't really work because there was no time for the relationship to develop. It was all too neat and tied up with a bow. (He obsessed so much about the money she was bringing into the marriage, implying that his lust for her was just an added bonus.)

That said, it was nicely written, as usual for CL. It just didn't grab me.

I was also confused as to how this fitted in with the series. A prequel? I kept thinking the new Duke must be gay, with his aversion to matchmaking women and marriage, but that never came out. I have read the other books, so now I have to go back to them and work it out, as I read them while a go. Previous secret marriage? Illegitimate offspring? Oh well. Time for a re-read!

Steelwhisper says

3.5*

Very charming.

Sofia says

I liked the characters and the story.

The language and writing used did not place me in the setting though.

Mackenzie says

Great start to a new series. This was just a novella, but it was a fun quick read and I didn't want to put it down. Everything changes when the deLaceys become nobility. As Francis takes on the role of duke, he declares that he shall shower his sister, Margaret with a very hefty dowry. Margaret, who feels herself deep into spinsterhood is thrown into the limelight.

Her coming out however is just in time for Rhys Corwen, Earl of Dowling as he has fallen into desperate times. As he searches for a rich bride, he meets Margaret. At first she gives him an amazing set down, but he likes her spirit and just knows she is the one for him.

Francis is against the match and Margaret discovers it's because he's loved and lost before. This fact starts off the rest of the trilogy -The Truth About the Duke.

No matter the problems and situations they are put in, "Maggie" and Rhys come together every time. I loved some of the conversations between them and it was this wit and character development that really made the story so enjoyable.

Ms_prue says

I enjoyed this. It's only 100 pages, according to goodreads. That must be why I finished it in record time. It was good but very light on, and the conflict was barely there. However the characterisation was delightful. It's interesting to contrast Margaret, the heroine of this novel, with Kitty from Heyer's *Cotillion*, which I've also just read. Both are heiresses, both are perceived as greatly improved in the eyes of their beholders by their new, fashionable outfits, and both don't take shit from anybody. But I enjoyed *Cotillion* more because it goes further into the complexities of Society than *I Love the Earl*, which only skims the surface of the politics of a newly-ennobled spinster with an unexpected dowry. In the end, this story seems to boil down to "money solves everything", with a side helping of True Love. Thus Heyer, with her more complex story about how money causes more problems than solutions, gets 4 stars from me, and Linden gets just 3. P.S. I paid money for this ebook, too. What's happening to me?

Christine says

I Love the Earl is a prequel novella to Ms. Linden's newest historical romance trilogy, The Truth About the Duke, the first book of which is titled *One Night In London*, released in September 2011. *I Love the Earl*

takes place several decades before *One Night In London* and tells the love story of Margaret de Lacey and Rhys Corwen, the Earl of Dowling. Margaret is a spinster at age thirty having never married and is nearly resigned to remain this way, although she still dreams of falling in love, marrying and having a family and home of her own. Her life takes a dramatic turn when her brother Francis unexpectedly inherits a dukedom and offers an extremely generous dowry on her behalf. Now Margaret is living in a mansion, has a lavish wardrobe and plenty of titled suitors seeking her hand in marriage. Just what she always wanted, right? Not quite. Having men interested in her because they are desperate for her fortune doesn't have the same appeal as men interested in her for the woman... not her fortune. This includes the Welsh Earl, Rhys Corwen who easily relies on his good looks and charm to capture the attention of women. He attempts to charm Margaret, but she doesn't fall for it. In fact, she brilliantly puts him in his place. Great scene! Now the Earl is the one who is charmed by this fascinating heiress and is determined to have this witty, confident woman as his wife. How will he ever woo her heart in earnest now? Oh, you'll just have to read this charming story yourself to find out!

I really loved this novella. Its greatest shortcoming is that it isn't a full length novel. The premise of the story is simple, but the characters are interesting, their dialogue genuine and entertaining and the romance just charming.

Maya Rodale says

Totally charming novella that kicks off a fantastic series. Don't miss it!

Keri says

3.5 Stars. I am intrigued enough to read the first book in the series. I even understand why she wrote a prequel for Maggie and not Frances, so we shall see how it shakes out. I liked Maggie and Rhys and would have liked to have had a longer book on them.

Jennie says

From Goodreads: A single lady in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a suitor

Margaret de Lacey has accepted her unmarried state with dignity, if not delight. She had no suitors when she was young and starry-eyed, though regrettably poor, and it's unlikely any man will court her now that she's older, wiser, and still just as penniless. Until, that is, her brother unexpectedly inherits the dukedom of Durham and settles an enormous dowry on her, making her the most eligible heiress in town.

No gentleman in London is more in need of a wealthy bride than Rhys Corwen, Earl of Dowling. He contrives an introduction to Margaret because of her dowry, but she swiftly sets him right: no fortune hunter will win her heart or her hand. Far from put off, Rhys is intrigued. Interested. Entranced. And soon the only thing he needs more than Margaret's fortune...is her love.

My Thoughts: For a novella, I found I enjoyed the story in this book. I think that's because it actually felt like there was a story, just condensed into under a 100 pages. A sort of prequel for Linden's upcoming series, the book introduces us to the Duke that causes the drama for his three sons (the heroes of the upcoming series). While we meet the newly titled Duke, the story focuses instead on his sister and her HEA. Linden did a nice job of telling a story in a condensed format that didn't feel like huge parts were missing or that it was completely rushed. More than that, I was left wondering about the Duke and his future, which is a great way to lead in to the next release. For a novella, an enjoyable read.

Robin Van Auken says

Show Me the Dowry!

This is a witty, sweet book that gave me the impression that titled yet penniless, bachelors of the Regency are similar to the athletes we worship today. Instead of football or baseball, however, their game is to land a bride whose large dowry will restore the entailed, crumbling family castle and provide a male heir to continue the vicious cycle of the Rake: rise, rot, ruin.

Margaret and her brother, Francis, unexpectedly inherit a fortune and title that changes their middle-class life, propelling them into "Society." What's worse than having to put up with new clothes and shoes and servants and a mansion, is that Francis bestows a staggering dowry on his sister, making her the most eligible lady in town, and the target of poor gentlemen throughout London.

Is Rhys, the Earl of Dowling, yet another needy, greedy fop who's only after her money? Or is there more to the impoverished Welsh aristocrat?

What Margaret wants is a husband, but what she needs is one with integrity. Can Dowling, reluctantly on the hunt for a large purse attached to a biddable wife, prove he's worthy?

Caroline Linden does a wonderful job embellishing this simple love story, and it's certainly a worthwhile and inexpensive read.

Katie Michaels says

You know what I loved about this book? I never had to forgive the hero or the heroine for being an idiot. Not once did they betray each other. Not once did they fail to forgive a shortcoming. There was no subterfuge, no great misunderstanding. It's just a story of a man, trying to win a woman's heart --and succeeding.

Margaret is firmly on the shelf at 30 when her brother inherits a Dukedom. He decides to share his good fortune with his sister, offering a sizable dowry for her to finally snag a husband. That money is just what Rhys needs. But when he meets Margaret, he is taken with her quick wit and strong will... and he knows they would be a perfect fit.

Margaret wants a man to love her for more than the money her brother is offering. And Rhys' financial problems are no secret, so it takes some time before she is assured of his affections. But the sexual tension is good and when they finally come together, it's great. There are a few foils for the couple along the way, but they're all external. It's a short read... only a little over 100 pages... but a pleasant way to spend an afternoon. 4 stars.

**ARC Provided by NetGalley*

Lady Wesley says

Quite enjoyable little story about what can happen when an on-the-shelf spinster's brother unexpectedly becomes a duke. And gives her a dowry large enough to attract every fortune hunter in London.

Jennifer says

I seem to have a weird relationship with novellas that are prequels to longer series. I am obsessed with finding them and using them to figure out if I like a particular writing style or premise. But, I often find myself disappointed in the shorter length and often cliffhanger endings that are designed to make me want to purchase the actual series books. Thankfully, this was not the case with *I Love the Earl* which is an introduction to Caroline Linden's The Truth About the Duke historical series.

The first thing that grabbed my attention about this novella was the Georgian England setting. I adore this time period with all the elaborate hairstyles and over-the-top fashion. This is not an era that is commonly found in historical romance nowadays so it was very refreshing to read different details even if it is only for a prequel.

The spinster heiress and the fortune hunter are two of historical romance's most common character types, but Linden found a way to make them new and interesting for me. Margaret's self-awareness and matter-of-fact nature made her a very endearing personality. That also made her journey to self-confidence that much more rewarding.

In terms of the hero, Rhys was surprisingly mature about his difficult financial situation. He knew he needed the money to help his estate, but was willing to do without some of the finer things in order to retain his livelihood. I also liked how devoted he was to Margaret from their first meeting. It is always nice to read about the heroine being pursued rather than the other way around.

The romance between Margaret and Rhys was sweet and fun to read. Linden shows these two characters slowly getting to know each other and developing a friendship and then a relationship. I thought the development aspect was well done especially for the shorter page length. Readers do get an introduction to the mystery behind Margaret's newly titled brother which is the focus on the series. I'm not completely sure what is going on with him, but I can definitely tell his past is an intriguing one that I will want to read more about.

Becca says

I really enjoyed this story. It was uncomplicated and sweet and the characters were always honest with each other, which is refreshing because you don't encounter that often. I'd recommend this novella as a nice way to spend an evening after a long day :)

An Earl in need of funds finds a woman he could love and pursues her, recognizing that love is important to him...and he never sways from the conviction that he loves the heroine for her, not her money. How

uncommon!
