



So Worthy My Love

By Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

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So Worthy My Love By Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

Maxim

Proud and passionate, the Marquess of Bradbury swore vengeance on those who had stolen his title and lands. . .and branded him a traitor to the Crown.

Elise

Beautiful and spirited, she found herself the innocent prisoner of the marquess, her family's most hated foe.

So Worthy My Love

They were bitter enemies caught in a dangerous tide that swept through Elizabeth's England—And thus began a battle of wit and will between two people so perfectly matched that they could only fall in love.

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So Worthy My Love By Kathleen E. Woodiwiss Bibliography

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Editorial Review

About the Author

(1939 - 2007) Kathleen E. Woodiwiss, creator of the modern historical romance, died July 6, 2007 in Minnesota. She had just turned 68. Her attorney, William Messerlie, said that she died after a long illness.

Born on June 3, 1939 in Alexandria, Louisiana, Mrs. Woodiwiss was the youngest of eight siblings. She long relished creating original narratives, and by age six was telling herself stories at night to help herself fall asleep. At age 16, she met U.S. Air Force Second Lieutenant Ross Woodiwiss at a dance, and they married the following year. She wrote her first book in longhand while living at a military outpost in Japan.

Woodiwiss is credited with the invention of the modern historical romance novel: in 1972, she released *The Flame and the Flower*, an instant *New York Times* bestseller, creating literary precedent. The *Flame and the Flower* revolutionized mainstream publishing, featuring an epic historical romance with a strong heroine and impassioned sex scenes. "Kathleen E. Woodiwiss is the founding mother of the historical romance genre," says Carrie Feron, vice president/editorial director of William Morrow and Avon Books, imprints of HarperCollins Publishers. Feron, who has been Woodiwiss's editor for 13 years, continues, "Avon Books is proud to have been Kathleen's sole publishing partner for her paperbacks and hardcover novels for more than three decades." Avon Books, a leader in the historical romance genre to this day, remains Mrs. Woodiwiss's original and only paperback publisher; William Morrow, Avon's sister company, publishes Mrs. Woodiwiss's hardcovers.

The Flame and the Flower was rejected by agents and hardcover publishers, who deemed it as "too long" at 600 pages. Rather than follow the advice of the rejection letters and rewrite the novel, Mrs. Woodiwiss instead submitted it to paperback publishers. The first publisher on her list, Avon, quickly purchased the novel and arranged an initial 500,000 print run. The novel sold over 2.3 million copies in its first four years of publication.

The success of this novel prompted a new style of writing romance, concentrating primarily on historical fiction tracking the monogamous relationship between a helpless heroines and the hero who rescued her, even if he had been the one to place her in danger. The romance novels which followed in her example featured longer plots, more controversial situations and characters, and more intimate and steamy sex scenes.

"Her words engendered an incredible passion among readers," notes Feron. Bestselling author Julia Quinn agrees, saying, "Woodiwiss made women want to read. She gave them an alternative to Westerns and hard-boiled police procedurals. When I was growing up, I saw my mother and grandmother reading and enjoying romances, and when I was old enough to read them myself, I felt as if I had been admitted into a special sisterhood of reading women."

New York Times bestselling author Susan Elizabeth Phillips, a leading voice in the women's fiction arena, says, "We all owe our careers to her. She opened the world of romance to us as readers. She created a career for us to go into."

The pioneering author has written 13 novels over the course of 35 years, all *New York Times* bestsellers. Kathleen E. Woodiwiss's final literary work, the upcoming *Everlasting*, will be published by William Morrow in October 2007. "*Everlasting* is Kathleen's final gift to her fans," notes Feron.

Kathleen E. Woodiwiss, who was predeceased by her husband and son Dorren, is survived by sons Sean and Heath, and numerous grandchildren.

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The Marquess of Bradbury is a man used to taking what he wants. So when he loses his reputation, the life he has always known, and his fiancee, he is determined to win them all back, starting with the kid napping of his betrothed. But his men bungle the abduction, and instead of the haughty, aristocratic Arabella, they take her beautiful cousin, Elise. Here's what happens when the Marquess discovers the wrong woman in his castle, although he'll soon learn that she is the right one.

Maxim lifted the latch and pushed the door open.

"Arabella? Where are you?"

Elise had pressed herself against the wall behind the door and had been well-prepared to launch an attack upon this foolish mortal who had dared enter her chamber. She had frozen when the warm and vibrant voice stirred memories of a darkened stairway at Bradbury Hall, and she stepped from hiding, lowering the small hearthside stool she had intended to smote the visitor with. Though the man was now dressed in the manner of a wealthy lord and the beard was gone, there was no mistaking the handsome rogue.

"What the deuce . . . ?" A sharp frown quickly creased his brow as his eyes came upon her. "What are you doing here?" "Twas you!" The sapphire-blue eyes fairly flashed with sparks of indignation. "Twas you who bade them take me! And all the while I thought . . . aarrgh!"

In the next instant the stool was hauled back and swung with all the impetus of her outraged fury behind it. Maxim jerked back to avoid the clumsy weapon, and though he stared in utter amazement at the seething girl, the stool came around again with the same dire intent. The need to disarm the maid seemed of vital importance to his continued good health, and he reached up, plucking it easily from her grasp.

"Where is Arabella?" he demanded sharply. His eyes swept quickly to every corner of the chamber, but the one he sought was nowhere to be seen.

"Arabella, is it?" Elise snarled the question venomously. So! He had bade his men to fetch Arabella, and they had caught her instead. Her fair lips curled with contempt as she continued. "No doubt Arabella is wherever a good wife should be found . . . at her husband's side . . . most assuredly in England."

"In England?" The door of Maxim's understanding burst wide, igniting the fires of his rage. He recalled this vixen all too well. When he would have rushed to Arabella's side to soften the shock of her abduction with an explanation, the meeting with this wench and her recognition of him had necessitated a change in plans. Now she was here, where his former betrothed should have been, a fact which he was certain the girl was somehow responsible for, whether by design or misfortune. "Why are you here?"

With a flippant shrug Elise flung a hand toward the door. "Ask your men. They were the ones who took me."

"They were instructed to bring Arabella here," he informed her brusquely. "What are you doing here instead?"

"You dim-witted buffoon!" Elise railed back. "Can you not hear me? If you would have the answer to that question, seek out your henchmen! That simple pair of dolts were waiting for me in Arabella's chambers. The next thing I knew I was being carried off!"

"I'll throttle them with my bare hands!" Maxim ground out. Spinning on a heel, he stormed from the room, flinging the door wide. His voice thundered ahead of him as he leapt down the stairs three at a time. "Fitch! Spence! Dammit, where are you?"

The two had left the hall and were about the same distance from the front portal when his shout halted them. Scrambling back, they hit the opening at the same time, somehow managing to wedge themselves into the narrow space. A cacophony of loud curses and clamor arose from the entrapped pair before they managed to extricate themselves. Gasping for breath, they hastened back to the Marquess who had paused in the middle of the hall. With fists braced firmly on his waist, he fixed them with a dark, ominous scowl that fairly sundered their feeble attempts to smile. His voice began as a low thundering rumble. "Do you know what you've done?"

The pair stumbled back as the last words were blared at them, and they looked at each other in was confusion. The soft whisper of foot steps compelled them to lift their worried gazes to the girl who slowly descended the stone stairs. The smile that curled her lips was one of sublime pleasure, as if she anticipated what was forthcoming. What venom had they stirred in the maid' s heart that she should countenance their comeuppance?

The two glanced between his lordship and the girl and were quick to note the absence of the blissful smiles of lovers reunited. The Marquess was genuinely enraged, there was no doubt. Those green orbs fairly burned with rage, while the muscles twitched tensely in his lean cheeks.

Glancing over his shoulder at the girl, Maxim made a request in a tightly controlled tone. "Would you be so kind, madam, as to tell us who you are."

Elise continued her leisurely descent with all the aloof dignity of a great queen. "I am Elise Madselle Radborne." Her voice, though soft, was given resonance by the echoing chamber. "Sole descendant of Sir Ramsey Radborne, only niece of Edward Stamford, and first cousin to his daughter, Arabella."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Music:

The experience that you get from So Worthy My Love is the more deep you searching the information that hide into the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to know but So Worthy My Love giving you buzz feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in selected way that can be understood through anyone who read it because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go along, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having this specific So Worthy My Love instantly.

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