



The Marquess of Cake

Heather Hiestand

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Coffee...tea...or a pastry chef sweeter than any confection...

Scotch trifle fit for Queen Victoria, scones with clotted cream...Alys Redcake knows the way to a man's heart. Yet she is unaware that with each morsel—and flash of ankle—she is seducing the handsome marquess frequenting her father's tea shop. Unmarried at twenty-six, Alys's first love is the family business. But thoughts of the gentleman's touch are driving her to distraction...

With his weakness for sugar, the Marquess of Hatbrook can imagine no more desirable woman than one scented with cake and spice. Mistaking Alys for a mere waitress, he has no doubt she would make a most delicious mistress. And when he finds himself in need of an heir, he plans to make her his convenient bride. Yet as they satisfy their craving for one another, business and pleasure suddenly collide. Will Hatbrook's passion for sweets—and for Alys—be his heart's undoing?

85,000 words

The Marquess of Cake Details

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From Reader Review The Marquess of Cake for online ebook

Vânia Nunes says

A hypoglycemic marquess and a baker of cakes. A complicated mix.

When the Marquess of Hartbrook went to Redcake's Tea Shop, he never imagined that in addition to delicious cakes and trifles, his interest would fall on one of the beautiful attendants - called cakies - who smelled wonderfully as orange.

Michael did not want to marry. He was well seated in his single life taking care of his mother, younger sister, Beth, and hoping that his brother and heir back from India, where he was during the war.

With the death of his father long ago and finding themselves deeply in debt, because of his gambling father, rather than marry a rich American heiress, he decided to roll up his sleeves and work to take back the wealth of family. And he was successful.

Besides working, his only pleasure was eating well. And that sweet Tea Shop were so delicious, and it was so famous that even the Queen lived ordering their famous Scotch Trifle.

Behind the famous delicacies of Redcake's Tea Shop, Alys Redcake was the eldest daughter of Barclay Redcake, a man who managed to get rich thanks to his business acumen, and the magic hands of his daughter.

Alys grew up working in the kitchen because she liked. Her two younger sisters, Matilda and Rose had the opportunity to go to school and learn good manners to be ladies. Alys not. But she did not regret it. She enjoyed baking cakes and seeing the reaction of people to savor her work.

Her biggest surprise was to discover that a marquess was a regular customer of her family tea shop.

Now the Redcakes were famous and his father was consecrated "Sir". So Mr. Redcake decided that Alys should no longer work as a middle class person, because although she was twenty-six years and say she did not want to get married, this behavior could reduce the chances of her sisters contracting a good marriage in society.

Alys did not well accept her father's decision, and while the two were fighting this battle, she and Michael became friends, exchanging confidences.

The attraction between them was not overwhelming. Began in a calm. And as a matter of necessity, different for each one of them, finally decided that both would gain if married. And only from there, living together, any feeling would have a chance to grow. But not without having to go through a test that could shake the structure of their lives ...

The book caught my attention by the cover. The title is interesting and the model is gorgeous.

When I started reading, I liked the written of the author, who soon arrested my attention.

I found some interesting points that the author discusses different, such as the family of the main characters start to move between high society, but in fact they have no preparation for the antics of so-called gentlemen and ladies. In some points Alys even mentions how her mother is naive to many things, trusting people easily.

The fact also that Alys, the main character, not having had the opportunity to finish school, as did her sisters, and she really enjoys the work she does, without feeling embarrassed by it. Of course she is happy because her father was consecrated "sir", but if it did not affect her future in Tea Shop.

Michael's disease is not related promptly, but by the symptoms the reader knows what it is.

The attraction they feel for each other is more physical. She is delighted to have a marquess as a customer, and he finds fascinating that she smells like orange and sweet, which was natural since she spent hours in the kitchen baking. Only with the time they begin to know how each one behaves and thus the feeling flows more naturally.

I think the book is fantastic not only for being the genre I most liked, historical, but at the same time have a certain clue of modernity.

Charismatic characters.

Pace of the story is good.

Positive point: the story is based in a time of regency, but brings a different reality than normally appears in historical novels: the side of the middle class, and those who are rich for their work, not because they are heirs.

Negative point: where are the recipes of those wonderful sweet??

If I read the other books in the series? Surely will be on my to-be-read list.

5 STARS!!!

Jacquie says

The Marquess of Cake is a fun Victorian romance. I had no idea what to expect when I started reading it, but certainly didn't expect to salivate over the desserts as well as the marquess. :) This book is full of quirky characters and we're sure to see more of them in future books. I hope so. What a fun read with a satisfying romantic ending. I'm looking forward to reading more books in this series.

Pam Victorio says

I'm her agent so of course I think this book is amazing. Great Victorian writing and a great hero-heroine pairing.

Suzanne Rogers says

In the Victorian era, Alys, as a woman of 26, is considered over-the-hill. So I was rooting for her to find romance and prove to herself and her family she was worthy of happiness. At times I wanted to smack some of her family members for their boorish, self-centered, and entitled behavior. In addition, it was painful to watch a talented artist such as Alys have to defer to men so frequently. I enjoyed the journey, however, and took pleasure in the successes of an unconventional heroine. I will look forward to the next book in the series, and hope to see some of the antagonists in *The Marquess of Cake* get the smack-down they so richly deserve!

Jessica says

am i the only person who though every single man in this book was a jackass? Father? Total douche. "Hero?" Oh you were raped...let me just sneak in your bedroom and start touching you inappropriately. Then tell you you should marry me because really...you can't do better. Then constantly belittle you. It made me physically ill how little care he showed towards the heroine and i despite giving him all the chances to redeem himself just couldn't do it. Started off interesting but it hardcore crashed and burned. I frankly can't understand why any woman would read this and find him even remotely passable much less a true romantic hero. DNF and absolutely wouldnt recommend

Vicki says

This book is such a wonderful mix of romance, the family and one very talented cake baker. I started it and planned on reading until bedtime and stayed up almost all night finishing it. It is that good. The entire quasi courtship of Michael and Alys was an excellent adventure. I loved how they came together during unexpected occasions.

Their friendship led me to believe that they could grow to have more. But there was drama in their lives that caused trouble for the couple. The family was not accustomed to so many things that were happening to them and it made things pretty hard on Alys. Michael's mother did not really approve and that was just one little problem.

This was a great read. I want to read the rest of the series if it means keeping up with Alys and Michael. Heather Hiestand is a new writer for me, but I plan on reading more from her.

Laura the Highland Hussy says

Don't forget to stop by on July 7, 2013 for a chance to win a copy of the Marquess of Cake!

Read this review on Got Fiction? Book Blog

3.5 stars

This book looked cute when I saw it floating about twitter, so when I had the chance to review it, I was super excited! I love the premise of this book (btw it's an Historical, don't let the cover fool you!), and I think it's the first book I've ever read where the hero's sweet tooth is what drives the plot!

Hatbrook loves his sweets, and if he doesn't eat often enough he tends to get the shakes, vision dims, mind is fuzzy, he's probably hypoglycemic. So he constantly visits his favorite little dessert shop Redcake's. This lovely cakie named Alys serves him, and boy is she feisty. He has no idea she's actually Miss Redcake, the owner's daughter, and gifted with a hefty dowry.

The only problem is that while Alys may be well-dowered, she is no lady. She's been a hard worker her whole life, her parents made her join Redcake factory as soon as she was able. But Alys worked hard to be where she's at, and she really likes decorating cakes. Her parents, however, are able to give their daughters the lives they've always dreamed of now. The only obstacle is getting Alys out of the kitchen and out on the

marriage market, where her father feels she belongs.

Alys and Hatbrook have a sweet romance with some lovely scenes. One of my favorite things is how Hatbrook always notices how Alys smells. It's either of sugar, cake or orangewater. But he always notices. It's adorable. Besides, what better scent for a man with a sweet tooth, than to have his woman smell of cake?

I did find the romance to be slow. But there were a few obstacles that the two needed to overcome. Learning to live with each other, learning to trust each other, and maybe learning to eat a bit less cake. . . The last third of the book was really exciting, though and leads to some sequel bait, but I'm okay with that. In fact I look forward to the next story about Hatbrook's brother.

An original story with likeable characters, if you're looking for something different in the Historical genre, then the Marquess of Cake is for you.

***ARC courtesy of the author and Kensington Books

Paola and Francesca says

Alys is the daughter of an upstart baker who has been knighted and has pretensions of moving among the aristocracy, but all Alys wants is to grow their cake business. The Marquess is a diabetic (Type 1, I think? it's not clear) with a sweet tooth. Sticklers for historical accuracy will likely be put off, but I enjoyed the story and the chance to read about non-aristocratic characters. A lot of recent historical romances have their heroines express frustration with sexual double standards and with the restrictions put on them as a result of their era; what stood out about Hiestand's novel was that she also focused on the way that gender roles at the time were class specific, so that moving up the social ladder put new restrictions on Alys's daily life. I've also seen quite a number of otherwise feminist historical romances suggest that the hero is honorable because while he'll sleep with tavern maids, he would never besmirch the honor of an aristocratic virgin. This novel actually recognizes the grossness of that distinction between ladies who deserve respect and women who are seen as fair sexual game. This novel is probably more of a 3.5 star rating for me than a 4, but there's a cliffhanger at the end with regard to one of the minor characters, and I'll definitely be purchasing it when it comes out.

Sophia says

Talk about an adorable title and blurb- a handsome aristocrat with a sweet tooth! I just couldn't wait to read this one. And I was not disappointed at the hijinks, romantic entanglements and focus on scrumptious food. The foodie and the romantic in me can't decide who is more satisfied at the moment. I am so in need of some delish baked goods after reading this one.

The handsome Marquess of Hatbrook has a weakness and it is while pandering to his need for sweets that he comes across the fiery Alys Redcake daughter of the proprietor to his favorite bake shop. He is attracted to Alys almost as much as he is to the Scotch Trifle, but his ideals for a wife are for someone much more mild-mannered and malleable so he attempts to contain his interest to the desserts she serves.

Alys is a woman past the usual marrying age and caught between two very different worlds. She grew up

working in one of her father's companies as one of the workers before continuing as a baker in his recently successful business venture and now that he is knighted she is expected to give up the joys of baking and decorating cakes to be a lady of class. Alys is not fooled- even if her father is- into thinking that the upper echelon of society like the handsome marquess will accept her. She has hope for her sisters who came along later and were brought up genteelly in landing good matches, but none for herself.

Meanwhile, her father removes her from her position with the bakery and starts parading suitors past her. Too bad her eyes are settled dreamily on Hatbrook and he seems to feel something for her too.

Circumstances throw them together often and its usually over a slice of her delectable cakes before they finally give in to their attraction and that's when things really start to happen.

The plot started out light and fun like an old-fashioned historical romance, but then the two main characters let their passion loose showing the two of them were hungry for more than cake. I loved how there was so much going on, though not so much that it gets dizzying, between Alys and Hatbrook and then their interrelations between friends and family. Admittedly, there is a great deal of focus on food and health in this one since its the Marquess' sweet tooth and Alys' baking talents that started it all going. The two of them were so adorable together even when they really didn't understand each other or got headstrong about matters. I liked how the perspective swapped back and forth so I could get to know each of them equally well. There are some sad realistic things in the story, but the tone remains light throughout.

In the end there were a few things left unresolved, but I noticed that a second book is coming out so I assume it will pick up and give some explanations.

Fun and tantalizing historical romance that will appeal to the foodie romance lovers who like their stories set in the past along with those who just enjoy spicy Victorian era romances.

Eilis Flynn says

This book had me wandering around looking for baked goods I had never heard of! Marquess of Cake by Heather Hiestand had me beguiled (I have a feeling that I got that word from the book) with this cute story about a woman who wants to work for a living, a handsome noble who has a sweet tooth, and a bakery filled with items most of which I had never heard of (but hope I can someday find in a bakery somewhere, because they do sound way too tasty). YUM!

Celeste says

I really wanted to like this story, but the storyline jumped constantly and I have trouble placing the when and where. As for the historical timeline, the propriety seemed way off. When all is done the story help my interest.

Jenny Q says

3.5 Stars. I wanted to read this the moment I saw it. I have a huge sweet tooth, and I thought the premise of this one sounded adorable. And it was. Pastries and romance and a dashing marquess — could there be a

sweeter combination?

Alys Redcake is perfectly happy with her life. She's quite happy to be past marriageable age and able to focus on her passion: her father's growing bakery business. As the chief decorator and maker of special occasion cakes, Alys's services are in demand among the Ton. She's proud to be a working woman, whether or not it is deemed unfashionable, and proud to have a measure of independence and a sense of purpose. But all of that changes when Michael Shield, the Marquess of Hatbrook, falls in love with her Scotch trifle, and her father decrees it's time for Alys to marry and settle into family life. Suffocated by her parents, a war-wounded brother, two sisters — one chronically ill and the other chronically husband hunting — and faced with a future saddled to a man she doesn't love and banished from her beloved bakery, the charming and handsome marquess who can't get enough of her sweets and wants to sample her more personal delights is becoming more appealing by the day. Perhaps a partnership with Michael, illicit and inappropriate though it may be at first, could provide a pleasurable solution to her dilemma and allow her to have her cake and eat it too!

I thought *The Marquess of Cake* was super cute in the beginning, and I loved the sexual tension and honest banter between Alys and Michael, but just at the point they really came together, the large cast of supporting characters and a couple of subplots rose up to detract from the development of Alys and Michael's relationship, which ended up centering more on Alys's efforts to make Michael cut back on sweets for his health and Michael's seemingly sudden desire to stifle the independence and intelligence that had drawn him to Alys in the first place. So while the book started off very strongly, I thought the plot and romance development fizzled out a bit and didn't live up to its full potential. But it was still an enjoyable read, something different, something sexy, and quite satisfying in the end.

Originally reviewed for the Romantic Historical Fiction Lovers blog

Maggie Lynch says

I was fortunate that this book was available at Net Galley and I was approved to review it in advance of release. First, let me say that if you read this and you are on a diet, you will likely stray. So be forewarned.

There are so many clever pieces in this mixture of family drama with light romance. The Marquess of Hatbrook has a sweet tooth that has caused him to frequent Redcake's Tea Shop and Emporium. Of course this leads to a mutual attraction and a delicious romance between the Marquess and the Emporium's owner, Alys. The romance is even more delicious than the cakes (or maybe that is simply because I don't have a sweet tooth but love a good romance).

The author does a great job presenting the Victorian era and its dictates around marriage, owning or running businesses, class, and society. She also inserts plenty of tension with difficulties between various family members--some of them not very nice. The other thing I like in her characterizations is that she does not make Michael, The Marquess, out to be perfect. He makes mistakes and some decisions are not ones I liked to see. However, that made him so much more real and the relationship between Michael and Alys even sweeter.

One of the more interesting character attributes, and thus possible tension, is that the Marquess is hypoglycemic. This means that Michael is unconsciously dealing with his low blood sugar levels by eating sweets. I admit, I'm not a physician so I don't really understand the difference between a diagnosis of

hypoglycemia vs diabetes. In both cases, the blood sugar needs to be regulated or normalized. The way that Alys identifies Michael's problem and addresses it really adds to the romance and bodes well for a forever after relationship.

Overall, I enjoyed *The Marquess of Cake*. It was a nice combination of romance, drama, and entertainment. I believe the Redcake series will be fun to follow.

Rating: 4.5

Kimberly says

3.5 stars - My review cross-posted from Wit and Sin: <http://witandsin.blogspot.com/2013/06...>

Michael Shield, Marquess of Hatbrook, has a sweet tooth, which is why Redcake's Tea Shop and Emporium is his favorite place in London. It doesn't hurt that Michael's also captivated by cakie Alys Redcake. Alys has no interest in anything other than decorating cakes and working at her family's business, but that doesn't stop Michael from pursuing her. The attraction is mutual and when Michael decides he needs to marry, he can't picture anyone other than Alys as his bride. Can he convince her to be as passionate about a life with him as she is about the cakes she bakes?

Don't start *The Marquess of Cake* when you're hungry, or Alys's creations will have you hunting for pastry in the middle of the night. Even if you don't have a sweet tooth like Michael, *The Marquess of Cake* is still delicious thanks to Alys and Michael's romance.

Alys is a woman who was raised to work hard and her family's rising fortune has turned her world upside down. Alys is happy being a spinster and decorating cakes, but her father is determined she marry and there's nothing she can do to change his mind. I appreciated Alys's passion for her work and it saddened me a bit that conventions of the Victorian era dictated she had to give a lot of that up, even though Michael does come up with a compromise for her. The titular marquess is a handsome hero with a taste for Scotch trifle. What was most interesting about Michael (to me) was that Heather Hiestand made him hypoglycemic. The way Alys came to recognize his health problem (though obviously it was never named or formally diagnosed, given the time period) and how she and Michael ultimately addressed it made *The Marquess of Cake* unique, in my opinion.

Aside from the romance, *The Marquess of Cake* has family drama aplenty. I admit, I wasn't very fond of Alys's sisters, particularly toward the end of the book, and I really had to question Michael's judgment given his choice of friends. I was, however, interested in Michael's sister, Beth, Alys's twin brother, Gawain, and her cousin, Lewis. All in all I found *The Marquess of Cake* to be a highly entertaining read and I'm looking forward to the next book in the Redcakes series.

Christine says

I love reading stories from this era. You throw food into the mix and a great set of characters = a storyline that sucks you in and leaves you wanting more. I could not put this book down and stayed up until 4am

reading it. Alys and her interesting family are a great match for Michael and his family. Their connection was so deep and powerful that I could feel it resonate within. I am glad to know there will be another book. Trifle or scone anyone?

Thank you NetGalley for providing this book to read.
