



A Love by Any Measure

Killian McRae

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An Irish lass. An English lord.

A love that overcomes all boundaries, but at what cost?

Lord August Grayson, English landlord, has secretly, and much to the dismay of his father, held in reverence the object of his first fancy: poor Irish tenant Maeve O'Connor. Returning to the Ireland for the first time since his youth, August discovers that Maeve has grown into a woman of beauty and tenacity. August understands, however, that he could offer Maeve nothing but shame if her pursued her. But when circumstances allow him an opportunity to indulge his fancy, even if only in a limited scope, August finds himself unable to resist the temptation.

Maeve, for her part, knows the danger falling for August holds, but finds her heart and her good senses becoming confused the longer she spends in his company. As two hearts become hopelessly entangled, both Maeve and August are forced to question the costs of their love. As consequences of their romance manifest, both struggle with the pain and difficulties their love causes, both for them and for their loved ones.

Killian McRae's delve into historical romance will challenge reader's presumptions of the genre. A title garnering controversy due to McRae's preference towards historical truth versus genre-standard "love despite the realities of the day" perspectives, it asks at what cost winning love is justified. "A Love by Any Measure" is an exploration of a romance that strives to overcome divisions of cultural, socio-economic, and religious differences in an era where options for lovers in such situations were limited.

A Love by Any Measure Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Killian McRae

Format :

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review A Love by Any Measure for online ebook

Alexis *Reality Bites* says

FREE TODAY 8-16-13 on Amazon link: <http://amzn.com/B005YN747A>

Spoiler Free Review AWESOME HISTORICAL ROMANCE!!!

4.5 STARS out of 5

Genre: Historical Romance

Setting: Ireland

This book starts with an arrangement. Maeve O'Connor has lived on Middle Lake in her families cottage her whole life. Her family has been there for generations and she one day hopes to raise her children on this land. Her mother has passed away so it is now just her and Rory, her father. They are currently behind on rent. When Maeve goes to see the middle man for an extension when she runs into Lord Grayson himself. The land owner.

The two make an arrangement one that puts Maeve's reputation and virginity at risk.

"We have an understanding then?"

Lord Grayson sneered as his prideful, bemused eyes took in her frame from tip to toe. It might as well have been his hands that catalogued her every feature, so astute was his examination.

Maeve shuddered at the thought. His hands. With that to which she had just agreed it wouldn't be long, she supposed, until his hands and not just his eyes explored her on all sides and in all measures.

As children August Grayson and Maeve O'Connor were best friends. They ran and played along the country side until the day of the kiss. On that day everything changed.

As adults society and it's standards keep these two apart for he is an English Lord and she is just a poor Irish commoner. Well society kept them apart up until the minute Maeve came looking for an extension and August took advantage of her situation. He jumps at the opportunity to have Maeve, but can we blame him? After all he is in love with her.

He has secrets he knows this is wrong, he would be taking advantage of her.

She knows she should not do this, she is engaged to be married.

However the two agree anyway. Starting a web of lies and betrayal that will cause nothing but broken hearts and pain all the way around.

And just when you think the pain has subsided something happens that causes more pain and brings death.

Words are spoken

Mistakes are made

Betrayal comes in and wrecks havoc. AGAIN.

Thoughts

If you are in to Historical Romance then you need to read this book. I thoroughly enjoyed it. This book challenges tradition and boundaries set by society. It shows how obtuse and ignorant people can be. The bigotry alone had me foaming at the mouth in anger.

No worries I got my HEA! And it was BEAUTIFUL because love has no boundaries!!!!

I loved this book! Read it!!!

My Ratings

Characters- Lovable
Writing Style- Good
Plot/Storyline- Savory
Steam Factor- Medium/Moderately steamy
Overall- I loved it! Read it!!!

Now go forth and read. Then tell us all about it on Goodreads!

Tessamari ♥Many Waters...♥ ~ Sweet Spot Book Blog says

4.75-5 Stars

"I love you: beyond rich, beyond poor, beyond lord and peasant, Anglican and Catholic, Irish and English. Beyond any measure of time or wealth or ruin, I love you. No greater truth has ever been spoken." ~ Lord August Grayson

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I don't even know how to begin this review. So I'll start with the following: I absolutely LOVED it. Definitely one of the best HR stories I've ever read. I'm actually sad the journey is over, but what a ride this was. The love story between August and Maeve was both tragic and beautiful. We get to see glimpses of their past, present and future. The jumping back and forth between time periods was a little difficult to get use to, but the story it weaved was unbelievable. It was one epic journey that leads to one heck of an ending.

The following may contain spoilers

"We are all equal in the sight of God. It is only in the eyes of man that we find the faults of this world within." ~ August Grayson

August Grayson is an English Lord. Maeve O'Connor is an Irish peasant. Their paths crossed one summer when they were just teenagers. August's father returned to Ireland, where he brought his Irish wife, Eliza, home to die. As young as August was around this time, he was unaware of this reason.

August and Maeve were best friends and spent the majority of the summer at Middle Lake at Maeve's home. The following is how Maeve's mother, Sine, described August:

~ He had been kind, though fiercely inquisitive, and she hadn't failed to notice the way he followed her daughter around like a puppy to its master.

~ Then came the day when August's gaze fell upon her daughter with a new softness, a sense of reverence that she had understood at once with tempered fret.

After the passing of his mother, August disappeared. While everyone was in search of him, Maeve knew exactly where to find him. August was overcome with emotion when Maeve found him. All the feeling he had towards his mother and Maeve came crashing down on him. He kissed her for the very first time. Upon their arrival, August's father was disgusted to find that his son was in company of an Irish peasant girl. Aiming to please his father, August dismisses Maeve, breaking both their hearts.

Fast forward ten years to the present. Lord August Grayson is back in Ireland. He owns the land that Maeve and her father reside on. Maeve is behind on their rent and makes a deal with the Lord. ***"You and your father can stay in your little cottage on my property as long as you present yourself to me when summoned. Whenever, without qualification."*** This is for *his* pleasure. Though she is engaged to the local blacksmith, Owen, she reluctantly agrees.

"Our first time together will last five seconds, ten the next, then twenty, and so on, doubling each time."

Time doesn't begin until August touches her cheek and measures the encounter with the tick of the clock in his chamber. Talk about taking things slow and sweet. The electricity between the two just escalates with each passing encounter. Holy mother of God, the tension was unbelievably hot. Good Lord! Poor Maeve, she tries to resist, but it's futile. These two cannot resist each other. They try to keep their arrangement secret, even coming up with a unique excuse, but everyone has their suspicions. However, with Maeve and her pristine reputation, no one questions her. But how long can their arrangement last? How does August react when Maeve and Owen actually set a date for the wedding? "Oh my God" and "poor Owen" are all I have to say about that. August definitely gives Maeve something to think about. She has to make a decision and her choice is life altering.

When we get glimpses into the future, we start to form our own conclusions on how things will play out. It's like you knew where it was going, then it would immediately take various twists and turns and you're left second guessing yourself. It was one hell of a ride, let me tell you. The shockers seemed to come out of nowhere, without any warnings. There so many ****GASP!**** moments, my heart and mind were on the brink of overdrive. The ending totally came out of left field. I totally didn't see any of that coming. Don't worry, it was happy, just surprising. Anyway sorry for the lengthy review, but I just LOVED this story and can go on forever about it. It's safe to say that I highly recommend it :)

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Pam Godwin says

In general, I don't like historical romance, but I'm damn glad I checked out this one. So many things can pierce through the heart of love and destroy it. Jealousy--especially in stories like this one--is the most painful weapon, and it seldom misses its target. I felt this wound lance open when August brought Maeve to England. The depth of the blow was agonizing as it became clear the kind of role Maeve would have to play to stay with August. Betrayal, uncertainty, humiliation, and the damned British decorum...these were just a few things knotting up my insides as the story unfolded. Being a linear thinker, I struggled with how KM scrambled the past and present. I had to make an effort to remember dates so I could keep track of which time period I was in. I don't see the advantage in taking the scenes out of chronological order, but by the second half, it no longer mattered. The tension and action in the conclusion was brilliant. I cheered, I cried, I chewed all my nails off. My favorite scene was in the jail at the end when Maeve asked the drunken inmate, "What did you steal?" He laughed lowly. "Time." My heart jumped to my throat and stayed there for days. This was my first McRae novel. Won't be my last.

Miranda says

Killian has become one of my favorite authors and with ALBAM she did not disappoint. I love the detail she puts into her characters bringing them to life on paper. I believe that if you can picture a story playing as a movie in your head as you read it then the author has done their job. Killian creates worlds that are easy to escape to and ALBAM brings you into 1860's Ireland and as a woman you become the main character Maeve as she endeavors to save her family home by any measure necessary even if it means giving herself to the man who broke her heart years before. I love stories where you watch the characters slowly discover their love for each other and the concept of the "arrangement" begins that journey.

As always Killian's ability to combine fact w/ fiction is what I think I love the most ie. "the Boston fire". It brings the story even more to life.

ALBAM is one of those books you can't put down because you can't wait to see what happens during the next encounter of Maeve and August. At the end of each encounter you are left wanting more.

Congratulations to Killian on a good read! Can't wait for your next book ;)

Natasha says

"A Love by any Measure" is my first Killian McRae" and I have to say, I really enjoyed it. So much, that I had to take it to work with me so I could read a few pages during my breaks. I always wanted to know what happens next.

The characters were charming and memorable, interesting and even witty. Maeve O'Connor is a respectable young lady that works hard for those she cares about. She'll do anything to help her father and when they end up short on rent for their cottage, she does the only thing she could do. Ask for help. She meets with the owner of the cottage to try and get an extension, but he wants more than that. He wants her.

At first, I wasn't fond of the idea of her pay off her rent through a sexual way, but the author wrote it properly, so that it made it intriguing.

August was a fantastic character. Yes, he was a jerk for a good part of the book, but we found out his reasons. He cared deeply for Maeve, it was obvious, at least most of the time. But he went about things all wrong. I guess, when you grow up a certain way, it's the only way you know.

One things I have to point out is the cover. It was beautiful and unique and the material was so soft. Almost like a plastic silicon? It feels great.

As for the storyline, I really enjoyed it, but at times was a little confused with the chapter/time changes. It would jump back and forth with some chapters, that made it a very interesting read, but also a bit harder to read along with. I ended getting into the groove of the writing and really enjoyed it, but I have to admit, it took a few chapters.

Another small annoyance was the typos. "Pobodys Nerfect", but it can be a bit annoying when you have to read a sentence over a few times to get the jest. There weren't many and it doesn't discourage you from the main part- the story- one bit. I just thought I'd let it known. Many novels have typos, but this one I noticed, more so than others. *shrugs* It was still a great read that I recommend to all historical romance lovers.

This was a sweet, emotional read that will have you laughing and crying. I hope to read more historical romances by this author!

April says

I wanted to like this book, I really did. The problem was that I couldn't find anything to like about the two main characters. All those ideas of love being patient and kind, those do not apply in this book. Our couple demonstrates their love through blackmail, emotional torment, jealousy, disloyalty, and sexual manipulation. We are meant to believe that pure and upstanding Maeve is only led to the dark side because of her inability to resist August, but all I could think was that pure and upstanding gals do not agree to sexual blackmail, they find another way to make things work. We are also meant to believe that August is damaged by his childhood and that his Daddy issues have made him the hardened man he is. I felt like his actions were childish and ridiculous, from hot to cold in the blink of an eye. I love historical fiction and when I read the premise I was so excited. Having read the book I would file it under Romance, but not romantic Romance. There is more description of the sex than the characters themselves. This book was a real disappointment to me,

Erin says

Wow, this book really took me by surprise!! I've read more romance stories than I could possibly name, but only a handful have been historical romances. I generally don't gravitate towards them because the romance is so muted and tame compared to contemporary and paranormal romance books, but Killian McRae has proven me wrong with this beautiful story!! *A Love by Any Measure* was an emotion-driven, passionate tale of forbidden love and the lengths one would go to in order to find their way back to it.

The tone for this book changes dramatically as the story plays out. When we first meet Maeve and August, she's on the verge of losing the cottage she shares with her father and is desperate to keep it. Enter August, once a childhood friend and now wealthy English landlord with an offer Maeve wants to refuse but can't. An Irish peasant with few options at her disposal, she is to make herself available for his time (precisely and frustratingly measured by the ticking clock) when he sees fit, and they can stay in their meager home. But the crass, crude, and admittedly alluring August who forces his way back into Maeve's life slowly lets down his walls. We see Maeve and August evolve from emotionally distant admirers forced back together by her station in life, to two long-lost loves determined to find their way back to each other, and throughout their journey there are hidden secrets, mysterious twists, ill-fated lovers, and passionate stolen moments that set the tone for a story that never ceases to keep you guessing and captivated.

The really was such an exquisite story; McRae's painstakingly accurate detail of the period (mid-late 1800's) makes you feel enmeshed in the life of the time, and the plight of the characters grabs at your heart. Maeve's struggles as a poor Irish lass trying to make a life for herself felt so real, and as she wraps her mind around marrying blacksmith Owen Murphy despite her lack of feelings for the man, you can't help but wish better for her. The ways of their society made marrying someone of a higher station in life difficult at best, and even though she and August have such a deep connection, he knows he can't give her the happy life she deserves. But the passion they share can't be denied, and from their short interludes to the moments they finally give in to their attraction, it was sexy!

When the truth comes out about a decision August made in the past, it threatens to loosen any hold he had on Maeve completely, and she is forced to make choices of her own that tear their world apart. McRae gives glimpses of the past and present leading up to these events, allowing the reader to have a unique perspective on what happened to these lovers presumably destined to be apart. It was heartbreaking, and seeing what they had to go through all due to ridiculous narrow societal views was maddening. It's unsettling what they had to endure and what terrible turns fate took in order for them to find a way to be together, but in the end there was no doubt their hearts belonged to each other. It was a bittersweet end, but it was beautiful and worth the wait to see what would happen to these memorable characters!

You can also find my review at: <http://www.autumnreview.com/2012/12/a...>

Sandra says

My review of this book was deleted. The below is a review of the book with spoilers.

This book is a rewritten Twilight fanfiction called *Twice As Long As Yesterday*. ~~Edward Cullen~~ August Grayson is the Lord of some manor in Ireland during the 1800s, and ~~Isabella Swan~~ Maeve O'Connor is a tenant on the property, with her aging father. When she can't pay the rent, the Lord offers her another way of payment by giving him unfettered access to her for a specific amount of time, that doubles with each consequent visit. She is engaged to be married to some other guy, and the Lord is married to some chick back in England.

When the Lord returns to England, he takes ~~Bella~~ Maeve with him as his servant/governess/whatever, and they carry on the affair because his wife is ill. He also has a small child for which ~~Bella~~ Maeve begins to care.

I don't recall the intricate details of the plot, but the wife dies or something, ~~Bella~~ Maeve runs off to America, the jilted fiance helps her out when she gets to Boston, and she's accused of kidnapping the child and gets thrown in jail.

After much ado, ~~Edward~~ August and ~~Bella~~ Maeve escape to the frontier where they eventually get married.

The writing is juvenile at best, with too many superfluous details that should have been left out and/or shortened. The story is convoluted and hard to follow.

Not worth the bother.

Alisha says

Quick Take:

Fans of sprawling, epic romances are bound to love this book. I loved the emotional buildup of the first half, but had trouble buying into the plot developments of the second. It's not for the impatient, nor for those who prefer that their main characters be without deep flaws and baggage. But by golly, it's a fascinating story.

Review:

I'm kind of in awe of Killian McRae. How she comes up with her book concepts, I don't know. But she's definitely adept at taking a simple premise and making it into something epic. She did it in her debut novel, 12.21.12 (the title of which some give a clue about the topic). Here in *A Love by Any Measure*, she takes the idea of a single bargain between two people, and slaps some legs on that puppy to take it across many years and many locations. Don't be fooled by the fact that there's only a line or so at the end of the blurb above that hints at complex intrigue. All told, this book is nothing if not epic.

Having a basic familiarity with Irish history during the latter half of the 19th century, while not required, provides some added import to the motivations and behaviors of the book's characters. Even without prior knowledge of the historical events, it's very clear that identity and social standing had very special importance to people of this era, for various reasons. And it's because of the status and identity that August Greyson begins the whole thread of his bargain with Maeve O'Connor.

August and Maeve's interactions in the first section of this book are positively addictive. Maeve detests the man, and yet she's drawn to him. August seems like a right jackass for even starting his agreement, and while his narrative perspective is not revealed until well into the book, his motivations are so complex, his feelings much more than might be initially assumed. I loved the interplay between the two, which lived somewhere on that thin line between love, anger, and lust. Quite compelling, emotionally turbulent stuff.

I very much appreciated that it was difficult to guess what might come next. Just when an expectation was starting to form, it'd be blown away by some unseen plot development. In the first half of the book, such twists grabbed be and kept me glued to the page. I must admit, however, that some of those same types of developments in the second half of the book made be a bit exasperated more than anything else. ^_^

As a matter of fact, I'd mentally separated the book into two halves. Whereas the first half feels more intimate and character-based, on a smaller scale and arguably more realistic, the second half is very much a huge, sensational tale. (Think *The Matrix* as compared to *The Matrix Revolutions*.) Given the relative realism of the first section, the second felt a bit theatrical, and I had trouble buying into the story and accepting that the characters would behave they did. The second half also has what I like to call "Tarantino-style" plot development; punchline first, explanation much later. (If you've seen the film *Pulp Fiction*, you'll know what I mean. ^_^) As such, it required a good dose of patience to get through. All told, if someone were to tell me that the two halves of *A Love* were in fact different books, I'd believe them in a minute.

I wouldn't count the aforementioned reservations as a reason not the read the book, however. I'd simply say that one should be patient enough to let the story unfold as it does. Overall, it's a touching and very powerful love story. It's got so much range that one is bound to be caught in some part of its spell.

Martha says

I kept hearing what a good book *A Love by Any Measure* was. I took the chance and when I started reading I was hooked. I must admit that as I read through the table of contents I didn't understand why the timeframe jumped around. But I decided to jump into it and was very glad I did.

August appears to be a heartless Englishman who had no use for the Irish except to work his lands or tend to his home, even though he had the Irish of his mother in him. This attitude he had learned from his father who was an Englishman. But then there was Maeve. The Irish lass he was forced to leave behind so long ago and could not forget. The young girl who stole his heart with the kiss he placed on her lips in his time of grief.

The young woman who, he discovered quite to his dismay upon his return to Ireland, was engaged to someone else, someone who could provide for her and her father.

This is a beautiful story of discovery, mistakes, sacrifice, and most of all forgiveness. As you read it you wonder if the ending will be a happy one or if you should prepare yourself for the heartbreak that often accompanies stories like these.

I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who is an avid romance reader.

Debra Anastasia says

That got me addicted to this author's writing. Such a wonderful, gripping romance. The elegance and fire in this book is epic. You really deserve this book on your kindle. And Lord Grayson? *flop* he is so dreamy.

Searock says

2.5 stars

This was an enjoyable read, but I had too many issues with it to rate a full 3 stars.

The book feels quite uneven between the first and second halves and several contrivances irritated me. There is a Big Ol' Useless Mis Of The Worst Sort in here (my least favorite device) so it *must be punished* with half point loss.

Otherwise, I enjoyed the tropes and several elements of the story, yet for every bit I loved, there was a pesky ridiculousness in the execution that killed my buzz.

I'll be checking other stuff the author may have written. If she relies less on the okey doke set ups and false conflicts (and one incredibly unrealistic throwaway character in (view spoiler)), she has great potential. I thought some of the foreshadowing was well done and her choice to jump the timeline at a pivotal point was fairly brilliant.

I think this was my biggest issue: The author seemed to be taking on an ambitious historical context and I thought she wanted to portray an impossible love affair between two characters from hostile cultures and different classes. However, much of that went undeveloped as creating a rather kooky plot surprise or two took precedence. All of the potential horror and drama was somehow smoothed over while other conflict was manufactured.

Oh well, if you only read it for the unique language this author uses in sensual encounters, it will likely be worth it.

One warning though, for those sensitive to issues of premarital, post-marital, no-marital, co-marital, multi-marital (lol) not saying what, if, when or how outside of the spoiler.

(view spoiler)

Melissa says

Wow. Just WOW.

Theoretically speaking, anybody in possession of a pen and paper can *write*, but just because you put ink on a page doesn't mean you are a **writer**. I didn't know what to expect when I started this book, but I took a chance and all I could think after finishing was...

HOW IN THE H-E-DOUBLE L DID I NOT READ THIS SOONER?!?!?!

I'm seriously *perplexed*.

For whatever reason, Killian McRae has been a rather elusive author to me in the Goodreads world and I am about to rectify that. This was an utterly fantastic piece of Historical Fiction/Romance and I most definitely consider it a favorite of mine and will probably read it multiple times over the next several years. Her talent is so extraordinary that I am seriously in awe. I went to bed last night with the most amazing **Happily Ever After** resting in the confines of my mind and my toes curled over in absolute glee. This story is so *beautiful*.

You basically have 3 main players in this book Miss Maeve O'Connor, Lord August Grayson and Mr. Owen Murphy. The time is set in the mid 1800's and takes place between Ireland, England and New England with a brief encounter into the West of the Americas. And I devoured every single sentence.

There were times that I was in love with August, hated August, back in love with August, wanted to KILL August, sort of liked August, understood August, didn't understand August, was ANGRY at August, only to fall head-over-heels back in LOVE with August. It was an adventure. Killian kept surprising me at every turn and I found 90% of the plot to be completely unpredictable, which I loved! It definitely held much more intrigue, mystery and drama than I was ever expecting. Just when I thought I knew where she was taking me, she'd throw on the e-brake and we'd be heading in the opposite direction. It was mind-boggling!!

The beginning of the book has a lot more *heat* than I was expecting and which generally isn't my style when picking up books, but it really sets you up to understand everything that would come to pass between August, Maeve and Owen. And I think that's what I love most about this book. Killian had every single piece of her "puzzle plot" completely in line with each other and perfectly connected. Her entire story line was so well-thought and planned to such minutiae that it was no wonder she took 3 years to write it! It was fantastic to put it all together piece by piece. I felt that my brain was constantly unlocking secret doors to new information every time she began a chapter. The timeline she choose to use in telling her story was perfect as well. I did find it odd that she jumped back and forth from present to future, but after awhile I realized I didn't have to pay attention to the dates to keep up. It just all made sense.

First Line: "We have an understanding then."

Favorite Line: Why didn't Guinevere have a baby then, if that's what Arthur needed? "Perhaps they didn't do it enough," August returned with a slight blush on his cheeks. But Maeve was more confused still. "Do what?" August smirked, "It, Maeve."

Funniest Line: "Do you ever get used to Patty making jokes about you whacking your log all day?"

(british/irish humor is hilarious)

Last Line: Every day, I love you more. *Mo Maeve, mo chroi.* My heart.

I recommend this book for anyone who enjoys the following:

1. Historical Fiction
2. Intense plot lines that keep you guessing
3. Experiencing a ton of emotions towards your Main Characters
4. Great, Epic LOVE STORIES!!!

Morgan says

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE REVIEWS AT READING, EATING AND DREAMING I WAS BLAIR WALDORF](#)

What can I say about *A Love by Any Measure* by Killian McRae?

It's a beautiful, emotional rollercoaster ride that takes readers on a journey they will never forget. It's a lovely story that transports readers back in time. It's a romance novel about a love that runs deep and true, but isn't accepted by society. It's about the obstacles that two people must overcome and the unforgivable circumstances they must forgive in order to be together. It's a breathtaking, jaw-dropping story that needs to be read by everyone.

This story made me laugh, cry, and SCREAM! Yes, scream! There were times when I was so frustrated with the hero that I wanted to punch someone in the face. (Luckily for my boyfriend, I refrained.) That may sound like a bad thing, but it's not. I love books that make me feel every emotion. Books that make me feel everything are the books that I'll remember five years from now, and this is definitely one of those books. It's intense. It's romantic. It's memorable.

I gave *A Love by Any Measure* by Killian McRae 4 STARS. I loved this historical romance novel, and I strongly recommend it to mature young adults and adults.

-XOXO

READING, EATING AND DREAMING

Meg says

Believe me, I'm sorry to say...

I read a number of good reviews for this book and was so excited to read it. Sadly, not at all what I was hoping. It jumps right into the story, but became less engaging as I read. The pacing was odd, moving too quickly to share a moment with the characters. I wanted to be sad, angry, and in love with them but I wasn't able to connect enough to do so. The only thing I know is that they're in love... even though all they do is lie and manipulate each other and almost everyone else.

The biggest challenge for me is that neither Maeve nor August was likable or realistic, making it difficult for me to believe their love. By the end, I almost hate August (and not in a love-to-hate, Mr.Darcy-style way). He is so cruel and manipulative that even when viewing him through her loving eyes, all I see is an abusive, distant, controlling aristocrat that she willingly (inexplicably) follows into an unhealthy relationship. Overall, I'm so disappointed that it's not for me - I need a strong female character who is driven by love but respects herself enough to walk away when she's treated so poorly.
