



## A Historical Christmas Present

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*Throughout the ages, Christmas has been a time of love and rejoicing. Now, from Dorchester Publishing, comes a selection of three classic tales to warm the hearts of historical romance readers everywhere.*

RITA Award-winning "I Will"

LISA KLEYPAS

When a Georgian bluestocking is propositioned by a rakish noble, she finds the unlikely deal he proposes is the gift of a lifetime.

"Three French Hens"

LYNSAY SANDS

A twelfth-century scullion gets the chance to play a lady's maid--and win the true love of an impoverished lord.

"Father Christmas"

LEIGH GREENWOOD

Delivering a young widow's baby during the holiday season transforms the heart of a lonely drifter in the nineteenth-century Arizona Territory

## A Historical Christmas Present Details

Date : Published October 1st 2008 by Love Spell (first published August 31st 2008)

ISBN : 9780505527882

Author : Lisa Kleypas , Lynsay Sands , Leigh Greenwood

Format : Paperback 305 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Holiday, Christmas, Anthologies

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# From Reader Review A Historical Christmas Present for online ebook

## Carmen says

I just read the Kleypas novella in the anthology, as she is a favorite of mine. She rarely disappoints and her regency romances are some of the best ever written. Her scorching heroes never fail to pleasure their ladies ;D

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## Shawna says

5++ stars – Historical Romance

\*\*\*\*\*Rating is for *I Will* by Lisa Kleypas, only.\*\*\*\*\*

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## Aoi says

\* Rating only for Lisa Kleypas' contribution.. What a pleasure to read her work again!

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## Elizabeth Bennet says

This was a fun read to put you in the mood for the upcoming holiday. The first book begs the reader to answer the question of rather a 26 year old spinster to win the heart of a well known rogue. Lord Drake is all that is improper but in this read he has to appear the opposite in order to gain his inheritance. No better way to convince his father than asking Caroline Hargreaves with her sparkling reputation to bring home his sham. -Lisa Kleypas, "I will"

The second is by Lynsay sands and while I've loved books by her in the past. I really missed her humor she usually injects in her story. This is a nice story about a a scullery maid posing above her station. Brinna does it to give an easier life for Aggie but of course Royce steals her heart. He is a good man trying to better his peoples situation. The ending was a happy one but over the top mushy. I know that sounds bad but it wrapped up to fast even when the deception gets revealed at the end. - "Three French Hens"

the last book was the only clean story out of the three and so sweet. I never read a book from Leigh Greenwood but I enjoyed this one. When I think of the holidays children always come to mind. This a story of a pregnant widow and her step daughter. Her late husbands partner is on the run but falsely accused. While looking for a buried treasure on the ranch he manages to win the heart of the ladies and the animals on the ranch. Its just a heart warming, feel good story for the season. "Father Christmas" delivers Joe into Mary and young Sarah's life and it still leaves its effects in my heart. I'm a sucker when it comes to kids but one that has lost both of her parents but is now loved by two people not related to her by blood is so endearing to me. Enjoy your season!

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## **Crista says**

### **Reread on 11/23/12. I love this book! A must read for the Christmas season!**

Usually I do not bother to review anthologies. Takes too long and they are not usually worth writing about....This one being the exception to that rule.

For the price tag and quality of stories...you can't go wrong with this one.

It's tough, but Lisa Kleypas's RITA award winner "I Will" was my favorite. For those that read her pair of books *Somewhere I'll Find You* and *Because You're Mine*, you'll recognize the hero. He is Logan Scott's renegade half brother, Andrew, Lord Drake. This is a reformed rake story...my favorite. It has one of the most fun, interesting, imaginative, and sexy love scenes I've ever read...in a short story no less! I loved the heroine Caroline and how she goes about getting her man! I found myself reading portions of this story over and over. Andrew's reformation is sweet, convincing, and heartwarming.

Lynsay Sands, "Three French Horns" was the weakest of the bunch. It's kind of a Cinderella story with a twist ending. I appreciate Sand's humor, but often times her novels lack the depth of feeling that others do. However, only when reading Lynsay Sands have I ever laughed out loud uncontrollably! In this one, Royce, Lord Thurlough is never really developed enough for me to connect with him. Okay book....just not memorable like the other two are.

Leigh Greenwood delivers a special treat with "Father Christmas". If you like this one you have to read "Outsider" by Penelope Williamson. It has the same premise. A drifter comes into the life of a widow and her child and none are ever the same. Although Joe is definitely a bit rough around the edges, the way that he cares for Mary and Sarah had me choked up a few times. This story, out of all of them, seems to best capture the "feeling" of Christmas. A beautiful story of the making of a family.

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## **Linda says**

This is my review of Lisa's contribution to this anthology. (2 Wine Glasses)

Starts out as a light historical read... then takes some wrong turns...

"I can't conceive of what you could possibly want from me, Lord Drake," Caroline said crisply. "However, I can assure you that you won't get it."

*I Will: A Christmas Novella* by Lisa Kleypas starts out as a light historical read. I recently discovered Lisa's books and, when I saw this one available at our library within the *A Historical Christmas Present* anthology, I snapped it up. For your reference, it was also available in a second anthology, *A Christmas to Remember*. Regardless, it's now available as a stand alone novella. It's touted as a Christmastime tale, but the holiday portion doesn't occur until the last chapter and consists of just two pages. This is the story of spinster Miss Caroline Hargreaves and rogue Lord Andrew Drake.

Caroline is unwed by choice. I like that she wears glasses which are mentioned in the story multiple times. Her brother and her annoying mother are supporting characters.

Andrew is a cad. He gambles and drinks and associates with other male and female scoundrels. At the beginning, when he is imbibing heavily, he is bloated and sports bloodshot eyes with dark circles - Not a very sexy picture. To his credit, he's actually very honorable towards our heroine throughout.

I had a few issues with this story that just didn't work for me. I am fairly open-minded and have read other scenes similar to the one I'm about to mention which didn't bother me. But, there's a sexual assault scene where the heroine takes racy liberties with the unwilling hero while he is tied to a bed. The key here is that the interaction was nonconsensual.

Secondly, the hero goes incommunicado near the end - his cowardly solution to the very real blackmail dilemma he found himself in.

And, finally, the heroine has let her slutty cousin get away with murder for years.

Following please find a few of my favorite quotes from *I Will: A Christmas Novella*:

"Stop me," he muttered, clamping his hand over her writhing bottom. "Tell me to let go of you... Slap me...."

She tilted her head back, purring like a kitten as he nuzzled the soft space beneath her ear. "Where should I slap you?" she asked throatily.

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"And the way you dress reminds me of an unmade bed!"

"Does that mean you'd like to lie on top of me?" he asked.

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"Now stay back," he added curtly, "or you're going to lose your virginity in this damned garden."

This is a well-written quick read that provides a HEA finish of sorts. The story is fleshed out well and doesn't feel rushed until the very end when everything slams into place bizarrely, way too fast and too conveniently. While I don't regret reading this, I'd not recommend it. If you do choose to read it, stop reading after Caroline's interview with Andrew's father. At that point, there's a happy ever after without all the funky that comes afterwards. IF you do that, it's a fun little romp!

My review of *I Will* is published at Reading Between the Wines Book Club. Please check it out there: <http://www.readingbetweenthewinesbook...>

*Three French Hens* by Lynsay Sands (4 Wine Glasses)

Previously published in the print anthologies *Five Gold Rings* and *A Historical Christmas Present*.

Careful what you wish for...

*Three French Hens* by Lynsay Sands is an entertaining festive historical novella. I read it within *A Historical Christmas Present* anthology in which it was one of three stories. It's a standalone read not related to any series. This sweet romance details what happens when two women – a scullery maid and a spoiled highborn lady - switch identities. Lady Joan wants to get out of a pre-arranged marriage. Brinna, the scullery maid, would like to help her elderly friend, Aggie, retire and not have to worry about finances. Brinna plays her

hand too well as, while playacting as Lady Joan, she falls in love with Lady Joan's betrothed, Royce, dooming Brinna to a broken heart.

I really liked both lead characters. They were caring and strong – both inside and out. Lady Joan was full of herself. I pity the man who ends up with her. Brinna's chaperone while impersonating Lady Joan was an entitled hoot. Some of the stories she told to justify Brinna's behavior as Brinna struggled with adapting to the different class norms were absolutely hilarious.

Following please find a few of my favorite quotes Three French Hens:

"Were you hurt? Is anything broken?"

"Nay." She signed wryly. "But the snow went up me skirts so far me arse is a block of ice."

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"She hurt her hand." Sabrina managed a frown. "Terrible, really. Awful accident. Sad. Horribly painful. She almost lost full use of her hand."

"Whatever happened?" he asked.

"Happened?" Sabrina blinked at the question, her face going blank briefly, then filling with desperation.

"She... er... she... er... pricked her finger doing embroidery!" she finished triumphantly, and Brinna nearly groaned aloud as what sounded suspiciously like a snort of laughter burst from Lord Thurleah.

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"Is everything all right, ladies?"

Sabrina whirled to face both men as they dismounted. "Oh, my, yes. Everything is fine. Why ever would you think otherwise?"

Brinna could just see Lord Thurleah's face as he arched one eyebrow, his lips appearing to struggle to hold back an amused smile. "Mayhap because Lady Joan has fallen in the snow?"

"Fallen?" Lady Sabrina's genuine horror seemed to suggest ladies simply did not do anything as embarrassing as fall off the back of the wagon into the snow.

She gasped, "Oh, nay. You must be mistaken, my lord. Why Lady Joan would never have fallen. She is the epitome of grace and beauty. She is as nimble as a fawn, as graceful as a swan. She is ---"

"Presently lying in the snow," Lord Thurleah pointed out dryly.

I was wracking my brain while inhaling this read, trying to figure out how the author was ever going to be able to provide Brinna and Royce the happy ending they deserved. I didn't see a way, but, I shouldn't have doubted her, as she pulled one off that left me happy as can be! If you enjoy escaping into quick, sweet and humorous Christmas romances, Three French Hens is a wonderful option!

Father Christmas by Leigh Greenwood - Still working on my review... (3 Wine Glasses)

Average of all three novellas: 3 Wine Glasses!

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## Kris says

only read it here and there, couldn't really get into it.

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## **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

A Historical Christmas Present lives up to its name with three enjoyable, Christmastime historical romance stories.

"I Will" is actually a favorite reread of mine. I think is my third time reading this story. I loved it just as much. I think that Ms. Kleypas found just the right story to bring the Christmas mood to this reader. This is a story about redemption and second chances. How hope comes in very unexpected packages, just like the baby born in a manger over two thousand years ago. Kleypas gives us the unredeemable rake and matches him up with a spinster who has the key to his very hidden heart. I loved both characters, even at their worst. Andrew has a ways to go, but love changes him, and his transformation takes place so believably in this 100 or so pages story, a testament to Ms. Kleypas' formidable writing skills. Of course this one gets five stars.

"Three French Hens" by Lynsay Sands is my least favorite story, but it has some stiff competition. This one is a medieval-set story that brings to mind "The Prince and the Pauper", where a lowly kitchen maid is talked into masquerading as a lady when Lady Joan is forced to spend time with her betrothed during holiday celebrations. Sands is known for her slapstick-type humor and some of that is on offer. It's a good story, although it doesn't quite feel as period as I would have liked. I think that she ties up the story very well, and I was happily surprised at the reveal near the end. It's a good story, so I'd give it 3.5 stars.

Leigh Greenwood ends this collection with a pleasing note with "Father Christmas". I have an enormous weakness for western historical romances, and this story reminded me of why I love them so much. Joe is a rough, gruff prison escapee with a heart of pure gold. The lovely ladies he gets charge of via his rascally deceased partner have him like a pile of mush in no time flat. Although love happens fast, it was completely credible. Joe never had a home, and he finds one with Mary, her stepdaughter Sarah, the baby she's expecting, and on their small ranch property. I just adored Joe, and Mary is a sweet, and likable heroine. I loved little Sarah, and I enjoyed how Samson, Joe's dog, his horse General Burnside, and even an ornery cow that Joe names Queen Charlotte also have pivotal roles in this beautiful little tale. I guess you can tell this is a five star read for me.

I was so happy to be able to fit this collection into my Christmas reads. It was an enjoyable book that definitely added to my Christmas mood. Thumbs up.

Overall rating: **4.3 stars/5.0 stars.**

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## **FlibBityFLoob says**

I really enjoyed the first two in this anthology by Kleypas and Sands, but I found the third story to be boring...

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## **Vashti says**

I WILL by Lisa Kleypas is the story that I read in this Christmas anthology.

This is the story of Andrew, Logan Scott's brother, one of my most favorite of LK's heroes.

Thoroughly enjoyed this little gem of a story. I love how Andrew constantly removes Caro's specs and cleans

them for her ,then gently places them back on.

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### **Ally72 says**

I just read the short story by Lisa Kleypas called "I Will." It was a lovely story about the brother of Logan Scott from Because You're Mine. I really liked the heroine in that book so it was fun getting a glimpse of what her life was like after the book ended. The heroine in this one was considered a bluestocking and a perfect match for the hero (once again Ms. Kleypas takes two different characters and fits them perfectly together). There were not a lot of redeeming qualities in the hero who started out as a rake...The kind that makes me think of my all time favorite one...Lord St. Vincent. This was a perfect short story to read just in time for Christmas!

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### **Christiana says**

I borrowed this from the library just to read LK's I Will. It's tied in with one of her older novels that I will need to read soon, about Logan Scott. I liked this short story but wasn't in love with it. I didn't feel that the heroine's background, upbringing and experiences would allow her to be so sexually forward so that was a leap for me. I liked the Hero more; his reformed rake transformation was similar to the story of Cold Hearted Rake. It's probably better than 3 stars except for the fact that LK somewhat reinvents similar heroes in her stories despite the fact that she writes beautifully. Didn't have time to read the other 2 stories.

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### **MelissaB says**

Kleypas story - 4 stars - sweet, nice story

Sands story - 3 stars - okay

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### **∅???? [Punya Reviews...] says**

Of course, for LK's "I Will". Originally read in the Wish List anthology. Haven't re-read in a while but I'm sure the stars will remain the same. Wish I had the time to add a review. :-<

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### **Kris says**

"I Will " by Lisa Kleypas: Eugh. I didn't get past the first chapter of this one. An ass of a hero holding the family's ruin over the heroine's head to get her to pretend to be his betrothed? Stirring members, tingly insides... I couldn't read it.

"Three French Hens" by Lynsay Sands: An unrealistic yet cute story of a serving girl persuaded to pretend



she is a lady, and (of course) falling in love with the hero.

"Father Christmas" by Leigh Greenwood: Another unrealistic yet cute story of a hero on the run, falling in love with a pregnant woman.

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