



The Fruitcake Challenge

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When new lumberjack, Tom Jeffries, tells the camp cook, Jo Christy, that he'll marry her if she can make a fruitcake, "as good as the one my mother makes," she rises to the occasion. After all, he's the handsomest, smartest, and strongest axman her camp-boss father has ever had in his camp—and the cockiest. And she intends to bring this lumberjack down a notch or three by refusing his proposal. The fruitcake wars are on!

The Fruitcake Challenge Details

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Author : Carrie Fancett Pagels

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From Reader Review The Fruitcake Challenge for online ebook

Betti says

As one who does not have a great appreciation for this delicacy, I wondered whether this story would keep my attention. Needless to say, it did much more than that. A very well written book, highlighting the beauty of the Mackinac area in Michigan, the author had me chuckling, shaking my head and laughing out loud! Set in a logging camp, something that was very prevalent in the 1890's, a challenge of some sort was nothing new, I'm sure. Who knew, however, that there were so many different variations of fruitcake? To promise to marry the cook if this fruitcake tastes as good as Mom's, certainly gave the cooks and the partakers of these lovely tidbits plenty of opportunities to try another new recipe. But will the challenge be met and conquered? Read on and learn to crave this lovely tradition.

Robin Willson says

A lovely tale set in the white pines of a lumber camp in early Michigan. Jo is the boss' lovely daughter and camp cook. She loves her family but wishes to break away for a life of her own. Then Tom comes to the camp to work - actually a teacher, but taking the job of a lumberjack to earn extra money for himself and his widowed mother. Each has been praying for God's direction in their life, and doesn't realize what He has been working out in the background for their future. The fruitcake challenge provides romantic spice and will make you hungry throughout the story, so be prepared with a cup of tea and dessert as you curl up with this story. Sweetly satisfying, a wonderful example of how God works in the lives of the faithful.

Vicky Sluiter says

I love this book! Partly because I live in Michigan and partly because I enjoyed the history that author Carrie Fancett Pagels incorporated into the story. And it was just a great book! I mean, who doesn't like to read about fruitcakes and lumberjacks at Christmas. As always, Pagels doesn't disappoint.

A heartwarming novella, you'll find yourself pulling for Tom and Jo. Even when they are pushing each other away. There's a lot of fun that involves the fruitcake challenge, along with mischief and spunk. You'll smell the pine of the trees, hear the laughter of the people in the camp, and be so glad you made the journey to Northern Michigan!

I received a complimentary copy of this book but was not required to leave a review.

Derinda Babcock says

THE FRUITCAKE CHALLENGE is an easy to read novella about teacher-turned-lumberjack, Tom Jeffries, and Jo Christy, camp cook and daughter of the camp's owner. In a thoughtless, half-jesting moment, Tom states he will marry any woman who can make a fruitcake as good as the one his mother makes. Whether he

intends to honor his word is questionable. The challenge is on, and through the competition, other men form relationships with women who can make fruitcakes like their mothers'. Cute story. The covers in this series are attractive and got me into the holiday mood.

Lisa Norato says

The Fruitcake Challenge is a cozy Christmas read, but a romance to enjoy for all seasons!

In her lifetime, “Jo” Josephine Christy has had to put up with the shenanigans of many different fellows—big, hulking lumberjacks with everything from humble to aggressive personalities, men from all over the world. She was raised in a logging camp and grew up working alongside her now-deceased mother in the camp kitchen. But in all that time, no man has ever annoyed her so much as their new axeman, Tom Jeffries.

He’s an arrogant, smooth talker who flaunts his intelligence and devilishly handsome looks like one who has never known rejection. Jo would like nothing better than to take the proud rooster down a peg. Especially when he issues a challenge: “I have decided I’ll marry any gal who can bake a fruitcake just like my mother makes every Christmas.”

The audacity! The workers in the cookhouse rise to the challenge, and the men are caught up in the excitement. Obviously, Tom has instigated this challenge just to irk her. But could he be serious? Why does something in Jo’s heart wish it to be true? And why does she keep baking fruitcake after fruitcake just to prove she’s not one to back down from a challenge, even though everything within her longs to be freed of a life tied to a lumber camp. She wants a life beyond the one she’s always known and that most certainly does not include marriage to a lumberjack. She’s twenty-five years old and time is running out on her dreams.

She’s about to discover there’s more to Tom Jeffries than what meets the eye. . . .

I love this story! The Fruitcake Challenge is a well-written novella with warmth and humor. I enjoyed all the characters but especially Jo and Tom, in their confusion about their futures, looking for God’s guidance. I really enjoyed the unusual Victorian setting of a wintry, rugged logging camp in northern Michigan. There’s lots to enjoy in this heartwarming story—romance, family, yummy food, the scent of the pines and a crackling fire to warm you in the cold woods!

Diana Montgomery says

The Fruitcake Challenge (Christmas Traditions Book 3)

By: Carrie Fancett Pagels

Another great story by Carrie. I loved the sweet romance. Tom Jeffries new lumberjack falls in love with Jo Christy who is the head cook after her mother died. On one condition will he marry her. She will have to make the best fruitcake like his mother makes. Other lumberjacks take the challenge with other ladies at the camp. Will Jo succeed in winning his heart with the best fruitcake? You will enjoy all the ladies go through to win these tuff guys hearts. I loved the characters well written. Who knows maybe we will see them again

someday. If you like a good clean romance story you will enjoy. This is book 3 in the Christmas Traditions series.

Lindsey (Books for Christian Girls) says

{Merry CHRISTmas everyone! Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday in honor of our Savior's birth there'll be a new Christmas book review! With a couple giveaways sprinkled in, it's going to be so much fun! Let's start!}

About this book:

“When new lumberjack, Tom Jeffries, tells the camp cook, Jo Christy, that he’ll marry her if she can make a fruitcake, “as good as the one my mother makes,” she rises to the occasion. After all, he’s the handsomest, smartest, and strongest axman her camp-boss father has ever had in his camp—and the cockiest. And she intends to bring this lumberjack down a notch or three by refusing his proposal. The fruitcake wars are on!”

Series: It's considered book #3 in the "*Christmas Traditions*" series, but they aren't connected.

Spiritual Content- Many Prayers & mentions of Prayers; a Mention that Jo is angry with God over her Ma's death; Mentions of Church going & paying attention to the Pastor; Talks about God's Will, being called to do something & God's Plans for our lives; 'H's are capital.

Negative Content- Minor cussing including: a 'heck' and a 'shoot'; Tobacco & Blood (barely-above-not-detailed).

Sexual Content- a semi-detailed kiss and a detailed kiss; Hands get kissed, almost kisses & Wanting to Kiss; Touches & a Waltz that cause warmth &/or shivers; a Mention of a women's figure; Mentions of flirting; Love, falling in love, and the emotions.

-Jo Christy

-Tom Jeffries

P.O.V. switches between them (with Cordelia Jeffries at Chapter 11.)

Set in 1890

121 pages

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### Pre Teens- One Star

**New Teens- One Star (and a half)**

### Early High School Teens- Three Stars

Older High School Teens- Three Stars (and a half)

My personal Rating- Three Stars (and a half)

In the Author's Acknowledgements, she thanks quite a few author—but here's the neat thing—in her writing accountability group members are: Julie Klassen, Melanie Dickerson and Sarah E. Ladd! Author's we've reviewed recently or soon to be reviewing again! Pretty neat, huh?

*"The Fruitcake Challenge"* made me giggle at the plot and go "Ewww!" at the fruitcakes. (I've only had a British fruitcake and I was not a fan—Sorry Nana!) But it almost made me want to try fruitcake again.

Almost. :)

Now, since this is the last giveaway for this month it's open World Wide! Miss Carrie Fancett Pagels, the author, has generously offered a giveaway of a e-copy of this novella! :)

Link to review & Giveaway:

<http://booksforchristiangirls.blogspot...>

\*BFCG may (Read the review to see) recommend this book by this author. It does not mean I recommend all the books by this author.

\*I received this book for free from the Author for this review.

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## **Nancee says**

"The Fruitcake Challenge" discloses the late 1800s tale of a family logging camp and the people whose livelihood depends upon the magnificent white pines known to Michigan, both upper and lower peninsulas. These massive forests were cut for use in building growing communities.

The new axman to the camp poses a challenge to the daughter of the camp's owner. If she could make a fruitcake that was as good as his mother's he would ask her to marry him.

This is a sweet story of family, faith and relationships between family and friends, loss and hope. It's a warm telling of a group of people working hand in hand toward the same goals. I could easily envision the area, and could feel the icy chill from the Great Lakes.

There is both a serious thread throughout this novella that reaches the heart, and a touch of humor that warms the soul. I'd like to have seen this book developed with greater depth and character, but as a novella it was a warm and cozy read. Grab a copy of this short book and enjoy with a pot of tea or a cup of hot cocoa!

Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for my honest review. All opinions expressed are my own, and no monetary compensation was received for this review.

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## **Brittany says**

The Fruitcake Challenge was such a fun and enjoyable novella! It takes place back in the late 1800's in a lumber camp near Mackinaw City, Michigan. The author did a great job of crafting a sweet story, set in an interesting time period. The story was full of historic details that made me feel that I was back in time.

I really liked the two main characters, Tom & Jo. The marriage challenge that Tom issues to Jo is a lighthearted thread that runs through the story. There are also misunderstandings and both of these characters must seek the Lord's guidance and His direction for their lives. This is an uplifting Christmas story that brought a smile to my face.

You can read this review on my blog at:  
<http://brittreadsfiction.wordpress.co...>

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### **Rhonda says**

I am one of the weird people who absolutely loves fruitcake so this book was quite appealing to me. It was great fun to read along as Jo and her fellow cooks and shanty boys tried to find the perfect fruitcake recipe to win her a hand in marriage! I was very impressed with the research that obviously went into the writing of the book. I was not familiar with the history of logging camps so I thoroughly enjoyed learning about it. The scenery of Northern Michigan sounded breathtaking and made me want to plan a trip headed that way. I also love historical romances and this one is set in 1890. Grab a cup of coffee and ride along in the wagon as Jo and Tom head to town to shop and mail the letters for the camp. Find out if Jo perfects the fruitcake that can rival that of Tom's mother. I rate this book 5 stars and highly recommend it to readers. I was given a copy of this book by the author in exchange for my honest review.

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### **Niki says**

Carrie Fancett Pagels has crafted a sweet story set in the dense north woods of Michigan in 1890, in a lumber camp. Jo is the daughter of the camp boss. She wants out of the camp life, but after her mother's recent death, Jo feels she can't leave. Tom, a teacher by trade, has taken on a job at the camp as a lumberjack, so he can make enough money to help support his mother. A romantic tale with one of the most satisfying conclusions I can remember reading of late. And you'll probably be craving fruitcake at the ending, just in time for Christmas!

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### **Wendy says**

BACK OF THE BOOK BLURB  
(from Amazon.com)

When new lumberjack, Tom Jeffries, tells the camp cook, Jo Christy, that he'll marry her if she can make a fruitcake, "as good as the one my mother makes," she rises to the occasion. After all, he's the handsomest, smartest, and strongest axman her camp-boss father has ever had in his camp--and the cockiest. And she intends to bring this lumberjack down a notch or three by refusing his proposal. The fruitcake wars are on! All the shanty boys and Jo's cooking helpers chip in with their recipes but Jo finds she'll have to enlist more help--and begins corresponding with Tom's mother.

Step back in time to 1890, in beautiful Northern Michigan, near the sapphire straits of Mackinac, when the white pines were "white gold" and lumber camps were a way of life. Jo is ready to find another life outside of the camps and plans that don't include any shanty boys. But will a lumberjack keep her in the very place she's sworn to leave?

## MY REVIEW

Carrie did a great job on this short story. I don't like fruitcake, my mom loved it and used to make it, but it made for a good storyline and I liked how everyone in the camp seemed to get in on the contest in one way or another. If you want something quick and fun to read I would recommend this to you.

I was given this e-book as a gift from the author, she did not request a review be done. This review is my honest opinion of this book.

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## Deanne Patterson says

Do you love fruitcake for the holidays ? Even if you don't, The novella The Fruitcake is not to be missed. The Fruitcake Challenge novella features Tom Jeffries, the new lumberjack in camp and Josephine Christy ,the head camp cook. She had taken over as head cook since her mother's passing. Her two brothers Ox and Moose are overly protective of her and chase away any possible suitors. When Tom first arrives at the camp Jo finds him annoying and always shoos him out of the kitchen whenever he tries to talk to her. As the book progresses she finds herself falling for him but he seems not to be interested. Tom decides to have a contest and offer a marriage proposal as the prize for whomever make a fruitcake that tastes the most like his mothers. Unbeknownst to Tom ,Jo starts corresponding with Tom's mother to get the exact recipe so she can duplicate it for him and win the contest. Win it she does and she happily accepts his proposal. I recommend this hope filled Christmas story to everyone.

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## Tina says

The Fruitcake Challenge, book 3, A Christmas Traditions Novella\*\*\*\*\*  
by Carrie Fancett Pagels

Our hero/heroine live and work near Mackinaw City in Northern Michigan's logging camp in 1890. Josephine-Jo Christy, daughter of the camp's owner, is the camp's cook and longs to leave and find another life for herself. She has vowed to leave once this camp site moves on to the next camp site where the white pines they harvest are plentiful. Jo longs to marry and have a family but does not want to marry a lumberjack. Tom Jeffries is a teacher but teaching jobs are scarce and pay little, so he finds a job with the Christy logging camp as a lumberjack to support himself and his widowed mother.

Both Jo and Tom have prayed for God's leading in their lives and question His direction at times. Tom challenges Jo to bake a fruitcake like his mothers', if she does he will marry her. Jo takes up the challenge, not to marry him but to take him down a notch or two—he is way too cocky, and besides he is a lumberjack. But over the months as they get to know each other and Jo bakes one fruitcake after another that doesn't meet Tom's specifications, Jo begins to rethink baking yet one more fruitcake. Tom now has second thoughts on his challenge to Jo, he wants to marry her but not because of her baking a fruitcake. Things don't go smoothly as the deadline gets closer. Even though Jo's fruitcakes are not like Tom's mothers', each fruitcake she bakes spark romance in other unlikely couples.

I loved the sparks between Jo and Tom, each trying not to admit to themselves that there is an attraction. I like the way the author includes Jo and Tom's thoughts showing their uncertainty and how vulnerable they



really are. The description of how remote the logging camp really is from the nearest town and the difficulty traveling back and forth gives us a glimpse of their way of life. Those in the camp are more like family than co-workers and rely on each other daily. No story would be complete without surprises, and this one includes some surprises along the way keeping the reader engrossed in the story. I thoroughly enjoyed this story and would like to see more of the characters in a follow-up story.

~~I received an advanced PDF copy of this story from the author for my review~~

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### **Kay M says**

This is a fun book to read. The hero is such an honest and forthright man that he was easy for me to love. His sense of humor is extremely appealing, though not always appreciated. His kindness and thoughtfulness come easy, and he is so genuine. He does, however, have some secrets, so he's quite a mystery to Jo, the heroine. Due to Josephine's circumstances, she has insecurities, when it comes to personal relationships with men. She isn't really sure what to make of Tom, his refined manners, and his mysterious background.

If you are looking for a historical, Christmas read, I'm sure you will enjoy *The Fruitcake Challenge*.

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