



## With This Christmas Ring

*Manda Collins*

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A wallflower determined to fulfill a dying promise, the rogue she jilted years ago, and an orphaned baby are all brought together amidst the magic of Christmas in this new novella from Manda Collins.

Miss Merry Parks makes a deathbed promise to a schoolfriend that her infant daughter will be taken to her absent father. There's only one problem—to find the baby's father, she'll have to consult his cousin, Viscount Wrotham, the man she jilted five years ago. The man she couldn't forget.

Alex Ponsonby, Viscount Wrotham, is stunned to find Merry Parks—looking more lovely than ever--on his doorstep with an infant in her arms. His shock soon turns to dismay when he learns his own cousin William is the man who abandoned his wife and child. As head of the family he's duty bound to see right is done. But he can't let this opportunity pass. He'll take Merry and the baby to his cousin, but he'll woo her back in the process.

Merry agrees to travel with Alex and the baby to Wrotham Castle, where the entire Ponsonby family has gathered for Christmas, but her plans to see the baby settled then leave are ruined by a snowstorm. After five years apart, Alex and Merry will spend the week getting reacquainted. Perhaps it's the spirit of the holiday, or the magic of the season, but there could be something else in the air this Yuletide...A Christmas Reunion.

## With This Christmas Ring Details

Date : Published October 3rd 2017 by Swerve

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Author : Manda Collins

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Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Historical, Holiday, Christmas, Regency, Novella

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# From Reader Review With This Christmas Ring for online ebook

## Stacey is Sassy says

**When the truths come to light, love wins.**

I really enjoyed reading *With This Christmas Ring*. It was a fairly short story about reacquainting with lost loves and finding the spark still flicker to a flame when together. In this case, the time apart for the hero and heroine is 5 years and in that time neither had really moved on. Both knew they had broken away from the love of their lives, but neither thought it would be possible to reunite. With the birth of a friends child, the chance to reconnect brings all of their feeling to light.

It's amazing what you'll believe when you're not feeling confident in yourself or in love. Insecurities and doubts can make you question your feelings. Only with maturity can you see the light through the trees. Luckily, when the time comes for them to face their doubts and insecurities the second time around, they're ready to stand up for what they believe in.

The characters were engaging, the storyline interesting and the hero and heroine's love and heartache believable. I knew that they were meant to be together and I was convinced that they had learnt their lesson and were perfect for each other. I loved the mention of a few familiar characters and hearing how *their* love stories were perceived in their sphere.

If you enjoy a quick trip into the past, enjoy catching up with friends and seeing good beat evil, then I definitely recommend *With This Christmas Ring*.

*Stacey is Sassy, received a complimentary copy of this story. The copy provided is not the final copy and may be subject to edits and changes.*

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## Barbara Rogers says

This is a delightful second chance romance novella. I have thoroughly enjoyed every Manda Collins book I have read and this is certainly no exception. You immediately like both the hero and heroine because they are both nice, considerate and very loving individuals and what happened the first time around is a real shame!

Five years ago Miss Merry Parks and Alexander Ponsonby, Viscount Wrotham were engaged. They loved each other, but Merry let her insecurities cause her to call off the engagement and leave him. He's never forgotten her nor has he loved anyone else – and the same is true for her.

Merry's best friend, Charlotte, has just passed away during childbirth. With her dying breath, Charlotte asks Merry to see that her daughter, Lottie, is united with her father. Charlotte and William were married, but he'd abandoned her just days after the ceremony. It turns out that William is Alex's cousin. Merry vows that she'll unite father and daughter – no matter what it takes – even seeking the aid of Alex to help her find his

cousin.

As soon as Merry and Alex see each other again, they realize they are still as much in love as ever. Alex is determined to win Merry back in any way he can. So, he gets her to go with him to his country estate because that is where his cousin is – for a Christmas celebration.

You actually get two HEA's in this novella – and that is really sweet. Seeing all Alex and Merry have gone through and seeing them come together to rekindle their love and find their HEA is great.

I hope you will read and enjoy this novella as much as I did.

"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

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### **Arlena says**

Title: With This Christmas Ring

Author: Manda Collins

Publisher: Swerve

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Rating: Five

Review:

"With This Christmas Ring" by Manda Collins

My Thoughts....

What a good holiday romance read of just what can happen when a love lost will be found once again that will definite capture the wonderful feeling of the true spirit of this holiday season. I found this short novella story to be well written from the start to the finish that will definite keep your attention. This was one of those read that will have you shaking your head as this story unfolds that tells 'the tale of a pair of lovers that were truly torn apart by the conspiracies of a particular family member.' What will happen when all of the story comes out from traveling to Wrotham Castle? Will these two [Merry & Alex] that had been torn apart be able to work toward their HEA? Well, to find out you will have to pick up "With This Christmas Ring" to find out.

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### **Erin Kelly says**

I have read Manda Collins before, but was delighted to have a chance to read her Christmas novella.

Honestly, this reads more like a novel. The characters are well-developed; the story doesn't feel shortened or like there was anything left out. It is a perfect historical read for this time of year.

The Story-

Merry made a promise to keep the dying wish of her friend to return her baby to its father. The problem is,

the father is cousins with the man she jilted years ago, but still loves. Alex could never understand why Merry ended their engagement, but now that she has come back into his life, he doesn't intend on letting her get away again,

#### My Thoughts-

I was a little concerned that the baby plot would make this too sweet for me, but it really didn't. The Christmas setting was just enough to put me in the holiday spirit without feeling like I overdosed on gingerbread. What surprised me here was how well the characters are developed and how complete the plot felt in a shorter book. Motivations all made sense; there were even great secondary characters rounding out the story. Pacing was great, and it left me with a happy little sigh.

#### The Bottom Line-

If you enjoy historical romance and want an easy read with a lovely Christmas setting, this is the perfect book for you. The baby stuff is not overdone, so if you aren't a kid person, don't be put off. This has enough heat, sweet, and mistletoe to make you smile this season. 4 stars

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### Andrea says

\*I received a copy from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review\*

Five years ago, Miss Merry Parks left her fiancé, Alexander Ponsonby after someone used her insecurities against her to manipulate her into leaving. They both moved on with their lives as best they could, but when Merry's good friend Charlotte dies shortly after asking her to find her husband, Alexander's cousin, and to make sure he takes responsibility for their daughter, Merry is forced to seek out the man she never really stopped loving.

This was a nice Christmas novella. I really liked both main characters. They are both good people, who simply didn't trust their love was strong enough when they were young and easily influenced. I understood both their actions (her leaving, him not fighting for her sooner), and I liked seeing them getting together and realizing there was still something there, and seeing that they have both grown stronger. The wonderful characterization really saved this for me because of the thing I didn't like. There were a LOT of hurtful, despicable people doing things I personally wouldn't have forgiven. There were times I really wanted those two to cut ties to certain members of their family and banish those people from their lives. But I guess since Christmas is supposedly the season of forgiveness and all...

All in all, this was an enjoyable story about two really nice people, and the writing and the characterization was just lovely, so I'm rounding up my 3.5 rating to 4 stars :)

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### ♥Rachel♥ says

Circumstances throw Merry and Alex together after Merry ended their engagement five years ago. Merry was bullied by Alex's grandmother, the dowager Lady Wrotham, to break things off unbeknownst to Alex. The moment they lay eyes on each other again the attraction and longing rush right back up, but Merry

doesn't expect Alex to give her a second chance. However, it doesn't seem Alex is holding a grudge, he's had some time to think about the past and suspects his grandmother had a hand in ending things so when Merry shows up in his life again, he's determined to take this opportunity to set things right and find happiness with Merry at long last.

**With This Christmas Ring** was a sweet, second chance romance that warmed my heart. There's no drama between Alex and Merry once they meet up again. They are truthful and bond over the loss and longing they've felt since parting. All conflict comes from outside sources and they meet those problems head on, as a united front.

The Holiday setting will get you in the mood to take a snowy sleigh ride, snuggling up to your loved one, staying warm under blankets and the heat of attraction.

*A copy was kindly provided by Swerve via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Andrea Way says**

\*\*\*ARC Review Received from St Martins Press & Netgalley\*\*\*

Wow, this made me cry right from the start. I loved this story and the plot was really good. Alex and Merry (good Xmas name), have a past. It's nice to see them trying to work out that past. A great historical romance that will get you in the mood for the holiday season.

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### **Pamela says**

A charming little Christmas novella. I liked that the leads had a past together so it wasn't "Insta-Love". That helps make these quick stories a little more believable.

\*\*Thank you to the publisher and Net Galley in exchange of an honest review.\*\*

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### **JoRead says**

Sweet yet emotional and passionate story. Tie-in for both of the author's *Studies in Scandal* and *Lords of Anarchy* however it can definitely be read as a stand alone.

The last person Merry wanted to see was her former fiancé however she was willing to do everything within her power to give her dead friend's child the family she deserved. Alex never understood the reason Merry jilted him and when she appeared at his door seeking his cousin, he knew that was the perfect opportunity to find answers and perhaps ask for a second chance at love.

I very much liked that the story started with Merry as a take-charge, brave, and intelligent woman however as the story progressed her attitude sort of changed and she started to sound meek, or perhaps insecure, and that gave me a "what-happened-to-her?" kind of sense. It wasn't too bad but it still took away from the overall enjoyment of the story.

Her chemistry with Alex was nonetheless well-balanced. He was sweet, honorable, and passionate. He was a man of his word who respected family and friends immensely, particularly his grandmother given that she was the one who had taken care of him since he was a child. He never pushed Merry to do anything she didn't want and allowed her time to think and answer all of his questions. I think both their characters were well rounded in the sense that we get to understand what got them to be where they are and how much they deserved their HEA.

I'm not so sure what to think about the villains, though. One of the arcs sounded inconclusive and even implausible and the other one, well, I'm still wondering about that one. Still, the main romantic arc was what made this story worth my time and I do recommend it to anyone looking for a Christmas romantic story.

\*\* I received this book from the author at no cost to me and I volunteered to read it; this is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher.\*\*\*

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## **Carrie says**

Miss Merry Parks had done what any good friend would do when at her friend's deathbed, she had promised to take care of her friend's baby and see that the infant daughter would be reunited with her father. There's only one obstacle in the way of Merry keeping that promise, in order to find the baby's father she'd going to have to speak with Alex Ponsonby, Viscount Wrotham. Alex is the cousin of the baby's father but he is also the man that Merry had ended things with five years before but she's a lady of her word and determined to take care of the child.

Traveling with an infant as a single lady is a bit tougher than Merry expected but she makes her way to Alex's door and informs him of needing to find his cousin, William. As the head of his family Alex takes the matter very seriously and is determined to help Merry in her quest to reunite father and daughter but he also wouldn't mind reuniting himself with Merry along the way. The two travel to Wrotham Castle where the family is gathered for Christmas and find themselves stranded by a snowstorm giving them time to rekindle the flame that once was between them.

With *This Christmas Ring* by Manda Collins is a historical romance novella that of course takes place during the Christmas season. While this book is a relatively short read the author did pack a ton into the pages. It helped that the couple in question in the story had a background between them too so it didn't feel as if it was a case of insta-love with having such a short space to establish a relationship.

Along with the idea of bringing a former couple back together the story had plenty of other content to the point that I wondered if it wasn't bordering on maybe a tad too much for the length and could have benefited from being a bit longer. But on the flip side it certainly kept it a bit more interesting to not just rush the romance and be done with the story so I didn't take too much off my rating as I did enjoy this little holiday historical novella.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress....>

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## **Sissy's Romance Book Review says**

'With This Christmas Ring' by Manda Collins is the Story of Miss Merry Parks and Alex Ponsonby, Viscount Wrotham.

Merry good friend has died but asked a 'death bed' request that Merry take her child to his father, William. William is the cousin of Alex who Merry had jilted several years ago. But now she needs Alex's help in finding William.

Alex is shocked to see Merry on his door step and goes forward with helping her locate William. But Alex is set on wooing Merry back along the way.

This was such a joy to read their story!

"My honest review is for a special copy I voluntarily read."

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<https://www.goodreads.com/user/show/1...>

<https://twitter.com/soapsrus68>

<https://www.facebook.com/RomanceBookR...>

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## **Jenny Q says**

This was my first time reading Manda Collins, and I was delighted to discover that she writes beautifully! Here we have a tale of two people in love who were thwarted by the meddling of a domineering family matriarch. When Merry's friend Charlotte dies shortly after childbirth, Merry vows to track down the man who got her pregnant and left her to make him take responsibility for his child, a child Merry is already becoming attached to. The problem is that in fulfilling her vow she has to turn to Alex, the man whose heart she broke five years earlier when she allowed his grandmother to convince her that she would make Alex a miserable match. But when she sees him again, all the feelings she's tried to squash for so long come rushing back.

When Merry shows up on his doorstep, Alex thinks fate has given him a second chance. Determined to discover why Merry left him all those years ago, he convinces her that spending the holidays at his country estate will be the best way to reunite the baby with her father, who happens to be Alex's cousin. And when a snowstorm makes it impossible for her to leave, the stage is set for him to win back the woman he never stopped loving. And what better time to do it than during the magic of the holiday season?

Novellas make storytelling a little challenging, and plot points and/or backstories often have to be detailed or resolved quickly. I would have liked to see more of Merry and Alex's courtship when they first fell in love so I could understand why their feelings had never faded over so much time apart, and I would have liked to see more personal interaction between them as they realized they still wanted a future together. As it is, they spend most of their time talking about other people (the baby, his cousin, his grandmother), so I did not get the sense that they were truly rediscovering what they loved about each other. I also would have liked a little more Christmas. We have lots of greenery and a sleigh ride, but that's about it by way of yuletide festivities and traditions.

But overall it's a sweet romance with engaging characters and a nice way to kick off the Christmas reading season.



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## Selene says

[Yes! (hide spoiler)]

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## Katherine Hayward says

Merry's luck changes when she is asked by the Viscount's cousin Alex to stay at his huge home for a week because of the bad weather. This is five years after she jilted her lover, who is none other than him. It is not through fortunate circumstances that she is even at the house, though. Her friend Charlotte died in childbirth. She is there to comply with Charlotte's dying wish that her newborn daughter Lottie be looked after and returned to his father, Will.

I was drawn into the story from the first page and liked Merry's rapport with Alex as the story moved on, but felt that some of the other characters were very opinionated. We did get an insight into their relationships in the book and customs of the time that the book was written in. It is a story of secrets, revelations and relationships.

Alex wants Merry to be his wife. Alex has his own difficult past. His dad abused his mum and she left him and Alex when Alex was just nine years old.

Alex's Grandmother made his mum as unomfy as possible in the house, and she left.

There are conflicts, lies and scandals. The grandmother, who is the one who seems to rule the house, explains what she did and she claimed it was "best for the family" by sending Charlotte and then Merry away.

Will is also looking for love. Potential brides for him, who we meet at a Christmas family gathering, include Lady Katherine and Emily Delaford. Merry, who is shocked to find Will has a passing interest in her, has a plainer appearance than Katherine, and she is not wealthy.

Lady Katherine, however, does not want to marry Will.

Merry keeps thinking about Lottie's well-being.

People have very deep rooted feelings and reactions to what happened all those years ago. Lottie is judged as illegitimate by some but she is legitimate.

Despite all the tension, rumours and goings-on, there is a Christmas atmosphere as well as snow. There is sledding and excitement.

The novella is a great Christmas story and is well written with a good pace. Alex obviously wants to impress Merry. He is accommodating, welcoming and caring. When they all go house-to-house at Christmas, it is a good way for the reader to meet the other characters in the book.

It really shows the spirit of the season. Emily sounds manipulative towards Lady Katherine and Merry too.

There's tension and worry as well as concern for others. Emily is a liar. There is lots of action and working together to search for them. I suspected something would happen between her, Lady Katherine and Merry, but wasn't sure what. I thought it could be something involving jealousy, wickedness or lies.

The story had me interested as well as worried in some parts.

I hoped that Alex and Merry could work things out because of what they feel for each other.

I could not believe how cruel Emily was. Effie seems a good caring maid, which is good.

Will wants to do everything he can for Lottie. Merry is brave. Her bravery and determination as well as resilience shows through. It is a story of love, scandal secrets lies and deceit but a good historical romance with some very sexy scenes in some parts of the book.

I hope to read more by Manda Collins . My heart was in my mouth at some parts. As a bonus, this title has an excerpt from the next book in the series. It is a great extra which seems to be based in the town of little Seaford which was mentioned in this first book.

Thank you to St Martin's press for an ARC of this book and also thank you Manda Collins for this excellent book. This is one of the books that will be featured in my SMP Romance Blitz post in October. The only reason why I gave this book 4 and not 5 stars was that it ended too soon....I'd have loved for it to be a full novel, but it is an incredibly well-thought-out festive read.

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## **Elaine says**

This is a delightful Regency second-chance romance. Betrothed five years ago for just one day, Miss Merry Parks left the home of her fiancé, Alex Ponsonby, Viscount Wrotham, without explaining why other than leaving him a note. Now she has to face him again because her friend died giving birth and Merry promised the dying woman to take the baby to the child's father who is the cousin of Alex. Alex certainly hadn't anticipated Merry arriving on his doorstep with a baby in her arms! When he discovers the baby girl's father is his cousin, William, he agrees to help Merry take the child to William - who is staying in the family home, Wrotham Castle - planning to win back Merry's love whilst doing so.

This is a festive novella, packed with surprises along the way. A snowstorm leaves Merry staying in the Castle, along with a scheming grandmother, family secrets and potential wives for the man she loves! There's danger from an unexpected quarter, a new romance and a romance rekindled in this lovely Christmas read. I found it a lovely story to escape into with great characters and a plot packed with intrigue and surprises - especially some of the explanations given! I have no hesitation in recommending this entertaining seasonal historical romance to anyone who enjoys this genre.

I was gifted copy of this novel, via NetGalley. This is my honest review after choosing to read it.

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