

## House Of Secrets Choc Lit A Truly Gripping Suspense Novel

Historical romance trilogy spanning the two World Wars. Starts in 1914 and ends in 1948. A compelling and intensely romantic tale of the lives of a Dorset family throughout the wars. Set in the UK, France, Belgium, Egypt and Italy.

Can a secret be worse than a lie? Every time Kate Duggan looks in a mirror she is confronted by her guilt; a long, red scar reminding her that she was 'the one to walk away' from the car accident. Not everyone was so lucky ... On the surface her fiancé Rob is supportive – but the reality is different. He's controlling, manipulative and, if the phone call Kate overhears is anything to go by, he has a secret. But just how dangerous is that secret? When Kate begins work at a firm of private investigators, she meets Ben Parker. His strong and silent persona is intriguing but it's also a cover – because something devastating happened to Ben, something he can't get over. As Kate and Ben begin their first assignment, they become close. But, what they don't realise is how close to home the investigation will bring them, or who will be hurt in the process ...

A desperate young woman stumbles into a household of secrets, lies, and murder . . . in a thriller that will keep readers guessing until the end. After her boyfriend breaks her heart with a careless tryst, Ruby Fawcett has no option but to move out of their home. With nowhere else to go and no means of support, a job house-sitting in Cambridge, England, seems like the perfect solution. But her solution is far from perfect, as she learns that the absent homeowner is well known for his strict and callous demeanor. And when her curiosity overrides her good sense, Ruby decides to do a little snooping about the house—and into its sinister owner. But Ruby's boss, rugged former PI Nate Bastable, has his own concerns. As the two investigate, Ruby begins to suspect that his worry for her safety is more than just professional—and that someone else will do anything to stop them from uncovering the truth . . .

Do nice guys stand a chance? Nick Templeton has been in love with Lizzie Donavue for what seems like forever. Just as he summons the courage to make his move, she's offered a modelling contract which takes her across the Atlantic to the glamorous locations of New York and Los Angeles. And far away from him. Nick is forced to watch from the sidelines as the gawky teenager he knew is transformed into Elizabeth Donavue: top model and the ultimate elegant English rose pin-up, seemingly forever caught in a whirlwind of celebrity parties with the next up-and-coming Hollywood bad boy by her side. But then Lizzie's star-studded life comes crashing down around her, and a nice guy like Nick seems just what she needs. Will she take a chance on him? Or is he too damn nice?

What if a secret from Christmas past was stopping you from moving on to Christmas future? When Hugo McCreadie steps into Isla Brodie's pet portrait studio to get a 'Festive Furball Photo Shoot' for his sister's cat Schubert, he does question his sanity. But he knows the photographs will be the perfect Christmas present for his eccentric sister, Nessa – and he finds himself quite taken with ditzy, animal-loving Isla Brodie, too. Will a Christmas secret from long ago prevent Hugo and Isla's new friendship from going any further? Or will a certain big, black cat taking matters into his own paws lead them not only on a mad winter dash through snowy Edinburgh –but into each other's arms for Christmas as well?

"As the velvet cloak of moonlight settled over the ruined towers of Raglan Castle, the shadows beneath them stirred ..." When newly widowed Tess visits Raglan Castle, she experiences an extraordinary vision that transports her to seventeenth-century Wales and a castle on the brink of a siege. Even when Tess leaves Raglan to return to Merrick Court, her late husband's home, the strange dreams continue as her life becomes increasingly intertwined with the past. And when the new owner of the estate arrives - New Zealander Josh Owens - the parallels become even more obvious. But perhaps the visions aren't just trying to tell their own story, maybe they're also giving a warning ...

A Cornish Christmas wish sent across the ocean ... Christmas, Cornwall 1919 A promise to a fellow soldier leads Nicholas to Cornwall for Christmas, and to the teashop managed by Rose; the youngest daughter of a family whose festive spirit has been blighted by their wartime experiences. But as Nicholas strives to give Rose the best Christmas she could wish for, he begins to question whether his efforts are to honour his friend, or whether there is another reason ...

Like forbidden fruit, forbidden love is more sweet ... It's 1803 and widowed aristocrat Sophy De Browarec must flee France after being exposed as an undercover British agent. Fearing for her life, she returns to Cornwall to seek help from the only living link to her past, Fitzwilliam 'Fitz' Ravensbourne. Lord Ravensbourne has suffered his own share of misfortune and it's left its mark in more ways than one. He has become a near recluse at the Ravensbourne Estate, but still reluctantly accepts Sophy into his home. Sophy and Fitz's relationship is strained and her return could bring danger to Ravensbourne – but there is something that prevents Fitz from casting her out, something almost forbidden ...

The past is never really the past at Hartsford Hall ... Aidan Edwards has always been fascinated by the life of his great-great uncle Robert. A trip to Hartsford Hall and an encounter with Cassie Aldrich leads him closer to the truth about Robert Edwards, as he unravels the scandalous story of a bright young poet and a beautiful spirited aristocrat in the carefree twilight of the 1930s before the Second World War. But can Aidan find out what happened to Robert after the war – or will he have to accept that certain parts of his uncle's life will remain forever shrouded in mystery?

A promise is a promise ... Art historian, Rachel Ford has returned to the Irish village of Kilbrook intent on keeping her promise to take revenge on the school bullies who ruined her childhood and destroyed her family. Australian actor, Finn MacKenzie sets hearts fluttering when he turns up in sleepy Kilbrook to help his aunt with a school production. He seems to have a charmed life, yet his confident façade hides heartbreak and tragedy. Although Finn isn't looking for love, when he meets the mysterious Rachel, there's a definite spark between them. Rachel is torn between her desire for revenge and this new love affair. She doesn't want to deceive Finn, but can she trust him to keep her real identity a secret? And will he understand why she must keep her promise, no matter the cost?

When you open up your home and your heart ... Rowan Forrester has it all – the happy marriage, the adorable dog, the good friends, the promising business and even the dream home after she and her husband Tom win a stunning but slightly dilapidated Georgian townhouse in London at auction. But in the blink of an eye, Rowan's picture-perfect life comes crashing down around her and she is faced with the prospect of having to start again. To make ends meet she begins a search for housemates, and in doing so opens the door to new friends and new beginnings. But could she be opening the door to new heartbreak too?

Could one summer change your life? When high-flying American lawyer Samantha Muir finds out she's lost her partnership whilst on an assignment in London, she has a dramatic reaction. Rather than returning home, she resigns, leaves her business suits behind and jumps on the first train to Cornwall at the encouragement of a friendly stranger. The village of Little Penhaven,

where Samantha eventually ends up, is a world away from her life in Knoxville, Tennessee – and local farmer Cadan Day is certainly a world away from any man she has met before. But could the Cornish village and Cadan play a part in Samantha's summer of self-discovery?

Any wish can be granted with a little bit of Christmas magic ... As a wedding planner at Carrick Park Hotel Ailsa McCormack has devoted herself to making sure couples get their perfect day, but just occasionally that comes at a price – in this case, organising a Christmas Day wedding at the expense of her own Christmas. Not that Ailsa minds. There's something very special about Carrick Park during the festive season and she's always been fascinated by the past occupants of the place; particularly the beautiful and tragic Ella Carrick, whose striking portrait still hangs at the top of the stairs. And then an encounter with a tall, handsome and strangely familiar man in the drawing room on Christmas Eve sets off a chain of events that transforms Ailsa's lonely Christmas into a far more magical occasion than she could have ever imagined ...

Betrayed by his brother and his childhood love, Brice Kinross needs a fresh start. So he welcomes the opportunity to leave Sweden for the Scottish Highlands to take over the family estate. But there's trouble afoot at Rosyth in 1754 and Brice finds himself unwelcome. The estate's in ruin and money is disappearing. He discovers an ally in Marsaili Buchanan, the beautiful redheaded housekeeper, but can he trust her? Marsaili is determined to build a good life. She works hard at being a housekeeper and harder still at avoiding men who want to take advantage of her. But she's irresistibly drawn to the new clan chief, even though he's made it plain he doesn't want to be shackled to anyone. And the young laird has more than romance on his mind. His investigations are stirring up an enemy. Someone who will stop at nothing to get what he wants, including Marsaili, even if that means destroying Brice's life forever.

This year we're just going to have a nice, normal Christmas ... Last year's Christmas at Wrea Head Hall didn't quite go to plan which is why Jess Croft is determined this festive season will be the one to remember, for the right reasons. And she has plenty of reasons to be hopeful – she's going to marry the man of her dreams, Jack Stone, seven days after New Year's Eve.

However, as family secrets are revealed in hidden letters and two unexpected guests turn up on the doorstep, Jess is left wondering whether her life will ever be the same again. Can Jess and Jack still experience a peaceful festive season that they had imagined or are there some problems that even Christmas can't fix?

From old secrets come new beginnings ... When Angel Tempest finds out that her best friend Zac has inherited a Scottish mansion, Taigh Fallon, from his great aunt, she immediately offers to go and visit it with him. It will mean closing up her jet jewellery shop in Whitby for a few days but the prospect of a spring trip to the Scottish Highlands is too tempting. Then Kyle, Zac's estranged and slightly grumpy Canadian cousin, unexpectedly turns up at Taigh Fallon, and events take a strange turn as the long-kept secrets of the old house begin to reveal themselves ... Part of a series Tempest Sisters which can be read in any order.

Do you ever wish you could turn back time? Grace Nicholls has a few reasons for wanting to turn back the clock ... although an archaeological dig at a Bronze Age settlement on the Yorkshire moors is not what she had in mind. But encouraged by her best friend Tabitha, that's exactly where she finds herself. Professor Duncan McDonald is the site director and his earnest pursuit of digging up the past makes him appear distant and unreachable. But when a woman on the site goes missing, it seems that his own past might be coming back to haunt him once again. As they dig deeper, Duncan and Grace get more than they bargained for and come to realise that the past is much closer than either of them ever imagined ...

What if you had nowhere to call home for Christmas? When Fee Winter books a winter break at the remote Black Cherry Retreat in the small town of Pine Ridge, Tennessee, it's with the idea that the peace and quiet will help her recuperate from her hectic life as a photographer. But what she didn't bank on was meeting Tom Chambers and his huge, interfering yet lovable family. With them, could Fee finally experience the warmth and support that's been missing from her own life – and maybe even find a place to call home in time for Christmas?

What would you give to be free? Georgiana da Silva is catapulted out of the Victorian drawing rooms and into a world of danger when she escapes her fiendish fiancé to engage in a mad dash across the world to save her brother before an unknown assassin can find him. Meanwhile, Captain Harry Trent is setting sail for New Zealand. With a mission to complete and the law on his heels, he's got enough trouble of his own without further complications. Thrown together, unable to trust anyone, Georgiana and Harry are intent on fulfilling their missions despite the distractions of the other. But liberty comes at a price and the closer they get, the more they must question the true cost of being free.

"The stars are aligning and it's time again ..." Working at the Folk Museum in Hartsford village means that Kate Howard is surrounded by all sorts of unusual vintage items. Of course she has her favourites; particularly the Victorian ice skates with a name – 'CAT' – mysteriously painted on the sides. But what Kate doesn't realise is how much she has in common with Catriona Aphrodite Tredegar, the original owner of the skates, or how their lives will become strangely entwined. All Kate knows is that as soon as she bumps into farrier Theo Kent, things start getting weird: there's the vivid, disconcerting visions and then of course the overwhelming sense that she's met Theo before ...

England, 1611, and young Hannah Marston envies her brother's adventurous life. But when she stows away on his merchant ship, her powers of endurance are stretched to their limit. Then they reach Japan and all her suffering seems worthwhile until she is abducted by Taro Kumashiro's warriors. In the far north of the country, warlord Kumashiro is waiting to see the girl who he has been warned about by a seer. When at last they meet, it's a clash of cultures and wills, but they're also fighting an instant attraction to each other. With her brother desperate to find her and the jealous Lady Reiko equally desperate to kill her, Hannah faces the greatest adventure of her life. And Kumashiro has to choose between love and honour.

Jessica Grant knows vampires only too well. She runs the York Council tracker programme making sure that Otherworlders are all where they should be, keeps the filing in order and drinks far too much coffee. To Jess, vampires are annoying and arrogant and far too sexy for their own good, particularly her ex-colleague Sil, who's now in charge of



With little choice, Maddie ends up at her estranged father's hotel, where she meets the rough-edged Christopher "Bandit" Lawless—an ex-marine and gamekeeper of the grounds—who hides his own painful past behind a hard exterior. After discovering the diary of a previous landowner, Maddie and Bandit find themselves immersed in the history of the old house, uncovering its secrets, scandals, and tragedies—and the truth about each other. But when Madeleine's ex shows up, determined to reclaim what he believes is his, Maddie and Bandit will have to stand together and fight for the love they have only just found . . .

In the war against Hitler every secret counts...

If you won a fairy-tale wedding in a luxury hotel, you'd be delighted – right? But what if you didn't have anyone to marry? Cat Aston did have a fiancé, but now it looks like her Prince Charming has done a runner. Adam Lawley was left devastated when his girlfriend turned down his heartfelt proposal. He's made a vow never to fall in love again. So – when Cat and Adam meet, they shouldn't even consider falling in love. After all, they're both broken hearted. But for some reason they can't stop thinking about each other. Is this their second chance for happiness, or are some things just too good to be true?

Must forbidden love end in heartbreak? Kayla Sinclair knows she's in big trouble when she almost bankrupts herself to buy a life-size portrait of a mysterious eighteenth century man at an auction. Jago Kerswell, innkeeper and smuggler, knows there is danger in those stolen moments with Lady Eliza Marcombe, but he'll take any risk to be with her. Over two centuries separate Kayla and Jago, but, when Kayla's jealous fiancé presents her with an ultimatum, and Jago and Eliza's affair is tragically discovered, their lives become inextricably linked thanks to a gypsy's spell. Kayla finds herself on a quest that could heal the past, but what she cannot foresee is the danger in her own future. Will Kayla find heartache or happiness? Christina Courtenay won the 2012 Historical Romantic Novel Award for her book Highland Storms.

Nagasaki, 1648 Temperance Marston longs to escape war-torn England and explore the exotic empire of Japan. When offered the chance to accompany her cousin and Captain Noordholt on a trading expedition to Nagasaki, she jumps at the opportunity. However, she soon finds the country's strict laws for foreigners curtail her freedom. On a dangerous and foolhardy venture she meets Kazuo, a ronin. Kazuo is fascinated by her blonde hair and blue eyes, but he has a mission to complete and he cannot be distracted. Long ago, his father was accused of a crime he didn't commit – stealing a valuable ornament from the Shogun – and Kazuo must restore his family's honour. But when Temperance is kidnapped and sold as a concubine, he has to make a decision – can he save her and keep the promise he made to his father?

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