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WHEN A PURITAN MISS DISCOVERS THE JOYS OF CHRISTMAS, LOVE'S AS NEAR AS THE MISTLETOE.

The Davenport sisters were alone, without even a dour-faced maid to supervise their strict puritanical devotions. Then the elder, flame-haired Gillian, boldly decided it was high time they let their hair down. So, with the help of a kindly relation, the two daring misses exchanged their somber attire for modish gowns and hairstyles that would surely give their parents apoplexy!

But the best was yet to come: plum pudding, eggnog, carols, and a most breathtaking tree. The Davenport sisters reveled in the rituals of Christmas --- and in the selection of handsome gentlemen who decorated the festivities!

But when Gillian was caught under the mistletoe by Lord Ranger Marden, she discovered things her mother had never dreamed of telling her!

Miss Davenport's Christmas Details

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From Reader Review Miss Davenport's Christmas for online ebook

Linda C says

Jilly and Mandy Davenport were raised by strict Puritans with a heavy-handed maid to keep them in line. Their dreary lives are also forbidden the celebration of Christmas. Through a set of unfortunate circumstances for the Davenports, the sisters are sent to distant cousins for their apparent safety. However, these relatives are appalled by the lives of these sisters and mean to brighten them, including celebrating the holidays.

Two handsome Lords are part of a house-party in the neighborhood and are entranced by the gleeful sisters discovering life. A running contest soon develops between the 2 households for the attention of Lords Ranger Marlen and Paul Fremont. Some spiteful things happen leading to the return of the parents.

Altogether a rather delightful Regency novel with lots of asides on the meaning behind a lot of the early Christmas traditions and superstitions.

Alice says

A very Regency English Christmas

What a perfect read for Christmas! Not only was there a lovely tale of 2 sisters, who were so strictly raised by Puritan parents, that they were constantly punished to beat the devil from them. Christmas was considered pagan, and jewelry, fancy dress, dancing and fun in general were all signs of evil. Both girls end up spending the winter months with Lord and Lady Harrington, who turn out to be the exact opposite of their parents. Of course there are two handsome Lords also spending the holidays nearby. There are a couple of scheming women who are after the Lords and causing serious trouble also. A very nice mix.

A most delightful part was the interspersing of English Christmas folklore, customs, and rituals throughout the tale. Apart from the sweet romance, the information about the folk customs is so enjoyable that it would be fun to copy some of them for Christmas. Thus I would advise you to read this slightly before Christmas in case you become inspired.

Bobbie Foster harper says

once again I remember why I love this author.

Angela says

Centered around Christmas this book is about two sisters who were abused but blossomed with with kindness and love.

Cynthia Warren says

As usual, MC Beaton/Marion Chesney pulled out another enjoyable tale. I give it four stars because it's exactly what it's meant to be; a fun, light romance against a holiday setting that's as easy and comforting to read as eating potato chips. While I find that the plot lines tend to turn out the same, her stories are still delightful. Ironically, I used to avoid this genre, but since this has to be at least the 7th one I've read this year, I'd say I'm happily hooked, lol.

Tam B. says

I read Marion Chesney courtesy of my library many years ago and something reminded me of her books and I decided to see if they were available as an e-version. This book was one of the cheaper ones and I thought 'why not'.

This is the tale of two sisters who have been repressed and strictly disciplined and managed by parents and a servant having their first taste of Christmas, socialising - simple pleasures.

Their delight in life and all it has to offer and their lack of artifice prove attractive to two younger sons of Dukes visiting neighbours. The girls hosts (distant relations) are very relaxed and hospitable people who enjoy casually entertaining whomever care to present themselves. Of course there is competition in the form of two perfect, very proper and thoroughly jaded young ladies who believe they deserve it all.

This is a nice story. It's not very "regency" in that it is more about fun and simple pleasures than balls, modistes, walks in the park and morning calls but the story does not lack because of this. It is a nice break from London (as it were).

Lisa Brown says

The Davenport girls have had a staunch Puritan upbringing, full of beatings and deprivations. However, this Christmas will be different, as a twist of fate has sent them to spend the Christmas holiday with a relative who is determined to help them have a wonderful time. Never being allowed to celebrate Christmas before, or really have any sort of fun ever, they are elated to experience it all - ice skating, sledging parties, dancing, new dresses, etc. And the fact that two eligible Dukes happen to be visiting the neighbors, just adds another element of fun into the mix. Knowing that this time will be short, they make the most of the opportunity, never realizing that their enthusiasm and genuineness will endear them to those around them - especially the dukes.

I loved this delightful book. I loved the girls immediately, and I loved rooting for them to have a wonderful Christmas, and to maybe even get the guy :). It was the perfect light, fun, and romantic Christmas read. I need to get my own copy, as I am always on the lookout for a great Christmas story, and this would be a fun one to reread.

Jessica says

A charming favorite of Marion Chesney's Regency romances. Two sheltered young girls with Puritan parents find themselves the guests of a warm, Christmas-loving family as well as courted by two handsome lords. The book is a bit heavy with info dumps about the origins of Christmas traditions in England, but the book is a delight all the same. I reread this every Christmas.

Reread 2015: Finished on Christmas Eve, with the presents all ready and having spent the day with family. So delightful!

Reread 2016: I think I have this book memorized.

Tara says

Another fun Regency romance/suspense novel. I love all the little tidbits about how a traditional English Christmas was celebrated and where some of those traditions came from.

Diana Green says

This was a fun and frothy romance, without much depth but highlighting likeable characters and a pleasingly detailed setting. Elements of the story were a bit simplistic, and I found the last section to be totally unbelievable. The method the heroes used to "rescue" the heroines was ridiculous, and the the Davenport sisters' parents went through a laughably rapid transformation in their attitude. All that said, I did enjoy the author's writing style and the way she played the heroines off their rivals. Miss Davenport's Christmas made for a light sweet distraction with plenty of holiday spirit.

Cathy Weber says

A cozy Christmas romance

A lovely little fairy tale with two Cinderella-sisters managing to escape their severe, oppressive parents, find love, and celebrate Christmas for the first time. A fairly typical Regency romance, with no twists or surprises, but still entertaining. Charming touches and vivid detail move the story along while showcasing English Christmas traditions.

Kristen says

This easy-to-read Regency romance has everything one might be looking for in the genre. Sweet, fun, fluffy and with all the drama and "to-do" that characterized the social structure of the time.

I don't think it will be spoiling to say that there is a happy ending here - that's also characteristic of the genre and particularly of Marion Chesney's books. But there's plenty of drama, crisis and angst for the characters before the end, and all of it is fun to read.

I liked the characters of Gilly and Mandy. While they weren't strong by today's standards, for their time and upbringing, they were about as brave as they could have been under the circumstances.

This was also an interesting look at the "country lifestyle" of the times and the social pecking order and behaviours of people. While it's fun to read about, I am very glad I didn't live at that time and have to deal with that myself.

This was a fast, fun easy read and I enjoyed it.

QNPoohBear says

Mr. and Mrs. Davenport, the strictest of all Puritans, are in despair. First a regiment of redcoats was posted in their Yorkshire neighborhood posing a threat to their teenage daughters, Miss Jillian and Miss Amanda. Then, a smallpox outbreak chases them from their London home. The Davenports turn to their acquaintances, Sir John and Lady Harrington, to take Jillian and Amanda into their home with strict instructions to avoid participation in Christmas. The Harringtons, sensing the girls need some holiday cheer, take Jilly and Mandy home and rush headlong into a fun season of holiday cheer. Lord Ranger and Lord Paul, attending a house party nearby, are delighted with the innocent, fresh young ladies but are cautioned that the Davenports will be choosing their daughters' husbands and the rakish sons of Dukes are not on the approved list. Bold Jilly and shy Mandy are having the time of their short lives but when they lose their hearts they fear that their parents will show up and crush their dreams. If only Lord Ranger and Lord Paul would propose and whisk them away.

This story has much darker undertones than most of Chesney's Regencies. The heroines have been abused by a cruel maid and their dour, unfeeling parents. Their fear of repercussions for any kind of behavior that their family would consider unseemly (anything fun) runs through the story. In the beginning the Davenport girls have a hard time accepting kindness. It puts a different spin on the romance aspect of the story. I could have done without the jealousy plot. There was enough going on here without it. I think the ending is improbable. The "villains" are vanquished too easily. The author steps out of the story a lot to explain the history of Christmas customs. I learned a lot about the history of Christmas celebrations but it was a little too much history and could have been worked into the plot better. This story is missing Chesney's trademark humor. It made me smile in places but not laugh out loud.

The romance in this story just didn't work for me. I can see why the rakish heroes would fall in love with such fresh, innocent girls and why the girls would fall for any man who was kind of them, but for a story about a passionate girl, there is surprisingly little chemistry between the heroines and heroes. Most of the romance is told to us from the point-of-view of one of the characters. There is a bit of showing the growing friendship but no real chemistry. I don't need sizzling heat, but some connection would be nice. I thought there was going to be a big misunderstanding plot towards the end but thankfully Chesney refrained from that trope. 99% of this story is kisses only. At the very end, the last scene he takes off her clothes, then his and lays his naked body over hers- fade to black. Chesney's trademark is a naked person!

The characters are rather two-dimensional. The heroines are, of course, good looking, sweet, kind and very

innocent. The heroes are supposedly rakes but they don't exhibit any rakish tendencies in the story. I did have sympathy for Jilly and Mandy and wanted them to be happy. I especially liked Lady Harrington and how she dealt with her rival and I also liked the Colonel's story. Lady Harrington and Sir John are wonderful people that I would like to live with. Lady Harrington is the only older adult with any real warmth. Lady Tenby has a large personality but is rather stereotypical.

The reader is very good. She speaks in an upper-class British accent and pitches her voice for different characters. However, I couldn't really tell any of them apart without listening carefully to the words explaining who was speaking. Overall, this is a pleasant sort of read. Not exactly a heartwarming Christmas story but a nice read for a snowy or rainy afternoon.

Damaskcat says

This is a delightful fast paced romp of a story in which the two Davenport sisters are invited to spend Christmas with Sir John and Lady Harrington at their country house. Jilly and Mandy's parents are very straight-laced Puritans and Lady Harrington takes pity on the girls and determines to give them their best Christmas ever. The two girls meet Lord Ranger and Lord Paul on their way to the Harringtons and both are attracted to the sisters. They are delighted to discover that they are staying only a few miles from the Harringtons and determine to further their acquaintance.

I loved this light hearted story with its many amusing incidents. The characters are well drawn and I just wanted everything to work out for the two sisters. The Christmas celebrations are described in such a way that they are really brought to life. This is a feel good book which can be read at any time of year, not just at Christmas.

Rebecca says

What a cute little romance!!! I enjoyed the fairy tale like story of the two sisters brought up with so much cruelty and punishments that your heart went out to them. But more than the sisters Jilly and Mandy it is Lady Harrington who is the hero of this story. And I think that is what made this one so endearing. And there are snippets on Christmas 's origin and the various celebrations which added to the enjoyment.
