

Promise Me Forever

New York Times *best-selling author Lorraine Heath promises happily ever after*

Love. Jealousy. Passion. Sex.
Lords and ladies.
Rapsallions and rogues.

Promise Me Forever promises all that *and* happily ever after. *New York Times* best-selling author and Planoite Lorraine Heath says that happily-ever-after endings separate romance novels from love stories. But don't worry, it is a mutual breakup.

Romance novels portray characters who, no matter what challenges they face, are sure to enjoy a happy ending, explains Heath. The author further stated, "While a romance will always have a love story in it, a love story isn't always a romance." She refers to *The Bridges of Madison County*, a love story, where the principal characters do not end up together. "Plus it is really a story about adultery, and you won't have adultery in a romance," Heath assures.

What you will have is an escape from reality. "One of the most touching moments in my life was at a book signing in Austin where a woman thanked me because her friend who was battling cancer had recently passed away, and she kept my books on her bedside table because they would help her escape."

In *Promise Me Forever*, readers retreat to the late 1800s to meet Lauren Fairfield and the "devilishly handsome" Thomas

Warner. The two meet in Texas as callow teens, but Lauren follows her family to London, where she becomes tamed and taught the English "trappings" of life.

Years pass, and Tom learns of his heritage only to be summoned to

responsible for "turning him into the type of man she could never love."

Promise Me Forever is number four of Heath's third series called "Lost Lords." As an author of more than 30 novels, she not only writes historical romances for adults, like *Promise Me Forever*, but also young adult contemporaries under the pseudonym Rachel Hawthorne.

Heath says that she respects her readers and added, "I think overall, a lot of people see romance novels as fluff, but true romance readers know the genre. They know their facts."

The old saying goes, don't judge a book by its cover, but that's what Heath did before she picked up LaVyrle Spencer's *Morning Glory* on a business trip – and loved it. "I had a preconception of what romance was but that's when I got hooked. I read everything she wrote and thought this is what I want to write." Heath sold her first romance novel, *Sweet Lullaby*, in 1993.

Born in Watford, a town in Herfordshire, England, and raised in Angleton, Texas, near Houston, Heath says she always wanted to be a writer. She graduated from the University of Texas, and Austin was home for 16 years

before moving to Plano in 1987.

Heath writes from her Plano home in a dimly lit room with the pitter-patter of rain. "I have a CD of a thunderstorm, and



Profile photo

Novelist Lorraine Heath loves a happy ending.

England to claim his title as the Earl of Sachse. Tom asks Lauren to change him, to teach him the subject of English manners, but she doesn't want to be

I prefer writing late at night. It narrows my focus so it's just me, the story, and the thunder," she says.

Heath's husband, Nathan, inspires her, too. Their sons Brandon, 25, and Alex, 19, graduated from Plano schools. "They've always been really supportive and encouraging," she smiles. Heath periodically would visit their schools to talk about writing.

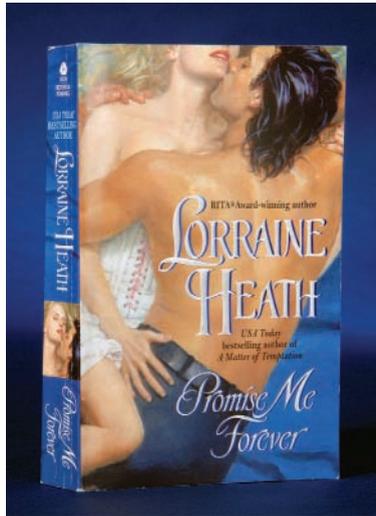
In recognition of her volunteer efforts, Heath was honored in 2003 with the Robin Teer Memorial Service Award. The award is presented by the Dallas Area Romance Authors (DARA), a local chapter of the Romance Writers of America (RWA) that consists of 160-plus writers, including Heath, the president of the organization.

Volunteering allows Heath to compile research and meet aspiring authors. "I enjoy helping aspiring writers learn the business so that they don't step into some of the pitfalls that I stepped into," she says.

Heath's writing is as elegant and noble as the lords and ladies her novels depict. She has garnered numerous awards including a RITA, RWA's highest award of excellence in romance fiction, a HOLT medallion award, a RT Reviewer's Choice Award, and five Texas Gold Awards. Her novels have also hit the *USA Today* and Waldenbooks best-seller lists.

She remembers when *A Matter of Temptation* hit the *New York Times* best-seller list: "I had been out walking the dog and I came in and there was a message on the machine. It said, 'My dear, you've hit the *New York Times*.' Actually, my husband thought somebody had died because I was screaming and crying," she says. "It's something that all authors aspire to do so it's ... it's nice when it happens."

Now *that's* a happily-ever-after ending.



Excerpt from page 205 - 206.

"Hungrily, he blanketed her mouth with his, his hand moving up to stroke her cheek, the underside of her chin, her throat ... improperly in a proper sort of way. ...

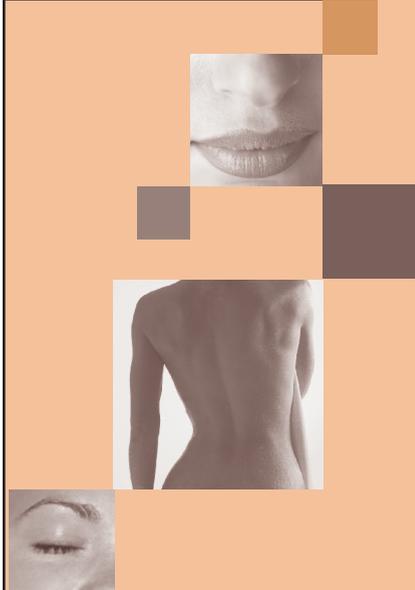
"He took only what he was certain she was willing to give, and she was beyond thinking clearly so that she might urge him to take more. Instead, she simply returned the kiss with equal fervor, raking her hands up into his hair, holding him tightly in place, at once wanting him near and fearing that without his support she would simply collapse. ...

"His arms came around her like banded steel, pressing her close as he changed the angle of the kiss so he could increase the intimacy. Heat and desire almost overwhelmed her. She'd managed over the past week to keep both at bay, to think of Tom as a project, someone to be taught, but not touched, someone to expose to London life without wondering what it might be like to live with him. She fought to remain aloof, to build up her walls, to refrain from wondering how different it all might be if he were still in Texas waiting for her. ...

"Instead, his kiss was clearly demonstrating the error in her thinking. He was still as untamed as the land that had once brought them together."

Lorraine Heath's next book, A Duke of Her Own, is available October 31. For more information, visit www.lorraineheath.com, e-mail her at lorraine@lorraineheath.com, or write to her at P.O. Box 250034, Plano, TX 75025-0034. For information on DARA, visit www.dallasromanceauthors.com.

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