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# A Christmas Promise (Christmas Novellas)



## Synopsis

It's a freezing winter day in London, 1895, when two young girls have a chance meeting. The pair turn out to have much in common: both are poor, both are parentless. But Minnie Maude, only eight, has even worse problems: the uncle with whom she lived has just been murdered, and if that's not enough, the family's donkey has run away. Her new friend Gracie, all of thirteen, feels obliged to help her, and so the girls team up to solve the mystery--and find Charlie the donkey. Anne Perry fans will recognize young Gracie as Charlotte Pitt's maid, a continuing character in the author's bestselling Charlotte and Thomas Pitt Victorian mystery series.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

While bestseller Perry doesn't offer much of a puzzle in her seventh Christmas-themed Victorian historical (after 2008's *A Christmas Grace*), she does a highly credible job of evoking Dickens, especially in the opening scenes set in Whitechapel. As the 1883 holiday season nears in London's East End, 13-year-old Gracie Phipps, a supporting character in Perry's Charlotte and Thomas Pitt series (Buckingham Palace Gardens, etc.), encounters a woebegone younger child, Minnie Maude Mudway, on the mean streets of her neighborhood. Minnie is looking for a missing donkey, Charlie, which belonged to her beloved uncle Alf. The animal disappeared the day before, around the same time Alf, a bone-and-rag dealer, was killed. The two girls turn detective in an effort to find Charlie as well as the truth about how Alf died. Mr. Balthasar, a shopkeeper who assists in the sleuthing, lends an appealing Holmesian touch. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Anne Perry is the New York Times bestselling author of a number of holiday novels, two acclaimed mystery series set in Victorian England, and a series set during World War I. She has also written several stand-alone novels and novellas, and her books have been finalists for the Agatha, Edgar, and Macavity awards. Born in London, she now lives in the Scottish highlands. Terrence Hardiman has worked extensively in theater. He began at the Old Vic, went on to repertory at Bristol, and then spent five years as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company. He played the title role in BBC TV's The Demon Headmaster, while his other television appearances include major parts in Secret Army, Miss Marple, Hannay, and Inspector Morse. Among his film credits are Mask of Murder, Loophole, and Gandhi.

I really enjoy these Anne Perry Christmas stories. They are novellas. Very fine indeed. Some people who are not followers of Anne Perry buy these stories and then write negative reviews. Readers such as that should be aware that these novellas take place during the Victorian Age and Anne Perry presents conditions in the Victorian Age as they really were. So just as Charles Dickens wrote about the sad conditions of the Victorian Age, so does Anne Perry both in her full length mystery series and in these Christmas short novels. Things in the 19th century were very different than they are now in the 21st century. Keep that in mind if you have not read up on the Victorian age before you read your first Anne Perry.

First Sentence: The week before Christmas, the smell and taste of it were in the air, a kind of excitement, an urgency about everything. A few days before Christmas, 13-year-old Gracie Phillips comes across 8 year-old Minnie Maude Mudway standing in the cold. Her uncle, a rag and bone man, was found dead in the street with his cart and Charlie, the mule, missing. Gracie starts out by promising to help her find Charlie, but goes on to help her find out who killed her uncle. Anne Perry's Christmas books are wonderful gifts to her readers and always feature one of the secondary characters of her series. A young, pre-Pitt family, Gracie takes center stage yet even at this young age, you see her grit, determination and indomitable spirit. She is determined that she'll learn to read and improve her life, but doesn't let her lack of skill stop her. Yet I so agree with the wonderful, slightly mysterious, Mr. Balthasar when he states, "...Everyone should read. There is a whole magical world waiting for you, people to meet and places to go, flights of the mind and the heart you can't even imagine." Speaking of places to go, the sense of time and place is one of the things I most admire in Ms. Perry's writing. You feel the cold wind and see the dirty alleys, but also the

wreaths on the doors and the lights. The dialogue is written in dialect, which took me a bit to get on to, but I quickly forgot it was even there. Lest you think this is a light Christmas story; it's not. This is not the London of drawing rooms, but of back alleys, the poor, desperate and hungry. There is fear and cruelty and a mystery with tension, suspense and a wonderful ending. I look forward to seeing who Ms. Perry brings us next year. A CHRISTMAS PROMISE (Hist Mys-Gracie Phipps-England-Victorian) - ExPerry, Anne - 7th Christmas book Ballantine Books, 2009, US Hardcover - ISBN: 9780345510662

The thing that I didn't like about this story is the dialogue. What a pain to be reading while trying to figure out what some words were. It might be more genuine, but it's harder on the flow. Other than that, it's a cute story.

It is nice to know what happens with some of Perry's characters before you met them for the first time. Gracie is true to form--wanting to help where she can. It was a lot for two little girls to accomplish but not necessarily impossible. I've known children to do extraordinary things in my time as a teacher.

Anne Perry is quite a lady and a prolific author. Her Christmas gifts to us are small novels that deal with a character from one of her Thomas and Charlotte Pitt or Hester and William Monk novels, and what impact they have in the story. I wrote Mrs. Perry and she sent me a Christmas card and I have it in the first of the series, and it is precious to me. This year's book deals with Gracie Phillips, the spunky maid and friend of the Pitts. This deals with a time just before she meets the Pitts and starts a new life with them. Gracie is thirteen and comes across an eight year old girl, Minnie Maude. Minnie is upset that her uncle, who is a pan handler, has been killed, and his cart and her beloved donkey, Charlie. Feeling sorry for Minnie, Gracie joins her after her chores and cleaning job, find the donkey, and see who killed Minnie's uncle. A wise man named Balthasar helps the girls unfurl the mystery and the girls have a gift for the Christ Child in the manger. Only they get the best gifts ever. It is a short, but very sweet read that means so much for us Anne Perry fans. Merry Christmas Mrs. Perry! Thanks for your gift to us!

My only regret is that soon I will have read all of the Christmas novellas. Perhaps I shall reread them for the sheer pleasure of it! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Love this story. Read/"Listened" to the book two years ago, and this year I bought two copies for friends at church (ages 12 and 14). The books arrived in as described. Thanks.!

Came to me like a brand new book, I just finished reading it and enjoyed. Thanks so much for great used books at "perfect" prices and prompt delivery.

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