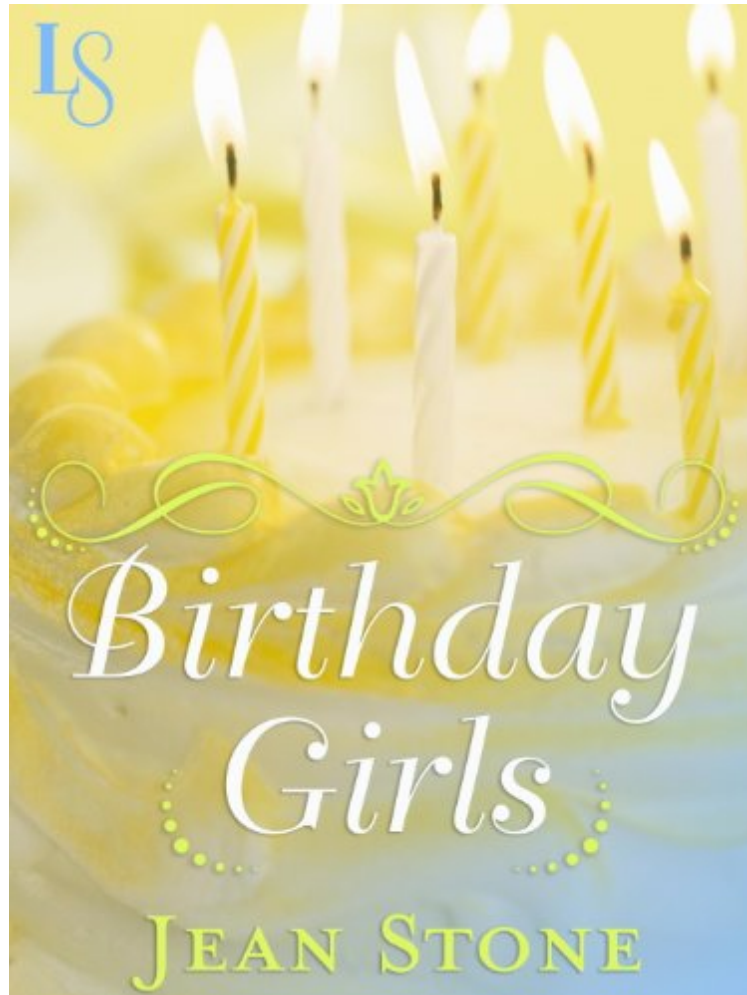


[Free pdf] Birthday Girls: A Loveswept Classic Romance

Birthday Girls: A Loveswept Classic Romance

Von Jean Stone

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Von Jean Stone : Birthday Girls: A Loveswept Classic Romance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Birthday Girls: A Loveswept Classic Romance:

KurzbeschreibungIn this poignant, exhilarating novel, three enormously successful career women face their regrets, rewrite their wrongs, and take one last shot at a happy birthday. Abigail is a star, a Martha Stewart type with a weekly TV show and millions of loyal fans. Maddie is a brilliant photographer who shoots for a hip magazine. And Kris is a bestselling author whose taut thrillers fly off the shelves. As girls, they celebrated birthdays together, sharing laughter

and tears and hopes for the future. Then they lost touch. Now, on the brink of turning fifty, Abigail reaches out to reconnect. Once again, Abigail, Maddie, and Kris will spend time together to toast their birthdays. But this year, they're all too aware of the childhood dreams that never came true. One of them carries a dark, tormenting secret; another is obsessed with the man she loved and lost; a third will give anything to start over. Haunted by the passage of time, all three will go to any length to make sure their wishes come true. Includes a special message from the editor, as well as excerpts from these Loveswept titles: *Mistletoe and Magic*, *Claimed*, and *After the Kiss*. Kurzbeschreibung In this poignant, exhilarating novel, three enormously successful career women face their regrets, rewrite their wrongs, and take one last shot at a happy birthday. Abigail is a star, a Martha Stewart type with a weekly TV show and millions of loyal fans. Maddie is a brilliant photographer who shoots for a hip magazine. And Kris is a bestselling author whose taut thrillers fly off the shelves. As girls, they celebrated birthdays together, sharing laughter and tears and hopes for the future. Then they lost touch. Now, on the brink of turning fifty, Abigail reaches out to reconnect. Once again, Abigail, Maddie, and Kris will spend time together to toast their birthdays. But this year, they're all too aware of the childhood dreams that never came true. One of them carries a dark, tormenting secret; another is obsessed with the man she loved and lost; a third will give anything to start over. Haunted by the passage of time, all three will go to any length to make sure their wishes come true. Includes a special message from the editor, as well as excerpts from these Loveswept titles: *Mistletoe and Magic*, *Claimed*, and *After the Kiss*. Leseprobe. Abdruck erfolgt mit freundlicher Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber. Alle Rechte vorbehalten. "It would be nice if one of you said something." Maddie realized she was staring at Abigail--the woman who had everything any woman in the world could possibly ever want, except, of course, kids; but then again, Kris hadn't wanted any either but now she did and, oh God, this was all so confusing it made her head hurt. She blinked. "Maybe you should clarify." Kris laughed. "I think our queen of the kitchen is saying she wants out." "Out," Abigail said. "Yes, that's a good word. All my life I've been trying to please others. First it was Grandfather. Then Edmund. Now the entire freaking world." Maddie watched as Abigail walked over to the fireplace, ran her finger across the carved marble mantle, then looked up to the portraits of her grandfather and his father before him. It struck her that this was not the same, unretouched woman who posed on the cover of *In the Rose Garden* with Abigail; this was not the same woman who had always been in control. She was pale and drawn; she was . . . vulnerable. God, in all the years Maddie had known her, she'd never once thought of Abigail Hardy as vulnerable. "I don't even have a clue who I am," Abigail said softly, "By the time I am fifty I need to find out. But I'm not going to learn it by pretending to be someone I no longer want to be." Maddie now realized that Abigail must definitely have hit menopause. It was the only answer that made any sense. She tried to sound compassionate as she asked, "Have you seen a gynecologist?" Abigail whipped around. "Don't blame my hormones, Maddie. I've hated every minute of my life for years. Most of all, I hate the damn 'empire' I worked so hard to create. Now I'm going to do something about it." It was difficult to believe that Abigail was serious. She had done so much with her life, had touched so many people. How would millions of women react without Abigail Hardy in their kitchens each week? How would Sophie react? Maddie wanted to ask if there would be reruns, but somehow that didn't seem appropriate. Still, the thought of no longer having to endure the dinner-of-the-week was not unappealing. Kris stood and moved over to Abigail. "I say go for it, girl. What the hell, we only live once." "Thanks, Kris. I knew I could count on you." Maddie wondered what Betty Ann would have said, in her cherub-like, childlike way. "Maybe you should take it a step at a time," she replied, trying to sound encouraging. "Start with a separation from Edmund. Cut down on your work schedule. Travel. Something less . . . drastic." Her words sounded thin. She traced the curves of the paisley brocade on the sofa. "I don't think you get it, Maddie. This isn't like a diet. I'm not trying to wean myself off chocolate. If I'm going to do this, I've got to do it. Sever the ties. All of them." "Including divorce?" Maddie asked. "Sorry, Maddie," Kris said. "Sometimes that's what it takes to move on." But Abigail was shaking her head. "No. I'm not going to get a divorce." "What then?" Maddie asked. "I'm going to disappear. And you are going to help me fake my death." Kris whistled. "Holy shit, you're serious." Abigail raised her chin. "Very." "You can't do that," Maddie protested. "You can't just drop off the face of the earth and make people think you're . . . dead." "It's the only way. My life is too complicated. Untangling the business alone would be a nightmare. And it could take years." It hadn't taken years for Parker to "untangle" Maddie from *Our World*. A few swipes of the pen on the dotted line and--presto--she was out. Of course, the magazine had still been in its infancy. Or course, there had been no profits to make it look valuable. Of course, Maddie had been stupid. "You two are the only ones I can trust," Abigail continued. "No one but the three of us can know the truth. Maddie gets her ex-husband, Kris gets her baby, and I get . . . out. It's all or nothing. Do we have a deal?" Maddie chanced a glance at Kris. Kris grinned back at her. So Abigail had had an agenda. Now they knew. "When do you plan to do this?" "Not until your wishes have come true. Unless, of course, either of you changes her mind. I, for one, won't." The irony did not escape Maddie. Here she was, trying to get her life back, and here Abigail was, trying to throw hers away. As for Kris, well, who knew about Kris. Next week she'd probably be off in Bora Bora and forget the whole thing. "So," Kris asked, "where do we start?" "Maddie made her wish first, so let's begin with her." "That should be easy," Kris said. "Men are my specialty." Folding her hands in her lap, Maddie wondered which one of them was the craziest.