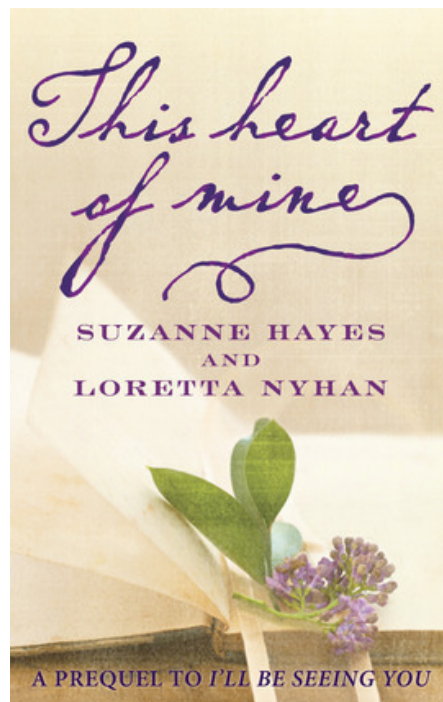




## This Heart of Mine

*Suzanne Hayes , Loretta Nyhan , Suzanne Palmieri*

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In this short prequel to *I'll Be Seeing You*, authors Suzanne Hayes and Loretta Nyhan introduce you to two extraordinary women who are worlds apart—but whose journals reveal they have more in common than they could ever imagine....

Chicago, 1921

Nineteen-year-old waitress Rita Strauss is trying to make it on her own in the big city, spending most of her time alone with her thoughts. The bright spot in her day is the handsome medical student who's a regular at her diner. Rita fantasizes about what to say to him, wishing she could be more confident—until she decides to take control of her life once and for all.

Rockport, 1940

Socialite Glory Astor thinks it's the best day of her life when her longtime beau, Robert, finally proposes. But everything gets complicated when her childhood friend Levi asks her to run away with him instead, forcing Glory to choose between the two men she cares about the most.

Find out how Rita's and Glory's lives intersect in *I'll Be Seeing You*. Told through their letters during WWII, this incredible story brings together two unforgettable women who have never met in person yet share an unbreakable bond of friendship.

### This Heart of Mine Details

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## From Reader Review This Heart of Mine for online ebook

### Mahmoud Elsherif says

It's always such a thrill when a long anticipated book lives up to expectations. I tried to figure out the one thing that made it such a fun read. But with *This Heart of Mine*, there isn't just one thing. Humor, poignancy, creative plotting, and wonderful characters make this book an all-around winner. I can't wait to read it again.

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### Lorraine says

#### Just fair

The first part of the book was interesting, but the second half was middle school story. I was pretty bored with it. Since I am sick, I will probably read the next book to see how the first girl fares.

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### Susan says

*This Heart of Mine* by Suzanne Hayes and Loretta Nyhan is set in 1921 Chicago (Rita) at Christmas and 1940 Rockport (Glory) in July. Two young women, Rita Strauss and Glory Astor, record their private feelings as well as their activities in their journals.

Rita works in a diner, fantasizing about a medical student who is a frequent customer. She recently lost her mother, lives alone now, only her diary in which to confide. After sitting with a dying neighbor, she muses: "Luck should not be measured by the amount of times one avoids tragedy. That would make the world a very dark place, would it not? Shouldn't luck be measured by the good things that happen out of the blue, with no strings attached?" Another day, she berates herself for cowardice: "Why do I come up to a mental stop sign every time I should take action? It's as if I will live the rest of my life thinking so hard about every decision that the world passes me by." Rita goes out to a speakeasy with coarse co-worker Hildy, but rejects the party scene, reconfirming her values.

Wealthy debutante Glory thinks she's achieved the pinnacle of her life when her beau proposes, as their high-society families always planned. Then a childhood friend reveals his love, and she must choose. She remembers advice from her late father: "Choices are everywhere. And each choice triggers off a set of events, like dominoes. A smart girl tries to see the dominoes from above and decide wisely. Don't follow your heart by itself. It lies to you. And for that matter, never follow your brain alone either. Both the mind and the heart have to agree." When she'd asked: "How do you know when that happens?" he had replied: "It feels like the sea on a calm day. Not a worry in the world. It doesn't even feel like a choice. That's how you know."

Many passages from their diaries resonated with me. I look forward to reading epistolary novel *I'll Be Seeing You* set during WWII, in which Rita's and Glory's letters reveal how their lives intersect.

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### Diane S ? says

I am still not sure what I think of these short prequels but this one was free on Amazon. They are also useful in that a reader gets a small taste of the writing style and subject matter before buying or reading the longer book. First person narratives , in my opinion are always tricky, it is often so hard to get them just right. The first part of this story I did not like the style at all, but once we got to the letter writing I liked it better. Will I read the longer story. Not sure yet.

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### **Melodie says**

This is the prequel to I'll Be Seeing You. I have not read the novel yet, but the prequel has whetted my appetite. The prequel consisted of 2 parts, one devoted to each woman, Rita and Glory as they journals their lives and loves. Each has gone through the loss of their parents, and are coming to terms with the new normal in their lives. And each has a love story to tell. I'll leave it there. Suffice it to say, I'll be reading their story.

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### **Marcia says**

Oh boy can't wait to read I'll Be Seeing You and find out what happens to Rita and Sal And Glory, Robert and Levi.

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### **Virginia says**

An informative prequel to my favorite book of this year, at least so far. Provides some backstory to Glory and Rita that helps put their characters in the following Till We Meet Again into some perspective. These two authors have a real way with character development and their writing style is most enjoyable to me. Looking forward to more, from them and from this storyline in general.

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### **LaFleurBleue says**

This book was a free prequel to a full length novel. First notable thing is that the prequel is like an independent short story which did not end up with a huge cliffhanger, as can sometimes be the case, which I find highly irritating.

However what I did not like that much was there were 2 short stories within this already short book, with no apparent link between one another, as the relationship between the 2 women was the main topic of the consecutive full length novel. Both short stories were told at the first person.

The first short story did not manage to hold my interest. I did not care much for the narrator, I did not understand anything about her future husband's personality and what she really saw in him except for an escape route from her miserable life. And what he could see in her was an even bigger mystery.

The second short story felt much more interesting, the characters looked more lively and the plot, though basic, worked well.

Will I read the full length novel? Probably not, considering I have no interest in hearing more about one of the two leads there.

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## Mary says

I love the chemistry these 2 authors have. And this prequel to I'll Be Seeing You was just lovely. The only beef I have is that thanks to the titles of these 2 books, I have 2 songs stuck in my head anytime I think about them :) Otherwise, I highly recommend both books.

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## Dianne says

Suzanne Palmieri and Loretta Nyhan did an amazing job working together to write the prequel for I'll Be Seeing You. I almost forgot that I had it. This tells how Glory and Rita met their husbands and will give you a little bit of their back story.

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## Gina says

Wonderful background stories for Rita and Glory, the 2 main characters for the novel I'll Be Seeing You, which I also gave 5 stars. It gave me a better understanding of who the characters really were. I also would recommend, if you are going to read the novel, to read the novel first and then go back and read this novella afterwards. The novel lets you get to know both Rita and Glory as they are throughout WW2 while their husbands are gone. But then go back and read this story, if you want to get more of a background on how they met their husbands and especially how Glory ended up choosing Robert over Levi. I don't want to say anymore about that because it would be entering spoilerland for both books. Since I liked the novel so well its no wonder that I liked this one as well too. 5 stars!

**\*\*This is not needed to be read to understand the main novel in any way. It only offers background information and I got it as a freebie at one point or another from Amazon. So please don't feel like you need to rush out and spend money on this short story. It isn't necessary reading for the novel.\*\***

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## Michelle (Champ) says

Last year I read I'll be seeing you by Suzanne Hayes and I had NO idea there was a prequel. This book provided a wonderful glimpse into the lives of the pen pals that WWII thrust together. After I finished this book I started rereading I'll be seeing you and I have a different view because I know why Rita and Glory feel the way they do about certain things. I still think it's a fantastic book on it's own, but when you add this one it takes it to a whole new level.

Both books are written in a collection of letters back and forth to each other. I'll be seeing you adds letters to their boys fighting in the war and I promise all the letters will tug at your heartstrings.

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## Margaret Fisk says

Originally posted on Tales to Tide You Over

This Heart of Mine offers two short works introducing Rita Strauss and Glory Astor through a glimpse at an important moment in each of their lives. These characters meet in the novel I'll Be Seeing You which details their relationship through letters as they share the absence of their loves, both of whom have gone to fight in WWII. This prequel, however, takes the reader to 1921 in Chicago where Rita struggles to keep a roof over her head by working in a diner and 1940s Rockport where socialite Glory is finds all her dreams coming true.

These are two very different women in circumstance and time, but both stories are full of heart and complication.

Rita is trying to figure out what to do after her father's death has left her with little money and no one to call her own. She's caring and attentive to the people around her, but puts her own needs aside, a fact no clearer than in her nervousness around a customer at the diner who is a handsome medical student. She builds fantasies up in her mind, but lacks the self-confidence to let him know how she feels. He attracts the attention of the other young waitress, but he's focused on her, something she fails to realize until almost too late.

The story is a lovely, low-key romance between two people who are well suited in many ways, but what caught my attention is how clearly the times became through description and events. I went with Rita to her first speakeasy, experiencing her doubts when faced with the choice of accepting drinks and what expectations might follow, but also just walking through her daily life gave a strong sense of place and neighborhood.

Glory's tale is more complicated and less critical in a lot of ways as childhood friendships turn into love, leaving her forced to make a choice between two friends she'd never realized were in competition. Again, the scene is well drawn, and her confusion clear.

Of the two, I preferred the first, but enjoyed both. I feel the stories show a strong hand at writing not just the period but also the people and their concerns. It bodes well for the story in I'll Be Seeing You.

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### **Joan says**

This is a prequel to the book I'll be seeing you. In it we are told how Rita meet her husband and worked in the restaurant after her parent's death. We also learn how Gloria made the decision to marry Robert who is a member of her class instead of her other friend. We understand that Glory was grieving for her parents until pulled out of it by Robert. The three grow up together, but as adults class is a part of their lives.

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### **Jenny T. says**

This is actually contains 2 short stories...The first tale shows Rita, a diner waitress in Chicago, 1921 who recently lost her mother and is making her way in the world. I enjoyed the second story more which was set in Rockport, MA, 1940 and involved a love triangle between Glory chosing between Robert and Levi.

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