



Amid the Winter's Snow: A Lady Emily Christmas Story

Tasha Alexander

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In *Amid the Winter's Snow*, an uplifting Christmas story in Tasha Alexander's acclaimed series, Lady Emily and her husband Colin take on a case that proves the enduring power of love.

Emily and Colin Hargreaves are looking forward to nothing more than spending a relaxing Christmas at their country estate, Anglemore Park, eating mince pies and playing with their sons in the falling snow. Their solitude is interrupted by a knock on the door one night, when the villagers of nearby Dunsford Vale come to them with strange tales of a barghest--a mythical black dog with red eyes and enormous teeth and claws--that has been wreaking havoc on the town.

Never ones to be taken in by local superstitions, Colin and Emily team up to find an explanation behind the bizarre events. When a grieving young woman in town receives a mysterious and beautiful gift after a visit from the barghest, Emily and Colin begin to suspect that the beast is more man than monster. Racing through the candlelit streets of Dunsford Vale and the windswept heaths of Anglemore, the couple must follow the clues and uncover the truth to restore Christmas cheer.

Amid the Winter's Snow: A Lady Emily Christmas Story Details

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Carrie says

Equal Parts Creepy and Delightful

As always, Ms. Alexander has taught me something with her writing. I won't spoil the story but it was fascinating to learn about an English legend and walk alongside Colin and Emily as they determined whether the creature of legend was real or imagined. I honestly wasn't sure what they were going to find and felt a tad creeped out on a couple of occasions in the story. This story contains a cast of wonderful characters, a beautiful village setting and the typical banter between Colin and Emily that I've come to love so dearly. They certainly are not the norm when it comes to couples in 1900 and for that, they are all the better. The story also brings us some insight into the couple's three charming children, which was a delightful addition. The Lady Emily short stories are a great way to tide oneself over between the longer novels. And anything involving Christmas always makes me happy.

Danielle says

3.5 stars

Lisa Brown says

Lady Emily and her husband, Collin, are happily ensconced in their country home for the Christmas holidays, but when their tenants complain that the Barghest has started to terrorize the village - stealing food and scaring children - their peaceful Christmas is interrupted. They must discover what or who is causing all the turmoil, and what they find out may just be a surprise to everyone.

Another fun Lady Emily mystery, this time it is a Christmas novella, but still a great read.

Linniegayl says

This is a lovely holiday novella in the Lady Emily mystery series. Lady Emily, Colin, and their three five-year old boys are at Colin's estate in Derbyshire in the lead-up to the holidays. Their peace is interrupted when some of the villagers come to their estate to ask for help. Several residents claim to have seen a barghest, a demonic dog-like beast. Naturally Colin and Lady Emily quickly get involved in trying to find whatever is scaring the villagers (and ripping sheep apart).

I thoroughly enjoyed this story while waiting for the next full-length Lady Emily mystery. I'm not sure people who haven't read the series will enjoy it quite as much as me, but it is a fun read, and an A for me, so five stars here.

Betty Strohecker says

This was an enjoyable interlude in the series in which we find Emily and Colin spending Christmas at Colin's Anglemore Park estate with their three boys. Their idyllic holiday is interrupted when villagers come to the door claiming a mythical beast, said to stalk the area, has been sighted. Of course Colin and Emily must solve the mystery. I really enjoyed this look at the growing boys. An uplifting story!

Linda Smatzny says

This short story is set in December, 1900 and features Lady Emily and her husband, Colin Hargreaves at their estate in England. It is Christmas time and the villagers of Densford Vale believe they have a barghest in their midst. The story is really a love story. I read this on my Kindle. It was a quick easy read.

Katherine says

Love sees few flaws!

A short but meaningful ode to love and a fitting Christmas Tale. Love overcomes all obstacles, at least in fiction if not always in fact.q

Annette Meier says

Love, love the local lore/history that goes with each of her stories . . . long or short!

Elizabeth (Miss Eliza) says

*Special Content only on my blog, Strange and Random Happenstance during Alexander Autumn (October-November 2018)

Colin has returned to Anglemore Park to spend the holidays with his family and eat his weight in mince pies. Of course nothing in Colin and Emily's life ever goes to plan, as is evidenced by the torch wielding villagers that have arrived at their door. Thankfully they are not about to be plunged into a Gothic drama as their butler Davis worried, because they are without pitchforks and have come for their liege's help. A dozen of the residents of Dunsford Vale, one of Anglemore Park's estate villages, are awkwardly seated in the cinnamon drawing room when they reveal that their problem is the arrival of a beast born out of local legend. Dunsford Vale is being plagued by a barghest. Emily almost laughs at the suggestion of the mythical monstrous black dog that folklore says heralds death and can be warded off with coffin nails. Seeing as she's only lived in Derbyshire for eight years her stance on the barghest is expected by the locals. What Emily doesn't expect is for Colin to believe them! He's an agent of the crown, a sensible man who has thrown all

sense out the window. Could Colin be appeasing the villagers while planning on doing a proper investigation under the guise of a barghest hunt? As Emily and Colin dig deeper into the sightings, the missing food, the dead sheep, one person in the village seems more troubled by the beast than any other, the unfortunate Miss Fletcher. What could the beast have to do with Miss Fletcher? And can they solve the riddle of the barghest before Christmas so that things can get back to normal?

The second Davis asked if Emily and Colin were about to be plunged into a Gothic drama my first reaction was to snort with laughter, my second was to hope it was true. AND IT WAS! Not the ghostly Gothic in a foreign land, but the monstrous Gothic complete with a fainting heroine! It was Lady Emily does *The Hound of the Baskervilles*! Seeing as I revel in anything the slightest bit Gothic and I had literally just re-read *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for book club this mash-up was right up my alley! I can't believe I'd never heard of a barghest before as it fits neatly under the black spectral dog haunting that covers everything from the grim, made famous in my mind by *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, to the ghostly huntsman and his hounds who inspired Arthur Conan Doyle, to Yeth Hounds, a possibility that Emily's most astute son points out when no one has died from seeing the barghest. While I love all Emily's adventures I have become really invested in these Christmas tales. Tasha seems to free herself of all constraints and it's go big or go home time. The more absurd, the more fantastical the idea, the more humor, the more heart, the more holiday she is able to infuse it with. Missing jewels and Sebastian the gentleman thief baiting Emily's mother, a true ghost story, and now a spectral hound!?! When are these tales going to be collected in one volume that I can place on my bookshelf? I seriously need to know because these tales are the perfect concentration of everything I love most about Tasha's writing.

Though the true test of Tasha's writing is that she is able to create these characters we never want to let go. Every time I start one of her stories I hope my favorites will appear. I know it doesn't make sense to have Jeremy, Cecile, Margaret, Ivy, Davis, Nanny, the boys, and everyone else ever featured in every story, but that doesn't mean I don't hope for the revolving cast of characters to all appear at once. This attention to character is what makes *Amid the Winter's Snow* standout for me. The best stories, the best mysteries, in my mind are the ones where you could just hang out with the characters forever. Who cares if the culprit is caught so long as you are entertained by the inhabitants of the pages. This is why my most favorite British TV show of all time is *Midsomer Murders*. Yes, it strains credulity that they still have any population after all the murders and murderers in their midst. But all these quaintly named little towns are peopled with the most eccentric folks. That is how I felt about Dunsford Vale! This was like a turn of the century Badger's Drift haunted by a hound! The little old lady who cursed the hound away, the young girl who lost her fiance but still found solace in baking for the town, the sheep farmer who was willing to admit his sheep might have just wandered away instead of falling victim to a barghest, the shopkeeper who is viewed as an outsider because he moved to town at three months old. I felt intrigued and invested in each and every one of these characters. Of course now I'm going to want them to come back... damn, it's a double-edged sword falling in love with Tasha's characters...

Tony Hisgett says

This was a nice short story, the conclusion was fairly easy to spot but it was still an enjoyable read.

Holly says

A good novella mystery with a nice mix of local superstition and family holiday time.

Pamela says

This was an excellent novella on the Lady Emily series. It was perfect for Christmas . A howling noise and flashes of a demon dog is seen in their small village Colin and Emily are called out to discover if their village is under attack by an urban legend, or on with two legs. Heartwarming ending. Great story for the Christmas time, forgiveness, and new beginnings. 4 stars. Wish it were a bit longer, so we could see how the couple made out, in the future.

Bibliothekerin says

Two and a half stars. This is no cozy Christmas tale, if that is what you seek. This is more suited to Halloween, or All Hallows Eve. Or some other European pagan folk tale.

Not worth summarizing. Happy ending of sorts, but other than that, meh. A better title for this novella—which means a very SHORT book—would have been Much Ado About Nothing.

Bebe (Sarah) Brechner says

Christmas novella featuring Lady Emily and husband Colin at their home during the holiday season. There's not much on holiday settings or festivities, though. It starts a bit dark, but has a good message in the end.

Mary says

loved it!
