



The Kissing Season

Rachael Johns

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From the author of Man Drought and Jilted comes a funny and romantic Christmas story set in rural Australia.

Every family has a black sheep...and Hannah Elliot is it.

It's no surprise to anyone when Hannah Elliot makes the spontaneous decision to marry a stranger in Las Vegas. But when she finds herself pregnant and her new husband files for an annulment, she dreads having to tell her family.

Returning to her Australian hometown of Wildwood Point, Hannah is determined to become a devoted mum and put her baby's needs ahead of her own. She's also set to prove to her family she can actually be responsible. This means putting her wild past behind her and accepting a job back in the family business...while keeping her pregnancy a secret!

Except, when gorgeous Italian Matteo Della-Bosca walks through the shop door, Hannah finds her resolve slipping fast...

The Kissing Season Details

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From Reader Review The Kissing Season for online ebook

Bree T says

Hannah is the black sheep of the Elliot family. While her three brothers are all settled with stable partners and hard at work in the family furniture making business, Hannah has spent the past few years travelling overseas both for adventure and as a way to avoid the fact that she doesn't know what she wants to do with her life.

It was no surprise to anyone that Hannah impulsively married a man she barely knew in Las Vegas and it seems that everyone was even less surprised when it didn't work out. With the marriage annulled, Hannah has returned to Australia and the town where she grew up to work in the furniture store helping out until she figures out what she wants to do with her life. However what her family don't know is that Hannah is also pregnant. She hasn't told anyone, not since the only person she did tell, the baby's father, turned his back on her and filed for the annulment.

When Matteo Della-Bosca strides into the family store looking to furnish the house he's just bought, sparks fly between him and Hannah. But Hannah is trying to be good – after all if ever there was a time to start being responsible, surely it's now. She's going to be a mother soon and she needs to put her child first. And Matt makes no secret of the fact that while he wouldn't mind going to bed with Hannah, he's not really the commitment type. Hannah is torn – she really wants Matt and what's the harm in a little fling before she has to settle down and embrace responsibility? However, she's not sure that she'll be able to keep her distance, especially when Matt is so generous and wonderful. But he's made it clear he's here for a good time, not a long time....although Hannah might be able to make him see that the long time can be just as fun.

The Kissing Season is a fun novella from rural romance Queen Rachael Johns for the holiday season that is mostly sweet but with just a little bit of spice thrown in for good measure. Hannah has spent the last little while travelling all over the world, something that culminated in an unwise rushed marriage in Las Vegas. The marriage didn't work out and Hannah returned home to face the consequences with her family, keeping her own little secret as well. Torn between a desire to have one last fling with a good looking man and embracing her new found life stage, Hannah is kind of treading water. She's working in the family furniture business, filling in for someone, she's staying with her parents, she's not sure how she's going to go forward with her life and what she's going to do. By contrast, Matt is very focused. He mostly lives in Melbourne but his mother is a local in the town and he has returned home to spend some time with her at Christmas. Matt is successful and spends a large portion of the year travelling around Australia and abroad so he's never been looking for something long term. He enjoys flings and casual relationships and it's clear that from the time he meets Hannah, he wouldn't mind a bit of her Christmas cheer. But then he finds out Hannah's secret and things slowly begin to change... for both of them.

It's a novella so the story unfolds quite swiftly, especially in the beginning but with each interaction, Matt and Hannah question what they really want just that little bit more. I liked the way that Matt was so supportive of Hannah after she blurted out her secret during what has to be a very inconvenient moment! He had made it clear that he was only after some fun so he could've turned and ran but he also saw that she didn't really have much in the way of support and that she was really dreading confiding in her family, who she believed were already upset with the failed marriage. Matt offers Hannah a friendly ear and shoulder and also it makes him question things he's always thought about himself. Due to his upbringing, he had certain beliefs but once he finds himself actually possibly right in the middle of a situation he always wanted to avoid he begins to realise that he may have been hasty in his thoughts and it doesn't have to always go the

way that he experienced growing up.

The Kissing Season is a quick read, perfect for summer days at the beach or by the pool in between dips!

Aussie bookworm says

I am a sucker for a good Australian Romance, and no one does it better than Rachael Johns. Although the Kissing season is a novella, is a wonderful heart warming story about a young woman called Hannah who keeps making stupid mistakes where men are concerned, She made a rash decision to marry a stranger in Las Vegas, which turned sour after finding out that she is pregnant. So Hannah decided for the sake of her baby she moves back home with her brothers and parents and tries to prove to her family that she can be responsible.

Matteo Della-Bosca was another wonderful character, full of charm and Italian sexiness, He decides that he wants to have a fling with Hannah although he doesn't know that she is pregnant, Hannah can't help but be drawn to Matt.

The kissing Season is a sweet Romance, light on sex, but big on family and romance, I think that If you are going to put a few Christmas themed books on your to read list, add this one, for a light, sweet romantic read you won't be disappointed.

Shelleyrae at Book'd Out says

The Kissing Season, a short and sweet romance novella by Rachel Johns, is an enjoyable distraction during the busyness of the holiday season.

Hannah Elliot has returned home to Wildwood Point after an ill-advised adventure in Las Vegas. Facing her family's disappointment with her impulsive marriage, and the annulment that followed barely a week later, is difficult enough, so admitting she is going to be a single mother is impossible. Yet Hannah is determined to keep her baby, vowing to make more sensible choices for the sake of their future...until the gorgeous Matteo walks in the door.

I'm not too sure how I feel about the first meeting between Hannah and Matt, it made me a little bit uncomfortable, but the progression of their relationship was good within the constraints of the format. There was definitely that delicious sense of anticipation around the 'sooner or later' question, and the couple sizzle when they finally get it together. I appreciated that there was actual conflict rather than inane misunderstandings (a pet peeve of mine) and of course there is the obligatory happy ending.

This is an entertaining, light romance to enjoy on your next lunch break or commute.

Brenda says

Hannah Elliot had just returned from a whirlwind marriage and annulment to an almost complete stranger in

Las Vegas. Home to her family in Wildwood Point in sunny Western Australia and the condemnation she was sure would follow. The fact that she was also pregnant meant that piece of news was not for public knowledge – she hesitated to tell her family as she knew what would happen.

Christmas was just around the corner, and in the lead-up she was filling in her hours at the family furniture emporium. When a handsome stranger entered the store, her emotions went haywire. Matteo was the son of Sarah, who did the cleaning for her family. He was also of Italian descent, delicious to look at, but hadn't been in town long; living out of Melbourne meant he rarely visited his family home.

Hannah felt all her good resolutions to be settled, responsible and make her family proud, slipping. She couldn't understand what was happening to her. What would happen over the Christmas period? Would she make it through the festive season in one piece?

This novella was a delightful Christmas romance, light and entertaining, and easy to read. I cringed in the section at the furniture emporium when Hannah first met Matteo; a little bit rushed and “icky” for want of a better word! But the story was very enjoyable, and if you love a light romance, I definitely recommend it.

With thanks to NetGalley for my copy to read and review.

Jess says

The Kissing Season is a delightful Christmas themed novella that is sure to get everyone in the Christmas spirit.

Hannah Elliot is renowned for making bad decisions, it is after all what made her the black sheep of the family. Having returned home to WA in time for Christmas nursing a bruised ego, broken heart and the biggest secret of her life, the last thing she expects to stumble upon is the gorgeous Matteo Della-Bosca. Sworn off men after her disastrous Vegas wedding, Hannah isn't looking for companionship or love. In fact she'd love to just hide out for a bit longer, especially if it means she doesn't have to listen to her parents lecture her on her life choices once again. But while Hannah would love to lie low for some time, Matteo has other ideas. For since his first encounter with Hannah at her family's furniture shop, he hasn't been about to get her out of his mind, not can he keep his hands off her when they are in close proximity!

I quite enjoyed this humorous and heart-felt novella about what it means to let go and take a chance on love. The Christmas setting is brilliant sweeping the reader up into fast paced timing of Christmas and family relations. The romance for the most part is well -paced; kudos to Rachael for dropping that first scene on us so earlier on in the narrative. I'll admit I was bit dazed by it for a second and slightly confused by the character's actions, but I recognise the humour and fast paced of the relationship and I thought it worked over all. It certainly got out attention anyway! I've noticed a lot of people are commenting on this scene in particular, but if you do feel a bit weird-ed out by it, I urge you to keep reading, because The Kissing Season is a beautiful love story that you won't want to miss. It's short, sweet, and heartfelt – what more could you ask from a Christmas Novella?

My thanks go to the Publisher and Netgalley for the copy I received to review.

Read as part of my Australian Women Writer's Challenge 2013.

This review also appears on my blog - The Never Ending Bookshelf - and can be found here:
<http://nevendbookshelf.wordpress.com/...>

Sharon says

Hannah Elliot has returned home after living in Las Vegas where she had a failed marriage and then found out she was pregnant. Now she must tell her family and knowing how they'll react she decides to wait until the right time arises.

Matteo Della Bosa known as Matt walks into Hannah's family furniture shop whilst Hannah is there helping out. Matt is wanting to purchase furniture for his mother and when he comes across Hannah there is instant chemistry between the two of them. But Hannah knows she's not ready to confide in Matt about her past when she hasn't told her family and with Christmas just around the corner she's really not sure when she's going to get an opportunity. Will Hannah get the support she needs from her loved ones?

This was a sweet, fun and light romantic read by a talented Aussie author. A delightful short read which I highly recommend.

Vanessa says

My only problem with this book is that I didn't want it to end!

Kristy Cook says

Loved it from start to finish:) beautiful story line:) n loved the characters:) made me feel right at home

Sam Still Reading says

I must admit that I was first drawn to The Kissing Season by Rachael Johns' name (she did write the spectacular Outback Dreams after all). But when I saw the cover...isn't it gorgeous? The heroine has gorgeous eyes and she's just like I picture Hannah (the heroine). The scenery also reminds me of around Gracetown, in Western Australia's south west – good thing as the book is set in the South West around Busselton and Margaret River (known for wine, cheese and surfing).

Rachael writes a fantastic story, and The Kissing Season is no exception. Packed into this novella is a mainly sweet romance (with some spicy scenes), a family Christmas with drama and a secret baby. Oh yes. A secret baby! You see, Hannah's returned home after a lot of travelling. That's not what her parents would have liked, preferring her to go to university or help run the family business (gorgeous wooden furniture). Along the way, Hannah happened to get married in Vegas...and pregnant too. But the marriage didn't last and now she's home to try and work out how to tell her family, who never take her seriously.

When Matteo Della Bosca (you just know he's going to be hot from his name) comes into the showroom to order furniture for his mother, he practically sets the place on fire with his smouldering looks and charm. Add to that jumping on a bed, then kissing Hannah and everything's topsy turvy. Matt doesn't do commitment and Hannah is thinking of one last fling, so what can go wrong? (Plenty.)

Matt's a hero with a heart of gold – the way he's portrayed as someone who really cares for his mum balances nicely with his own admission that he's a player. He's definitely a hero you wouldn't mind wrapped (or unwrapped) under the Christmas tree! Hannah is a girl you'd be happy to have as a friend – she's not perfect, she's real.

Told in the days leading up to Christmas, Rachael gets it just right from the building heat of an Aussie Christmas to the events of a small community. I loved the parts devoted to the town's Christmas tree event – it brought back memories of attending one in the country when I was small. Although Wildwood Point's Christmas tree sounds like a bigger production, the essence of community spirit and happiness abounds in the writing. The big 'oops' moment at the family Christmas event is also brilliantly written – I was squirming in my seat for Hannah as the scene filled with awkward silence. I also liked that Christmas wasn't the major theme of the novella at the expense of others – there's still plenty of room for the strong family and friends and of course, romance. The pacing was also just right – not too hurried and I felt that the romance developed realistically over the time period.

I read this book in one night – simply put, I didn't want to sleep until I'd finished it!

Thank you to Net Galley and Harlequin Australia for the eARC.

<http://samstillreading.wordpress.com>

Lauredhel says

This is a sweet, uncomplicated romantic holiday novella. It centres on Hannah, a woman who is a few weeks out of a whirlwind Vegas marriage to a stranger, who left the moment she found out she was pregnant. She comes home to her family in the beautiful Southwest of Western Australia, determined to raise her child alone and forgo romantic flings for the foreseeable future. Matteo throws a spanner in the works when he turns up to her family shop to buy a houseful of furniture. The events in the shop ooked me out a bit - consent is not an afterthought, people! - but the rest of the story is rather sweet. It's nice to have two characters who are equally keen on sex, not one pushing for it against the other's wishes. I did find the jumping from one MC's head to the other a little disorienting at times, but that's a matter of taste and style, not a fault as such.

There's not much time in a novella to get from "I don't want to get involved right now" to the Happily Ever After, but the insta-love wasn't too insta- for me. And I was delighted to spend some book-time in the Southwest at Christmastime, a happy stamping ground for me.

Fiona Marsden says

This is a sweet romance with no real surprises but a yummy hero in Matteo and an interesting heroine in Hannah. She seems to be a bit of a ditz in terms of not being able to settle and always falling in love with hopeless losers. Including Larry the Loser who married her in a Vegas wedding and promptly dumped her when she fell pregnant.

Back home in Western Australia, Hannah is trying to fly under the radar, not telling her family she's preggers because it will just fit in with their belief that she's hopeless. Enter Matteo who she ends up snogging on the most expensive bed in her families furniture store half an hour after meeting him.

Matteo is an adorable hero and really saves this story from being too trite. I don't usually like the whole, pregnant heroine dumped by loser then finds man of her dreams who accepts her and baby trope. I couldn't deny it if I wanted to because I wrote a blog about it a while back. Incidentally this isn't really a spoiler because you know this is gonna end well. It's all about the journey.

So I enjoyed the story and really loved Matteo. There were some secondary characters that stood out, especially his mother. A nice little read in the novella length for a quick fix of romance.

Just adding a note to say this is being released again with a new cover in Oct 2014

Christi Snow says

My Review:

Overall, this was a fun, quick little read. Hannah is the black sheep of the family. She's a bit flighty with a need for adventure that tends to get her in trouble. Currently that attitude ended with her pregnant and with an annulled marriage. Oops, but it's the Christmas and she doesn't want to ruin her family's holiday so she hasn't told anyone. She's right at three months pregnant.

Matt is home for the holidays when Hannah catches his eye. She's beautiful, but really hard to get...something that Matt isn't used to, which makes him even more intrigued with her, but Hannah knows that would change if he knew she was pregnant...she's wrong though.

This book takes place in small town Australia during the holidays so the two are constantly thrown together. I wasn't real sure about Matt at first when he just seemed to want her more only because she said no, but his reactions after he found out she was pregnant sold me. I liked how supportive he was of Hannah and her predicament.

I think this is my first Aussie Christmas read. It was funny to read a book that takes place during the holidays, but it's also the middle of the summer. While I still really love snuggling by the fire for me Christmas images, this was kind of fun and entertaining for a short afternoon read.

This book was a short one and I would like to see how Hannah and Matt get on after more than a few weeks together. That impulsiveness of hers scares me for their long-term HEA, but they were a good match in the travel area of life.

I received a complimentary copy of this book in return for an honest review.

Sally906 says

THE KISSING SEASON is a Christmas novella and a wonderful, but quick, romance. The two leads are Hannah and Matteo (Matt). Hannah is a nice girl who makes rash decisions and has not been lucky with her choice of men. Her last mistake was an impetuous decision to be married in Las Vegas and ending up pregnant and divorced. She has returned home to Australia but has not plucked up enough courage to disappoint her mum and dad once again by telling them she is pregnant. She has finally turned a corner and vowed to ignore men, be a 'grown-up' now and be the best mother ever. Then, just before Christmas, Matt walks into the family shop and he is a drop dead gorgeous, rich, kind and the love 'em and leave 'em type. Hannah finds her resolve to ignore men slipping – and Matt suddenly finds an urge to settle down.

Being a novella the romance has to move along very quickly from the first meeting until the happy ever after. I did feel a bit uncomfortable with their first 'connection' in the shop when Matt comes in to buy a bed, it was a little bit too much too soon for me at that point, I guess in hindsight that their reactions to each other fitted with their characters at that point – impetuous and live for the moment. Once this scene was out of the way then growth and respect for each other followed as they made a mental connection and the rest of the story was a lovely romance with the occasional (and much more suitable) spicy scene. While it is a quick and enjoyable read, there is no time for sub plots, other than the pregnancy secret, just purely the romance between Matt and Hannah. You don't get a chance to really connect with the characters as you do in novels, but Hannah and Matt seemed like nice people that you could have a cup of coffee with. I did like how, despite the shortness of the story, author Rachael Johns managed to evoke a hot Aussie Christmas in a small community; Christmas movie nights, Christmas markets, Christmas trees and the drama filled Christmas day lunch. I love books and stories with Christmas themes so THE KISSING SEASON was a great kick-off to my December Christmas reading blitz. I really recommend the story for all you light Christmas romance lovers, well any light romance lover really! I read it in one sitting with a glass of wine at hand and my Christmas tree twinkling beside me.

Stephanie (Bookfever) says

The Kissing Season was a short, romantic and amusing christmas story set in rural Australia. Generally this story was pretty sweet but it also had some sexy moments.

This story stood out from other contemporary romances I've read before, in my opinion. Just like the synopsis says Hannah, one of the two main characters, is pregnant. I think it's pretty unique to start a book out like that. I really liked this aspect of the story.

I really liked how Hannah and Matt first met each other. It was pretty funny but also got straight to the point that Matt is interested in Hannah, even though Hannah was a bit unsure about it all at some because of her pregnancy.

And I have to say I liked both main characters well enough. Especially Matt was a favorite of mine. He was very charming, handsome and oh so sweet. Hannah was also a likable character. I really thought her and Matt made a good pair.

It's a pretty short book so the romance develops pretty fast. Maybe a little too fast... but like I said before it's

a short story so in the end I'm okay with that. The writing was not bad either, it read very easily so I ended up finishing it fairly quickly.

Overall, I think this is a nice short story with a sweet romance and little spice that's easily read and isn't just perfect for Christmas time but any time really!

Shannon says

The Kissing Season

The Characters

Hannah Elliot
Matteo Jerky Jerkerson

The Story

Look I can't with this guy. I mean I think he is supposed to come off as a suave playboy but to me he's just reading as a jerk. I don't have patience for that.

The Random Thoughts

*DNF so no rating
