



Jingle Bell Rock

Lori Foster, Donna Kauffman, Susan Donovan, Janelle Denison, Alison Kent, Nancy Warren, T.J. MacGregor

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They're big, they're bad, and they're everywhere -- Brava's national bestselling anthologies continue to delight devoted fans across the country, and the franchise that began with *All Through the Night* now brings a whole new meaning to the idea of Christmas ecstasy. Featuring a six-pack of top-notch, bestselling romance writers, *Jingle Bell Rock* will be the next best thing to eggnog to celebrate Christmas cheer.

Skip the mistletoe -- you won't need it after you indulge in these six tempting tales of romance filled with the sort of naughty-but-oh-so-nice men who make the season so bright it's downright hot...

He Sees You When You're Sleeping

Lori Foster

What Booker Dean wants for Christmas isn't under the tree, it's right next door. Frances Kennedy is everything Booker desires...and the gift he has planned for her involves a lot of delicious unwrapping...

All She Wants for Christmas

Janelle Denison

When sexy pediatrician Matthew Carlton plays Santa, pulling Faith Roberts onto his lap, he has no idea what's on her Christmas wish list...or how much he'll enjoy fulfilling every bit of it...

Turning Up the Heat

Susan Donovan

Being stood up on Christmas Eve is bad enough, but now Valerie's furnace is broken, too. Good thing that sexy repairman is available to raise the temperature dramatically...

Baby, It's Cold Outside

Donna Kauffman

It's been ten years since Susanna York left Jace Morgan. Now, as fate reunites them during a holiday snowstorm, they'll have plenty of time to discover that distance only sharpens certain hungers...

A Blue Christmas

Alison Kent

Thomas "Blue" Miller never expected to see Jessie Buchanan on his Christmas tree farm again. But now that she's here, he's ready to show her exactly what she's been missing...

The Nutcracker Sweet

Nancy Warren

Co-workers Daniel and Tara couldn't hate each other more. So when they end up as Secret Santa partners, it's

a perfect chance for revenge and a dare that just may ignite the steamiest night of their lives...

Jingle Bell Rock Details

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From Reader Review Jingle Bell Rock for online ebook

Writerlibrarian says

I read the Janelle Denison's short story in this anthology because it's part of her Wilde series and I am this read in order freak. Short and kinda sweet. A lot less "fantasy play" than her two previous stories in the series. Her male character is actually interesting and not annoying. Her female character is a bit too ordinary but still has the red flame hair that all spunky female character need in these kinda stories. The set up is cliché but Denison makes it work. I enjoyed it for what it was a PWP short story with an interesting male lead.

Julianna says

Reviewed for THC Reviews

"3.5 stars overall" *He Sees You When You're Sleeping* by Lori Foster – I thought that *He Sees You When You're Sleeping* was a little light on the plot and character development. It is basically all about the hero, Booker, finding out that he is finally free of a past romantic entanglement. He then immediately sets out to get the heroine, Frances, into his bed, and a whole lot more. I normally enjoy the friends to lovers theme, but even though Booker and Frances had been hanging out as buddies for the past two months, I still felt like things moved too quickly for them. I liked Frances and respected her for keeping things purely platonic between them even though she had fallen for Booker almost as soon as she moved in next-door. She also insisted that he officially break up with his ex before they could start anything with each other.

There was just something about the way that things developed with Booker though, that didn't quite sit well with me. He had fallen for Frances while he was still involved with another woman, Judith, and then he strung Judith along for a full month even though he knew that the spark was gone from their relationship and it was essentially over. The author says it was because he was a nice guy and was looking for just the right way to break up, but in the end, all it accomplished was making both him and Judith unhappy and drove her to try to cheat with Booker's brother. When Booker realized that he didn't have to do the breaking up (which felt like he was trying to take the easy way out), he then immediately went to Frances with what I thought was a rather arrogant attitude, as though he didn't expect to be turned down. He did soften up later on, and I thought that them baking cookies together and talking through the connecting wall of their bedrooms was rather cute. The love scenes were pretty steamy which I would expect from Lori Foster as this is an area where she seems to excel in her writing. Since I've only read one other story by Ms. Foster, I don't know if including the ex is a typical thing for her to do, but the other story had this element too. While I don't mind if the hero has a past with other women, I don't care to hear about those exploits or to have the "other woman" play any kind of role in the story. I'm also not a fan of two brothers casually dating and/or sleeping with the same woman. That's something that just seems like it would be very weird and complicated in real life, but was treated very casually in this story.

He Sees You When You're Sleeping is the first in a trilogy of novellas titled *Dean Brothers & Friend*. The third story, *Playing Doctor*, features Booker's brother, Axel, as the hero and the second story, *Some Like It Hot*, has their friend, Cary, as the hero. From what I could tell in this novella, Cary seemed like a fairly decent guy, but Axel's extreme playboy persona did not endear me to him at all. Even though these two are both doctors which I usually like, I probably won't be in any hurry to pick up their stories. Overall, *He Sees You When You're Sleeping* was an OK read, but I just didn't feel connected enough to the characters or plot to

really love it. I know that a lot of romance readers rave about Lori Foster, but I'm beginning to think that her style may not be for me. I might give her another chance with a full-length novel though, before throwing in the towel. **Star Rating:** ***1/2

All She Wants for Christmas by Janelle Denison – It took me a little while to get into *All She Wants for Christmas* mainly because when I started it, I couldn't help thinking that it was basically a carbon copy of the first two books of the *Wilde* series. Hero who has an undeserved “bad boy” persona, but underneath really has a heart of gold and strong family ties – check. Heroine who only wants a sexual fling because of a past relationship gone bad with a similar type of guy – check. Hero who doggedly pursues the heroine attempting to convince her she's “the one” for him – check. If it hadn't been for the redundancy or if I had spread them out and hadn't just read the first two *Wilde* stories within the last month, I might have been able to give this one keeper status.

Matthew was a to-die-for hero, a rich, successful pediatric surgeon who's great with kids, and unbeknownst to anyone has been looking for a woman who wants him and not his money or the prestige of being married to a doctor. Faith is a schoolteacher and hospital volunteer who loves kids every bit as much as he does, and has been attracted to his seemingly good heart as well as his gorgeous body. However, Matthew has a really bad reputation with the ladies around the hospital, and after a nasty breakup that left her heartbroken, she hasn't been able to bring herself to take a chance on him and accept his numerous requests for dates. Instead she decides to ask him for her Christmas wish of a steamy one-night stand.

I loved that Matthew had wanted Faith for six months and the second she gave him an opening, he was ready, willing and able to do anything and everything to convince her that he was in love with her. He was definitely a dream man who knew how to seduce and pamper a woman. If I weren't a married woman, I wouldn't mind finding a Matthew under my tree on Christmas morning to “unwrap.”;-) I could kind of understand Faith's reluctance to get involved with Matthew thinking what she did of him. I don't mind sexually aggressive heroines once in a while, but I just don't relate to them quite as well as ones who aren't. Perhaps having three heroines in a row like that who also harbored the same basic commitment issues, was just a bit too much for me. I was glad, however, that she didn't fight it for long. I can't imagine any woman being able to resist Matthew after all he did for her, so at least that part was believable for me.

Aside from the plot and character repetition, so far, all the *Wilde* series stories have been pretty good reads, and overall, so was *All She Wants for Christmas*. This novella gives a brief introduction to Chayse Douglas who is apparently acquainted with Adrian Wilde and becomes his heroine in the next story, *The Wilde One (Bad Boys to Go anthology)*, and Ashley St. Claire who is the heroine of book #5, *The Wilde Side*. I do plan to continue with the *Wilde* series but hope that Janelle Denison has a bit more creativity in store for future books, or maybe I should just put a lot more space in between them. **Star Rating:** ****

Turning Up the Heat by Susan Donovan – I spent the majority of my time reading *Turning Up the Heat* thinking that it was a nice little fantasy scenario, but not one that worked well for me personally. It seemed to be based primarily on stranger sex which is generally one of my least favorite romance themes. I really tried to get into it, but up until the last chapter or so, I couldn't help wondering how the hero and heroine could possibly have this wild, elaborate sexual encounter with someone they'd just met. Knowing that Valerie appeared to be having a lonely Christmas Eve, I wanted to just go with the flow, but her sexual daring was kind of weirding me out, as was Earl's forcefulness at one point and the lack of any sort of protection. Granted the author dropped a few hints along the way as to where things were leading, but in spite of that, she still managed to completely catch me off guard with a big plot twist near the end which saved the whole story from getting a lower rating from me. While I admire her skill for being able to do that, this is an extremely rare case where I think I would have enjoyed the novella more if I'd known the ending first. As

written there wasn't a lot of character development either. I'm sure this story would appeal to other readers more than it did to me, but it didn't quite "turn up the heat" for me as well as it could have. *Turning Up the Heat* was my first read by Susan Donovan. Other than a few odd word choices, she had a pretty solid writing style, which leaves me open to trying something else by her in the future. **Star Rating:** ***1/2

Note: This novella has a few instances of slightly more explicit language that is typically reserved for the erotic genre, but otherwise the sexual content is on par with most steamy mainstream romances.

Baby, It's Cold Outside by Donna Kauffman - *Baby, It's Cold Outside* centered around one of my all-time favorite romance themes, the reunion, but in spite of that, it still fell pretty flat for me. I like introspective characters, but the first two chapters of this story were almost entirely nothing but a running commentary of what each one was thinking. I realized that the author was attempting to do some character development by giving the reader background information and establishing that Jace and Suzanna still had deep feelings for one another even after ten years apart, but in my opinion, this wasn't the best way to go about it. Once the two characters started having some dialog, it was a little better, but then their conversations were so frequently punctuated with more internal ruminations that I often lost track of what they were talking about.

The steam level of the story was pretty good and could have been great if the author had kept a steady flow going in the narrative of the love scene. As it was written though, it seemed like the hero and heroine couldn't decide if they wanted to make love or talk out their problems, so the scene went on for about three whole chapters. I think it would have been better if they had talked first and made love later, because they started and stopped so many times, I was beginning to get frustrated. I also thought the reasons that Jace and Zan had parted company ten years before and never sought each other out when it became clear that they were still hopelessly in love were for the most part rather weak and mainly a result of pride on both their parts. Overall, this wasn't a truly bad novella, but there were just too many parts that felt forced for it to be truly good. Ultimately, it did not hold my attention very well at all.

Baby, It's Cold Outside is the first story in the *Men of Rogues Hollow* series in which each book or novella revolves around one of the Morgan brothers. Jace's other three brothers were mentioned in passing, but no carry-over characters actually appeared which gives me the feeling that each volume may stand fairly well on its own. The remaining stories in the series are *Exposed* (from *Bad Boys Next Exit*), *Catch Me if You Can*, and *Making Waves* (from *Merry Christmas, Baby*). This was also my first read by Donna Kauffman, and even though she didn't wow me this time, I may continue the series at some point and will keep an open mind about reading other works by her in the future. **Star Rating:** **1/2

A Blue Christmas by Alison Kent - *A Blue Christmas* was a surprisingly heartfelt and emotional read about two former teenage lovers who've never been able to forget one another and who reunite ten years after they last saw each other, just in time for Christmas. I absolutely love a good reunion romance, so this little story was very appealing to me. I wish that I could have gotten to know Jessie better. Her reasons for leaving Thomas aka "Blue" a decade earlier made sense, but it would have been nice to know more about her past. Although he was understandably angry and resentful when Jessie walked back into his life after so long, Blue was obviously a very loving and forgiving man to let go of all the hurt and bad feelings and just allow Jessie into his heart again. I loved that the two of them had never found anyone else who could equal the level of passion, intimacy and trust they had with one another. I do wish that Jessie had come to Blue out of a desire to rekindle their relationship rather than just to find out whether she was actually frigid or could get him out of her system by sharing a wild weekend of sex, but it was fairly obvious that she did still love him and was simply holding back her feelings. Their love scenes were tender, passionate and thoroughly sensual with them giving very freely to each other.

The ending was sweet, and although Jessie and Blue did admit there was a lot of work to do, I wished I could have seen how they resolved their issues. Oftentimes, wanting to know more is par for the course with novellas, and alls well that ends well I suppose. At least, I did come away from reading it, believing that they could make it work this time. Overall, *A Blue Christmas* was a lovely and enjoyable read for me. This is the first time I've read anything by Alison Kent, but after this, I'm definitely open to trying more of her work.

Star Rating: ****1/2

Note: This novella is the steamiest one in the *Jingle Bell Rock* anthology. It has a little more explicit language and some borderline erotic content (back-door caressing with fingers and tongue) which may make some readers uncomfortable.

The Nutcracker Sweet by Nancy Warren – I have to admit that I'm not a big fan of the love/hate relationship in romance, and *The Nutcracker Sweet* mainly revolves around this theme. I've just never quite been able to wrap my head around the idea of two people who are at each other's throats in the light of day, but have perfect explosive chemistry during their long passionate nights together. I'm beginning to think this is one of Nancy Warren's favorite themes, because it is the second novella of hers that I've read which is based on it. All that said, *The Nutcracker Sweet* had a sort of underlying humor and cuteness to it which made it more palatable to me.

Daniel and Tara are definitely a case of opposites attract in the extreme. He is a thoroughly disorganized, but charming salesman who hates Tara's nitpicking of his expense reports. Tara is a perfectionistic accountant who can't stand Daniel's penchant for not turning in the proper receipts. After her daring Secret Santa gift to him, they can't keep their hands off of each other. What little I got to know both characters in such a short story, I generally liked them, and their love scenes were hot and steamy. The only other thing that wasn't quite to my liking was how quickly things progressed between them. They went from driving each other crazy, to jumping into bed, to falling in love in a mere two weeks. Even though they'd been co-workers for a while this was a little hard for me to swallow. However, I decided to try to just go with it, and overall, *The Nutcracker Sweet* ended up being a fun, sexy and pretty well-written read which has left me open to trying Nancy Warren again sometime. **Star Rating:** ****

Jessica Alcazar says

12/19/12: so far so good...Denison's story is once again fantastic...too short for my taste, but good none the less :) I will read the rest when I finish her WIilde series...

03/25/13: This review is for all 4 stories that make up Donna Kauffman's Men of Rogues Hollow ... ALL FANTASTIC. I loved reading about all four brothers finding their happily ever after. If I had to rate the stories from best forward, I would put Austin as my favorite then Tag, third comes Burke and last is Jace BUT all 4 stories were 5 stars in their own way.....

Alex (HEABookNerd) says

Review is only for the following stories:

Ratings

---*He Sees You When You're Sleeping* by Lori Foster: 3 Stars

---*All She Wants for Christmas* by Janelle Denison: 3 Stars

---*Turning Up the Heat* by Susan Donovan: 3 Stars

---*Baby, It's Cold Outside* by Donna Kauffman: 2 Stars

---*The Nutcracker Sweet* by Nancy Warren: 2 Stars

Sarah Eiseman says

Just finished reading this Christmas collection, which includes works by Lori Foster, Donna Kaufmann, Susan Donovan, Janelle Denison, Alison Kent, and Nancy Warren. This collection was great. There were dramatic parts, some very funny comedic parts. Basically, I laughed, I cried and was very happy by the end of the book.

Foster is a reliable favorite of mine, but this one was even better than I thought it would be. Of the authors, Donovan's and, surprisingly, Warren's were my favorites. These were both the funnier installments with some surprising twists mixed in. The Kaufmann and Kent pieces were good, but a little too dramatic for me. Denison's installment was a continuation of a series that she has written many books on, so it was nice to see some side characters get the spotlight.

If you are looking for a fun holiday read, check this book out. I love collections like this because they are super-quick reads and I get to sample new authors (like Kent and Warren) to see if I want to give them a shot at a whole novel. Good stuff!

Christie P. says

This is an anthology book that I had high hopes for. I was really disappointed in all of the stories except for the Lori Foster story.

I would recommend this story to anyone who is looking for something that is a really quick and easy read that doesn't require much thought.

The stories weren't bad, they just didn't catch my fancy once I started reading them. Lori Foster's story saved the book, for me anyway.

Linda C says

This collection of 6 HOT Christmas stories was a fun read. The stories included 2 reunions after 10 years; an office battle that heats up in the bedroom; a next door neighbor that becomes something more; a solitary Christmas Eve that changes with the arrival of the furnace repairman and a wished for Christmas present that explores some hidden truths. All the stories were sexy and well presented. I liked Nancy Warren's the best, but all were well done.

Elle says

Last year, I read only one story from this collection. I loved it - it was so cute (Donovan's story).

This year, I read the rest and loved them. And this Anthology packs a lot of meat - like 5 or 6 stories. And it's a nice little collection of stories, I liked or tolerated all of them!

Sure, there were some questionable bits. Maybe I'm jaded, but when the sexy dr. everyone says they've slept with turns around and tells me that those are all rumours, I might not necessarily take that as the full truth. But that's just me - and lest we forget that there is no sexy dr. in my life ... so maybe that's where I am going wrong.

The stories are good. A lot of them have lonely women in them, but maybe there is something about the holidays and loneliness and the gift of good sex and no longer being so lonely that really jive with readers? I don't know, but I enjoyed reading them ... so I wonder what that means.

Kimberly says

I got this book because it contains Wilde #3. I was pleasantly surprised by the other stories contained. The main theme is Christmas. I would also rate it 3.5 stars.

He Sees You When You're Sleeping

Very enjoyable. Enjoyed the theme of neighbors. The reader was told that Booker had a very physical job on page 15, but had to wait until page 17 to find out that he owns a lumber yard. Frannie is an artist. The story line of these two falling in love was easy to accept since they spent a lot of time together from moving furniture to watching sports. I loved the comedic pairing of Alex and Cary. I was also glad to find out this story starts another series, and that I will get to read more of Alex and Cary. They were great and their behavior actually helps to move the story along. I thought this was a great story to start the book out.

All She Wants For Christmas

This was the story I got this book for. There was a foreshadow on page 49 for Wilde #4. This made me wonder what the foreshadow was in "Wilde Thing." I can't remember Matthew nor Faith from that book. While I've read one review where the reviewer thought it was good to get a little distance from the Wildes, I don't know that I agree. The reader is introduced to the female lead in Wilde #5. The theme of the male, in this case Matthew, buying clothing and jewelry for the female lead, Faith. This story was nice, not one of the more erotic ones. And because they were removed from the Wildes, I was not that emotionally invested. I was a little disappointed in this story, especially since the first story in this book was so good.

Turning Up The Heat

This story started on page 101. By page 104, I knew there was something a little off about this scenario. The continuing events further confirmed my suspicions. I knew prior to page 138 that these two were married and having fun. I liked how they worked to keep their sex life alive. I also liked the humor present in this story. It reminded me of "Four Christmases." I was happy that the author did not stop with the story once it was revealed that Valerie and Earl were actually married, but gave the back story as to why these two play their little game. A nice little story and a little different in who the leads are. I liked it.

Baby, It's Cold Outside

All I can say about these once young lovers reuniting is angst, angst, angst. Jace and Suzanna have come

back home. Jace to accept a job and figure out what to do with the family estate and Suz also to accept a job. Both hope to see each other, but don't expect to because they have spoken to each other in years. Everyone else in the Hollow, seems to realize they should be together and scheme to make it happen. The plan seems to be working, but Jace seems bound to disrupt it. Luckily, Suzanna is a very strong and determined woman, and gets what she and everyone wants.

A Blue Christmas

Yet another young lovers reunited short story. This is one is a little more revenge driven on the part of Thomas "Blue" and curiosity for Jessie. After reaching all of her dreams, Jessie returns to the small Texas town she was born, lived and fell in love in. And the town and love she left to get away from a terrible situation. As the maxim goes, with a little twist, it is only in the arms of her true love that she can reach orgasm. And she does, over and over again. Of the two young lovers reuniting stories, I like this much better. It was faster and not as much angst.

The Nutcracker Sweet

A story about a gag gift backfiring on the person who gave it. Daniel thinks that Tara is a ball buster and gives her a nutcracker for the company gift exchange. Before he knows it, he has volunteered his own nuts to her for as long as she wants. What starts out as dare, would he be the man to give her what he is heard telling another co-worker, turns into an office romance and more. This was a cute story. It was one of my favorites in the book. I also liked how the author showed both partners relaxed and started to adopt some of the other better traits. A nice story to end the book.

Toni N says

There are a couple of stories in this book that I would give 5 stars to. And then, there are a couple that bring that score way down for me. I won't say which ones fall under which category, because it's not the fault of the authors. I just have my own preference about what type of stories I like to read. Overall, I'd have to give an average of 3 stars (since I can't do 3.5).

? ?randi says

He Sees You When You're Sleeping by Lori Foster

3.5 stars

Booker Dean has been with his girlfriend, Judith for 5 months but in the past two months he's fallen for his neighbor Frances. When he finds out that his girlfriend has recently propositioned his brother Axel, he's ecstatic. Ecstatic because he's merely been holding off on pursuing Frannie until he could let Judith down easy.

Frances wants one thing for Christmas but her hunky neighbor Booker already has a girlfriend. So she's stunned when Booker knocks on her door and announces that he wants her. It's sudden even though she returns his feeling so she needs some time to think...but only a day.

So this little story moves extremely fast. Over the span of 2 months, Frances and Booker hang out like buddies. During the 2nd month Booker decides he wants Frances, at least more than Judith. The moment he learns Judith is interested in his doesn't-turn-down-any-women brother he makes a play for Frannie by telling her he wants her in his bed and for life - essentially in the same breath. It's bit far fetched, one would hope,

but no less sweet for a 44 page romance. Also, I'm guessing brother Axel and their friend Cary each have their own short stories via the Dean Brothers & Friend series.

All She Wants for Christmas by Janelle Denison

2.5 stars

Third grade teacher and children's hospital volunteer Faith Roberts has decided that this Christmas she's going to indulge in night of hot, anything-goes sex with a man whose rumored to be very skilled in bed if the gossip around the nurses stations is to be believe. Faith hasn't dated since her bad breakup and after this night of passion she's determined to start dating seriously again. Pediatric surgeon and playboy Matthew Carlton has been asking her out for months and like her ex who was also wealthy, successful Faith has decided he's not marriage or even boyfriend material but she only wants one night and since he's not a commitment guy he's perfect. Matthew accepts her proposition for one night of passion but he has something more permanent in mind and only 24hrs to convince her they should be together. Also, there is a brief mention of Adrian Wilde who I'm assuming is from The Wilde Series, which I have not read.

The story was a tiny bit pretty woman, minus the prostitute, with a good bit of steaminess and build up. Faith seemed to get over her resistance to wealthy, successful men fairly quickly. I guess Matthew really is that good, but 51 pages and 24 hours felt a little long in the end. Interesting how different 7 pages feels from story #1 to #2.

Turning Up The Heat by Susan Donovan

4 stars

Alone on Christmas Eve Valerie thinks things can't get any more sad and then her furnace goes out. She's spent a hour on her hair and make-up, hundreds of dollars on a new dress, stockings a shoes and prepared a holiday feast but now, alone and waiting on the repair man from Ferguson Heating and Cooling, she decides it all to pathetic that know one else gets to enjoy it. Plus, she's convinced that the repairman will be some poor, bald loser with a beer belly named Earl or Cletus with no family or relationship keeping him home on Christmas Eve. She's right about one thing. His name is Earl (ha!) but she was wrong about everything else concerning the gorgeous man who has been sent to put the heat back into her, umm...unit.

This one is bold, funny, sexy, dirty, surprising and really great. You will laugh out loud and smile profusely. If you don't, you're ice cold. One of the best I've read in any anthology but also pretty awesome on it's own. Amazing the zing you can pack into 42 pages!

Baby, It's Cold Outside by Donna Kauffman

2 stars for the beginning. 3+ for the relationship/boldness.

At age 18 Jace Morgan and Suzanna York lost their virginity to one another. Though they were in love they were both leaving their small Virginia town to pursue college degrees in Indiana and Georgia respectively. So they did the mature thing and promised to remain the best of friends during their years away. That lasted 6 months and Jace never heard from Zan again. So 10 years after they left he's returned home, even though it's never really felt that way, to pursue a career as a teacher. He figures he might run into Zan and that will be okay but he admits that she still holds a tiny, but significant piece of his heart. A heart he's never been able to give to another women. Still he never expects her mother to call out of the blue and ask him to fetch Zan from the train station on Christmas Eve.

Suzanna knows she's to blame for her and Jace no longer being friends. She made a terrible mistake and would take it all back. She's hoped to run into Jace during one of his visits home these last 10 years but he's never been back. Still she's thought about him everyday. Daydreamed about him and fantasized about him at night. Can the love she shared with Jace really be as incredible as she remembered? It doesn't matter though since she's sure Jace will not want to speak to her even if he was here. But Suzanna is about to have all her questions answered when she departs her train and Jace is there waiting.

This one was filled with pent-up passion and lots of forthright, bold thoughts from the word go so I expected it to be a-w-e-s-o-m-e. When the couple finally gets together, whether simply talking or ah, more it is pretty great. But it took a very, very, very long winded, jumbled time getting there. And a handful of times I found myself rereading passages because the sentence structure or word usage (or lack thereof) was odd. Also, the action shifted a time or two and I thought I must have missed a sentence so I'd have to go back and read it again. It became tedious. If you can skip about 20 of the rambling 60 pages then it would have been better.

Blue Christmas by Alison Kent

2 stars

Jessie Buchanan left the small town of September, Texas 10 years ago to attend college and flee an abusive father. Now she lives in Dallas, has a good job, great friends, a nice boyfriend and a good life. But more and more she's realized that she's missing something and she suspects that the boy she loved at 18, the same one she walked away from 10 years ago, is the only man she'll ever find passion with. She's made a plan to visit September one more time and seduce Thomas "Blue" Miller.

Uhh, I didn't care for this one. The entire first part of the book is either Jess deciding she is going to have sex with Blue, who wanted to marry her at 18 but she left him, or it was Blue ordering her about in only her thong and heels. When they finally start having the sex it's steamy-ish but I didn't care because I didn't like the whole set up. Each of their motives were yucky and I didn't get a good enough explanation for why Jess left him to begin with (besides her father was abusive and no one knew). It's been 10 years, they've had no communication, he kind of hates her and she has a boyfriend who doesn't ignite any passion, but they are both more than happy to bone, instantly. Plus he tells her she's every man's dream: a whore in bed. How romantic! Then after a few orgasms all is forgiven, at least mentally though no one says it aloud. They part but later he's come a'knocking and they say they love each other and then the story is over. It was only ok if you can get past the plot but it had a couple of nice steamy parts if you like being called a whore.

The Nutcracker Sweet by Nancy Warren

stars 3.5/4

Tara Ellison is a numbers and receipts kinda gal so when the company's traveling sales managers categorize expenditures on expense reports as 'miscellaneous' it drives her insane. Daniel Jarvis is the worst offender so she meticulously combs his reports making sure he's not charging the company for his out-of-town play girls as well. Daniel calls Tara the Ballbuster and since he drew her name at the office Secret Santa he thought it a fitting gift to get her a silver nutcracker. That was until Tara overheard his private conversation telling a friend that Tara's problem was that she needed to get laid. Then Tara did the most shocking thing: She asked Daniel if he was up for the job. Was she kidding? Serious? All he knows is that after thinking about Tara more he sure as hell wants to find out.

I immensely enjoy adversarial romantic relationships so I liked the idea of this one instantly. The story unfolds quickly and it has endless steamy and several funny moments. With the exception of these two

professing their love at the end this story was a home run in the anthology world.

Sofieke Anderson says

He Sees You When You're Sleeping

Lori Foster

★★★

All She Wants for Christmas

Janelle Denison

★★1/5

Turning Up the Heat

Susan Donovan

★★★★

Baby, It's Cold Outside

Donna Kauffman

★★★

A Blue Christmas

Alison Kent

★★

The Nutcracker Sweet

Nancy Warren

★★★

Shannon says

He Sees You While You're Sleeping-- **

I don't know why I expected this to be good. But it wasn't. In fact it was kinda creepy. The hero's brother goes after his one day old ex-girlfriend. Idk. Just was really icky.

All She Wants For Christmas-- ****

I liked this one. I feel like I shouldn't for some reason but I did. Both H/h were nice people.

Turning Up the Heat-- ****

This story started really weird. I thought it was kinda creepy. Having sex with a stranger? How does that turn into a romance? But the ending totally changed my thinking. I went back and reread it and really enjoyed it. I thought it was really sweet.

Baby It's Cold Outside---***

This was ok. I didn't really connect with the characters. I think Zanna could have groveled a bit more. Jace forgave her way too easy.

A Blue Christmas---**

Again I didn't really feel this one. It hints at a back story but doesn't give me enough to really connect. Personally if the guy I was about to sleep with called me a whore I'd be out so quick.

Nutcracker Sweet---****

I really liked this one. It moved a little fast but it was still sweet. One of those opposites attract kind of things.

Lisa (Remarkablylisa) says

THERE WAS THIS SUPER DUPER CUTE SHORT STORY IN HERE CALLED "TURNING UP THE HEAT" AND IT STILL MAKES ME SIGH RANDOMLY WHEN I'M BY MYSELF. LIKE HI! RELATIONSHIP GOALS!!! i'm so alone.

Wendy says

Very enjoyable anthology of Christmas romance. Definitely a bit steamy, sometimes a bit unrealistic, often a bit of fun. I always enjoy a good anthology and even though I always say that I don't read 'romance', I really seem to enjoy it when I do.

While some of the stories seem to be parts of series they all seem to be able to stand alone as well. Normally I am anal about reading series in order, but it did not bother me to read these particular stories.
