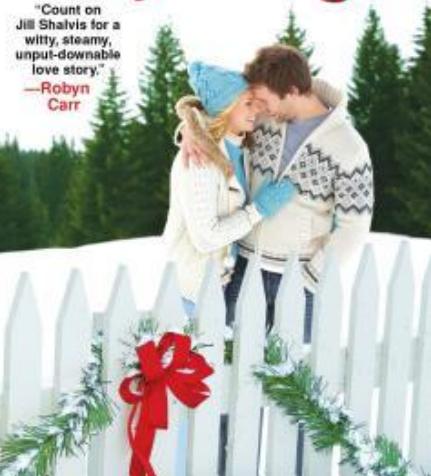


New York Times Bestselling Author

jill Shalvis

Merry and Bright



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Merry and Bright Jill Shalvis

Finding Mr Right

Brilliant chemist Maggie Bell has a knack for choosing Mr. Wrong, and with yet another lonely Christmas looming, she decides it's time to alter the equation - and seek out someone who seems totally wrong for her. Eureka! The heart is a genius...

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Behind on her bills, B&B owner Hope receives an unlikely guest - stranded solicitor Danny, who has been threatening to put her out of business. Funny how the holidays can bring people together no matter how much they resist...

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Merry and Bright Details

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Author : Jill Shalvis

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Holiday, Christmas, Contemporary, Anthologies



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From Reader Review Merry and Bright for online ebook

Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says

Jill Shalvis + Christmas stories = Happiness!

That's really all you have to know. MERRY AND BRIGHT is a Jill Shalvis orgy of her Christmas stories compiled together in one book. That being said, you may want to check and see if you're already read these stories before since they are reprints of older titles. I haven't read them and I wasn't sure what exactly to expect since they are older works of my favourite author, but once I cracked into it, I realized that I had nothing to worry about. ALL the stories in this anthology are wonderfully written and sweet. I would definitely recommend this to Shalvis fans.

FINDING MR. RIGHT – 4 stars

Maggie Bell is a sweet and smart chemist who spews useless, but actually quite interesting information when she is nervous. When in the presence of a bad boy named Jacob, the normally composed brainiac suddenly turns into goo. It's actually quite endearing and made me fall instantly in love with Maggie's character. Jacob, the hero is a sinful bad boy who loves talking dirty. I can tell you I had absolutely no complaints about that!

In this short, but scorching story, Shalvis really displays her talents as a writer. I don't know how she is able to create such chemistry in such a short amount of time, but she nails it in this first kick-off story to the anthology.

The only thing I would say is that it wraps up a little too quickly in the end, but the romance is fabulous!

BAH, HANDSOME! – 4 stars

Another sweet and sexy story by Shalvis takes a financially struggling B&B owner named Hope and her solicitor Danny and puts them together in a snow storm. With the help of Hope's friend, Lori and her husband, Ben, they bring the two haters together until all there is is love!

I adored Lori's presence in this story. She added so much life and fun moments to the story. Hope's character was more on the anal, uptight side and I didn't like how she constantly rejected Danny's offers for help. In the end, this story had so many LOL moments and some wonderfully cute and sweet moments as well, making it a perfect read for the holidays!

MS. HUMBUG – 4 stars

What happens when you put a recently betrayed woman with a rebel in nice shoes? Explosive chemistry, that's what! Shalvis does it again with this short story featuring Cami and Matt.

This story felt the shortest of them all, but it still packs quite the punch! The banter between Cami and Matt is so entertaining to read that I was smiling from ear-to-ear. There's just so much heart in Shalvis's stories that when you add the Christmas element to it all, it just makes for a delicious treat fit for the holidays!

*Review copy provided by publisher

Darcy says

These 3 stories were cute, but the set up a little hard for me to buy into, especially the last one. Being that they were short stories it seemed like things moved at super speed.

Samantha says

Merry and Bright by Jill Shalvis is a collection of three short stories set around Christmas. I don't normally read holiday setting books, but I picked this one up for the Ho Ho Ho Read-a-thon.

I've only ever read one other book by Shalvis and this collection reminded me why I never picked-up another. While the stories aren't bad, they're just not my thing. If I read a contemporary romance, I tend to want the conflict to stay at believable levels. The fact that Shalvis seems to think that all her stories need a conspiracy or life and death situation annoys me.

The first story, *Finding Mr. Right* was the best story in the collection. Chemist Maggie Bell has a crush on the contractor working outside of her office. Even though she knows he's completely wrong for her, she decides to pursue him for a short term relationship.

Maggie has the habit of spewing out random facts when nervous. At first I liked this, but the character trait was overused to the point where it started to get annoying. Even though Maggie's wikipedia knowledge started to get on my nerves, I still liked her character. I only wish that Shalvis had stuck with character conflict between the heroine and hero to move the plot forward, rather than going the action/conspiracy route.

The second story, *Bah, Handsome*, features Hope, a B&B owner, who owes a ton of money to her loan shark step brother. When one of her step brother's lackeys shows up at the B&B, Hope doesn't expect to be attracted to the man. This one really didn't work well for me. Hope was annoyingly stubborn and I honestly didn't care at all about the relationship. I also really hated how meddlesome her friends were.

The final story, *Ms. Humbug*, focuses on city planner, Cami, who discovers the man she's dating is banging the office assistant. Disheartened, she takes up with mayor and long time verbal sparring partner, Matt. Another story that would've worked better for me if Shalvis hadn't taken the action/conspiracy route. While this one wasn't bad, I thought the characters were the most underdeveloped, compared to the first two stories. Despite this, I still generally enjoyed the lighthearted tone and bickering between the main characters.

Shalvis has an engaging writing style and her characters are fun, so I can see why her novels are so popular. However, she's not for me. If you're looking for a cute holiday read and are a fan of Shalvis, this is probably worth checking out.

Deborah Vespo says

Three cute Christmas short stories. Don't know why but I go through these fazes throughout the year where I want to read Christmas stories!

Finding Mr. Wright: Chemist Maggie Bell finds that a man she knew in high school, Jacob, is doing some renovation work at the company she works for. She hasn't had much luck with the guys who she thinks are ideal for her, so on the advice of a friend she decides to go for a guy who is totally opposite of her and Jacob is looking like the ideal candidate. Jacob's appearance couldn't have come at a better time in Maggie's life. Someone has been breaking into her office, her home, and has slashed her tires.

Bah Handsome!: Hope is a Bed and Breakfast owner who is struggling financially. She took out a loan from her stepbrother who offered her terrible terms. Now the money is coming due and she isn't real sure how she's going to pay. It doesn't help matters when her brother's financial solicitor appears at her door in a snow storm. Danny has very strong feelings and is concerned about Hope. He knows the money is coming due and wants to do everything he can to help her out. But Hope isn't exactly making things easy. It's a good thing Danny is just as stubborn as she is.

Ms. Humbug: I'm pretty sure I've read this in another book before. Cami works as a city planner. She's been dating one of the guys in her office and it doesn't seem to be going anywhere. Recent Mayoral elect, Matt, and Cami always seems to be fighting at opposite sides of the coin. And for Matt, this is a good thing. He loves Cami's intelligence and her spirit and isn't afraid to take advantage of a moment once presented. Not only do Cami and Matt find themselves in a developing romance, but they also find themselves in an office investigation. Someone seems determined to cause the downfall of many people in key administrative roles for the city and Cami and Matt are determined to find out who is behind it all.

Jessica Alcazar says

THIS was a little bundle of goodness!

All 3 stories had the great wit, humor and sexiness that Ms Shalvis has normally delivered but Finding Mr Right stood out WAY above all! From "\$1.19" to "Goddammit, are you getting naked?" I laughed so hard I thought I would pee my pants. I couldn't stop. Maggie made for a very entertaining 100 pages or so. The only tiny little thing that I would change is the 'i love you' part. The story didn't need it. It actually took away from it's realism a little bit. But an excellent short story, non the less!

Bah Handsome was cute as well, but again, the 'i love you' was unnecessary and made the story seem rushed and unrealistic. And that goes for Ms Humbug as well.

In conclusion, PEE YOU PANTS hilarious! Highly recommend!

Kate says

The first two stories in this collection were terrible. The writing was sloppy and felt like mediocre fanfic to me. The plots were kind of ridiculous and also not at all suited to novellas. The plot in the last one was also not suited to a novella, but there was some good tension and chemistry between the leads and the writing was

markedly better. And all three female characters were primarily motivated by the fact that they desperately wanted orgasms. They were obsessed with orgasms. And, honestly, it was one of the most off-putting things for me, because it made their motivations murky for me with how short of a time the characters were given to develop anything even remotely resembling a relationship. I'm glad I bought this series for 99 cents, as I see Jill Shalvis books advertised constantly and I am always so close to buying, but this was a good way for me to see that her stories just aren't for me.

Carol says

I read two out of three stories and could not work up the enthusiasm to read the third. The plots were cute and the characters okay, but for short stories there seemed to be an awful lot of sex. I prefer relationships to be more developed before sex is involved.

Aly is so frigging bored says

Buddy read with Maru

Danielle (Love at First Page) says

Finding Mr Right: the smart woman wins the heart of the stud muffin, who she had a major crush on in high school. I will always devour that story line!

Bah, Handsome: love that Jill Shalvis wrote a nerdy hero, but the heroine was too bitchy for my tastes.

Ms. Humbug: my favorite of the three. Hate-to-love stories seem to be doing it for me lately. ^_^

Dee says

Two-haiku review:

Lady scientist,
Inn owner, city planner
Three women find love

I love Christmas books
Three holiday novellas
All happy endings

Note: This is a reprint of older holiday novellas. I hadn't read any of them previously, but you might want to check before buying.

Gwen (The Gwendolyn Reading Method) says

Story 1 was super cute, stories 2 & 3 were ok. But JILL SHALVIS, so I'm ok with it.

Anne - Books of My Heart says

Well this is a Jill Shalvis book so of course, I liked it. The stories are all set right before Christmas but do not really include anything holiday related except minor mentions of shopping or decorating or travel plans. This is actually 3 long stories in this book.

1. Finding Mr Right 5 stars

This is my favorite in the bunch. Maggie is a scientist, smart. Jacob owns a construction company. They knew each other in high school. He was a popular, sports star. She was years younger, a nerd, not exactly popular. They run into each other again when Jacob's company is doing work on the offices where Maggie is employed. The humor is lovely. They are nice people, easy to love. There is a bit of a mystery here related to Maggie's pet science project.

2. Bah Handsome! 2.5 stars

This was my least favorite in the bunch. The couple were fine folks, Hope and Danny. She owns a B&B and Danny is a CPA. I especially loved the supporting characters Lisa and Ben. They are great and funny! But I didn't find the main relationship believable. It happened too quickly.

3. Ms Humbug 4 stars

This story is an office romance with a mystery. Cami tries to keep her life in control with OCD organizing. I can totally relate to her. Matt is a shoot from the hip, popular successful guy. There's some bad stuff going on in their office. They end up working together to figure it out and get together. It's interesting and funny.

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/me...>

Merry and Bright

By Jill Shalvis

ISBN: 0758291124

Author's Website: <http://jillshalvis.com/>

Review brought to you by OBS reviewer Andra

Synopsis:

Finding Mr. Right

Brilliant chemist Maggie Bell has a knack for choosing Mr. Wrong, and with yet another lonely Christmas

looming, she decides it's time to alter the equation – and seek out someone who seems totally wrong for her. Eureka! The heart is a genius...

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Born rebel or overgrown man child, Matt is the kind of man no woman can tame–until an unexpected encounter with his nemesis, Cami, at the office holiday party proves there is an exception to every rule.

Review:

Finding Mr. Right

From the first page I was drawn into Maggie's plight...and I totally loved her sister's suggestion! Why not choose Mr. Wrong since Mr. Right (on paper that is) has not worked out in the past (maybe I should take a lesson from her playbook?). As it turns out...Mr. Wrong (aka Jacob) is an old high school crush who just happens to be working as the guy in charge of earthquake retrofitting her office building.

Maggie is insecure (with respect to the opposite sex) and I found the interactions between her and Jacob really drawing me in to their journey.

“What, you've never seen a clumsy woman tear her stockings before?” “I've never seen a beautiful woman so unaware of herself before.”

Let us not forget the humor as well J In one scene, Jacob is sleeping over (on the couch), Maggie wakes up in the middle of the night with a big thirst so she goes into the kitchen (after standing over Jacob on the couch...peering at him...making noises hoping he will wake up so they could...well you know...). While in the kitchen, Maggie does not turn on the light and then hears a noise. Upshot is it does not end well for either Maggie or Jacob and Maggie asks that Jacob not turn on the lights.

“I told you not to,” Maggie said on a sigh. She was sitting in the opened dishwasher tray in a camisole and panty set, bare legs dangling over the sides, her arms bracing her up as she attempted to lever herself off the broken plates beneath her. “Jesus, Maggie” She had to be cut all to hell, and he rushed forward to lift her out.

Maggie then leaves abruptly and locks her self in the bathroom while Jacob is trying to insist that he look at her derriere for possible broken glass. At this point, Maggie responds in true Maggie fashion and we get a real hard look at her compulsive side when Jacob accidentally knocks her toothbrush to the ground and he picks it up and places it on the counter:

“Wrong side.” “Huh?” “That's the toilet side of the counter. Dentists recommend that a toothbrush be kept at least six feet away from the toilet to avoid airborne particles resulting from the flush. You just put it within four feet. I'll have to throw it away.”

Besides the really hot story with the really hot Jacob, there was an additional ‘mystery’ which added depth to the story which kept me guessing until the end. Slowly throughout the story there emerges a theme of

sabotage and the ‘who’ is a surprise.

Bah, Handsome

Hope O’Brien runs a B&B (her dream) two hours north of Denver but at the moment things are looking dismal. She is behind in paying her bills and with a balloon payment looming in three weeks to her step-brother Edward AND...she has not been with a guy in over eight months, what’s a girl to do. Frustrated on many levels, we catch a glimpse of what it is like to be Hope.... who is quickly loosing hope. While decorating the inn, Hope and her good friend Lori (and support staff for the inn as well as a newlywed) are having a fun time when Lori says the following, which caused a grin to take up residence on my face:

“Mistletoe!” Lori snatched up the dried sprig, and held it to her chest like it was a bar of gold. “You’ve been married six months and still drag Ben into the closet whenever you see him. What could you possibly need with mistletoe?” “It’s for you.” “You want me to kiss me? Well, why didn’t you just say so?” Hope leaned in and puckered up. “Give me your best shot.” Laughing, Lori shoved her away. “I don’t want to kiss you. I want someone else to kiss you. A penis-carrying someone.”

As the evening approaches (and a snowstorm continues to rage outside), there is a knock on the door. Danny Shaw, Edward’s CPA is standing at the door and he is stranded. His rental car is stuck in the snow and he is ill equipped to be in Denver’s winter weather. Side note.... Hope refers to her step brother as “rat bastard”. Hope does not wish to let Danny in but what is the alternative? Let him freeze to death. So she relents and quotes the rate (twice what she normally charges...after all...that is what you charge ‘rat bastards’ isn’t it? :)). The next morning things start to go downhill as Hope discovers her pipes are frozen. Trust me when I say, from this point in time on it seems that a number of comedic errors occur. Slowly but surely, the two seem to connect on a happier note (and more lust filled I might add).

One particular quote had me laughing and happy that Hope was finally appreciating the geeky accountant:

“City rat bastard had a sharp wit, she’d give him that. And a good ass.”

Many trials and tribulations to get through (surprisingly given it is a novella) along with more chuckle worthy moments. In the end, a sweet (slightly naughty – given the shed scene!!!) romantic story.

Ms. Humbug

Cami is a professed workaholic. Here it is three days before Christmas and Cami Bennet is working and contemplating the necessity of going to the office Christmas party. As Cami said on the first page:

She liked the big O’s – order and organization. Orgasms would have been a nice addition to that list, but due to being a little uptight-and, okay, a lot anal – those kinds of O’s were few and far between.

So right off the bat I got a sense of desperation from Cami, not a quality I particularly like. However, there were certainly other redeeming qualities of the story :)

With respect to the bathroom scene.... poor Cami, her day is just not getting any better until....” The Kiss”. Of course, the internal confusion and then surprise when she finds out ‘who’ she is kissing was a chuckle worthy moment. From there I knew that chemistry would take over and the story would flow better for me. And it did. A quick and fun read (though the least favorite of the three for me) with a bit of a mystery as well.

As always, thank you Jill Shalvis for penning such delightful stories.

OBS would like to thank the publisher for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review

Susan says

Finding Mr Right

Brilliant chemist Maggie Bell has a knack for choosing Mr. Wrong, and with yet another lonely Christmas looming, she decides it's time to alter the equation - and seek out someone who seems totally wrong for her. Eureka! The heart is a genius...

Fun story. Maggie is tired of her bad luck in finding Mr. Right and with the encouragement of her sister, decides to have some fun with a Mr. Wrong instead. When she discovers that the man in charge of renovating the office where she works is her old high school crush, she feels she has found the perfect candidate.

I loved Maggie. She's the stereotypical nerd, brilliant at her chemistry work but awkward in social situations. When she gets nervous, she spouts all kinds of scientific trivia, which can be a little disconcerting at certain times. Jacob is concentrating on getting the job done so he can get paid with the bonus and then get out of town to visit his family. He noticed Maggie early on, attracted to her without recognizing his old classmate. Their first encounter was funny and hot as they went from awkward to steamy in a hurry. Maggie keeps trying to convince both of them that it is a one time thing, but they can't leave each other alone. I especially liked seeing how easily Jacob saw past Maggie's awkwardness and liked what he saw.

There's also some mystery going on, that has Maggie's office being searched, her tires slashed, and her house searched. Jacob is determined to keep her safe. It's pretty obvious who is behind it, but there is a twist to the end that I didn't see coming.

Bah Handsome!

Behind on her bills, B&B owner Hope receives an unlikely guest - stranded solicitor Danny, who has been threatening to put her out of business. Funny how the holidays can bring people together no matter how much they resist...

Another fun story. Hope has had a really bad year. One ex-boyfriend broke her heart, and the next one stole her money. To make ends meet, she borrowed money from her stepbrother. Unfortunately for her, he's a heartless SOB, the loan is due in three weeks, and he won't give her an extension. Instead, he's sent his CPA, Danny, to make sure she pays up.

Danny didn't want to come, doesn't approve of what his boss is doing. He tried to talk Hope out of signing the loan paperwork, but she wouldn't listen to him. She's not happy to see him and he really can't blame her, but he really wants to help her. Unfortunately for him, he can't get her to listen to him.

I loved the interactions between Danny and Hope. There's a really strong attraction between them, but Hope

is desperately trying to ignore it. Being from the city, Danny has no experience with things like frozen pipes and bears, so seeing his encounters with them was pretty funny. I loved the way that Hope called him "Genius Boy" and teased him about his reactions. I also enjoyed seeing how their attraction would get the better of them, and could understand Danny's frustration when Hope would push him away.

I thought Danny was a real sweetheart. It was pretty adorable when he tried to protect her from the bears. I also loved the scene when he tried to save her from the "earthquake" while just - almost - wearing a towel. It was great to see how getting away from her stepbrother made him realize just what had been happening to him, and that he was ready for a change. The phone conversation with Edward was really great.

I must admit that I got very frustrated with Hope and how she refused to even listen to Danny when he offered to help her. She's in deep trouble and she knows it, but her pride won't let her accept anything from him. I loved seeing her friend Lori keep pushing them together. It was also the mark of a true friend when she told Hope what an idiot she was being at the end. The final scene was very satisfying.

Ms. Humbug

Born rebel or overgrown man child, Matt is the kind of man no woman can tame--until an unexpected encounter with his nemesis, Cami, at the office holiday party proves there is an exception to every rule.

Fun opposites attract story. Matt and Cami have worked together in the past, but usually end up on opposite sides of the issues. Now, thanks to a rash of scandals, Matt has gone from councilman to mayor and is trying to bring back the town's reputation. Matt is the kind of guy that everyone likes, easy to get along with, fun loving, and really good looking.

Cami is just the opposite. She is a workaholic who has to be in control of every aspect of her life. That tight control tends to turn men off, so it's been awhile since her last relationship. She's gone out with a coworker a few times, but it has been pretty platonic. She's hoping to get a bit further with him at the office Christmas party, until she spots his shoes along with a pair of women's shoes in the ladies room at work.

Then, in a comedy of errors, Cami and Matt have a confrontation that has her convinced that he was the one in the ladies room. Encountering each other at the masked Christmas party, Cami mistakes Matt for Ned and they share a scorching hot kiss, which makes Cami mad when she discovers the truth. She can't deny the way he made her feel, and Matt is equally surprised by her effect on him.

I loved seeing the way that Matt was determined to pursue the attraction between them. He was amazingly sensitive to her needs for a man with the reputation of a playboy and Cami wasn't sure how to deal with it. I loved the way that he appreciated how smart she was, and that she didn't back down when she was trying to make a point. I also liked how he tried to get her to relax and have some fun. Cami discovered that Matt was the only one who could make her want to give up the tight control she kept on herself. I really enjoyed the scene in her office when she really let go.

I also enjoyed the way they worked together on the office mystery of who was behind all the scandal revelations. As they worked their way through all the possibilities, their differing ways of looking at things meshed well. The guilty party wasn't really much of a surprise, as they were the one with the most access. I loved seeing how the confrontation went down, and the effect it had on Cami.

Andra Weis says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/me...>

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