



Kissing Santa Claus

Donna Kauffman , Jill Shalvis , HelenKay Dimon

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Three hottie humbugs find holiday magic where they least expect it...

Donna Kauffman

Lock, Stock and Jingle Bells

Holly hates the yuletide season more than ever since she inherited her mother's Christmas novelty store, but her childhood pal Sean's determined to warm her up - to Christmas and to him. When they uncover a diary concealing secrets involving both their families, this could be the Christmas that changes their lives forever...

Jill Shalvis

Bah Handsome!

Behind on her bills, B&B owner Hope receives an unlikely guest - stranded solicitor Danny, who's been threatening to put her out of business. Hope's staff sees more fire than fight in the sparks that fly as they try and bring Hope and Danny together, but only a Christmas miracle can help these unlikely lovers see the light...

HelenKay Dimon

It's Hotter at Christmas

Hawaii's no paradise for Marissa, who, thanks to a series of unfortunate events, can't seem to get away from the sand to enjoy her Christmas East Coast style - with plenty of snow and slush. But tall, dark, and serious police officer Ted's about to give this bad Santa in heels a *Mele Kalikimaka* she'll never forget...

Kissing Santa Claus Details

Date : Published October 1st 2009 by Kensington (first published September 30th 2006)

ISBN : 9780758238849

Author : Donna Kauffman , Jill Shalvis , HelenKay Dimon

Format : Paperback 307 pages

Genre : Romance, Holiday, Christmas, Contemporary Romance, Anthologies, Contemporary, Fiction, Short Stories

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From Reader Review Kissing Santa Claus for online ebook

Debbie M. says

First story was ok but couldn't get into either of the others. Stopped reading.

CJ - It's only a Paper Moon says

The first one, "Lock, Stock and Jingle Bells" was a pretty good story, some editorial fixes needed to be made but satisfactory.

So far "Bah Handsome" the second story really got me. The writing was fresh, witty and sexy and I liked the two main characters enough to wish that there had been a longer book **on top of that** I liked the secondary characters enough to wish that there had been another book about them. Sheesh, I'm going to have to find more from this woman because our writing styles are similar (except she's more polished) and I've never read a love scene in the freezing cold that was as sexy as hers.

I couldn't read the third one because I just couldn't get into it.

All in all this anthology is a 3.5 and that's primarily due to the Jill Shalvis story. Looks like I've found myself another romance writer to check out.

Libby Waterford says

I really liked all three stories, but especially Jill Shalvis's. Her story was sexy and believable. Also I'm a big fan of heroes who wear glasses. ;)

Cari Keck says

Definitely not my type of reading material. People don't fall in love that fast and I don't quite think men think that way. There were so many grammatical errors it made me cringe. The only reason I finished was because it was a part of my book battle.

Dorothy says

This book was just not my cup of tea. It is a combination of three stories that are mainly love stories which is ok. What I don't like is detail about the love making nor the cuss words in the book. An author can write a decent book without either one.

Heather T says

I'm not sure. Some stories had potential, but they end the minute you get into them. Short stories either don't develop their characters well, or do a good job with the characters, but end the book too suddenly without the proper rises and falls. Very few authors manage the right balance. I saw potential in the first two, but Dimon was the only that I really got into because it felt more complete. Although, the Shalvis story made me want more and was more interesting for me. I just felt like it left a bit hanging with the brother issues.

Kati says

These three stories were so focused on sex between the characters that any character development was largely ignored. Not a book I'm going to keep in my collection or want to read again, I think.

Rebecca Wood says

More 2.5 stars.

The first story was okay, a solid 3 stars.

The second story was my favorite a 3.5/4 star.

The last story was the worst I DNF'd it about 50 pages in.

Abra says

I received this as a freebie at RT15.

This was a terrible book. I've read lots of Christmas novellas and short stories and many of them have been really good. There is no excuse for these stories.

Lock, Stock, and Jingle Bells by Donna Kauffman: This story had the MCs breathless all the time - no doubt this was because all their conversations consisted of long theatrical monologues. The heroine starts out all angsty over selling her mother's shop and making decisions about her life and then precedes to have everything handed to her on a silver platter tied up with a nice bow. She comes up with zero solutions to her problems on her own.

Bah, Handsome! by Jill Shalvis: By far the worst of the three novellas. Jill Shalvis phoned this one in. As an example here is the effort to fit in the heroine's backstory on page two:

"Honey, you're twenty-nine. That ship has not sailed. You're just being a pansy-ass because your last boyfriend stole all your money and ruined your credit before going to jail, forcing you to go begging from your asshole rich stepbrother."

Wow, smooth.

It's Hotter at Christmas by HelenKay Dimon: This was super clunky as well with the transition from let's

sleep together for the next two days to forever together very jarring. Usually that transition just goes right over my head and I'm right with the couple (after all I do read romances), but this time it just came as a non-sequeter. It had nothing to do with what had just preceded it.

Syntha Green says

Enjoyable Christmas romances

Nancy S says

Fun stories.

Amanda says

Lock, Stock, and Jingle Bells
by: Donna Kauffman

Holly and Sean sound like the perfect couple. It is a shame that they wasted all that time that they could have been together just because they were both so afraid of being rejected.

If not for Holly's mother leaving her the store she may never have reconnected with Sean... she may have missed out on true love, and a real family.

Bah Handsome!
by: Jill Shalvis

Hope has been through a lot in her life, she has dated all the wrong guys in the past and paid for those mistakes in so many ways... I think there are many women out there who can relate to her. Hope is hanging in there but how much longer can she last?

It's Hotter at Christmas
by: Helen Kay Dimon

Marissa is not having the best holiday season... purse stolen, flight boarding denied, hotel room broken into... what more can go wrong for this city girl?

Ted has had nothing but bad luck in his life. Parents deceased, failed marriage, plus he practically raised his two siblings. Can Marissa be the key to a better life for Ted?

First they have to uncover who is after Marissa.

Patti K says

Overall, not a bad read. I read this primarily for the Jill Shalvis story and also because I wanted to see if I liked Helenkay Dimon, since she has a series set in Hawaii, and this seemed like a good way to sample the Men of Hawaii stories. It was much better than the last collection I read for a couple reasons.

First, the stories were longer (only three total, all about 100 pages) and that let them develop a little better. Second, I'd say they were written by authors with a little more talent for the short story, knowing that it's harder to make 'love at first sight' believable when you're rushing the outcome. Good short stories have to be strong ones in either character or setting (preferably both, but I suppose only one is required) because they have so little time to develop complex or interesting plots. All three authors did pretty well here.

Lock, Stock and Jingle Bells, by Donna Kauffman

I was not at all familiar with this author prior to this story but I'm certainly interested in reading more of her stuff. This was my favorite of the three. I thought Sean was great and I could really feel sympathy for Holly. The characters felt like real people and it was a believable story - two people who have known of one another almost their whole lives and who finally figure out they've been mutually attracted all this time. The only thing I didn't like was the subplot. It was weak and the line about the secret involving both their families is very misleading; Holly's mother is so insignificant to the subplot story that the only way it truly involves both families is that the desk was in her mother's shop. It wasn't a long enough story for that particular brand of subplot and the story could have easily stood on its own without pointless subplots. Now, had the baby given away been an actual descendent of Sean's, say his dad (seeing as his grandmother had lots of kids and was, in fact, a friend to the woman who gave up the baby), that might have been a good subplot (but better left to a full-length story; the repercussions would have been interesting to explore). For the baby to have been one of his zillion cousins? Eh. Like I said, it was an unnecessary part of the story. Nonetheless, I'll check out more of her books.

Bah Handsome! by Jill Shalvis

I'll preface this review by saying that I've read several of her novels and I have generally really enjoyed them (and have a few in the wings to be read next). However...I've got a few bones to pick with this story. First, I hate the title. Too cheesy. Second, while I'm generally a little wary of the 'love at first sight' story, she did a great job with that in *Simply Irresistible*, but this felt a little too rushed. Ok, sure, it wasn't 'first sight' because Hope had met Danny before. And it was more 'love/hate' than 'at first sight', but still. I think if it had been a full-length story, I'd have maybe bought it a little more. But I wasn't 100% convinced that they were dealing with anything more than lustful attraction, and it's hard to imagine someone changing their whole life because of that. Granted, Danny had been fed up with the money grubbing before and this was a good excuse, a catalyst, if you will, but I didn't buy it completely. It doesn't make me not want to read the rest of her stuff, but I think if she's writing short stories, maybe I'd rather read ones like the last one of hers I read, where the couple had a history longer than a few days or few meetings. She's at her best when she can make you really root for the couple. Also, I had a hard time believing that the momma bear WITH her cub would have been so keen to just run off...and sorry, but sex outside when it's only 5 degrees? No thanks...

It's Hotter at Christmas, by Helenkay Dimon

This was my other reason for reading this collection. I wanted to know if I liked her writing because she has some stories set in Kauai. As I said, I love Kauai (yes, I've been there) and unlike Shalvis' Colorado-set

story, I can personally believe someone would go there the first time and seriously contemplate leaving their life behind to embrace island living. Not because Ted talks about that, not because we loved Hawaii that much, but because we actually met a couple who had done exactly that: left the fast-paced, smog-filled, crowded life of LA for a quiet life on Maui. When you're on island, it's really easy to understand why people want to do it. So, for me, I can understand why Marissa comes back, why she'd even consider really leaving Philly behind, especially if she had a job offer and a great guy already there. The problem I had was that I don't think she's really selling Kauai for someone who hasn't been there. When I'm reading the story, I am remembering my own experience on the island. She didn't describe it so that I believe someone who had never been to Hawaii would feel desperate to go there. For anyone who has read my reviews before, that can make or break a story for me sometimes, the ability to transport me to a place, especially one that is familiar. Nonetheless, she accomplished a couple things that I have to say made me want to read some of the other books in her Hawaii series, so it's not all bad. First, she made me like a detective story. It's not usually my thing (don't hate 'em, don't gravitate toward 'em either), but I found that I wanted to see if Ted was right (and if I was) about the robbery culprit. And that subplot not only made sense as a standalone plot, but it contributed to the furtherance of the main plot, as well. Now, to see if she can truly invoke Hawaii in the other books in the series.

Cherise says

The first story by Donna Kauffman was OK. Some of the dialogue was a little odd to me, but the story wasn't that great, or that bad. Just middle of the road.

I really liked the second story by Jill Shalvis. It was a cute and witty short story and I really enjoyed it.

The third story was a dud. I gave up somewhere after chapter two. I tried reading chapter 3 but found myself thinking about laundry and dishes and other things more exciting than the story. LOL

Hannah says

Lock, Stock, and Jinglebells

Donna Kauffman

2 stars

I could not wait for this story to be over. It was mind-numbingly boring. I couldn't drum up any enthusiasm about the romance, and the plot about the Christmas shop Holly inherited from her mother was anything but compelling. The subplot about the journal Holly discovers in an antique roll-top desk felt completely out of place in the story. I consider 2 stars a generous rating.

Bah, Handsome!

Jill Shalvis

3.5 stars

Very cute! This is actually the first thing I've read by Jill Shalvis, and I really enjoyed it. The humor is great. The romance plot advances quickly due to the length restrictions of a novella, but it didn't feel overly rushed. I plan to read more by this author soon.

It's Hotter at Christmas

HelenKay Dimon

2 stars

Reading this story felt like watching a train wreck in slow motion. It was agonizing, yet morbidly fascinating.

There was so much wrong with this plot, but I'm going to start with the writing. Dimon's writing is abysmal. Her sentences are poorly constructed and her word choices are often bizarre. Take for example her description of Ted as dominating his environment with "a knowing hand." Hands have no cognitive ability. They don't know anything. Besides, I'm not sure I want to know how Ted dominates his environment with his hand. That sounds either violent, or creepy.

As for the plot, I can not imagine any law enforcement officer acting the way Ted does. I'm pretty sure there are rules against officers sleeping with people involved in their assigned cases. The term "conflict of interest" comes to mind. But when Ted asks Kane, his superior officer, to take him off Marissa's case so that he can sleep with her, Kane gives Ted his blessing to screw the alleged crime victim to his heart's content but refuses to take Ted off the case.

Finally, what on earth does Marissa see in Ted? Not only does he have no manners and not even a hint of charm, but he doesn't even know what the word "obtuse" means, so he's ignorant and uneducated into the bargain. Wow, what a catch. I wanted to scream at her, "You're leaving your career, your family, your ENTIRE LIFE behind in Philadelphia for THIS guy?"

So clearly, I did not like this story. So why did I give it two stars instead of one? Because I thoroughly enjoyed how much I disliked it. I cackled with malevolent glee as I took notes on everything I disliked about it. I figure the entertainment value is worth an extra star.
