



## Snowy Night with a Stranger

*Jane Feather , Sabrina Jeffries , Julia London*

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**Snowy Night with a Stranger** Jane Feather , Sabrina Jeffries , Julia London

**Warm up on a winter's night with three passionate love stories from three shining *New York Times* bestselling authors!**

**Jane Feather's "A Holiday Gamble"  
leads an unwitting Yuletide traveler down a twisting path....**

Edward Vasey, Viscount Allenton, is journeying precariously through a snowstorm when his coach is overtaken by high-waymen! Robbed of his money, Ned takes refuge at Selby Hall, where a spirited beauty with a shocking secret may steal something more -- his heart.

**Sabrina Jeffries's "When Sparks Fly"  
unlocks the heart of an embittered lord....**

When a coach accident strands heiress Elinor Bancroft at the home of the notorious Black Baron, she discovers the Christmas Day heartache that darkened his soul years ago -- and her generous heart brings a festive air to his home and reawakens his spirit to love.

**Julia London's "Snowy Night with a Highlander"  
sends a debutante into the wintry Scottish wilds....**

Searching for her rakehell brother, an earl lying low in the wake of a scandalous affair, Fiona Haines is led by a rugged Highlander who obscures his scarred face. As they journey on, Fiona draws closer to her brave, enigmatic protector -- but will fury or passion ignite when he reveals his identity?

## Snowy Night with a Stranger Details

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## From Reader Review Snowy Night with a Stranger for online ebook

### Cherie says

I liked all three of these stories. I've not read anything else by Jane Feather but definitely enjoyed her novella and may read more of her in the future. The Black Baron in Sabrina Jeffries' story was not a good communicator, he tended to make a statement and not explain himself which of course leads to misunderstandings but he is endearing nonetheless. And last, a "beauty and the beast" story which bridges Julia London's Scandalous series. I liked the hero with scars; that he had also lost all the hair on his head (from a fire) added a deeper sense of tragedy to his character lent credibility to the story.

Though the stories are good, but not outstanding, I have now read this anthology three times so I gave it five stars.

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### Julie (jjmachshev) says

Reviewed for [queuemyreview.com](http://queuemyreview.com); book release Nov08

Ah, the joys of Christmas! Spending meaningful time and making memories with the ones that mean the most to you. But not everyone gets this picture-perfect Christmas. In "Snowy Night with a Stranger", all three historical stories are written about individuals who end up spending Christmas somewhere they never expected to be. But thanks to the magic of romance, our 'strandeers' find their perfect love in unexpected places. I can only imagine what wonderful stories these characters would have to tell their grandkids!

"A Holiday Gamble" by Jane Feather is the story of a plucky heroine plagued with a greedy guardian. As the once-disgraced Lord Allenton returns home from India to take up his duties as the new Viscount, he gets caught in a winter snowstorm, is robbed by a young rascal, and must take shelter at the home of Lord Selby—a thoroughly despicable character. It's during Selby's Christmas revels that he meets Lady Georgiana, Selby's ward. He quickly realizes two things. First, Lady Georgiana is much more than just the beauty he can see. And second, she's going to need his help to extract herself from a very ugly situation. This was the longest and most robust story at 135 pages. Includes a bit of action and good, steamy sexual tension!

"When Sparks Fly" is a delightful tale by Sabrina Jeffries about a young heiress who's given up on love, and her grouchy and unwilling host, 'The Black Baron'. A coach accident sends 'Ellie' and her aunt and three children to the home of Baron Thorncliff. While her aunt recuperates, Ellie tries to keep the children entertained and out of her grouchy host's hair. Baron Martin Thorncliff is a misunderstood scientist who still suffers guilt from the accidental death of his charismatic older brother. Their story is a sweeter tale about the value of looking beyond rumor and overcoming grief with the help of love.

"Snowy Night with a Highlander" by Julia London tells of a scarred and reformed highland rogue and the girl he never took the time to know. After 8 years, Fiona is back in the highlands. She's on a mission to find her brother before the Prince Regent's men. Of course, her brother is gallivanting about the highlands and Fiona ends up seeking assistance from the one person she never wanted to see again, her girlish crush—Laird Buchanan. Duncan Buchanan is now a changed man. He's physically scarred from the fire that took the life of his friend and hides himself from society. When he and Fiona end up in a storm, she doesn't recognize him behind his scarves and he's in no hurry to enlighten her. Their enforced intimacy grows into deeper feelings...until he's 'outed' before confessing. I found this the most moving story of the lot. Both characters were required to look 'below the surface' and beyond station and appearances.

While none of the stories were exceptional, each was entertaining in its own way. "Snowy Night with a Stranger" should appeal to fans of Jane Feather, Sabrina Jeffries, & Julia London as I believe each has a tie to one of their previous or forthcoming books. It's a pleasant way to while away two hours and appreciate being warm and secure.

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## **Angela says**

### **A Holiday Gamble, by Jane Feather**

Even though Ned and Georgiana are friendly and comfortable with each other, this story lacks attraction and chemistry. As far as the romance goes, it can be summed up with: they meet, they talk, they have sex, suddenly they declare love for one another, they ride off in the snowy sunrise.

The other characters were compelling, and could have added so much more depth. Belton and Selby were rotten to the core, but so many questions are left unanswered. Who is Belton, and where did he come from? What's Selby's history? Why does Georgiana practically starve herself at dinner? And who taught her to pick locks and the slight of hand tricks?

It had the making for a really good tale, but fell spectacularly short of its mark.

### **When Sparks Fly, by Sabrina Jeffries**

This is a fun read, and completely appropriate for Christmastime. It's not an insta-attraction type of book, and it takes both Martin & Ellie more than one encounter before they come around to liking one another. The butler and children are entertaining supporting characters, and Martin's passion for making his coal mine more safe is admirable.

Side note: This is a novella in the School of Heiresses series, so the correspondence between Charlotte and Cousin Michael at the beginning of each chapter won't make sense if you're not up to speed with the other books.

Pet peeves: for such a short story, there was a fair amount of bottom lip nibbling, one-eyebrow raising, and one scene with December outdoor nudity (or partial nudity, and to be fair, I guess she was in a barn and didn't seem to mind the cold).

### **Snowy Night With A Highlander, by Julia London**

This is my first taste of the Scandalous Series, and I think I might be hooked.

Fiona could have been a super annoying character, especially since she had a tendency to never shut up. Somehow Julia London was able to write her chattiness in a way that was almost endearing. My favorite thing about Fiona is how open minded she is. She treats tenants and servants with respect, and she acknowledges her attraction for Duncan before she even knows who he is. From the beginning she sees past his scars.

Duncan is a great example of how people grow and change based on their life experiences. He carries tremendous guilt and regret from his previous life, and has turned into a man who is humble and kind. It's a novella, so they fall for each other rather abruptly, but there were sparks along the way so it didn't feel forced.

## Victoria says

I haven't much to say about Jane Feather's story in this one: A Holiday Gamble, because well, I couldn't even make it into the third chapter. It just didn't catch my interest, and I couldn't even begin to root for a hero named "Ned." Seriously. Yes I am that picky. It was just slow feeling for me and the characters felt strange right off the bat. Not a good sign for me, so I just moved on to the next story.

In When Sparks Fly by Sabrina Jeffries (a possible new favorite author!), I was completely in love with all of the characters. Especially the heroine, Ellie. I just loved her. She was so sweet and charming, I hoped the "Black Baron" (Martin) would see it too and let down his guarded heart and just sweep her away. But Martin had a horrid Christmas memory that left him hating the holiday and typical "society ladies" as he believed Ellie to be. Fortunately, Ellie is able to break through all of the ice and his fears, and bring the promise of a new and happy life to Martin.

In Julia London's Snowy Night with A Highlander: Lady Fiona Haines must go into the Highland wilds to deliver an urgent message to her brother Jack from the king, which is basically to get his rear out of there and venture even deeper into the Highlands until the Delicate Investigation of Princess Caroline is over with and he is out of danger. But naturally, in all good romance tales there are a few problems for our lovable heroine: She must ask the Laird of Blackwood - Duncan Buchanan, for help on getting to her rogue of a brother, which she does and succeeds at. But under the belief that Duncan, the man she despises ever since he likened her to a woodchuck, is not there. Only.....he is, and is very unrecognizable due to a horrifying accident he suffered that left him scarred and disfigured. Lady Fiona finds herself being swept away by this mysterious, quiet Highlander that hides his face bundled up in scarves.

And I will leave the details at that. :) This was such a sweetly heartwarming story, I just loved it. Though it was a short, easy read, the characters were touching and my heart went out to Duncan for all of the suffering and self-punishment he'd been doing. He sort of had a Phantom of the Opera thing going for him. And well, I suppose you all know by now how I feel about The Phantom. So it was only natural I rooted and felt for Duncan.

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## Katrina Passick Lumsden says

Most of the time these short story compilations end up really disappointing me. Seems like all I've ever stumbled upon are slapped-together piles of crap all bound together in one volume in the hopes of making some cash. That's not the case here. The first story was the one I liked the least, and even that one was well-written and engaging. Definitely worth a read. Especially around the holidays. It's also inspired me to check out more from the various authors.

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## Eastofoz says

Nothing too exciting here. All have the heroine meeting a stranger of sorts in and around Christmas. Feather's story I found boring and tedious to read so it's a 2 star, Jeffries' story was modestly better especially in terms of the holiday season so it's a 3 and London's was a good take on the beauty and the beast theme so it just makes a 4 even though the focus of the ending made no sense but I think it must tie in with some new book she's putting out.

Both Feather's and Jeffries' stories have appeal but they felt rushed and unlikely when it came to the

romance and there was nothing all that interesting in the writing. I just wanted to hurry up and finish them –this didn't bode well then for the last story but surprise, surprise....

London's story "Snowy Night with a Highlander" was the one I liked the best because it was well-paced and you could "see" everything happening. For a short story it did a good job of building sexual tension. The heroine is not annoying or dumb and the hero, who is horribly scarred from a fire, is not pathetic which sometimes happens with these beauty and the beast stories. The author makes the reader believe that this could really happen, it all makes sense.

Christmas is the backdrop for all 3 stories which you feel most in the second story by Jeffries—but it's hardly a good story. If you're looking for a lot of Christmas cheer (which was why I wanted to read it) I'd say pass on this book. They could've easily put it out at any other time of year and it'd have had the same feel.

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### Magpie67 says

I love reading romance novels set in the English ton and the Highlands. More Highland driven... these character's stories were all around the Christmas holiday. The language was delightful to read and I read a few passages out loud for my own ears. Interesting that Christmas was more about the decorations and the feast than present giving but nonetheless three great stories. The second story was my favorite. The first story ended too soon and left too many gaps, but I enjoyed the dastardly wicked ways of the unscrupulous men and what a gentlemen with words as his power, could wield. I especially loved the traveling about in the castle, all the twists and secret passages. Funny thing... I read the third story first and it was my second favorite. Both men and women were of different, non usual ton characters... They had flaws. It has been awhile since I read an old fashion regency story. Bloody Hell, I've missed historical romance.

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### Sara ♥ says

Three short stories. They were all REALLY CUTE! I think I might have liked the middle one the best. I really like Beauty and the Beast-esque stories... :) Here's the breakdown:

#### STORY ONE: *A Holiday Gamble* by Jane Feather

It was cute. An heiress stuck with her good-for-nothing guardian who wants to marry her off to a creepy friend of his... and of course, the Viscount comes and saves the day. I didn't much care for the ending. It was happy, but kind of abrupt. I felt like she could have written 5 more pages and wrapped it up nicer. Like with them getting MARRIED. Also... how is NED short for Edward? There isn't even an N in Edward! ???

#### STORY TWO: *When Sparks Fly* by Sabrina Jeffries

Another girl from the School of Heiresses. More letters between Charlotte and Michael. Will their book EVER COME OUT??? (Her website says August 2009.) ANYWAY, Ellie and family get into a carriage accident in the middle of a snow storm and have to seek refuge with the notorious "Black Baron"... \*CHEESE (the good kind)\* Anyway, he's all \*grumble grumble grouchy grouchy\* and she brings happiness back to his life. There's nothing better than that.

#### STORY THREE: *Snowy Night with a Highlander* by Julia London

I need to read more Julia London. I've read two of hers and really liked them. Anyway... umm... so Fiona has

to find her brother, who's in trouble with the law, and who has fled to Scotland. So she set off to find him, and ends up in the company of a guy who she really hates. He was a friend of her brother's and slighted her when she was first out in society... EXCEPT that she doesn't know it's him... He was in a really bad fire, and has a big burn on the side of his face, so he uses the cold weather as an excuse to keep his face covered... and she totally mistakes him for a coachman or some such, and totally falls in love and I'm totally giving this away, but whatever. It's GREAT.

They were all great.

PS - Christmas stories generally drive me crazy. They're just annoying! I don't know when I became so bah-hum-bug-ish about them, but holy CRAP... so stupid. They're like super-cheese... the bad kind of cheese... like Velveeta wrapped in Kraft singles. \*blegh\* GROSS. I wanna throw up now. Think happy thoughts!

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## **Cheesecake says**

### **A Holiday Gamble - Jane Feather (unread... and probably won't)**

I'm not a fan of Jane Feather so I won't read this one, but the other two stories more than make it worth the price of the book. (although it is rather steep at \$6.15 canadian!)

### **When Sparks Fly (School for Heiresses 4.5) - Sabrina Jeffries \*\*\*\*\* (loved it!)**

There's a really satisfying pace to this story. No insta-love but a nice progression from a mutually poor first impression to true romance. There are misunderstandings, but they are believable and not belaboured to the point where you question the characters' intelligence, not even close. I have to say, even though this is just a novella, it's my favourite of this series. I wasn't sure where the story was going to go as I got closer to the end, and was worried it would devolve into the usual predictable mess. But NO, it was wonderfully sweet and very satisfying.

### **Snowy Night With A Highlander - Julia London (unread)**

I believe this is my first read by this author. It def won't be my last!

When Fiona was 15 her newly awakened heart was publicly smashed as less than an afterthought by the man she of her dreams; Duncan Buchanan. Now, 23 and successful in her life in London she finds she must travel back to the Highlands to seek Duncan's aid in finding her brother.

Duncan doesn't even deign to greet her but deals with her through a servant, allowing another servant, Duncan, to accompany her and her maid to his remote manor where her brother is. It's not really a secret that Duncan is Duncan the servant. He has changed from his former vain, cruelly inconsiderate, self-absorbed persona. Now terribly scarred and missing an eye, he hides in the highlands. It took me a while to truly believe he was a better man.

Along the journey, Murphy's law proves true several times over and the author does a lovely job showing how they both come to see the other anew, even though Fiona remains oblivious of who he really is until about 75% in. There's no overdone push and pull, no OW/OM, and even better, he falls in love first. I LOVED the ending!!

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## **♥The Kat's Meow♥ says**

### **A Holiday Gamble by Jane Feather**

Feisty protagonist, savvy, worldly hero; great story about a girl who refuses to be a victim and the man who falls in love with her feistiness.

What is it about brooding heroes that captures the protagonist's heart? The next two stories offer interesting and insightful peeks into why our heroes brood.

When Sparks Fly by Sabrina Jeffries

Guilt, grief, and fear drive this intelligent hero. (Smart *is* sexy). To what lengths will Ellie go to ease the burden of guilt from the Duke? I'm not telling. But I will say, whenever I read a Sabrina Jeffries book, I gain a tidbit of knowledge to ponder.

Snowy Night with a Highlander by Julia London

Guilt, grief and remorse drive this survivor of a fire. When our chatty, vivacious Highland lovely finds out the secrets the Laird keeps, will she castigate him? You'll need to read the book to find out for certain. However, I must admit, I'd forgive him in a heartbeat.

*Did I skim?* Not a word.

*Will I re-read?* I added this anthology to my Holiday re-read list.

*Did I enjoy the supporting characters?* Some I loved others I felt contempt. Well then, let's mark that as yes, shall we?

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## kris says

While traveling places for holidays, inclement weather results in a ... SNOWY NIGHT WITH A STRANGER. Obviously body heat melts snow so let's give a warm round of applause to all the boners out there.

*A Holiday Gamble*, Jane Feather

Edward "Ned" Vasey, Viscount Allenton, is on his way home after 10 years of being abroad when he ends up stranded at Selby Hall which is full of mysteries, alcoholics, and a pretty girl named Georgiana. CUE THE BONERS.

This was very much not my thing. First, Georgiana is one of those Idealized Heroines that can do no wrong and is spunky and fun and beautiful and has a billion secret talents and isn't like Other Women©. And Ned's obviously Got Feelings because she's so Unique and I just hate it so much. Add to that the very real, very nonexistent development of a relationship that crescendoes into sex in an attic and a heroine who releases all agency to the Man Who Will Save Her and you can see my struggles, perhaps. 1.5 stars.

*When Sparks Fly*, Sabrina Jeffries

Elinor "Ellie" Bancroft ends up at the manor of Black Baron with several plot moppet cousins and a chaperone Aunt with a broken leg. The Black Baron is tormented by Man Pain and also his raging erections and there are WAY too many metaphors about explosions. (PS There's a dead brother I'll give you one hint how he died.)

I did not mind this? Like, obviously it's over SUPER FAST because novella, but the willful misunderstandings were obnoxious ("Obviously he won't marry me because I'm so plain!" "Obviously she will hate me once she knows my Tragic Backstory!") and the beast-like behavior was some what over the top. So a warm 3.25 stars.

*Snow Night with a Highlander*, Julia London

Fiona Haines must find her brother before the Prince of England does, so she asks for a favor from an old family friend and ends up traveling to the Highlands with the mysterious Duncan. Except the scarred Highlander is FULL OF SECRETS and SCARS and SEXINESS, allegedly.

Basically, Duncan used to be a vain asshole until he got lit on fire so then he Learned His Lesson. Except by hiding away from society believing everyone will be disgusted by his scars he actually...remains a vain asshole. So Fiona sees past all that and wants to bone him for *him* or something; blah blah LOVE. This was a mediocre 2.75 stars.

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## Carrie says

I'm surprised how much I enjoyed this anthology. Historical romance isn't my favorite romance genre, and I'm not a big fan of anthologies in general. This time, however, I enjoyed every story in the book. The first story, *A Holiday Gamble* was perhaps my favorite. The writing was a step up, with well-developed characters and an engrossing plot. The other two stories, by Sabrina Jeffries and Julia London, had great story lines as well, although I didn't think the writing was quite as good as Jane Feather's.

Overall this was a thoroughly enjoyable holiday treat.

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## Melissa says

I live to write another review. Even though it's been so long since i last wrote one. Mainly because i've been working odd and long hours at work. I then come home too exhausted to do anything. Anyways.....

*A Holiday Gamble* by Jane Feather.

This was my favorite story out of the anthology. It even beat out the tortured hero one. ^^ The story basically is that Ned Vasey is returning home from India for the first time in ten years. His brother unexpectedly died leaving without an heir making him Viscount Allenton. One the way to his former and new home he gets stuck in a blizzard and finds himself at Roger Selby's place. There he meets Lady Georgiana Carey and soon the story begins.

With all anthologies the author only has a limited amount of pages to tell the story so it's not uncommon for the hero and heroine to get together after only knowing each other for a few days. Therefore my usual nick pick of that had to be overlooked. Jane Feather did the best though. You could really feel the buzz between Ned and Georgiana. Neither were particularly looking for romance, but found it. In face Georgiana was on the way of helping herself. She had already devised a plan to escape her greedy cousin and her forced upon fiancée. Ned merely helped her along. So in a way they feel in love helping each other. The only thing i can complain about was that i wanted to here/see Georgiana's cousin and former fiancée reaction to their marriage. Other than that i give the story 5/5 stars.

*When Sparks Fly* by Sabrina Jefferies

This was my least favorite of the anthology. Mainly because it was so expected of what you think a Christmas story would be. The maiden and her family gets stuck at the old Scrooge's house. She and the

children start to bring joy to his life. Girl and Scrooge fall in love. Girl's father "saves" her from the man. The man whom has had a change of heart follows the girl. The funny thing about it is that the author even wrote Charles Dickens as a child in the story which upped the corny level. Definitely a disappointment. 3/5 stars

Snowy Night with a Highland by Julia London

This one was middle of the pack. Strange enough since it contained a tortured hero. One that i normally would have died over. The thing was that it felt like I was missing something. Like 100 pages out of a book. In face up to chapter 10 would have been a brilliant beginning of the book. I really adored reading it. It just felt extremely rushed after that. I almost wished that Julia had scrapped this one as a short story and moved it over to her "long story" pile. It would have been brilliant then. It had all the makings of a good long story. A girl who doesn't recognized the scared man as the one whom humiliated her earlier in life. A missing brother whose in trouble with the law. The girl has her own home in Scotland.... Oh there were so many possibilities.... In stead of the pitiful ending we got. 4/5 stars.

Final ratings: 4 & 1/2 stars. I enjoyed the characters, plots were generally good, and the sex wasn't that risky.

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### **Christy says**

Really more of a 3.5. Liked the first two but couldn't stand the heroine of the third, though I do love the tortured hero plot. Heroine seemed a feather head who behaved unbelievably. 2.5

The first story ended a little too abruptly. It seemed there should have been a little more to it--some daring escape scene or something. I realized I'd read this story before as parts of it had stuck with me, which is a good sign. 3.5

Samantha Jeffries's story was sweet. Sure, little Charlie Dickens was a hokey touch, but isn't that what Christmas stories are all about? 4

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### **Hannah says**

#### **A Holiday Gamble**

Jane Feather

4 stars

This was interesting and a bit suspenseful. It was very well-written. In fact, the writing and the content reminded me a little bit of a Georgette Heyer historical. The development of the relationship between Georgie and Ned was very well done. It is difficult to write a satisfying romance in only 100+ pages, but Jane Feather pulled it off nicely here. This was my favorite of the three stories.

#### **When Sparks Fly**

Sabrina Jeffries

3.5 stars

I couldn't help loving this story, even though it has a few cheesy elements. Martin, a.k.a. "The Black Baron,"

is such a lovable humbug, and his romance with peppy little heiress Ellie is very sweet. I just wish the author hadn't written Charles Dickens into the story. That was just cringe-worthy, and it added nothing to the plot.

### **Snowy Night With a Highlander**

Julia London

3.5

At first I was a bit exasperated by the Scottish accents. I don't usually like it when authors change the spellings of words in dialog to depict accents. It is almost never convincing, and it can be distracting. Furthermore, Scottish aristocrats during this time period often tried to cultivate more "educated" English-sounding accents.

That nitpick aside, this was a sweet love story. I have a soft spot for scarred, tortured heroes, so I loved Duncan. I also respected him for having learned from his mistakes and reformed his character, rather than wallowing in despair after the tragic fire which left him scarred. It was gratifying to see him get a HEA, because he deserved it.

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