



An Invitation to Sin

Jo Beverley , Sally MacKenzie , Vanessa Kelly , Kaitlin O'Riley

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

An Invitation to Sin

Jo Beverley , Sally MacKenzie , Vanessa Kelly , Kaitlin O'Riley

An Invitation to Sin Jo Beverley , Sally MacKenzie , Vanessa Kelly , Kaitlin O'Riley

1 Forbidden Affections by Jo Beverley - Notorious Earl of Carne moves next door to Anna Featherstone's London townhouse.

2 The Pleasure of a Younger Lover by Vanessa Kelly - Clarissa Middleton and ardent Captain Christian Archer meet in secret or risk London society censure.

3 The Naked Prince by Sally MacKenzie - Demure Josephine Atworthy is shocked and beguiled by mysterious nobleman next door, who begs a kiss - then another.

4 A Summer Love Affair by Kaithlin O'Riley - Unwed, unconventional, unchaperoned Charlotte Wilson is free to do as she pleases at a secluded Spanish villa in summer with dashing Gavin Ellsworth.

An Invitation to Sin Details

Date : Published February 1st 2011 by Zebra

ISBN : 9781420112382

Author : Jo Beverley , Sally MacKenzie , Vanessa Kelly , Kaitlin O'Riley

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Romance, Anthologies, Historical Romance, Historical, Regency, Historical Fiction

 [Download An Invitation to Sin ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online An Invitation to Sin ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online An Invitation to Sin Jo Beverley , Sally MacKenzie , Vanessa Kelly , Kaitlin O'Riley

From Reader Review An Invitation to Sin for online ebook

Jessi says

Wow. The only story that I even halfway liked was "The Naked Prince by Sally MacKenzie. Thank God that was why I got this book otherwise I would have been more disappointed. Josephine Atworthy is invited to an orgy when another woman drops out and they need even numbers. Little does she know that the man she's been corresponding with (her London prince) is also invited to the party. He looks beneath her dated clothes and spinsterish attitudes to see the desirable woman underneath. They also help to protect Stephen Parker-Roth from and importuning widow who wants to be a wife.

"Forbidden Affections" by Jo Beverly totally squiggled me out since the heroine was sixteen. I know it was a fact of life but still...

"Pleasure of a Younger Lover" by Vanessa Kelly is about a man who's been in love with his sister's friend for years, but never caught my imagination.

"Summer Love Affair" by Katilin O'Riley was an interesting change but I wish that there had been a little more character development. Charlotte Wilson is sent to a summer in Spain where she meets handsome Gavin Ellsworth.

Maria says

I bought this anthology for The Naked Prince by Sally McKenzie, the last part of her Naked series I hadn't yet read, and it didn't disappoint. 5 stars.

The first novella, Forbidden Affections, was okay. The heroine is only 16 though, so if that puts you off, be warned. There were times where I felt uncomfortable with the situations she was in, especially the first time she meets the hero. But it was still pretty good overall. 3 stars.

The second one, The Pleasure of a Younger Lover, was quite nice. I thought both heroes were pretty well developed for a novella. 4 stars.

And I loved the last one, A Summer Love Affair. Great style, good descriptions of feelings. 5 stars.

Lindsay Pittman says

The following review is more about The Pleasure of a Younger Lover than about the other three novellas in this delightful anthology.

The Pleasure of a Younger Lover by Vanessa Kelly is one of four novellas included in the anthology An Invitation to Sin. It was, in fact, the last story I read in this anthology. I started with Sally Mackenzie's The Naked Prince simply because, well, it was the reason I purchased the anthology (Damien, by the way, is another to-die-for hero, but I already knew my love for Mackenzie. Kelly, on the other hand, I had never read before that anthology). Afterward, I skimmed the back and chose the ones that looked appealing. For those wondering about the anthology overall, I liked A Summer Love Affair by Kaitlin O'Riley, even if I was yearning for a showdown at the end. Forbidden Affections by Jo Beverly was well-written with a very intriguing plot that I would have enjoyed a lot more if the heroine had been older.

Let me stop to examine that. I myself know quite a bit about history. In this novel, Jo Beverly was historically accurate in making the heroine sixteen years old. It seems like only yesterday I would have thrown myself into such a book with no qualms whatsoever. I'm young enough to remember being sixteen -- I'm only twenty-two, after all. But for this story, I found myself wanting an older heroine. I could no longer connect with a sixteen-year-old protagonist. It looks as though I've changed, grown up so to speak, when I wasn't paying attention.

But while relevant, that's hardly the point of this post. My age also played a factor in picking Kelly's tale to read last. You see, when I skimmed the blurbs -- well, even Kelly's title suggests to me that this story is about a cougar. Being only twenty-two, I didn't think I would connect to such a tale and therefore chose another. Finally, I came to the last one, and having enjoyed this anthology so thoroughly, I decided to read it.

Imagine my surprise when I read that the heroine is only thirty-two and the hero no more than five years younger than her! Not precisely a cougar tale at all, though (considering the times) I understood her qualms over his age.

This story was easily the most powerful in the anthology. The heroine is a widow, whose husband died in the war against Napoleon. The hero is not only a soldier in the same war, but the younger brother of her best friend. Maybe it was their history that gave them such a strong emotional tie from the very start. Not only did I connect with both characters on an emotional level, but the power of the ending is still with me.

This story made me want to go out and buy every single one of Vanessa Kelly's books I can get my hands on. I won't be, but only because I'm a very fangirl-type reader. When I find a book I really love, I hop online to email the author and squeal over how much I adored it. I did this with Kelly, naturally, but never received a response. Not even a single line reading "Thanks." I don't like unapproachable authors, so I in fact won't be reading another of Ms. Kelly's books. But I was talking about the book, wasn't I? Which, let's face it, was fantastic. In this story, she writes such a riveting, emotional tale that whets the appetite for more of her words.

An Odd1 says

Humor improves any Napoleon era romance. In this hot collection, Jo Beverley's *Forbidden Affections* and Sally MacKenzie's *The Naked Prince* are 4* giggles.

The first title is one of Gothic romances by the late owner of the Featherstone family summer rental. Anna, 16, daring, forthright, bookish, takes the Lady's recreated gargoyled bedroom, follows the secret passage to next door, where the bruised Lady was found overdosed on laudanum, and finds the handsome Earl of Carne. He fled under suspicion, now returns to thwart his cousin's claims. They arrange an assignation to solve the murder with a triple word-play on cake, as sweet tart, silly fool, and victory ("take the cake"). Clever. (I'd be happier with less age difference - personal experience.)

Second, handsome Lord K, nicknamed Prince of Hearts, attends a valentine orgy weekend to protect his best friend from an avaricious London widow. He lets months-long correspondent on Latin treatises JA know of their visit to the Atworthy neighborhood. But the true J is spinster daughter Jo, and K sees beneath the dowdy country exterior when their identities are revealed. "Her virtue was shrivelling inside her like a grape forgotten on the vine", while pallid bits bobble in the frigid February air.

*** *The Pleasure of a Younger Lover* by Vanessa Kelly. Brawny soldier Chris helps lifelong crush Clarissa clear the reputation of her late husband. Page-long tongue tangle leads to hot afternoon roll.

** *A Summer Love Affair* by Kaitlin O'Reilly has tight thin dresses more suited to other times. Meeting on a Spanish holiday, being painted as near-naked Greek gods, pairs a rich English couple for a later in-love reunion. Transparent, explicit.

Donna Jo Atwood says

Four authors, four stories, four disappointments. And I usually love Jo Beverley. Sorry.

Janga says

Like a lot of anthologies, this one was a mixed bag. Jo Beverley was on my autobuy list before I acquired the romance vocabulary to call her an "autobuy author," but "Forbidden Affection," although not a bad story, never reached the level I expect from this author. "The Pleasure of a Younger Lover" by Vanessa Kelly, another of my autobuy authors, was my favorite of the four. It was an enjoyable read, but I still prefer VK's novels to this novella. "The Naked Prince" by Sally MacKenzie stretched credibility a bit far for my taste, but it was an entertaining read nonetheless. "A Summer Love Affair" by Kaitlin O'Riley didn't work for me at all. Overall, I'd rank the anthology a B-/C+.

Dede says

Dulcele p?cat al iubirii întrune?te patru povestioare romantice foarte faine, fiecare dintre ele având mai mult sau mai pu?in de o sut? de pagini pline de umor, spirit, afec?iune, sinceritate, speran??, ironii delicioase, mister, pasiune ?i, mai ales, dragoste.

??? *Dulcele p?cat al iubirii - Jo Beverley* ???

Primul titlu îi are ca protagoni?ti pe Anna Featherstone, o tân?r? de numai 16 ani, ce n-a p?r?sit înc? b?ncile ?colii, **?i pe Roland, conte de Carne**, în vârst? de 30 de ani, ce a fost nevoit, într-o oarecare m?sur?, s? p?r?seasc? casa familiei din Londra, datorit? unui incident din trecut. Înc? de la prima întâlnire, ce n-a decurs chiar în ni?te circumstan?e adecvate unor persoane respectabile, între cei doi are loc o chimie puternic? ce amenin?? s? ?ocheze lumea monden?.

Pentru ca fiica lor cea mare, Maria, s?-?i fac? debutul în societate, familia Featherstone vine la Londra împreun? cu aceasta ?i fata cea mic?, Anna. Ace?tia închiriaz? pentru câteva luni una dintre locuin?ele lordului Carne, iar cea mai sinistr? ?i ciudat? camer? din cas? va fi luat? chiar de mezina familiei, deoarece surorile nu suportau s? doarm? una cu cealalt?. În plus, camera o cam speria pe sensibila Maria.

Anna posed? o inteligen?? aparte pentru vârsta ei, de?i fetele ?i femeile nu prea aveau voie s? se arate doritoare de prea multe cuno?tin?e pe vremea aceea. Asta pentru binele lor. Totu?i, tat?l ei o încuraja s? citeasc? mult, iar tân?ra era foarte receptiv? la recomand?rile sale. O cititoare înr?it?, fata g?se?te o leg?tur? între cartea de dragoste ?i aventur? pe care tocmai o citea ?i casa în care st?tea în prezent. Astfel, Anna d? peste o u?? secret?, ca ?i cea din roman. U?a ducea chiar spre casa vecin?, ce f?cea parte tot din proprietatea lordului. Crezând doar în lucrurile logice ?i curiosas? din fire, dup? ce toat? lumea s-a retras la culcare, tân?ra se aventureaz? singur? dup? u?a secret? pentru a descoperi ce alte asem?n?ri mai exist? între roman ?i casa descris? în el.

De?i i s-a adus la cuno?tin?? c? inteligen?a ?i curiozitatea ei acerb? o va b?ga în bucluc, Anna î?i ascult? doar instinctul ?i mintea, nemai?inând cont de avertiz?rile primite. Odat? aflat? de cealalt? parte a u?ii, fata

are parte de multe surprize. Ce alte mistere o vor mai înv?lui, înafara celui ascuns printre paginile romanului? Va reu?i s? le elucideze înainte de a fi prea târziu pentru ea? Trebuie s? afla?i singuri!

??? *Pl?cerea unui iubit mai tânr - Vanessa Kelly* ???

A doua povestioar? debuteaz? cu o petrecere fastuoas? dat? de c?tre familia lui **Christian, c?pitanul Archer**, în onoarea revenirii acestuia din armat? pentru câteva s?pt?mâni pe meleagurile p?rinte?ti, la care va participa **?i Clarissa Middleton**.

Dup? moartea so?ului ei, care ?i-a g?sit sfâr?itul pe front, luptând pentru ?ar? ?i regele lor, Clarissa a preferat s? aib? grij? de socrul ei ?i s? nu mai acorde importan?? societ??ii mondene. S-a închis cu totul în ea ?i a refuzat s? mai ias? în lume sau s? se rec?s?toreasc? cu altcineva, preferând s? duc? o via?? izolat?. Totu?i, într-un final, s-a l?sat convins? de buna ei prieten?, Lillian, s? renun?e la doliu ?i s? participe la unul din cele mai mari evenimente ale societ??ii, dat în cinstea fratelui mai mic al acesteia.

Christian a cerut o permisie pentru um?rul s?u r?nit ?i a revenit acas? pentru o scurt? perioad?, dar adev?ratul motiv era revederea celor dragi ?i a iubirii sale din adolescen??, g?sind c? poate mai are o ?ans? la inima acesteia. Astfel c?, atunci când cei doi se întâlnesc la petrecere, ambii sunt aproape schimba?i, din toate punctele de vedere, ?i sunt surprin?i de apari?ia fiec?ruia. Christian reu?e?te s?-?i controleze emo?iile, pe când Clarissa r?mâne, la propriu, cu gura c?scat? la vederea acestuia.

Nu mai era adolescentul pe care-l ?tia ea ?i pe care îl urechea la vreo boac?n? pe care o f?cea, acum era un b?rbat în toat? firea, dar ei i se p?rea c? era înc? destul de tânr pentru a-?i lua angajamente serioase. Faptul c? era cu cinci ani mai mic, n-o mai deranja ca înainte, mai ales la ce impozan?? d?dea dovad?. Emană pericol ?i masculinitate din to?ii porii, ceea ce-i trimitea fiori reci pe ?ira spin?rii. Dar nu...nu putea s?-i permit? acestuia s? se apropie mai mult de cât trebuia. Era doar un prieten vechi de familie ?i atât. Dar dac? ar putea exista ceva mai mult între cei doi? Va renun?a Clarissa la prejudec??ile impuse de lumea monden? ?i î?i va da frâu liber sentimentelor, ce nu credea c? le mai are în ea, sau va r?mâne o singuratic? pân? la sfâr?itul vie?ii?

??? *Prin?ul gol - Sally MacKenzie* ???

Cea de-a treia povestioar? ni aduce în prim plan pe Josephine (Jo) Atworthy ?i Damian Weston, conte de Kenderly. Ace?tia se întâlnesc pentru prima dat? la petrecerea organizat? de baronul Greyham, în onoarea zilei de Sf. Valentin.

Ace?tia descoper? cu mare surprindere c? se cunosc de mai bine de luni de zile, de?i de-abia acum au avut ocazia de se g?si fa??-n fa??. Prin intermediul unor scrisori, ini?iate chiar de Jo, pe marginea unui articol de ziar ce viza latina, semnat chiar de conte, cei doi ajung s? se cunoasc? într-o manier? aproape intim?: împ?rt?irea gândurilor unul altuia, percep?ia asupra lucrurilor din jur, inteligen?a aparte care reiese din cuvintele transmise de fiecare dintre ei.

Astfel c?, această coresponden??, această leg?tur?, ce se leag? între tinerii no?tri, îi apropie destul de mult la nivel psihic, f?cându-i ner?bd?tori în a?teptarea scrisorii celuilalt. Dar, nici Jo, nici Damian, nu ?tiu cine este cu adev?rat persoana din spatele scrisorilor adresate lor. Josephine continu? s? viseze c?, în spatele celui ce se semna cu "K" în scrisorile ei, se afl? un "prin? pe cal alb" care va veni s-o salveze pe ea ?i tat?l ei din s?r?cie, pe când Damian crede c? discut?, de fapt, cu Joseph Atworthy, tat?l fetei. Pe vremea lor, erau foarte nelalocul lor, de-a dreptul scandaloase, aceste conversa?ii dintre un b?rbat ?i o femeie, chiar dac? se limitau doar la scrisori.

Revenind la întâlnirea lor, este una cât se poate de exploziv?, "o Cenu??reas?" care nu-?i pierde pre?iosul

pantof, ci se pierde pe ea însuși în brațele "prințului" mult așteptat, acesta fiind mereu pregătit să o prindă atunci când tânărul se împiedică la fiecare pas. Cum va decurge vederea lor pe toată perioada petrecerii, rămâne să descoperiți voi.

???? *Aventură de-o vară - Kaitlin O'Riley* ? ? ? ?

În ultima povestire, dar nu cea din urmă, ne întâlnim cu doi tineri la început de drum, Charlotte Wilton și Gavin Ellsworth, ce ne arată că, uneori, dacă ne îngăduim o clipă de fericire și ne lăsăm duși de val, nepăsându-ne de regulile impuse de societatea în care trăim, ne putem aștepta ca acea clipă să dureze toată viața.

După câteva sezoane "dezastruoase", în care și-a refuzat toți pretendenții, negând pe nimeni potrivit pentru ea, Charlotte se lasă convinsă de către mama sa în a o însoți pe mărtașa Louise într-o Spanie liberă și lipsită de prejudecăți, față de sobra și constrângătoarea Anglie. Astfel că, acestea, ajung într-o zonă liniștită de țară cu o priveliște minunată asupra Mediteranei, unde vor locui la o prietenă dragă de-a mărtașii sale, Yvonne.

Acolo are parte de o surpriză amețitoare sub forma unui tânăr englez cu plete aurii, ce reușește să o facă să-și piardă mințile, ceva ce nu i s-a mai întâmplat vreodată. Descoperă cu furie că nu găsește să-i dea replica, așa cum o făcea cu ceilalți masculi. Cunoștea prea bine tipii de țeapa lui, iar Gavin nu făcea excepție. Era genul care obține mereu ceea ce și dorește, chiar și atenția femeilor, fără să depună prea mare efort pentru asta. Și nu greșește! Dar oricine se poate schimba...

Hotărât să părăsească Spania, datorită plictiselii ce-l acaparase, Gavin își schimbă planurile atunci când observă îngerul blond de la micuțul balcon ce trona deasupra sa. Se lansează, după câteva cuvinte schimbate, în a o caracteriza ca arogantă, o femeie ce se crede prea bună pentru orice bărbat, ca să-l ia în seamă. Asemenea Charlottei, se lasă antrenat de prima impresie, impresie care poate fi, de cele mai multe ori, greșită. Intervenția doamnei Yvonne, ce constă în a-i picta pe amândoi într-o postură promițătoare, începe să-i apropie ceva mai mult. Dar cât va dura această legătură ce a înflorit pe neașteptate între cei doi? Se vor lăsa ei duși de val într-o Spanie care nu-i arată cu degetul, așa cum s-ar fi întâmplat în locul natal? Vor fi împreună pentru totdeauna sau această poveste va rămâne doar o aventură de-o vară?

Link: <https://bookysme.wordpress.com/2015/1...>

Claudine says

The only reason I picked up this anthology was because of 3 authors I read regularly. Four stories with no common theme. 3 star rating because while I loved The Naked Prince, I truly didn't like the Forbidden Affections, I just couldn't get past the what bothered me the most with the story.

Jo Beverley - was not a familiar author to me, it was the first time I have read anything by her and will be the last. Forbidden Affections is about a 30 year old Earl falling for a 16 year old child, Please.... I know that in past reality this was every day occurrence but let's face it we read these books for enjoyment, not historical content. And this was a short story I did not enjoy.

Vanessa Kelly - The Pleasures Of A Younger Lover, was interesting but needed more development, the story was rushed, which is understandable as it is a short story.

Sally MacKenzie - The Naked Prince....What can I say this story alone was worth buying the book. Sally is

not a disappointment, she made me laugh with the first book I ever read by her and the laughter still continues with this short story. Looking forward to reading *The Naked King*

Kaitlin O'Riley - *A Summer love Affair*, A delightful story and well put together and flows nicely to completion.

Julie says

This review & rating are for "The Naked Prince" by Sally Mackenzie only. As stated on Ms Mackenzie's website, "The Naked Prince" won the Golden Leaf for best novella!" And I agree wholeheartedly that it was well deserved! I think this novella is a critical part of the "Naked" series, before you read "The Naked King." The female half of this romance, Miss Josephine Attworthy, is intelligent & very proper but is duped by her father to attend a very scandalous house party. Luckily for her Lord Damien Kenderly is there only because he wants to protect his best friend Stephen Parker-Roth, from a devious widow (who is Stephen's current mistress, & mistress to a few other males of the ton to boot!) who Damien believes wants to trick him into a marriage. Damien, known as the Prince of Hearts for his previous abilities to romance and bed the ladies of the ton (to his friend Damien's King of Hearts) is now more staid & interested in intellectual pursuits. Damien is now paired with the naive Jo for a few days to celebrate Valentine's Day which is followed by Lupercalia, a pagan Pre-Roman holiday of fertility. This holiday is the excuse used to give free reign to these parties attendees to have explicit, open, & often deviant sexual escapades. Jo, more than appalled, is shielded as much as possible by Damien & only stays to help him with his task to save his friend. Of course this brings the couple together. Though this story does have a lot of hints, innuendos & outright scenes w/ explicit, sometimes deviant sexual acts, it just adds to the sweetness & romance between Jo & Damien. I'd recommend this book to any romance fan that isn't too offended by some blatant scenes as I've described, & as well highly recommending the whole series!

Sue says

This was my Christmas vacation read when I wanted to be cherished (in fantasy, at least) rather than challenged. The book is really four short romances by four different authors rather than one story, which seemed perfect for my unpredictable schedule during the holidays. I happily accepted 3/4 "invitations" (in my imagination, anyway) but was so bored by Kaitlyn O'Riley's story that I couldn't finish it (which is unusual for me). However, Jo Beverly and Sally Mackenzie were in good form (as usual), and I enjoyed the novelty in Vanessa Kelly's story of finding the heroine older than the hero (though not really old enough to be considered a cougar, I suppose -- darn.)

And, now, my Goodreads friends, if you are thinking, "OMG, we are going to have to read an entire year's worth of romance reviews from Sue," rest assured that you are not. I DO read other things, even fine, literary things worthy of college-level discourse. However, it's the stack of paperbacks on my desk that is most likely to topple over onto the floor at any moment, so I will be clearing it off first. Deal with it! And have a nice (dare I say, romance-filled?) day.

Suzainur K.A.R. says

I often resort to novella compilation when I couldn't find anything I like to read. It's a good way to find new

authors or even to evaluate prolific authors before I invest in a longer novel. This can be pretty hit and miss as some authors are great at short stories but suck at novel length and vice versa.

Of the 4 stories featured here, the one I enjoyed most is *The Naked Prince*. I remember reading Sally MacKenzie before and feeling a little disgruntled with the immense amount of contemporary Americanism littering the story that it quite took me out of it. In *The Naked Prince*, she gave me a pleasant surprise with the cute and satisfying romp; perhaps I'll look her up again another time.

The rest is pretty meh.

Cecilia Rodriguez says

An anthology of four short historical romance stories all with an erotic element.

willaful says

Four Regency-ish romances featuring characters in somewhat scandalous situations. I pretty much expect anthologies to be meh, so I wasn't disappointed -- except perhaps in the Jo Beverley story. Beverley is generally the highlight of any anthology she's in, but though her story has by far the most original and interesting plot, it's talky and claustrophobic feeling, with very little action. And the age difference between the characters is pretty squicky. (He is thirty, she is *sixteen*.)

Vanessa Kelly's story about a grieving widow is a pleasant, quick read, featuring a younger man who finally wins the older woman he's always loved. I really dislike the sophomoric sex humor in Sally Mackenzie's books but in the smaller doses of a short story, it wasn't so bad. Kaitlin O'Riley's summer romance was okay. Overall, the whole book was okay.

Cindy says

An anthology of 3 Regency romances, 1 Victorian romance. 3 with sex, 1 without.

Jo Beverley - 3 stars. I bought this book because of JB. I've never even heard of the other 3 authors before. JB writes intelligently & always has an interesting story to tell. I liked this one a lot. The age difference between Anna & her "wicked Earl" bothered me, but I guess this is my problem. I know young teenage girls were often given in marriage to men old enough to be their grandfathers, & the Earl is only 30. The best story in the book!

Vanessa Kelly - 1 star. Very boring, trite story. Read like bad fanfic. The widow is the usual shy, demure, straightlaced, nincompoop. The villain is spreading it around that her dead soldier husband was a coward, since she spurned his evil advances. The only thing missing from his description was a mustache to twirl. The hero was likeable & has loved said widow since they were children. Unfortunately, she's 5 WHOLE YEARS older than him. I was really sick of the whole I'm SO much older than you, blah, blah every other paragraph. The author also thinks we'll forget how "brawny" the hero is, so she reminds us at least 3 times a chapter. "Brawny" being her usual description of him.

After all her protests at how demure & morally upright she is, the widow decides she needs the hero to help her defeat the villain's evil rumors, even though the hero's been given a direct order from his superiors (he's a soldier too). So, she seduces him & has sex with him to get her way. Great ladylike behavior.

Sally MacKenzie - 3 stars. This was the 2nd best story in the book.

It was interesting & intelligently written. I don't know how many men would encourage their virginal daughters go to a orgy house party, but I'm willing to suspend disbelief since I liked it. The sex was described very clumsily though & that's kind of funny considering finding a sex book written in Latin was one of the reasons for the heroine to be at the party. Maybe if she read some Lori Foster or Erin McCarthy she'd get an idea of what's hot.

Kaitlin O'Riley - 3 stars. I don't know how realistic it would be for a young, virginal Victorian era girl to pose practically naked with a man she just met, but I liked this story. It was different then the usual.

Maura says

Forbidden Affections – Jo Beverley - 2/5 – This one was a bit weird. Anna Featherstone is 16 and in London for her sister's coming out when she realizes that her bedroom fireplace opens up into her neighbor's house. The Earl of Carne, with a rakish and scandalous reputation finds her and mistakes her for a housemaid and more or less coerces her into a kiss. He spends some time trying to figure out who she is, while she is falling in love with him based on a kiss. It's weird because our Hero was willing to seduce an unwilling housemaid and in my opinion that gives me some insight into his character and I don't like him much. Also, why does the heroine have to be 16? Why couldn't she be 18? This might not have bothered me except that at one point he calls her an "Outrageous child" while in this same conversation talking about overtaxing her with carnal attentions. And what attachment could they have possibly formed over one kiss? I just didn't feel like they knew each other at all by the end of the story.

The Pleasure of a Younger Lover - Vanessa Kelly – 3/5 – Clarissa is a 30-year-old widow who acts as though she thinks she's 60. She's finally come out of mourning for her husband and goes to a party where she encounters her best friend's younger brother, Christian. He's only about 5 years younger than her, but he's been in love with her forever. He's a soldier, like her previous husband, so that causes some tension for Clarissa. I liked Christian – a lot. He was a delightful character. I had trouble sympathizing with Clarissa who comes across rather selfish and Machiavellian. Within this story, she asks two men to forego their honor for her sake, she manipulates the man who loves her into destroying his own career for her dead husband's reputation (view spoiler) which I could have forgiven her for if she'd actually loved him. It was an enjoyable story, but poor Christian! There was a bit of grovel on the part of the wrong-doer, which kept the rating up, but I still didn't like Clarissa very much.

The Naked Prince – Sally McKenzie – 4/5 – I enjoy Sally McKenzie's romance writing on the whole. Her characters tend to walk the line between charming and annoying, but there's always humor and a good love story. This is no exception. In fact, I found the exploits of Jo and Damian rather enjoyable. Jo is a bookish spinster trying to take care of her financially irresponsible and very academic father. Damian is the former "Prince of Hearts" who has since given up his rakish ways for the pursuit of academics. Jo invited to an orgy to even out numbers and she attends to find a rare book that her father lent to the host, thinking she can sell it. There she is paired with Damian, who unbeknownst to him is the man she has been corresponding with. Their romance was very enjoyable. As good as she is with characters and plot, this author struggles with love scenes. I almost wish she wouldn't do them, since there's very little lead up or attention to detail and then it's like, "Wait, they're having sex already?" Then it's over and a bit of a let down, but then we get back to the conversation and relationship and we're all good. This is a very enjoyable story and definitely one of the

better stories in this anthology.

A Summer Love Affair – Kaitlin O’Riley – 3/5 – Charlotte is vacationing in Spain with her aunt and staying at a friend’s Villa where she meets Gavin, a bit of a rogue who recently got kicked out of Oxford. This strikes me as a bit of a New Age romance meets historical, since Gavin is college-aged (and therefore a younger hero than I’m used to reading about) and Charlotte is about the same age. For some reason I couldn’t get past the age-thing, especially since Gavin really does act like a college-aged guy, although he does mature before the end of the story. The romance was good, but it didn’t really pick up and earn its stars until after the two characters return to England and encounter one another. Then it gets angsty. Overall it was an enjoyable read, but one particular thing irked me. I HATED that Charlotte, who purports to be an intelligent and self-confident woman who is ripe with sardonic comments loses the ability to be herself in the presence of Gavin. Instead she becomes his simpering fan and giggles in his presence. Oh please! I’d much rather have a heroine stay true to herself and have the hero fall in love with her for that reason.
