



No Mistletoe Required

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Dan Beckins isn't sure how he let his best friend con him into volunteering to build Santa's Winter Wonderland at the local hospital. He's got no problems with charity work, but anything Christmas-related is off-limits ever since he lost his parents on Christmas Day years ago. The only bright spot is working with smoking-hot Anna Smith.

Anna Smith loves Christmas and volunteering at the hospital is one of her yearly highlights. She had leukemia as a teen and then a breast cancer scare in her mid-twenties, and is now operating under a self-imposed rule that she can't have a relationship until the doctors give her a clean bill of health.

A little fling might be permissible, though, and sexy lawyer-turned-carpenter Dan seems like the perfect candidate. But when chemistry flares and the two start forming a real connection, will Anna run away before like turns to love?

No Mistletoe Required Details

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Author : Jeanette Murray

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From Reader Review No Mistletoe Required for online ebook

Stephanie Collins says

This was a heartwarming quick read. You feel for both of our main pair and want them to find happiness.

Dan has been a Scrooge around Christmas for most of his life so being tricked in to helping at the Children's Hospital over the holiday season isn't his idea of fun. He's surly but when he sees Anna from across the room he's very intrigued. He thinks she's one of the sorority sisters so therefore too young for him but when he finds out she's the advisor ... he's a happy man! He pushes to get more time with her and they have an immediate connection both in the bedroom and when they spend a little time out of it. He wants to see where it might lead but she pulls back and pushes him away.

Anna loves to help out during the holiday season at the Children's Hospital. She's got a lot on her plate with her own medical history and current potential issue but she figures she'll help the Scrooge find Christmas again and scratch an itch. She's doesn't do relationships right now and has a timeline on when she can start to look for the right man. Dan isn't in her plan but she really enjoys spending time with him and loves the way he makes her feel in the bedroom but that is all it can be.

I'm not going to say more about why she pushes him away or his issues with Christmas because that is part of the charm and heart of this story. You'll smile and snuffle a bit in this story but it is worth it. Thanks to NetGalley.com and Carina Press for letting me read this in exchange for my honest review.

Natalija says

"No Mistletoe Required" is not your usual Christmas novel for the reason that it touches upon some serious subjects such as health issues, death and grief. This notwithstanding, it's a heartwarming and sweet reading for the holiday season. The characters are interesting and well developed, but, while I absolutely loved Dan, I never really warmed up towards Anna. There was just something that held me back from enjoying her character to the hilt. Other than that, I'm glad I read it, and I would recommend it for anyone looking for something quick to read during this season.

Allison (The Allure of Books) says

You guys, I am more than a little obsessed with Christmas-themed books this year. It seems like almost every day lately that I hop onto g-chat to tell April about another one (or five) purchased on Amazon. So, when I saw No Mistletoe Required by Jeanette Murray available to review on NetGalley, it was a no brainer.

Anna Smith loves Christmas – and she especially loves helping orchestrate a Winter Wonderland display at the local hospital. She has a deeper connection to the hospital than most people realize. This year, Dan

Beckins shows up as one of the volunteers to help build the stage. It doesn't take long for his true personality to shine – and that personality? SCROOGE.

It is slowly revealed as No Mistletoe Required continues that while Anna has a strong connection to the hospital and the magic of Christmas – Dan has equally strong aversion to Christmas. Something horrible happened in his past that basically has him refusing to accept any kind of positive feelings in regards to the holiday.

All this emotional drama is where the story loses me. Y'all, No Mistletoe Required is just a fairly short novella. I felt like way too much was being packed into the pages. Instead of getting to know the characters with easy Christmas-y vibes paving the way, I was constantly bombarded with personal revelations and emotional drama.

Since I didn't have enough time to connect with the characters in any real way, their stories didn't really resonate with me. To be blunt: I didn't really care about them or their pasts. The writing and plotting just didn't work for me in this one.

So, if you feel like diving into a deeper and more emotional Christmas story that is a super quick read – definitely give this a try. I think you'll enjoy it more than I did! If you prefer to keep your Christmas reading light – or, like me, prefer emotional stories to be longer with more character development, you might be a little disappointed with No Mistletoe Required. (Either way, the ebook is only \$2.50!)

To Sum it Up:

-I'm completely obsessed with Christmas novellas this year! Unfortunately, this one definitely left me feeling underwhelmed.

-Short length + lots of emotional baggage = Allison no happy. I need a full length story to allow for more development with my drama.

-Should definitely interest those looking for a quick read with characters that have a lot to overcome from their pasts.

Liz F says

Review copy courtesy of the publisher via NetGalley.

No Mistletoe Required by Jeanette Murray is a delightful novella that has the feel of a full novel. Don't let the blurb or back cover description turn you off. I promise, you won't be depressed when you read this!

As you may have guessed from the title, this story takes place around Christmas. Christmas is a really crappy time of year for our hero, Dan Beckins. When he was younger, he lost his family as Christmastime and since then, it's seemed like sacrilege to enjoy the holiday. He seems like a real downer, right? At first, Dan IS a bit of a Grinch! But whatever the author does, she gets you to like Dan, in spite of it! He's like great guy... even though he's a divorce attorney! But let's not hold that against him, ok? LOL! We meet Dan at a children's hospital; he's been goaded into helping decorate for a Santa's Workshop by his best pal and Dan is NOT thrilled about it. Especially since he's surrounded by sorority girls and, whoa, they are just WAY too young for his taste!

And that's where our heroine, Anna Smith, comes in! She's leading the troops, so to speak, and getting everyone to work together to make this Santa's Workshop run smoothly. It's fitting that everyone calls her the Sergeant since she makes everyone work hard! But the children's hospital holds a special place in her heart and this Santa's Workshop that they put together which allows the kids to get out of their rooms to make little gifts or cards for their families means so much to Anna that everyone is happy to be ordered about. But she's also really sweet and pretty hilarious.

Anna takes an interest in Dan since he's such a Grinch and she's such a Christmas nut. She loves poking fun at him and teasing him whenever she gets a chance. And Dan is great because he does kind of hate Christmas but he can't help but smile and laugh with Anna. Its really fun to see someone going from an extreme like hating Christmas to actually having fun with it.

I usually do NOT like novellas. For me, they are too short and I don't get the chance to sink my teeth into the story and the characters and the world that the author builds. And that's assuming that the author is capable of building worlds and characters in such a short amount of time. But don't worry about any of that with this novella. I was fully immersed in the world that Jeanette Murray builds for us. It didn't even seem particularly short, if you can believe it. The characters felt fully fleshed out; like actual, real people. The subject matter is a little bit dark at times: these are two people who have unhappy backgrounds. But who doesn't?

I did think that there was a little too much focus on how short Anna was. I mean, I think she was around five feet tall and that's short but it just seemed like it was pounded into my head SO much. I was actually picturing a little person, you know, like the ones TLC makes TV shows about. Real little people. So I thought that was a little heavy handed. However, I had to balance that with how perfectly the Grinch was paired up with the Christmas fanatic and how great they were together!

Sure, there were some really depressing points but I also found myself laughing out loud a few times. I think that's why I liked Anna so much: sure, she's in love with Christmas but she's also a bit of a smart ass and, for me, that really brings it home! I would recommend this book for anyone who wasn't sure if they'd like a book set in or around Christmas. This novella could show you that it isn't so sugary sweet that it makes you sick; it'll show you how a little bit of spice added to the sweetness makes it all so much better!

Pauline Destinugrainy says

Dan Beckins is a lawyer who doesn't like Christmas season, since his parents died by accident on Christmas day when he was young. But he can't resist when his friend Geoff con him into volunteering to build Santa's Winter Wonderland at the local hospital in the name of charity. And then he met Anna Smith, a big brown eyes and shorty nurse. She is loves Christmas and volunteering at the hospital, where she spent her teenage time as one of the patient. She is also a cancer survivor (leukemia and benign breast tumor), and she want all children at that ward feel the joy of Christmas in Santa's Workshop.

Both Anna and Dan actually liked each other since they first met. Anna take the first step to approached Dan and took him to her bed. But each still keeping secrets of their past. When Dan started to open up to Anna, Anna actually break them. Anna doesn't think she could drag Dan into her life only to end up getting another form of cancer and having to go through the whole process of chemo and radiation and surgeries.

“It's just one of those times of the year where anything seems possible.”

Christmas is the time when anything seems possible. It also happened to Anna and Dan which is basically have different views about Christmas and their relationship. I love the interaction between them, when they finally came to revealing their past. This novella can warm your heart on a Christmas season.

Thank you for Net Galley and Carina Press for giving me the opportunity to read No Mistletoe Required.

Kat ~ Forever Book Lover ♥ says

You can find this review and more at Forever Book Lover.

Are you still trying to decide what Christmas themed romance book to read this year? Add this one to your list, this was an heartwarming and highly emotional read. My emotions were on a constant rollercoaster.

Anna is the "Christmas cheerleader", she loves the holiday season. She displays so much enthusiasm and Christmas spirit, it wouldn't surprise me to find that she has a private shuttle with a direct flight to the North Pole and to the big guy himself. When she was a teen her Christmas memories consisted of time spent as a patient in the children's ward. She knows first hand what it is like spending the holiday in the hospital, so each year she is the lead organizer in charge of transforming the children's ward into a Santa's workshop aka "Winter Wonderland". I am very humble to the fact that I was able to spend my Christmas mornings unwrapping presents under the tree where there many children are spending Christmas away from their home and in a sterile environment.

Dan is rangled in to volunteering to help transform the hospital into the "winter wonderland". Dan has his own holiday demons he struggles with, if it was up to him he would have his bags packed and enjoying the tropic sun. Talk about Grinch, but his story is tragic. His mom and dad loved Christmas, it was their favorite time of the year, that all changed one year.. While on the way to visit his grandparents, their was an accident and his parents died.

Anna has some clock that she created for herself, it is too early to get involved with someone. She is in remission with her latest cancer scare. They don't realize it, but these two need each other to get through the holiday season. Dan is the one who chips away at his own block, he knows that he can deal with the holiday if it includes Anna. And once Dan gets into the holiday spirit he is then able to Anna accept that her illness should dictate her happiness. If there is a lesson learned here, it is that you can't put a time frame on love, it happens when it happens. Carpe Diem!!

There were several secondary characters that provided depth to this story. I enjoyed this story and I recommend you pick this one up- it surely will make you thankful for all you have and may even spark some of you to bring some holiday cheer to those less fortunate.

My Favorite Quote:

"You came along with your 'Bah humbug' outer shell and your adorable, sweet soft center and you melted me. And you made me want more than I thought I could have. More than I should have."

Cocktails and Books says

It's a bit early for the holiday reads, but this was one that I had to pick up as a "filler read" because it was on my phone and I needed something to read while I was waiting around. I'm glad I had it, because it was a very cute story about learning to appreciate the holidays and not fearing the future.

Anna Smith is full of Christmas cheer and loves to spread it around...especially at the hospital's children ward, a place she spent time as a teen. She wants the children fighting cancer to have something that will put a smile on their faces while they fight for their lives. So each year, she organizes a Santa Workshop where the kids can come create gifts and get a little holiday cheer. What she doesn't expect to find while organizing the workshop was to run into the grinch, in the form of lawyer Dan Beckins.

Dan has dreaded Christmas since the death of his parents when he was younger. When he was tricked into helping at the hospital by his best friend, he was determined to find a way to get out of the project. But when he sees Anna, he suddenly finds that he doesn't mind the holiday cheer as long as it includes Anna.

I like Anna and Dan together, but at the same time they also made me a little sad because they were both holding onto the ugliness of death. It was funny to see that it was Dan who was able to finally get Anna to understand that her health issues couldn't rule her life. For a man that held onto the bitter feelings he had over the loss of his parents, it was great to see him let it all go for the chance to be with Anna.

A cute, funny and at times hot holiday story that will get you into the spirit of the season....even if it is before Thanksgiving.

Becky says

(3 1/2 stars) This was a cute little holiday story. Both the hero and heroine have some definite baggage. She had cancer as a child, suffered through a more recent breast cancer scare, and is now afraid to get into a relationship without having a clear bill of health first. As a result, Anna Smith has decided she's a fling-only girl for two years, at which point she should know whether or not her most recent health concerns are over. Dan Beckins lost both of his parents on Christmas when he was younger, so he's pretty much tried to out-Scrooge Scrooge ever since.

I enjoyed Jeanette Murray's style of writing in this book. Her dialogue was fun and her characters were quirky. It was mostly a nice little Christmas story, but it did have a bit more going on below the surface with the two characters' problems. I found it to be a nice balance altogether.

I found Dan's issues to feel a bit more "real" than Anna's--her self-imposed moratorium on dating just felt a bit extreme. Never having personally had major health issues like that, though, it could be that her reactions were indeed spot-on; but they felt slightly forced, which kind of had me rolling my eyes a bit at her continued denial of a relationship with Dan. Dan's turnaround was a bit quick, but 1) it is a novella, so space is limited and 2) it wasn't so much so that it was unbelievable, so ultimately it didn't really bother me.

Overall, this was a quick, fun read that put me in the holiday spirit. I'll definitely add this author to my "must find more books from" list.

Laura Summers says

Reviewed for www.bookchickcity.com

Here's the thing, I love Christmas, I love romance and I'm not adverse to a nice dose of cheese. NO MISTLETOE REQUIRED has all three in spades. It's a light, quick Christmas read, but at the same time it does have a slightly sad undertone.

Our hero and heroine are in charge of setting up a grotto for sick children in hospital when they meet. But, Dan our hero suffered a terrible tragedy at Christmas when he was a boy and has never celebrated it since. And, Anna, a recovered cancer sufferer herself has her own demons, and is determined to make Christmas special for the children.

The chemistry between Dan and Anna is instantaneous, even if there is a strange interlude where Dan confuses her for a college girl. It's hot, it's sexy and it's certainly fun, despite the sad backdrop.

I really enjoyed watching Dan transform from a Christmas grump, to embracing the season, and also the kindness he shows to the poorly children as the true meaning of what they are volunteering for sinks in.

Anna is feisty and determined not to fall in love for another year until she is given the all clear from her latest cancer scare. Naturally you crave for them both to get their happy ever after.

A problem I had with reading it, is there is a real cheesiness to the writing, which while most of the time it was fine, on occasion it tipped over into cringe territory.

For example:

"Please tell me you're going to play "Hide The Candy Cane" with that fine specimen of man."

Also, I didn't really get the whole sexy Santa thing, which seemed to really appeal to Anna. This is her comment after watching Dan dress up and do fake belly-laughs for the children:

"And, she had to admit to herself, more than a little erotic. The laugh and the attitude that went with it were doing things to her. And, oh God, she was totally hot for Santa."

Hmm not sure it did anything for me!

In general, this is not my kind of thing and I found it broke the spell of the writing when it occurred, but I think this is probably more about personal taste than anything else.

Also, my other comment is that the ending ended up being tied up far too quickly. I felt like the big decision about their relationship was made when a big part of Anna's life was revealed and then it was the end, without fleshing out and properly concluding the story. But this is often a problem in novellas for me. I think this is more a short story problem, than a big issue.

VERDICT:

This is the third Christmas book I've read this month, and while it was probably my least favourite, I still

enjoyed it. With good characters, a spirit of Christmas message and a sexy hero. There's nothing like a bit of seasonal, feel-good fun. This book is ok if you don't mind a side of order of cheese

RATING: 3/5

Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says

Slick's review posted on Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

4 Stars

I hate to admit it but as I've gotten older I've become somewhat of a Grinch about Christmas. My problem with Christmas is that it's become too commercial and the "season" now starts in October which is just crazy to me. Dan Beckins has a really good reason for hating the Christmas season but when his friend volunteers him to help out at a children's hospital and he meets Anna Smith, he finds his anti-Christmas feelings flying away faster than Santa's sleigh.

Dan is an attorney who is "volunteered" by his friend to help with some construction at a children's hospital. He's not happy about building a Santa's Winter Wonderland but he won't back out especially after he spots Anna who intrigues him. However, he mistakenly thinks she's a college student and dismisses her because of her age. When he finds out he's in his "preferred age range", he decides to pursue her but first he has to convince her he's really not a jerk.

Anna is a cancer survivor but she's had a recent scare and has decided not to get involved with anyone seriously until she's "clear" for two years. When she meets Dan, she's interested and thinks he'd make a nice holiday fling.

This is the perfect holiday story and I very much enjoyed Anna trying to fill Dan with the holiday spirit and Dan trying to just "fill" Anna! Really he didn't have to try very hard, they were both very much interested and it doesn't take long for them to embark on a sexual relationship. What I found funny and interesting is that Dan opened up pretty easily to Anna but Anna refused to share her story. Dan undergoes a pretty miraculous change during their time together, while trying to pin Anna down he ends up spending more time at the hospital and begins to understand all about having Christmas spirit.

Between Dan's issues with the holiday and Anna's self-imposed cancer-free timeline, these two have a very winding road to their happily ever after. The nice thing is they have friends and family there to be the voice of reason and they listen.

Whether you're a Grinch or more Elf-like, No Mistletoe Required is sure to get you into the holiday spirit. I hope you'll enjoy this story as much as I did.

Review copy provided for an honest review.

Kathie (katmom) says

Thanks, NetGalley and Carina Press, for giving me the opportunity to read NO MISTLETOE REQUIRED.

This was a charming little story with a lovely Christmas theme.

Dan is pretty much a grinch, but he has a pretty good reason for feeling that way.

Anna loves Christmas and her goal to give ill children a good memory with her Santa Workshop is a worthy one.

I was impressed with the skill that Ms. Murray showed in bringing these two polar opposites together.

It was sweet, spicy, touching and enjoyable.

A very nice way to get into the spirit of the Christmas season!

Sandy S says

NO MISTLETOE REQUIRED by Jeanette Murray

NO MISTLETOE REQUIRED is the November 5, 2012 release by Jeanette Murray. Like most holiday novels, the requisite HEA is not missing from Jeanette's storyline, but getting there was a bit of a struggle.

Dan Beckins is a divorce lawyer whose view of the holidays has been marred and forever tainted by the automobile accident that killed his parents on Christmas Day so many years ago. When his buddy volunteered them to help with the building of the annual Winter Wonderland display at the hospital Dan was incensed. Geoff knew Dan no longer celebrated the winter festival and the longer he worked on the display, the angrier his friend became until a petite little blond with enough bubbly personality for everyone showed him the true meaning of Christmas.

Anna Smith loved the holidays but there is always a dark cloud hanging over her enjoyment. Stricken with leukemia as a teen, Anna spent almost an entire year at the local hospital undergoing treatment and recovery. As an adult, Anna now gives back with the annual children's Christmas display and workshop. But with a second cancer diagnosis, Anna was reluctant to get personally involved in a relationship with another man. But the sight of Dan Beckins as he forged ahead with the Christmas display had Anna reconsidering her relationship policy-maybe a one night stand or fling was really what she needed. What she didn't expect was for Dan to lose his heart to a woman who may not be around to celebrate many more holidays.

The relationship between Dan and Anna is quick to start as Anna knows what she wants and starts to seduce Dan at every opportunity when they are alone. From asking him to help her with the heavy lifting to cornering the man in a cleaning closet, Anna isn't afraid to go for what she wants-and all Anna thinks she wants is a passionate night of sex with no strings attached. But Dan soon realizes that he has fallen for the spunky no-nonsense woman who had broken his heart. When Anna rejects Dan's offer of a permanent relationship, Dan's sorrow will be felt by everyone working, at the hospital, on the Christmas display.

NO MISTLETOE REQUIRED is a short story that brings two broken souls together during one of the most festive times of the year. Dan's memories of the day his parents were killed has forever jaded his opinion about Christmas Day and Anna's continuing health struggles force her to take a long hard look at the way she has been treating all potential relationships and friends.

The writing is simple with a few questionable grammar faux pas, but overall the storyline is a sweet look at a Christmas story.

Copied supplied by Netgalley.

see all of my reviews at : thereadingcafe.com

Hsiau Wei says

This book tell the story of season of giving evolving around Dan and Anna. Anna is a cancer survival and is the main person behind the charity drive where Dan has volunteered his help. Unlike most people, Dan is adverse to Christmas season and doesn't seem to enjoy the season at all. Anna, who wanted everyone to enjoy the season as much as she did, is determine to change his mind and as she is attracted to him and decided to make him as a nice holiday flings. The reason for having a fling as opposed to a long term commitment despite the obvious attraction between them is because Anna have set a 2 years time frame until she is clear of cancer. Dan, on the other hand,found Anna intrigues him and he decided to pursue her. I like Anna alot for her determination and her kindred spirits. overall, this is an enjoyable book to read for a perfect holiday story.

Laurie Carlson says

I HIGHLY recommend this novella for those who like/love contemporary romance! The only reason for it just being short of a 5-star rating from me is that it is too short, even if it is a novella! Imagine if it were a full length novel, it would have been even better! I can see so many possibilities with it.

I really enjoyed this story, even though it is short. (Ho, hum.) I really liked how well this story was written, too. A full-length novel would really enhance this story as I really enjoyed the characters, the development this author did with Dan and Anna meeting and getting to know each other, and the other characters as well. I was not ready for this one to end! I would LOVE to see this become a full-length novel!

At first, I hated Dan! Yes! His friend did con him into getting him to help decorate a part of a hospital for the Annual Christmas Party this hospital holds every year for all the sick children who are stuck there in the hospital over the holidays. Since his friend suckered him into helping him out, and since Dan's heart really was not into doing this charity work, his eyes were roaming around checking out all the other young, hot, sorority girls that were there volunteering to help decorate as well. So yes, I thought Dan was a jerk the way he was looking around and checking out all these women and thinking the things he did.

That is, until . . . Dan spots Anna, and then he starts to change the way he's acting by straightening up as quickly as he can as he is very attracted to her. He realizes she is older and she's much more mature than the other younger sorority girls are with whom she was with. She intrigued him and he started to take this more seriously. He also put more of his heart into what he was doing. This did not go unnoticed because Anna spotted Dan, too! Mutual attraction!

Anna did this charity event every year now, regardless of being a part of this sorority or not. Anna had had leukemia as a teen, fought and overcame it, but now, most recently, has had a scare with breast cancer. Currently she still has about three more months to go before she can get a clean bill of health from her doctor. With a clean bill of health being what she wants, she won't allow herself to become involved in a personal relationship with anyone besides a fling until that comes bill comes along. No emotional attachments. She's been through too much already and does not want anyone in her life to complicate matters.

Of course Dan does not know about any of this about Anna, although the more time they spend together, the more they learn and like each other. More and deeper feelings could be developing, and . . . well, you read the story! You'll love it! I did!

Let's say this couple did NOT need any mistletoe to kiss, just like the title says! Besides, it's Christmas and

this is a magical time of year!

As I said above, I would LOVE for this novella to be turned into a full-length novel about these two very likable/lovable characters!

This is a great seasonal book to read, and can be read at any time of the year! I happened to read it in December, before Christmas and during the holiday season, but it would not have made any difference to me what time of year I read it in, as I still would have loved it just as much!

I really enjoyed this author's writing style a lot, too, and will be looking for more full-length novels by her. I just found myself a new author I love to read! Thanks, Carina Press!

I received this book for FREE from the Publisher, Carina Press, through NetGalley, in exchange to read and write a review about it. It is NOT required for this review to be either positive or negative, but of my own honest opinion. "Free" means I was NOT provided with ANY MONIES to read this book nor to write this review, but to enjoy the pure pleasure of reading it. I am disclosing this information in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255, <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/wa...>

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Diah Didi says

I always enjoy story with seasonal theme.. I don't celebrate Christmas. But I know and do enjoy the joy that come along with it.

For this story, I understood why Anna wanted Dan to feel the joy, to enjoy the moment. But I also understood Dan's lack of enthusiasm. Not that I've experienced what he'd been through, but there were the times that I couldn't enjoy the those kind of moments, no matter how excited people around me.

The problem with novella is that most of the time it's too short to explore some mire. I kinda felt like it's all going too fast. But I did enjoy reading it. I liked Dan's character. :)

*copy provided from Net Galley
