



Christmas Homecoming

L.A. Witt

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August 1939. Roger Miller and Jack O'Brien have been close since childhood. By the time they realize there's more between them than friendship, Jack is leaving their sleepy Iowa town for college. But they console themselves knowing he'll be home for Christmas. Right?

It is Christmas before they see each other again, but that Christmas comes six years and a world war later. Aged, beaten, and shaken by combat, they're not the boys they were back then, but their feelings for each other are stronger than ever.

Neither know the words to say everything they've carried since that peacetime summer kiss, though. Even as they stand in the same room, there's a thousand miles between them.

But maybe that's some distance the little angel in Roger's rucksack can cross.

The Christmas Angel series books are standalones and can be read in any order.

Christmas Homecoming Details

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From Reader Review Christmas Homecoming for online ebook

Bookreader87(Amanda) says

R?J

3.5 stars

Childhood friends who share a stolen moment before one goes off to college. A shared kiss and unsaid feelings are left behind. Unfortunately, the war changes their lives and pulls them further apart. When the two meet again years later they fill adrift but something keeps pulling them toward each other. Overall this story was ok. Honestly a bit too angsty for a Christmas story but I did enjoy how the wooden angel travels through each of these books.

Bitchie says

Happy ending, but overall, this one had a very melancholic air to it, and it didn't leave me with the good feels. Also, the angel barely played a part in the story.

R * A Reader Obsessed * says

4 Historical Hearts - Team Review with Chelsea

Another win for this holiday series!

Prepare yourself for some heartache though...

Roger and Jack and have been boyhood friends for forever and at the cusp of adulthood, a shared kiss that could've possibly been the start of something never comes to full fruition as the world is soon thrown into war. Six years later and these two young men have seen and done much, suffered and grieved, and missed each other every day, surviving only through the hope of seeing one another again. Was that shared kiss all it was? A fleeting thing between friends or the start of something more?

This blends the best of friends who become lovers, set in a time where such was not accepted or condoned. Melancholy and full of longing, Roger and Jack are expected to carry on and move on, but neither can let that one memory go despite time, distance, and everyone else in their lives doing their damndest to keep them apart.

However, life's too short and these two are about to lose the best thing, the only thing they want. They deserve happiness and they grab it for themselves regardless of the possible consequences.

A bittersweet but triumphant win for Roger and Jack, their love definitely bringing all the romantic contentment and feel good warmth to the heart!

Thank you to the author/publisher for a copy in exchange for an honest review

Check out the blog for Chelsea's thoughts!

Sheri says

Our bewitched beauty takes us to the post-war era this time around and leave it to Witt to powerpack some extra feels. Roger and Jack have been best friends for as long as they can remember. Suddenly, the boys are whisked off to war and return very different men. Carefree grins and the invincibility that only young men boast have been replaced with dim half-smiles and nightmare shadows of piercing reality. Before they parted six years ago, they shared a stupendous farewell. A courageous kiss threw them both off kilter. Regardless of the timing, both clung to the hope and prayer that they may find their way to each other once more. And when the heavens above grant this wish, they are stricken to find they have become strangers. Everything has changed since that fated swimming hole goodbye. Or has it? Could their burning core remain once they break free from their combat-callused shells?

What's to like: We are introduced to Roger and Jack just as they are finishing school and spreading their wings. I'm so grateful we had the chance to see them glittering with innocent sparks. Witt allows each of them to take turns in sharing their story and again, I was thankful for the alternating voices. Roger starts back at that pivotal moment when he's struck with painful clarity, realizing he loves Jack. Then Jack continues on, half a dozen years later once they both have returned home. Their time at war may be over but the lingering effects will never cease. The scars they bear may not be visible but they are no less harrowing.

What's to love: Although the pages are just over a hundred, I felt we had plenty of time to get to know to both men. Roger was slightly more reserved compared to Jack's wild nature but I enjoyed them equally. It was difficult to see them hardened from war. Roger's family means well, but they have made arrangements for him to begin the next phase of his life. With a slight push and shove, they've set him up with a could-be-hopefully-fiancé childhood friend. It makes sense for him to marry. It's what's expected of them. But the war has given Roger an up close and personal reminder that life is too short for regrets. And he may not have given his best friend his heart before the war but he'll be damned if he denies him now. But they could never be? What will they do? Marry and live half a life with the picture-perfect wife? You'll just have to find out, now, won't you?

Beware of: In regards to the others in the series, this one is pleasant yet tinged with melancholy. They illustrate the struggles and anguish our soldiers endure long after their leave is over. They also remind of us of the torment gay men faced living and loving freely in the 1940s. Graciously, the glorious gift that a wooden statuette grants these two men is worth it all.

This book is for: If you need another reason to start this series, this one is a humdinger. I actually began the series with this homecoming. You can hop, skip and jump around if you like. So far, I've yet to be disappointed.

Book UNfunk

?? Michaeelle says

4.3 Stars

Didn't quite have that historic feel of the first two, but definitely nailed the small-town vibe. The innocence of that first kiss, the real lives the boys lived in between that summer and this Christmas...everything had a touch of melancholia tinged with optimism that just overwhelmed my feelz.

And this time we have two important characters mentioned in passing as having significant roles in both our MCs' lives (rather than side characters)...and I still find I want their stories. What did happen to Oskar after Germany invaded his town & did Floyd survive his plane being shot down? (Happened sometimes.) I loved that these two were important to Jack & Roger and that they each had someone to turn to when the war weighed too heavily on their minds & they needed a little human companionship...a little human touch to feel "normal" again. (Leave it to LAW to nail that military aspect so well.)

Plus, how about those old "confirmed bachelors" the guys were reminiscing about at the end? I want their story! (I hope each of these books has a spin-off novella for next year or something. I don't even need the Angel or another interwoven theme...just give them a .5 novella designation and I'm good!)

Also, yay! for having the Angel play such an important part in the story. She's not mentioned until later, but in a way I think that makes what she stands for more poignant. With her "voice" being heard again I got my romanticized/magical feeling back with this one! (Although, not enough specifics in how she got from the Iowan Chateau into our MC's hands; eager to see how she ends up with the next couple after that epilogue!) (I think that was the name of the theater in the last book. *shrug*)

I'm not even done with the series but I'm recommending it to everyone. Off to check out the next book...

Oh, and like LAW said in my comments, Nick DID do a totally amazing job with the narration!

(Also, *squee* LAW commented on my post...)

Not published until December but it's already at Hoopla on audio...

EDITED TO ADD: Yeah, I got it on ebook but listened to it via Hoopla for this review.

~◊~Doxi(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~◊~ says

***Christmas Homecoming* is a pleasant enough read, but the story is quite short and lacks compelling character and relationship development.**

Two boys kiss the summer before WWII breaks out and think of each other often as they suffer through the horrors of war. Both take other lovers and explore what it means to be with a man. They meet again after the

war and initially feel like strangers. But then they kiss and decide to be together (in secret, of course).

Roger is being pressured by his parents to propose to a woman, but he resists the pressure. It helps that the woman doesn't want to marry him either.

The angel makes an appearance, but its mention feels like an aside, which was disappointing. The story doesn't feel particularly Christmasy either.

I expected more angst and grit, considering the historical time period. At the very least, I needed more introspection on the part of the MCs. The epilogue is a HEA, but it didn't feel earned.

Ula'ndi Hart says

Overall book rating: 4

Audio Book: N/A

Book Cover: 3.5

For some reason, this was the saddest one for me so far.

I think the reality of Roger and Jack having to deal with the time they grew up and lived in for some reason weighed heavy on my heart.

Their discovery of their feelings and what it might mean was just so innocent and fragile.

War made them both grab for anything that could keep them standing and as sane as possible. Coming back and re-connecting with one another, having the reality of your best friend being a complete stranger in all this emotional turmoil hit you square in the face...

I couldn't help but pause and think about how it must have been for the boys back then. Boys who loved boys and wasn't allowed to show it. Becoming hopeless and seeing no future. Having to walk the path your family and society lay before you.

This book was bitter sweet and it just really touched me. Even the ending bough joy and sadness all rolled into one.

It's one of those that made me think. And I enjoyed it for that.

On to the next one!

Anyta Sunday says

<3

Disclaimer, I have a book as part of this series. However, all the books are standalones and I've been so thrilled to read some of the stories already.

I had tears in my eyes. This story moved me. It ends on a beautiful heartwarming HEA, rest assured. And, my, these boys certainly earned it. Sigh. <3

<3

L.A. Witt says

Available Dec 2.

Cadiva says

Every time I read a historical romance set in a period of war I want to just wrap my arms around the men who served but couldn't be open about their sexuality.

How many of them lost a loved one they couldn't openly mourn, like both Jack and Roger do here, and how many went to their deaths knowing their loved ones would suffer in silence.

Lori embeds this romance not only with that sense of loss, but also acknowledges those sacrifices with the characters of Floyd and Oskar, off page but important in the journey these men take back to each other.

This ends at the start of the 1950s and there was still a way to go, but the Epilogue felt completely believable to me - a happy Jack and Roger living their best lives under the radar as two war damaged bachelors.

#ARC kindly received from the author in return for an honest and unbiased review.

Ele says

3.5 stars

I always read romantic stories set in this time period with a heavy heart. Is there a more hopeless time for people to fall in love?

L.A. Witt knows her stuff when it comes to military themed stories and *Christmas Homecoming* was no exception. Here it was not the military details that stood out but the general feel of a postwar era. That cloud of loss and despair that still hangs above everyone and the way it shapes romantic relationships in particular.

So that aspect of the story was top notch. The romance itself, despite the likeable characters, didn't do much for me though. I know it's a short story but it felt rushed and without enough background. Except one short scene in the beginning we didn't get to know the MCs as friends and after they reunite it's mostly sex.

There is a lovely epilogue with a strong HEA, but note that it agrees with the time era which is the 1950s,

meaning that the couple is together but not out.

The little wooden angel theme is pretty cute and made me want to read more stories in this "series".

Meags says

4 stars

This addition to the lovely multi-author, holiday themed Christmas Angel series really packed quite an emotional punch!

Largely set in 1945, this novella follows two childhood best friends as they navigate their evolving and profound feelings for one another after each, now in their twenties, returns home to their sleepy town at the end of World War 2.

There were a lot of intense feelings and experiences being dealt with here, giving this story a bit more complexity and emotional gravitas than the stories that came before it within this loosely connected series.

The moment I opened this story up, I was hooked and wasn't able to leave the characters or their beautiful story until I was done - a reading experience which is rare in and of itself these days.

For the moreish quality and emotional impact, *Christmas Homecoming* now ranks as my favourite story in this series. <3

Lelyana says

“For some reason every time I touched that angel or looked at it, I remembered that if I got through the war, then I might see you again. Sometimes... sometimes that was the only thing that kept me going.”

This is a very beautiful second chance romance from one of my favorites, LA Witt.

As we knew, back then, being gay was forbidden and even Jack and Roger didn't know that they're gay, they're just, 'people like us'.

After six long years and realized being with women is never an option, the angel worked her magic to let Roger and Jack see what they need to see and feel what their heart desire and comfortable in their own skin. And just be who they are.

We'd both survived a war that had killed our friends all around us. We were two men who needed each other in a world that didn't allow it I don't care what we're supposed to do.

War is never pretty, but the, back home with the family demanded you to get married and happy, when all you want is being with a man you loved. A man, not a woman.

They had to make a decision after all.

And the decision and choice is only one. Being with each other. Be true to what they are and who they are. Jack and Roger with a help of the angel figurine, finally found their happiness.

And I'm happy.

I just know I've spent all these years scared to death I'd never see you again. Now that we're here again, I don't give a damn what anybody else thinks. I love you, I always have, and I'll understand if we can't be together...

I didn't need something to shut out the fear and stave off the loneliness—I needed this man to know that I loved him, that I had always loved him, and that I couldn't and wouldn't stop loving him.

Such a gorgeous story, Lori wrote a beautiful historical romance that is hard to forget. And Roger and Jack will stay with me for a very long time.

Recommended!

Annika says

Audiobook review

Once upon a time there were two young men living in a small town in Iowa. They were the best of friends. One August day in 1939 they realise there was something more between them than friendship and they share the sweetest of kisses. Then WWII happens and half a decade of separation without any contact. Fast forward to Christmas in 1945; they are both back in home. Both a bit scarred and tired from war. Old feelings bubble to the surface and this time they decide not to run from them, but embrace what started so long ago.

Part of this story had this bittersweet feel to it. It was heart-breaking to listen to how they struggled with society. How they loved each other, but knew that they couldn't be together. The expectations to marry girls from nice families. Having no hope of a future. Yet at the same time, the love they shared was so magical that they just couldn't walk away, and that sometimes love does conquer all.

Nick J. Russo captured the essence of this book perfectly. The longing, the anticipation and apprehension, but more importantly the love. It was all there in his voice, his narration. He made time fly and before I knew it the book ended, the boys got their happily ever after and I had a smile on my face.

Christmas Homecoming was a sweet addition to the series, and while each book is a standalone, I can't help but wonder what the angel has been up to since *Summerfield's Angel*. I hope more of this series will be released into audio so that I can experience more of the angel's magic.

A copy of this book was generously provided by the author in exchange for an honest review

Josy says

~ 3.5 stars ~

I don't even know what is happening right now...

Like seriously... Impatient Elf has rendered me speechless!!

I just came home to find not 1, not 2, not 3, but 7 books in my inbox!!!

Christmas Angel, Summerfield's Angel, A Soldier's Wish, Santa Daddy, The Magician's Angel, Christmas Prince, and Christmas Homecoming

I'm grateful beyond words for all this Christmas fluffiness <3<3<3<3
