



## **Baby, It's Cold Outside**

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## **Baby, It's Cold Outside** Susan May Warren

Five strangers with broken hearts. One raging blizzard. Brrr, baby, it's cold outside! But a warm fire and a string of Christmas lights just might provide the perfect remedy.

It's been years since Edith Miller hosted the annual Snowflake, MN, Christmas Extravaganza. After her son was killed in the war, some five years ago, her Christmas spirit died along with him. So she is more than happy to loan all her Christmas decorations to Stella Hanson, the new teacher in town. After all, what does she have to celebrate? But when the blizzard of the decade traps Stella—and four other wanderers—in Edith's home, Edith finds that by opening her door, she just might open her heart to a new reason to celebrate Christmas.

## **Baby, It's Cold Outside Details**

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Author : Susan May Warren

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## From Reader Review Baby, It's Cold Outside for online ebook

### R.A. says

WOW! After my sister read and reviewed this, I *knew* I was going to love it! It did not fail to disappoint me ... it was such a fun, amazing, Christmasy, magical book. (Yeah, I think I said that about another Christmas book I read recently!)

But, seriously. It was just so good!

The five characters who were trapped in a house during a storm were so quirky! I loved them all - they had such fun personalities and I grinned like a fool way too many times!

What can I say? It obviously was a good book. Not just good ... pretty amazing.

Gordy. Dottie. Jake. Arnie. Violet.

\*Gordy was such a sweet older man who looked after Dottie in mysterious ways. <3

\*Dottie was a rather stubborn woman who didn't like Christmas because of certain reasons.

\*Jake had this amazingness about him that really drew me in. His cooking was pretty impressive..

\*Arnie was adorable! He reminded me of my little brother. I loved his thoughts about Flash Gordon ... I totally forgot about that movie!

\*Violet wasn't the type of girl I liked right at the beginning, but later, I really liked her! She was a different heroin than other ones I've read about. I was impressed with her mechanical skills!

This book is full of Christmas miracles and how God allows things to happen to us so they can strengthen our growth in Him. I loved the spiritual content!

There were quite a few kisses that were rather detailed, but other than that, this book is quite clean! It deserves a high rating!

I'd give this book a try, folks! It was such a beautiful story and although the big snowstorm made me feel freeeeeezing, I thought it was great!

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### Cindy says

Set in 1949, the small town of Frost Minnesota this story will unfold. A small town to begin with they are close knit, loosing five of their boys in the war, has devastated and paralyzed, the once vibrant Dottie Morgan. The town librarian, most of the kids in town have great memories of story time with her at the library. The boys all have memories of hanging out at her house with her only son Nelson after football practice. But Nelson died in the war, and Dottie has become a sad shell of herself.

Violet, Dottie assistant at the library, also served in the war. She was in the motor pool, as a mechanic. And good one she was, but the guys seemed to be threatened by that and she had never married.

A storm right before Christmas has trapped Violet, Gordy (Dottie's neighbor and long time friend), Jake (a

stranger come to town to make things right with Violet) at Dottie's house. And Dottie is not happy with it at all, she tried to throw them all out, but the storm was so fierce they could not leave. After a night of fierce white out conditions, a trip to the barn reveal another person trapped. A little boy on his way home from school, who made it to the "storm house" or what he thought was the storm house, but it was only the barn, the four adults work together to save the little boy who is nearly froze to death. Will this change and thaw Dottie's frozen heart?

I love Susan May Warren's books and I have to say this one topped them all. A heartwarming story that will have you laughing, crying and unable to put it down. It also opened up my eyes to how the women who served in the earlier wars were treated after they returned home. We all think everyone comes home a hero, but it wasn't true for many of the women, they were resented, because people felt that their being over there took the boys off the easy jobs and sent them to the front lines, so they blamed the women. A great story that you cannot miss!! 309 pages \$US 12.99 5 stars.

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This book was provided for review purposes by Litfuse, no payment was received for this review.

### **Laura says**

Baby, It's Cold Outside by Susan May Warren is a wonderful book for unwinding from your own busy life. You'll meet five different characters, each carrying their own hurts and longings, who end up together in an old Victorian home hunkered down as they ride out a brutal winter storm in the days before Christmas in 1949. By the end of the story, they have faced that which they wanted to ignore and arrive in better places.

Who are these wounded characters?

Dottie Morgan is the town librarian who feels like even God has abandoned her after losing her only child in World War II. She's also the owner of the house where they end up.

Violet Hart is Dottie's assistant in the library and longs to connect with a soldier (Alex) with whom she's corresponded since during the war. However, she also perceives herself negatively given her mechanical inclinations and years spent serving during the war with those abilities.

Jacob (Jake) Ramsey III is a stranger to the town, come to hopefully reach Violet before she receives her last letter marked return to sender. He brings with him a secret he's afraid to even speak.

Gordon (Gordy) Lindholm is Dottie's long time neighbor who has loved Dottie for more years than he can remember. However, they keep each other at arm's length. It's only out of concern for Dottie that has him making the trek from his house to check on her and end up stuck at our house.

Finally, young Arnie Shiller finds himself at Dottie's, his appointed safe house as he resides out of town. He often escapes to his own 'reality' where he is Flash Gordon trying to save Dale Arden (his mom who is still mourning the loss of her husband during the war.) He finds his way to Dottie's house when walking home from school, but does not go TO the house, instead seeking shelter inside the barn where he's later found cold and barely breathing.

There are a few twists and turns in the story line. Romantic tension arises between the two couples and healing from past hurts eventually happens in the story. I loved how Ms. Warren wove into the story how

Jesus' coming also brought hope into the world. Without hope, there would be no reason to live a life filled with suffering. He's also our storm house...a place of security we can seek when the world continues to storm around us. Overall, it was a pleasurable read that held my attention so well that I had to force myself to go to bed (at almost 2 a.m.!) one night.

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### **Heidi Goehmann says**

This book was tender and peaceful, but it held surprising depth. The setting and time- rural Minnesota after WWII was done well by the author, so much so that I felt like I stepped right into the lead heroine's life. And so much grace, a really clear gospel message. I was thankful the author saved the cheese for the romance and not the theology.

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### **Ruth says**

When war claimed her only son Nelson, Dottie Morgan grew cold and brittle, the physical embodiment of the name of her hometown of Frost, Minnesota. Nelson had been her salvation, a sign of redemption and forgiveness for the youthful folly that caused her to spurn her childhood sweetheart Gordy's declarations of love for adventure with a ne'er do well thug. With crushed dreams and a hopeless outlook, Dottie resigns herself to another isolated Christmas and a lonely future, sure that God and mankind has forgotten her -- but more than that, positive that she doesn't deserve to be found. But when a fast-moving snowstorm brings four lonely souls to her door for shelter, Dottie discovers that not only she stands in desperate need of a new beginning. Gordy hopes for one last chance to rekindle his romance with Dottie. Violet, a tomboy who understands cars better than men, served in the WAACs and now struggles to adjust to civilian life and her family's expectations. Jake, a handsome stranger newly-arrived in town, hopes for redemption and carries with him news that could destroy Violet's dreams. And Arnie, a lost and lonely boy, longs to be a hero for his single mother, their family bereft by his father's wartime death. Isolated in Dottie's Storm House, these five bruised and wounded near-strangers are forced to confront their deepest fears for a chance to grasp hold of the promise delivered to the world anew each Christmas -- hope birthed in a world craving a second chance at redemption.

Oh how I adored this book. Baby, It's Cold Outside is the perfect Christmas read, brimming with the warmth and nostalgia of the late 1940s, made all the richer by Warren's trademark and skillful handling of emotional issues that cut to the core of what it means to be a believer in a fallen world. This novel is saturated with hope and spiritual truths, capable of thawing the most jaded of hearts if you'll but crack open the door, much like Dottie does, and listen to the whispered promise that no matter where you're at, no matter the pain, God has not forsaken you. With Dottie as the centerpoint, Warren speaks strongly to the idea of what makes a family -- not just those one is related to by blood, but family forged by the fires of shared experiences and faith. It's a powerful reminder to not overlook or forsake those who are different or whom tragedy has set apart from the "norm." The flirtatious song from which the novel takes its title dually speaks to the sweet, heart-stopping romances that Warren spins on the page, and on a deeper level as an invitation to take shelter in God's never-failing promises of redemption and second chances.

I am admittedly biased towards novels centered around World War II and its aftermath -- the 1940s is a decade rich with history and change, heartbreak and hope. Warren is adept at bringing this generation to life, with characters that feel wholly authentic to the time period, but vibrant and relatable thanks to their

struggles with hopes and heartaches that are timeless and define what it means to be human. It seems that the 1940s is where Warren really shines when writing historicals. She has a gift for sprinkling her narrative with little details that bring the time period to life, from descriptions of clothing and food to the music and expressions that bring the characters and the time period to sparkling life on the page. And setting the story during the 1949 holidays is a well-played stroke of genius -- enough time has passed for the reality of the war's aftermath to settle into the characters' lives, and on the cusp of a new decade's worth of promise, Warren posits a question for the principle players, and by extension the reader: will the tragedy and heartbreak of the past define one's future, or will one allow God to bring beauty and hope forth from the ash heaps of shattered dreams?

I have to briefly speak to Violet and Jake's blossoming romance, as since it begins with letters it is one of my favorite storylines in the novel. With echoes of You've Got Mail (perhaps a more apt comparison would be In the Good Old Summertime, the musical remake of The Shop Around the Corner that released in 1949), Violet and Jake fell in love through letters, where the worst hurts of their wartime experiences were laid bare (only Warren adds the delicious twist of "stolen" identities). In the Storm House, they're faced with the choice -- is the hope of love worth the risk of possible rejection? The risk of being truly known? Warren writes some of the best, most sizzling romances in the business. The tension between Jake and Violet sends sparks off the page, and Jake's quiet heroism and vulnerability will melt your heart -- Warren's outdone herself with this hero. :)

More than a passing seasonal treat, Baby, It's Cold Outside is a novel saturated with rich spiritual truths and overflowing with the beauty of grace. Warren's novels never seem to fail to meet me where I'm at and encourage me when I need it most. The characters within this novel's pages are so heart-breakingly authentic, so fully-realized on the page they'll become your friends, and if you're like me you'll be loathe to finish the book's final pages. Warren's story will weave its way into your heart, leaving you warm with its gorgeously rendered illustration of the meaning of Christmas -- redemption for a fallen world, hope to broken souls. Like so many of Warren's books, this one is a gift to treasure.

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### **Kathryn Class says**

I asked the general public on goodreads for an uplifting, happy christmas book and boy did this one not disappoint! It has it's sad moments and, yes, I did cry a few times, but not really because it was sad, but because it was touching and it pricked at a few difficult things in my personal life. Overall the story was well crafted. I thought I could predict the way the story was going to unfold, but I was wrong and I LOVE THAT! This book is written by a Christian author, but isn't preachy and I wouldn't have known it was written as a christian book if it weren't for the ending. I would've just thought it was a regular book, but being a christian bookstore book explains why I couldn't find it at any library. The author slides in some thoughts about Jesus, but it is totally part of the character and doesn't feel like she wrote the story just to include those thoughts. It was really a natural part of the story that any author could have written. (in case there's anyone worried about that)

The story takes place just after WWII in Minnesota. Soldiers have come home, but Dottie's only son didn't. She is bitter and the fact that Christmas is in a few days just makes the sorrow so much worse. She's shut everybody out of her life and lives alone. People have learned to just let her be. In the cold areas of the USA, some towns have places called storm houses. Storm houses are homes where the owner has agreed to host anyone who is caught in a storm on the way to or from their home. Everyone is assigned a storm house depending on where they live. Dottie's house is a storm house and because of this and a few other reasons

four people become trapped in Dottie's home for the 4 days leading up to Christmas and she has to find a way to let herself allow people and memories back into her heart. Some of them she knows and some of them are strangers to her. The story floats between the present time and some memories with just the right balance. I like how the author has an event happen and the only way to find out what happens next is to read it from another character's point of view and after that you get the outcome. That made it really come to life for me. It's about the healing power and magic of Christmas. About how when you think it's lost it can be found again. And she draws an analogy at the end in her "Author's Note" that Jesus is our "storm house" our safe place.

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### **Lorraine says**

**SUMMARY:** Five strangers with broken hearts. One raging blizzard. Brrr, baby, it's cold outside! But a warm fire and a string of Christmas lights just might provide the perfect remedy. It's been years since Dottie Morgan hosted the annual Snowflake, MN, Christmas Extravaganza. After her son was killed in the war, some five years ago, her Christmas spirit died along with him. So she is more than happy to loan all her Christmas decorations to Violet Hart, the new teacher in town. After all, what does she have to celebrate? But when the blizzard of the decade traps Violet — and four other wanderers—in Dottie's home, Dottie finds that by opening her door, she just might open her heart to a new reason celebrate Christmas.

**REVIEW:** If I could have given this more than a 5, I would have. This is perhaps one of the best Christmas stories I have read this year. Capturing the true essence of the Christmas spirit, love, forgiveness, hope and peace, the author does an excellent job of bringing 4 strangers together along with a young boy, each carrying their own baggage from World War II and placing them in situations that help them learn to forgive themselves and open up once again to the spirit of Christmas. Each of the characters was unique and loveable in their own special way: Dottie, the town librarian, who still held a nugget of love in her heart that just needed to be cracked open. Violet, the library assistant, who just needed to learn to accept herself as the special individual she was. Gordy, Dottie's next door neighbor, who needed to learn to express himself and try again. Jake, the stranger in their midst, who needed to know that the role he played in the War was important. Finally, Alex, the young dreamer, who needed to know that it was OK to dream.

**FAVORITE QUOTES:** "I don't think God is ever done speaking into our lives. Even when we don't want to hear it. Even when our hearts are cold."

"I don't celebrate Christmas anymore. There's nothing left in it for me" ... But what had Violet said: "Except of course Jesus."

"It specifically says that God doesn't expect us to be strong without Him. That we're supposed to need Him, and there's no disgrace in that. In fact, weakness just might be the mark of a man of God. Don't call yourself weak because of the things you can't do. Call yourself weak when you don't let God take over, do His work in your life." .... "That's the point of Christmas, isn't it. Our weakness, His strength? Him coming to our rescue?"

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### **Margaret says**

I was so tempted to give this book 5 stars but I only give that rating to the best of the best, almost there

though. This is my favorite Christmas themed books to date, sweet but also full of spiritual truths. If anything this book really drives home the point that Jesus is the reason for the season. I enjoyed every moment of this book and I especially appreciated the author's note at the end about her inspiration for writing this book.

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### **Laura says**

I was pleasantly surprised at the gender expectations discussion in this book. At first I became tired of the constant mention of how she is "doing an man's job" or not "needy enough to attract a man," but that was just the set up in the bigger discussion of being yourself regardless of what society considers feminine or what men want in a woman. It tore apart the ideal woman of the 1940s.

The story itself was interesting but didn't feel overly Christmasy... And the writing had some issues with continuity (mc's eye color changed a couple times, things like that) but was otherwise okay, not amazing. I appreciated that the Christian aspects of the story were sprinkled in in a tasteful, not preachy and forceful way that these Christian fiction romances can sometimes do.

Overall, I expected not to like it but was pleasantly surprised.

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### **Rebekah says**

I loved this book... Very sweet and perfect for Christmas-time!

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### **Renee says**

This book would make Scrooge (pre-ghostly visits) and the Grinch (pre-Cindy Lou Who) love Christmas stories. I for one am not normally a fan of holiday books but this one I loved. Way to go Susan May Warren!

Full review on 10/17

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### **Olivia says**

{4.5 stars}

Incredibly beautiful <3

*All these years, she'd thought God had taken away her reason to celebrate Christmas. But Christmas gave her son back to her. Christmas delivered her the one thing the world, and the war, wanted to steal. Hope.*

This was just as Christmasy and warm as I imagined it to be. This book will make you want to sit in front of a fireplace, with a blanket and cup of tea! The writing is beautiful and well-written. Join all five characters in a warm, Christmas story that will change all of them: Dottie, who has become bitter from the past; Gordon, a long time neighbor and friend of Dottie who loves her; Violet, a former WAAC who only wants to be womanly; Jake, a man battling asthma and who knows Violet's boyfriend; and Arnie, who loves Flash

Grodon. I love the 40s and 50s, and Susan May Warren portrayed that time frame very well.

I hesitated how to rate this. Overall I'd give this about five stars for the story and writing. The beautiful reminder of hope is evident in the story and the characters are well developed and real. A few kisses were a bit detailed, so that is basically the only reason why I lowered my rating.

A favorite quote:

*“I’m just a farmer. I’m not eloquent. I’m not dapper. I usually smell like the barn.”*

*“Then take a shower.”*

A perfect book to read to get into the Christmas mood.

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### **Doris Miller says**

#### **Baby it's cold outside (when I fall in love)**

This is a great book, I highly recommend it. This book reminds the reader that miracles still happen. We just have to open our hearts and look for them. Wonderful ending!

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### **Charlene Amsden says**

Susan doesn't use mere words to tell her stories, she uses pure, undistilled emotion. Whenever I pick up a Susan May Warren book, I know to also grab a box of tissue for my tears and to make certain I'm somewhere I can laugh out loud. I also have to clear my schedule of all obligations, because once I start reading a SMW story I am not stopping until it is done.

Like every other Susan May Warren book I have read, *Baby It's Cold Outside* is going on my keeper shelf. I expect that from now on I will make a yearly pilgrimage to Frost, Minnesota and spend the 1949 Christmas holidays stranded in Dottie Morgan's quaint Victorian house with her and her four reluctant visitors as they learn how powerful love and forgiveness can be.

I highly recommend this and any other SMW book you're contemplating reading.

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### **Christy says**

Rather than give a review about all the great characters or the touching scenes of this book, I'm simply going to say that sometimes there are books that come along at just the right moment in your life, and they leave the most profound impression. To some, *Baby, It's Cold Outside* may represent a wonderful start into Christmas books this season, but for me, it became a personal journey of sorts--a chance to pull back the curtain and recognize that, just like Dottie Morgan, I'm not perfect, either. To some, that may sound like a horrible quality for a book. (I mean, really...most readers don't really like to have their toes stepped on while they're reading a novel, thank you very much.) But there's something about the way that Susan does it that doesn't come off as preachy or condescending. These personal, introspective moments are what make Susan's

books so special to me. They get under my skin, and before it's over, I'm either at the point of tears and/or thanking God that he still loves me despite my faults.

And hey, if you're looking for an entertaining Christmas story, you'll still get it here...no worries. But I hope that, like me, you will take away something more than just, "That was a great book." I hope you'll give it the chance to be a blessing to you. I never expected it to give one to me.

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