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A Lonesome Point Holiday Novella

It's the time of year for miracles...

Once upon a time, Lula and Carter were inseparable and Christmas was Lula's favorite time of the year. But when Lula refused Carter's proposal one dark December night--unwilling to abandon her hometown to live the dangerous life of a treasure hunter's wife--the holiday lights went out in her heart. She abandoned all hope of romance and embraced a hermit's existence, keeping her distance from dangerous men and untamed cowboys. Until now...

Years of hard knocks have taught Carter that the greatest adventure is the one he once found in Lula's arms. He's back in Lonesome Point determined to win back the only woman he's ever loved, but Lula is just as determined to keep her heart under lock and key. She gives Carter twelve days--and twelve dates--to make his case before she sends him on his way, not counting on the fact that the two of them have grown into people even more meant to be.

It looks like Lula and Carter are on track to Happily Ever After take two, but when Lula's old fears are reawakened Christmas Eve it will take a holiday miracle to keep them together.

Twelve Dates of Christmas: The Ballad of Lula Jo Details

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From Reader Review Twelve Dates of Christmas: The Ballad of Lula Jo for online ebook

Tracey says

Lula Watson doesn't like Christmas. Ever since Carter Bryce up and left her eleven Christmases ago, heartbreak and guilt have combined to turn Lula from a high-spirited, life-loving, mischievous 22-year-old to a spinsterish Christmas gnome hater, content to hide away in her Lonesome Point, Texas, tea room, letting life pass her by. Lula has buried her sassiness and love of life under a veil of anger and hurt; love let her down, so she has vowed to shut herself off from further heartbreak, but when Carter returns to Lonesome Point, determined to win her back once and forever, her crotchety veneer doesn't last long at all.

There is not one book that Jessie Evans has written that I do not absolutely love, but her novellas are some of my favorites of all. She has mastered the art of capturing small-town life and vibrant characters that make you want to step into the story and become a part of their world. Her Lonesome Point, TX, series is full of sexy cowboys and strong and independent women, and TWELVE DATES OF CHRISTMAS: THE BALLAD OF LULA JO is no exception. Lula and Bryce are another signature Jessie couple, and I fell in love with them immediately. Fans of Jessie's FIRE AND ICING and ALWAYS A BRIDESMAID series will absolutely love this story, and this series. That this is a Christmas novella makes it an even sweeter read for me, and I couldn't recommend it more, so grab this treasure, sit down with a cup of cocoa, and enjoy. Five-plus heartwarming and sexy stars for my girl Jessie.

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/tw...>

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Andra

A simply marvelous novella. I must admit, this is the first book I have read from this author, and I am not fond of starting a series in book 2 or onwards, but that reservation did not interfere with my enjoyment of the book. I found Ms. Evans writing style easy to read, the story flowing effortless – and for a novella that can often be the challenge given its smaller length.

I found numerous things to love about this book. First let's start with the title....I loved it....Twelve Dates of Christmas – reminding me of my favourite time of year. So the title evoked an emotional attachment to the book before I even opened to the first page. Secondly, I quite enjoy second chance romances as well. It just seems to me that the protagonists try harder because they know what they are missing. And this certainly is the case with Carter Bryce. Of course...why did it take Carter more than a decade to discover this??? Well read the story and you shall find out...his life during their years apart was filled with adventure galore along with mishaps and tragedy. Makes for some interesting reading :)

Lula (Tallulah Josephine Watson) is the woman Carter leaves behind. As a young woman, she falls madly in love with Carter. Unfortunately, Carter leaves town when Lula rejects his initial marriage proposal....Lula had answered with her pragmatic self and not with her heart. As time goes by, she has created a tolerable life in Lonesome Point, but it seems she is missing her passion and zest for life.

In walks Carter after more than a decade and we quickly see there is still attraction between the two. I was glad to see that Lula wanted to take it slow and her acceptance of Carter's suggestion of 12 dates prior to Christmas for them to get reacquainted before Lula makes her final decision as to whether they can give "them" another try.

The dates are fun.....and hot (boy is it hot). Time will tell if they make it. Read the book and enjoy the experience of Lula and Carter! And the gnomes.....don't get me started....but trust me....a chuckle or two will probably be associated with gnomes from now on.

I know I will certainly be reading more of Jessie Evans' writing. I want to begin the Lonesome Point series from the beginning!

Kara Hildebrand (Two Book Pushers) says

Some people don't like novellas. I happen to love them. Especially Jessie Evans' novellas. It takes a brilliant writer to get everything you need, want and love into a short book! This book has 2 of my favorite things: it takes place at Christmas and it's a second chance romance! Lula Jo and Carter were in love and planning to spend forever together, but he leaves to follow his career dreams. Years later he comes back to town and wants Lula Jo back. She puts up a good fight, but her body quickly remembers Carter. Her mind is a little slower to believe that he's back for good and wants her. Can she forget the pain and loss she felt when he left? Can she let him in again? He has 12 dates to convince her that he loves her. Can he do it? I love this series and I can't wait for Diamonds and Dust!

"Play with me," Cater said, his voice husky. "I'm yours."

"Don't ever leave. Stay here forever."

"Yes, ma'am," he drawled. "Though we might get some funny looks if we go down to serve customers naked and tangled up."

Sandra Shipman ~ Two Book Pushers says

I love novellas especially when they are able to pack so much story in a small package. Jessie Evans novellas do that every time!

One Christmas Eve Eleven years ago Lula thought she had it all. She opened her shop Tea for Two and was so in love with her boyfriend Carter, the man she knew would be proposing tonight of all nights. She loved the Christmas Season. But when Carter wanted her to leave her town from treasure hunt around the world with him, she had to say No. And Carter was gone. And she had changed.

Lula was now a 33 year old that lived a very quiet and dateless life. She tried to move on from Carter and she thought she had but she didn't see love in her future. Ever again and she accepted it. Embraced it. But now it was the season she dreaded every year and like every year she put on a happy face and went with it. Then twelve days before Christmas her life had changed, with a Christmas gnome on her door step she knew Carter was back....

Carter wanted her back. Lula didn't believe that he could stay in one place so they decided they would have twelve days to figure it out. They both have changed in the last eleven years. Lula was not the fun outgoing woman he knew but he brings it out in her, makes her feel alive. And Carter had been through a lot. Can they rekindle their love in just twelve days? Can Carter settle in a small town for a lifetime?

I love this one. Getting to know Mia's cousin was a treat. She was the boring cousin but now my mind has changed, she had her reasons.

Quotes:

It was harmless fun, and Lula didn't care if she got caught one day.

"I put the gnome in the pantry. I'm still deciding whether he's allowed to go out and play in the front yard. I told you there are no holiday gnomes in my collection."

I think that look just got Carter pregnant.

Tami Talbert says

Twelve Dates of Christmas is a story which offered me three pleasures in one. First, it is a story which takes place at Christmastime. Second, it is from one of my favorite book series, Lonesome Point. And third, it is written by one of my favorite authors, Jessie Evans. With these three treasures included, Christmas has come early for me, and I knew this was going to be a "gift" I was going to love.

Lula has lived for years with heartbreak which arose that awful night eleven years ago when Carter, the only man to ever hold her heart in his hands, disappeared from her life. When suddenly he returns to Lonesome Point, all of the hurt that has remained quickly resurfaces. Carter has always regretted impulsively leaving Lula all those years ago and believes all the misfortune and adversity which has befallen upon him since running away was his punishment. Now, eleven years later, he has finally been able to make his way back to Lonesome Point and to the woman who has always owned his heart.

Hoping he can rekindle their love, Carter proposes they share twelve dates, and if Lula is unable to let go of the hurt from the past, he agrees to leave Lonesome Point for good. Lula agrees, however, insists their time together be spent merely as friends. But as each new date together reignites the passion inside, Lula allows the walls she has built around her heart to disintegrate and finally lets Carter, her only true love, back into her heart. But when occurrences from the past begin to resurface in Lula's mind, the hurt reappears as well, and she begins to question whether Carter's love for her was ever as deep and true as he proclaimed it to be.

Wow, Ms. Evans. You had me at the prologue. I had been wondering about Lula's story since reading Leather and Lace and finally here in this Christmastime novella, I have it. The connection between Lula and Carter and their love for each other at the beginning quickly pulled me into their lives. Lula spent so many years with a shattered heart and despite trying to remain closed off, upon seeing Carter after such a long time of being separated, you could quickly sense the love which still remained buried rapidly bubbling back up to the surface. Twelve Dates of Christmas is a magically sweet holiday romance. It is a quick read and can be read as a standalone. Though believe me when I say once you've experienced Lonesome Point here, you'll want to read the others as well.

Liz says

A sweet Christmas story.

Diane says

Loved this book!!

Tallulah Josephine Watson was a spinster at the age of 33 years old. At least, that is what she felt like.

Lula was 22 years old when she fell hard and fast for Carter Bryce, an archaeologist who came to her home town seeking his fortune. Despite a courtship that spanned a few years, Carter left abruptly when faced with Lula's decision to refuse his ring and not leave with him when his job ended. Devastated when his departure coincided with a family tragedy, Lula's life fell into a predictable routine until the unexpected return of the love of her life. How could she trust him again? Could Carter convince her that he was sincere and back for the long haul?

I loved this quick read set in the wonderful town of Lonesome Point, Texas! I'm a big fan of the series and this installment felt like going home. Both sweet and romantic, the author breathes life into the characters she creates. With Christmas as a cheerful backdrop, and gnomes (both real and magical), I laughed and got misty in equally measure through all the twelve days. Another great book by this author!

Deniz says

Sooo I had this great idea to read some Holiday novellas... I have a soft spot for winter lurv and having met le DH on 12/24 ... well, ok, I admit it I am a christmas romance sucker!
This however- OH DEAR! where to begin?

Well first the dialogues were way to corny. I mean who talks like this?

"I have a feeling you might get lucky." " I'm already lucky"

All the supposed cute banter was just too put on, it felt unreal. In fat it sounded like a corny rom-com. You know, the kind of movies you wonder who they were made for, cause they are so way out there so over the top when it comes to romance, surely no-one buys into that?

The writing style is in fact the only redeeming thing about this novella. Evans did some beautiful descriptions, I enjoyed her prose.

The story lines was. Well. Not much to tell about. It's your starcrossed lovers come second chances kinda thing. It's predictable and nothing new. I didn't mind the predictability by the way. It is a Christmas novella after all, I was after a cute and fluffy fix.

The end, well, uhm. The gnomes thing, really? I don't know how I feel about that. But I do know that I didn't really care any more because I was by that time so annoyed with the characters, I seriously could not care less.

The characters were all steriotypical AT BEST. They were dizzy idiots. I mean seriously?!

Mia seems kinda fluffy and small brained, Carter is mr. desperation deluxe, every one was weird and just unreal. I don't know if maybe Evans was trying to go for quirky? Sadly quirky it ain't not. Add the corny dialogues to their weird stuck up charaters and you got- certainly not cute and fluffy- more like irritating as hell.

I should have probably stopped at the prologue. Because I was already agitated by that. I mean really?! WTH? Have they never heard of a compromise????

BUT crown for the most annoying thing in the novella goes to *drum roll* Lula.

So first she is being beyond unreasonable. I mean, she was not 15 she was 22. Then well she behaves like a stuck up, judgmental, old spinster:

Her cousin had more enthusiasm than sense, but Lula didn't try to reason with Mia anymore. Some people were a lost cause, and all you could do was include them in your prayers before you went to sleep.

I mean she is **33!!!!** For heavens sake!

But then she totally reverts into a teenager:

Lula wrenched the door open and slammed inside, flipping the lock behind her and ignoring Carter's call for her to come back. She pounds up the stairs to her apartment, tears streaming down her cheeks.

I MEAN she is **33 years old!** WTF?! Excuse my french.

BUT seriously. She does not once not a single time behave like a reasonable person. She either is old, stuck-up, jealous or she is a horny, moody, clingy teen. I won't even go into her clingy and control streak. Seriously.

Let's just leave it at this. I can not believe I wasted my precious reading time on this.

So I think she has the honour of being worst character of 2014!

Contrat's LULA, the worst character 2014.

Kimberly Graham says

4 very sweet Christmas stars.

Janice says

Review of Twelve Dates of Christmas by Jessie Evans

Another 5++ star read -- Lula's story

This book is all about Lula, whom we met in previously in Mia's story, as well as Bubba's (with no cliffhanger). Lula is Mia's cousin, and a recipient of her pranks - most notably when Mia pantied her gnomes. I had a feeling we would get around to her story at some point, and boy was I happy to get it.

We start out 11 years ago, when Lula and Carter were an item. Carter is an archeologist and treasure hunter and ready to move on to the next big thing. Lula is expecting a ring, thanks to her Aunt blabbing about it, and is devastated when he wants her to leave Lonesome Point and travel with him. When she runs away from him, he leaves town without her. It takes eleven years for him to make it back to her, but will his love be enough to break her out of the walls she has set up around her heart? Can they make it work this time?

Sometimes, you have to admit that money isn't as important as the love of a good woman. I am looking forward to reading the next story in this series. Jessie keeps writing amazing stories and we get to reap the rewards.

****Complimentary Copy provided by Author for an honest review.****

Rhianna says

Sweet Christmas Romance, not just for Lonesome Point fans!

If you've got as much of a weak spot for romances where the hero and heroine have had a romantic relationship fall apart a long time ago you will love Lula and Carter's story. She wanted to stay in Lonesome Point and he wanted to run off on archaeological adventures which lead to them parting ways rather dramatically. Fast forward eleven years and he's had some less-than-good journeys and she's become a bit of a recluse. But if he can prove to her within twelve dates to that he's grown up they just might have something special together.

While I haven't jumped into Evans' Lonesome Point series yet I have loved her Always a Bridesmaid ones so I figured since I was participating in a holiday read-a-thon this week it was perfect timing to dip a toe in. I'm pleased to say that this story stands well as a holiday romance for those of us who aren't familiar with the series already! For those who are, I think it will be even more enjoyable as I caught hints at the first book in the series, LEATHER AND LACE for sure. I really liked Carter even if I giggled a little at how well... cartoony I guess might be a good word for it his need to run off and play Indiana Jones seemed. Rather than cheesey I found it charming. I felt pretty sad for Lula that she let his leaving break her so much but enjoyed seeing her give him a second chance to win her.

Sweet, festive and with the perfect dash of kitschy humor I love I would definitely recommend this one to anyone looking for a short holiday themed read to get them in the mood for Christmas. I really, really enjoyed it and will definitely be trying to work the Lonesome Point series into my reading schedule by hook or by crook now that I have fallen for the town.

Notes: ARC received via author.

Amber Boyd says

Jessie Evans knows how to write the best second chance romances!! I think all wonder about the one who got away or play the 'what if' game at times. Though not many of us want or even get a second chance with a former love; sometimes what's meant to be will just be. Other times fate steps in and helps us rectify our missteps. This is one of those cases of realizing you need to back track and re-find your path.

If you've read Leather and Lace, the first in her Lonesome Point TX series, you've met Lula. She's distant and stodgy and just no fun! But learning that Lula hasn't always been this way and that she's basically been hiding from really living since losing her first love, well that just made me sad. Carter Bryce's return to Lonesome Point is not the happy reunion with Lula that he hoped when she faints. But when he proposes she give him 12 dates to reconnect, Lula says ok.

It's really a sweet and hopeful story. Carter has grown up from the wild adventurer he was and Lula has retreated from living. Watching the two find some common ground again was good. Seeing Lula really look at herself and decide to live wholly again was better. Seeing if she and Carter can find love and forever was a little bit magical.

Lisa says

Sweet seasonal second chance romance novella. Easy enjoyable read.

Cara Group says

Cute holiday romance novella - I think it is part of a series.

Becca Moree says

Coming soon!Hi, my name is Becca and I am addicted to the Lonesome Point Texas series by Jessie Evans.

"Hi, Becca." Hehe come on, you know you echoed the expected response!! No? I'm the only one...well damn!

Moving on from my insanity....

Twelve Dates of Christmas is a novella, which I typically hate because things feel rushed and I always end up feeling like I missed so much of the story. Some how Jessie managed to pack one hell of a punch in this novella and I can honestly say that I didn't have a single moment during this book where I felt like I was being rushed or missing anything. It takes a special type of writer to be able to pull this off, to be able to fit an entire love story into such a short book.

So let's talk story line and characters, shall we?

Lula, who we met in Leather and Lace as well as Saddles and Sin, gets to tell her story! I was so excited when I heard about this book, I just knew that Lula had a story worth reading and boy was I right! When I read the first two books in the series I got the idea that Lula was much older than she is. I was rather surprised to find out her age! Anyways, in Twelve Dates of Christmas Lula gets the surprise of her life when the man who crushed her heart eleven years ago shows up in town hell bent on getting her back. It's a bit difficult to tell you much about the story line and not give away spoilers...so this will unfortunately be a short review LOL

Carter is sexy as sin (as are all of the men in the Lonesome Point series) and has a heart of gold! He may have made mistakes in the past, but the way he treats Lula and does everything in his power to earn back her trust is just perfect. He only has 12 dates...just 12 days to convince her that he is a changed man! Can he do it? Can he break down her walls and show her that his love for her never stopped??

The romance in this book is epic and undeniable! The sexual tension and connection that Carter and Lula share is intense. Even with this being a novella the relationship didn't seem forced or rushed. It just felt right.

Jessie has managed to earn the MFEO stamp of approval for a novella...which is a first on Breathless Ink!

Twelve Dates of Christmas is a DEFINITE must read! If you haven't already started the Lonesome Point series then head on over and pick up Leather and Lace and get your hiney to the LPA (Lonesome Point Anonymous) meetings lol Jessie Evan's writing style is addictive, fun and just plain amazing! The stories flow beautifully and the characters are so well developed that I feel like I could easily pull up in that town at any moment and run into the characters!
