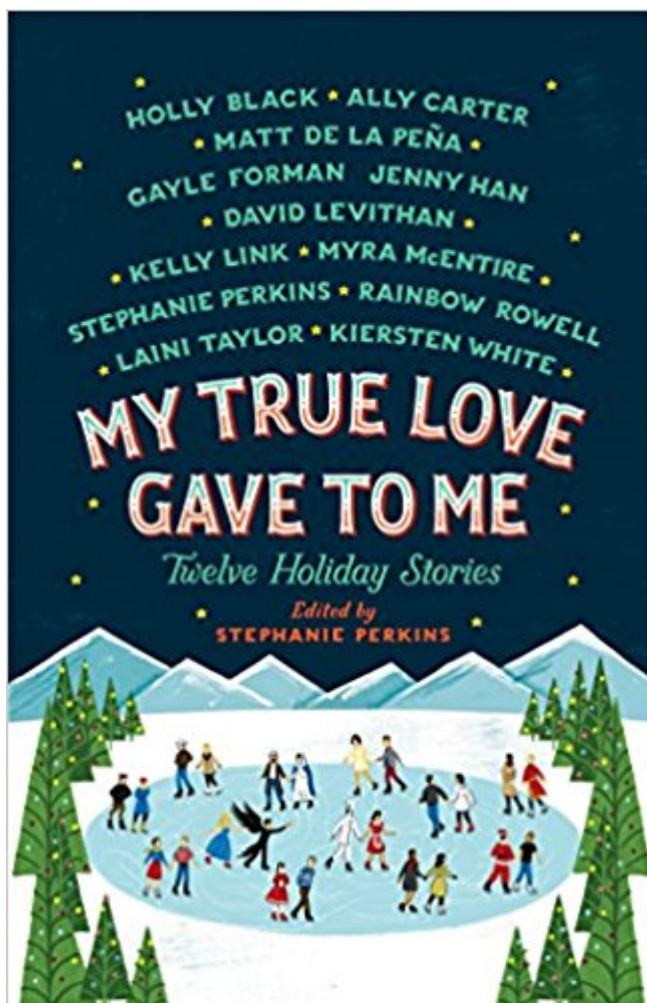


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# My True Love Gave To Me: Twelve Holiday Stories



## Synopsis

Twelve romantic holiday stories by twelve bestselling young adult authors edited by Stephanie Perkins.

## Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up "Twelve of the best-loved and best-known young adult authors-Rainbow Rowell, David Levithan, and Matt de la Peña among them-have contributed stories to this appealing collection. Most have a Christmas setting, but Hanukkah, the winter solstice, and New Year's Eve are also represented. Most are realistic, but Holly Black, Kelly Link, Jenny Han, and Laini Taylor have contributed tales steeped in fantasy or the supernatural. What all 12 selections have in common is teen romance at its most fragile and meaningful. Never mind the winter holidays; booktalk this title all year round." Virginia Walter, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies  
--This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Rich language and careful, efficient character development make the collection an absorbing and sophisticated read, each story surprisingly fresh despite the constraints of a shared theme. It's that rarest of short story collections: There's not a single lump of coal. • Kirkus (starred review) "There's no shortage of cozy setups for holiday romance in this captivating collection of short stories a rare seasonal treat. • Publishers Weekly (starred review) "Holiday canoodling stories by twelve of the top YA authors? It's a Christmas miracle! This is the substantive stuff of dream stockings: a rollicking, blush-inducing, memorable holiday collection of breezy, bite-sized stories perfect a snug evening next to the fire. • Booklist (starred review) "Never mind the

winter holidays; booktalk this title all year round.â • â •School Library Journal (starred review)â œStunning and diverse, this holiday anthology is pure magic. This is what all anthologies should aspire to be.â • â •RT Book Review, 4.5 stars, "Top Pick"â œThis collection of holiday stories reminds readers that while the season can be painful, it's also a time of hope. It's a marvelous collection, certain to earn a treasured spot on many Y.A. shelves.â • â •The New York Times Book Reviewâ œMy True Love Gave to Me is a plummy treatâ | Its best stories are worth savoring long past the seasonal expiration date and even beyond the teen years.â • â •The Washington Postâ œSatisfying and just sweet enough, like a good Christmas cookie, this will obviously appeal to those readers who get out the holiday decorations the day after Halloween, and it may even convert a Scrooge or two.â • â •The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

First off this book is gorgeous! I had to get the UK Edition and I love it so much!1. *Midnights ~ Rainbow Rowell ~ 5/5*I wasn't sure I would like this story as it only takes place on New Years Eve from 2011 - 2014. Mags first met Noel on New Year's Eve 2011 where she saved him an allergic reaction from not eating snacks with nuts in them. And they became best friends. But every New's Years Eve from there on she wants to be the one to kiss Noel but he's always kissing another girl.... until 2014 - her dream finally came true. There are more revelations and I'm not going to say what led up to anything, but this story was so good. I just loved it. I loved both of the characters and their chemistry together! And this wasn't even a long story as opposed to some of the other ones.2. *The Lady and the Fox ~ Kelly Link ~ 3/5*This story was a bit bizarre but I still give it three stars. Every year for a bit of time when it snows, Miranda meets this boy named Fenny in the gardens. He only has until the snow stops falling to be with her. He is apparently trapped by some snow witch or something. And no, they don't really explain why he is trapped. Needless to say Miranda saves him and I guess they have a happily ever after.3. *Angels In The Snow ~ Matte de la pena ~ 5/5*This is a sweet story about a boy named Shy who is watching his bosses apartment for Christmas. Well, rather he's watching the cat. But this boss didn't give him any money before he left and there is no food but maybe a few yogurts and random small things. Shy is starving but he won't try to go out and get help.Haley is a girl in another apartment that needs to use his shower. They become friends but he doesn't tell her he's starving. I mean I wanted to smack him several times. But I digress. Haley finds out on her own that he has no food and she starts packing it on. She makes him all kinds of food and they form as sweet little romance.4. *Polaris Is Where You'll Find Me ~ Jenny Han ~ 4/5*This one is cute because Natty is a human that lives at the North Pole with Santa and the Elves. But when she went on a Christmas run with Santa one year she meets a little human boy.

She has thought about him ever since and now that she is older she wants to find him. Especially since humans and elves can't be together and the crush she has on Flynn the elf isn't going to work out. I thought the ending was sweet and cute.<sup>5</sup> It's A Yuletide Miracle, Charlie Brown ~ Stephanie Perkins ~ 5/5 This is a wonderful story about Marigold and North. Marigold wants to use North's voice on her Youtube channel. She does animations and that's what she wants to do for a living with one of the big companies. North works for his parents tree farm and he's always outside her window selling trees. She doesn't have the money to get a tree but she wants to try to get one so she can talk to him. She asks for a Charlie Brown tree, it's so sweet ~ North ends up taking the tree to her apartment and then helps her clear a space since there is so much clutter. This ends up taking so many hours and they talk and talk. Marigold finally admits her scheme and other nice things happen. That's all I'm saying ~ 6. Your Temporary Santa ~ David Levithan ~ 2/57. Krampuslauf ~ Holly Black ~ 2/58. What The Hell Have You Done, Sophie Roth? ~ Gayle Forman ~ 2/59. Beer Buckets and Baby Jesus ~ Myra McEntire ~ 3/5 This one was okay. You have Vaughn who is the town prankster. I was the guy who taught other kids how to egg houses, roll yards, and glue mailboxes shut. And the older I got, the more elaborate my pranks became. In middle school, I filled the clinic with Styrofoam peanuts. Last year, my junior year of high school, I decorated the town Christmas tree with neon thong underwear. But one of his little pranks turns bad and he ends up catching the Church on fire. So he's in trouble for all of that and helping to fix it back up and work on the pageant. He starts talking to Gracie Robinson and they seem to click and she finds out he's not such a bad guy after all.<sup>10</sup> Welcome To Christmas, Ca ~ Kiersten White ~ 5/5 Maria lives in this small town and works at the diner for her mother and her mother's boyfriend Rick. Maria hates it and wants to get out of town as soon as she can. She's not sure how since she can't afford college and she can't afford much of anything else. Then when they replace the old cook that passed with the new cook Ben... things become sort of magical. Ben has a way of know what to feed people no matter what they order and it's awesome. They find a little magic together as well and the ending is sweet with Maria's dreams coming true. Even dreams she didn't know she had.<sup>11</sup> Star of Bethlehem ~ Ally Carter ~ 2/5 12. The Girl Who Woke The Dreamer ~ Laini Taylor ~ 2/5 Overall I enjoyed the book and some really sweet stories!

Every year one of my ~ goals ~ for the Christmas season is to read more seasonal fiction because I must admit that being the Hallmark junkie I am there ~s no logical reason why I shouldn't enjoy some festive fiction as well, which is why this collection of novellas immediately snagged my attention. Its 12 stories written by some of the best in the YA/Teen

business are all edited by respected novelist Stephanie Perkins. I started out reading this with skepticism after watching a booktube review for it, but am not sorry to have the information since it informed me about which stories I would enjoy and those that for personal reasons I would be skipping. Since it's tough to review a collection of novellas, what I am going to do with this review is a little different. I'm going to share about some of the stories I liked best along with maybe brief reviews on one or two I just didn't get, beginning with the first novella.

**Midnights, by Rainbow Rowell:** This is one of the least developed stories that I read, meaning while it spans several years (three, I believe) each time set on New Year's Eve, it really didn't feel as if we got to know the characters well. That being said, this one was darling. I enjoyed Mags as a character particularly since she isn't your normal, outgoing, vibrant kind of heroine. She's someone more people will relate to than I think we realize and that's nice. It's a story about a group of friends who have banned together for years and the male best friend (Noel) Mags has watched kiss someone new each year and it's never her. Plus I enjoyed getting a taste of what Rainbow's writing is about and being one of the most hyped currently in culture writers, that was a treat. (4 out of 5)

**Polaris is Where You'll Find Me, by Jenny Han:** This one tells the story of Natalie, a normal girl rescued by Santa who was raised to be Santa's daughter. Only trouble is she has developed a crush on an elf and unable to see a future with anyone other than her own kind, she begins thinking about the outside world. Unique is the best word I can think to describe this story. It's darling in a different kind of way because of the idea of a heroine who is crushing on an elf one who's sort of been her best friend through their growing up. Natalie has a sweet personality and I like that she's imaginative. Though probably the shortest in the whole collection, it's a nice read. (4 out of 5)

**It's A Yuletide Miracle, Charlie Brown, by Stephanie Perkins:** Immediately following up Jenny's story is this one which tells Marigold and North's story. These two meet at a tree lot and through a series of events (nothing epic certainly), they take a kind of emotional journey together in the span of limited pages and oh my, gosh! I totally know why everyone hypes Stephanie Perkins as a great contemporary author. I absolutely loved this one and can definitely get behind the calls for Perkins to make this into a full length novel without having time to really let us know these characters (because of page space), we love these two and want to know more as the last pages come to an end. It's charming, really plus it doesn't hurt that the title brings to mind one of THE most beloved Christmas specials. (5 out of 5)

**What the Hell Have You Done, Sophie Roth? by Gayle Forman:** Unfortunately, for all the hype surrounding this

author, I just didn't care for this story. It has some nice moments and I liked the idea of the story, but the crudities and choppiness (the story didn't flow as nicely as most of the other contemporaries) just didn't work. Sophie is a Jewish girl (whose family isn't strict in their religion) who finds it tough being at a school where next to no one is Jewish. She (of course) meets a boy who changes things. (3 out of 5)

Welcome to Christmas, CA., by Kiersten White: This was one that didn't seem to get the best of reviews from readers, but I actually enjoyed it. It's got some sass, features fabulous banter between its leads and offers a lesson that our perception of life isn't always the truth "something Maria has to learn and unfortunately it's a lesson that could have made her life more pleasant had she learned it sooner. Really quickly, the story is about a high school senior named Maria who hates her small town until she meets the new cook (Ben) at the diner her mother runs and where Maria works after school. (4 out of 5)

Star of Bethlehem, by Ally Carter: Lydia and Hulda serendipitously meet at the airport and when Lydia sees that Hulda is trying to exchange her ticket for a different destination, they swap sending Lydia to a ranch where a cute guy, Ethan and this large family await her. Okay, so this story may be the most unrealistic, but aww it was cute. I could have done without some of the "inconvenient" last-minute bits of dialogue and the events "it has something to do with legal guardianship and an aunt named Mary, but other than that, this one is darling. (4 out of 5)

I'm struggling with an overall rating for this so I'm not going that route with this collection. It's hard to know where to rate it because in the interest of full disclosure, one story I read nothing of and two others I left unfished (one of which being "The Lady and the Fox" because I'm sorry, but I just didn't get it "am I missing something?) Then there is Holly Black's mythical story ("Krampuslauf") which I suppose raises some interesting social issues yet doesn't explain itself: is it contemporary fantasy or what? Also some of the stories may wander into gray issues as regards spirituality and that will probably be a sore spot for some readers "I took most everything as regards those elements with a grain of salt because honestly nothing that happened in the pages shook what I believe in. Some of the novellas won't satisfy everyone not just because of content, but because some of the stories don't have time to spell out every issue due to the length. In the end, I'm glad I read this. It gave me a chance to "meet" some of the most popular authors in the YA scene (which I loved since I'm anxious to read some of their full-length novels) and provided me with some nice holiday reading "the festive events, scenes or descriptions know no bounds! Despite some disappointments, it's a book I can see myself picking up during the Christmas season

and rereading my favorites in the collection. Content: there is some profanity (sh\*t, da\*n, "effing" etc.) and innuendo (one story suggests a girl has taken a guy to a room at a party " she emerges in her underwear) in the stories. There are also some homosexual themes " some mentions are just in passing, another is the primary topic in "Your Temporary Santa." " Parties do occur in certain novellas, most include alcohol and underage drinking.

This year has been the year of story collections for me. I have read quite a few of them this year and *My True Love Gave to Me* might top the list. It is at least tied with *The Curiosities*. This set of twelve stories was raved about last year and I think it deserved all that praise. There is something for everyone in this collection if you enjoy cute contemporary romance stories. Some stories are very holiday related while others just happen around the holidays. Personally I loved *Midnights*, *The Lady and the Fox* (fantastic!), *It's a Yuletide Miracle, Charlie Brown* (OMG this one!!), and *The Girl Who Woke the Dreamer*. Like all collections these stories really stood out to me while others weren't for me. Overall though all the stories gave me the warm fuzzies and made me really happy. This book came along at the right time for me. I needed some feel-good stories because of some stuff going on in my personal life. This book gave me a boost right around the holidays and I really enjoyed it. I highly recommend this book especially around the holidays!

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