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Hoping for the normal life she was denied as a child of the streets, school nurse and social worker Mallory Phillips has moved to quiet, charming Chandlerville, GA, for a fresh start and the Christmas she's always dreamed of but never had. When motherless seven-year-old Polly Lombard shows up at her house in the middle of the night hiding near the Christmas tree, Mallory knows she needs to help, whether Polly's recently widowed and still grieving EMT fireman father, Pete, likes it or not. As she works to help Polly, Mallory helps Pete with his grief as well. Still it isn't until Mallory finally comes to terms with her past that she finds love and acceptance and truly "comes home." VERDICT: Issues concerning mothers and daughters, family, and grief are at the heart of this intense, heart-wrenching, yet uplifting romance that would make a solid book club choice. DeStefano (Secret Legacy) lives in north Georgia.

Christmas on Mimosa Lane Details

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Author : Anna DeStefano

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From Reader Review Christmas on Mimosa Lane for online ebook

Crista says

This had the potential to be the perfect Christmas romance. I love Christmas romances that are filled with redemption, new beginnings, and hope. This book contains all of those three ideals, but unfortunately they didn't outweigh the "heaviness" and sadness of this book.

At first glance, this book appears to be about Pete, a widowed father, and Polly, his hurting and withdrawn little girl. It is obvious that these two need a Christmas miracle. We are then introduced to Mallory Phillips, a former social worker, and currently the elementary school nurse where Polly attends school. She is also Pete and Polly's neighbor. The opening chapters show a distraught Polly seeking Mallory out to find peace. If the story could've just surrounded Polly's hurt and brokenness and Mallory's role in helping her heal, I may have been able to handle it. Unfortunately, there is so much sadness and brokenness in this book that no one gets a break.

Quickly, through the use of flashbacks, we learn that Mallory has a ton of hurt and brokenness in her own life. Heavy topics of homelessness, lack of healthcare, abuse, mental illness, and neglect are explored. This book quickly deteriorates as the amount suffering that the characters experience becomes overwhelming. I love a little bit of angst, but this book would've been far better served to either focus on Mallory's past pain OR Polly and Pete Lombard's pain. This book tackles both and suffers because of it.

Eileen says

It was one of the saddest books I read for Christmas and I loved it. Heart wrenching yet beautifully written. I loved the different point of views written because then you could see the hurt and feelings that each of them were dealing with during this holiday season. Pete and Polly were dealing with their first Christmas without Emma, and Mallory was having her first Christmas in her reboot start on Mimosa Lane. My heart ached for Mallory's past and trying so hard to move forward. I'm glad what she was able to do with Polly. Ending was quite touching. Mallory is a work in progress but i'm sure that Pete and Polly will help her along the way. I was drawn in by the beautiful book cover but that has nothing to do with the story that unfolded. Looking forward to reading the next installment next summer with Sam's story.

Virginia Campbell says

The holidays are a time of heightened emotions--happiness and grief are intertwined for those of us who have lost loved ones. The memories can be overwhelming, often as dreaded as they are treasured. Everyone has to grieve in their own way, and they should be allowed to find their own level of emotional acceptance. Then there are those people who have great loving hearts, but did not have happy childhoods, and never experienced a real "family Christmas". Sentimental holiday music, lights and decorations everywhere, and there's no escaping the shopping blitz. Author Anna DeStefano's "Christmas on Mimosa Lane" is a poignant, emotion-charged, and ultimately very rewarding holiday romance, but it is also a reminder that life is for the living. Mallory Phillips is a seeker, searching for the idealized community and home life that she has never known. She thought she would find it on Mimosa Lane in the charming community of Chandlerville,

Georgia. Working as a school nurse, she still feels something is missing from her life. She still feels alone. The only visitor to her home is a little girl from her neighborhood who comes to look at Mallory's Christmas Tree through her window. Polly and her father, Pete Lombard are grieving the loss of Polly's mother, and this Christmas season is very difficult. One evening, Polly ventures inside Mallory's house, triggering a chain of events which will change the course of all their lives. Pete is angry, frustrated, and just as scared as his little girl. Everything he took for granted, including his peace of mind, was taken away when his wife died from cancer. He's not sure of much of anything, and he resents Mallory's very frank assessment of his parenting skills. However, they soon begin to work together to make life better for Polly, and a fragile contentment settles around the three of them. Seeds of hope are planted, and the growing relationship between Pete and Mallory starts to bloom. When Mallory's painful past catches up with her, can she hold on to her newly-formed dreams of future happiness? Will Pete and Polly become the family she has ached for all of her life? "Christmas on Mimosa Lane" is highly recommended--especially for people like me who carry the spirit of Christmas in their heart all year long.

Review Copy Gratis Amazon Vine

Wai says

Given the title Christmas on Mimosa Lane, the cover and the blurb this sounded just like a warm, festive tale. And it is.

Eventually. After it put my emotions through the wringer!

This is actually a story of overcoming heartache in form or another with the season as the catalyst that drives the characters. There is Peter Lombard and his daughter, Polly who are both still grieving at the loss of wife and mother, Emma to cancer. Thanksgiving was pretty much a disaster and Christmas doesn't look like it's going to be all that much better.

On the other hand, Mallory Phillips, their new next door neighbour appears to be all set for the holiday with biggest and brightest tree of them all. And yet this former child of the streets where she lived with her mother also has major misgivings about the season. Her upbringing has meant that as much as she wants to be included she is also very guarded and will panic.

This is certainly not a case of people meeting and a magic balm being placed on all concerned relieving them of their hurts. Even until the last page, it wasn't certain if there was going to be a HEA. It's a story of gentle healing and even with the heaviest of losses; with the right care administered people at their lowest point can recover.

Perhaps this is a short review but this is not my usual sort of fare. There's no 'big bad' here. There did look to be a character who may have been unlikeable but that was just a case of a caring community being too much too soon but once this was recognised, it was understood. As I've stated this is a gentle, warm tale about the loss of mothers, grief and healing.

Definitely not a light and twee story but thoroughly recommended. Another major plus point is the new ability to borrow books as a member of Amazon Prime.

Yvonne says

School Nurse/Social Worker Mallory Phillips moves to the quiet town of Chandlerville, Georgia where she, basically, wants to be alone. She puts up a beautiful Christmas tree, as she never had one of her own when she was growing up, but imagine her surprise when she discovers she's not alone. A 7 year old girl, Polly, has found her way into Mallory's home in the middle of the night. A young girl who is staying within her own cocoon and not talking to anyone, except her new friend Mallory.

Polly's story touches Mallory's heart like nothing she ever expected. Polly's mother has passed away and her father, Pete, is trying as hard as he can to make things right. However, as far as Polly is concerned, nothing will ever be the same again without her mother. Since Mallory never knew her mother, Polly feels safe with her. She doesn't have to pretend to be okay. At the same time, Mallory is fighting her own demons after her mother walked away from her when she was just a child.

Pete is at a loss how to deal with his daughter and finds himself drawn to Mallory, but she's keeping her own heartbreak hidden. He's determined to bring a bit of happiness to both Polly and Mallory and maybe even find some of his own.

This is a touching, heartwarming story which is perfect for this time of the year. It will grab onto your heart and not want to let go. It's the first in a series and the next one looks to be just as much of an emotional ride as this one. These are sweet, loving characters who readers will want to have their "happily-ever-after".

Judy Kieffer says

Excellent Book real eye opener

I liked the book a whole lot, I have never read any of her books before. It is full of a lot of truth on how we tend to deny the things that are important to us and makes you see how people live in different types of society

S says

This book walked all over my heart. I normally read Christmas books for that feel-good, happy emotional read. This one was so sad ... Polly broke my heart. I know that the author plans a sequel, but if the ending had been different, I probably would have rated it differently. It was my first read by Anna DeStefano and I probably won't be reading any more. Just wasn't my thing.

Samantha says

I read this book through Kindle Unlimited.

I love reading seasonal books, especially those at Christmas time. This book was great book, for that because of the amazing Christmas tree used throughout the story.

This was a unique story for me as I haven't read one on a trauma child in a very long time. I completely loved the idea that even though one doesn't mean to become important to another person they can just worm themselves into a heart.

A school nurse doesn't mean to get involved in the affairs of one of her students. However, her heart goes out to the small one. She desires to help her but meets a brick wall from the father. This book turns into a healing book for all three main characters involved.

Nice, sweet book; one I will be reading during another holiday season.

Chelsey Wolford says

This is the third or maybe fourth book I have read this holiday season that surrounds Christmas and I am certainly not complaining. I am sure that I will be reading many more! I was very drawn in by the cover of this book simply because who wouldn't want to wake up to this on Christmas morning? It looks almost like the sun is breaking through the clouds on the cover as well. This book also surrounds the feeling of Christmas and truly captures that loving and giving spirit that most people experience throughout the holiday season.

This story follows a few different families that are living on Mimosa Lane, what a quaint street name! Each of them is feeling lonely or missing someone or some feeling this Christmas season. They are all trying to enjoy a Merry Christmas, but certain circumstances in their lives have left them empty in some way, shape, or form. I loved the way that Anna DeStefano connects each of the families on the lane and allows their stories to intertwine as well. I felt like I had moved onto Mimosa Lane myself and was part of this tight knit neighborhood.

My favorite story on the lane was the story of Pete, Mallory, and Polly. Pete and Polly have just lost their wife and mother recently and Polly, still in Elementary School, is having an extremely hard time coping. Just the thought of a small girl without her mother made me tear up while reading because I could never imagine life without my own mother, and I am a grown woman. Polly was such a loving and sweet little girl who was drawn to Mallory, their new next door neighbor, and her beautifully lit Christmas tree. Polly would often sneak out of their house and Mallory would find her lurking around her backyard or right in her living room! I thought it was the sweetest relationship and story that was developed between Polly and Mallory and it really put me in the mood to do something nice for someone in need.

All of the mini stories that make up life on Mimosa Lane are equally heart wrenching and a beautiful Christmas light shines through them all. Anyone who could use a touching pick me up should pick up this book! Sometimes we all need to have a good cry, especially when it is a fabulous book!

Thank you to Anna DeStefano and her publicist, Susan, at Montlake Romance for providing me with an e-copy of this book in exchange for my honest review

April says

Sometimes there is nothing like a good, emptying cry during the holidays, especially when you are full of emotions that just kind of need to be drained away. Too much? Anyways, y'all, *Christmas On Mimosa Lane* by Anna DeStefano definitely fits the bill for a heartfelt, emotional Christmas read. If you love small town southern settings, closely knit neighborhoods and your characters tragic, then you will definitely enjoy *Christmas On Mimosa Lane*.

Read the rest of my review [here](#)

Susan C Stafford says

Absorbing

I was interested in getting to know the main characters in this book. They were vividly portrayed and the interactions between the characters was really interesting. But some of this book chest didn't seem plausible to me. The book centers around foit characters. Who are dealing with the devastating loss to their family. which happened about six months earlier. Another was the teacher in New York City, near the World Trade Center. She was with her students on 9/11 when the Trade Center towers came down. The trauma left deep scars witch have not yet been resolved. The fourth is the main character. From age 6 to age 12, she traveled with her mentally ill mother as they went from town to town to prevent being found. This happened many years ago but left deep wounds that have never really healed. What I found challenging was that the same answer to healing those different wounds from those different times was the same, and that this answer almost immediately restored balance to all their lives. Maybe that has really happened but it seemed very unlikely to me. Still this was a good story, well written, well structured, with well drawn characters.

Kathy Altman says

Did you get those "oh, this is going to be good and where is that box of tissues?" kind of chills when you read the back cover copy? I did, so I grabbed my pink- and gray-striped afghan and settled in for a touching read. The book was even more stirring than I imagined. The perfect houses on Mimosa Lane harbor more than their share of heartrending imperfections — the once tightly knit neighborhood is slowly unraveling. The characters and their struggles are all so real and relatable that I'm still worried about them.

With Mallory and Polly, DeStefano presents a wrenching and effective juxtaposition—the child laboring to cope with her mother's death seeks salvation from the woman who can't come to terms with her own loss. But Mallory ends up helping Polly more than she can ever anticipate, and in doing so helps herself. She gives the little girl a "safe place" to store her mother's memories until the child is ready to reflect on them—which is a lovely parallel for the safety Mallory doesn't yet realize she's found on Mimosa Lane.

But there's so much more than angst within these pages! The sexual tension between Mallory and Pete burns hot enough to melt the snow off of every roof in the neighborhood, and the humor tucked here and there is entertaining and timely. In the snippet below Mallory calls Pete after finding his daughter in her living room in the middle of the night — she can't help wondering why he doesn't know the little girl is missing:

"Excuse me?" Pete mumbled. "It's nearly one in the morning. Who is this?"

There was rustling on his end of the call, and Mallory imagined him sitting up, all sleepy and sprawling and mussed. Brown, unruly hair the same shade of ink as his daughter's. Brown, emotional eyes. Dark stubble that he let grow along his chin and jaw each weekend. Did he sleep in the nude?

"This is your conscience speaking," she said, irritated with her wayward thoughts.

Christmas on Mimosa Lane celebrates the resilience of not only the holiday spirit, but the human spirit as well. You won't regret being part of that celebration.

Cherise says

2.5 Stars

I am not sure how I feel about this book. The storytelling and the writing were done wonderfully; I was fully invested in the story and its characters. But on the other hand, it was so flipping depressing! I feel the need to warn readers not to buy a house on Mimosa Lane, everyone living there is miserable!

We have the main character, Mallory, and her misery has deep roots in a childhood spent on the streets. The other main characters are Polly and her dad, Pete. Their misery is based on the recent and tragic loss of their mother/wife. Then you have two neighbors, one who is nosy and not content in her life, feeling a little lonely and neglected, and another neighbor suffering from PTSD and miserable about the events of 9/11. You see the pattern here? I just wanted to throw anti-depressants in everyone's drinking water.

I like stories about people overcoming past traumas and finding their happily ever after, I am just not sure that I buy all that the author was selling here. From the synopsis I assumed Mallory and Pete were going to be a couple by the close of the book. Yay! What I didn't know was how recent his wife had passed away. This was the love of his life; he and his daughter are barely functioning through every day because their grief is so raw and strong. But along comes Mallory and he's ready to fall in love? Huh? Had the author made the passing of the wife not so recent, I would have been happier with the turn out. But as it is, I didn't really get it – I don't think Pete, or his daughter would be so open to that relationship so soon.

Mallory is a social worker and she gives great advice to everyone, she's a veritable travelling therapist. But when it comes to her own life, she is the opposite. If anyone is in need of therapy it is her. Basically I felt like the people who should be hung up on the past (Polly and Pete) weren't, and those who should be moving on (Mallory and PTSD neighbor) weren't.

I don't enjoy feeling bad or sad, and I don't enjoy books that made me feel that way. While the story is well told, it's still too depressing for this reader to love it.

Cherise Everhard, February 2013

Book provided by and reviewed for the Amazon Vine Program

Brian Davis says

Loved it

A powerful story of loss and love, and how the past can make you stronger and cage you at the same time. I loved this book.

Mariel Grey says

(Sigh) I have been having feed issues between my blog and Goodreads for months, so I am manually posting blog posts for now.

This is the first book I've read by this author, and overall I felt like it was a good story. A word of caution, however. If you are looking for a light, fluffy story for the holiday season, this may not be for you. I will only briefly outline the plot as many other reviewers have done so in depth.

The story is told from multiple points of view: the heroine, Mallory, Peter Lombard, Polly Lombard, and a neighbor. This is a somewhat unusual structure for a romance of this length, but works due to the plot line.

Peter Lombard has been recently bereaved of his beloved wife and is struggling with his own emotional issues, as well as those of his six year old daughter, Polly. When Mallory, a new standoffish neighbor, moves next door, she puts up a festive Christmas tree. The tree draws Peter's emotionally distraught child to her house, and serves as the catalyst for Mallory to become involved in Peter and Polly's lives.

Mallory is dealing with her own emotional issues as a result of having been homeless as a child and living with a mother battling mental disease and alcoholism. Peter doesn't want anyone interfering with his attempts to reconnect with this daughter, and Mallory doesn't want to become emotionally attached to anyone, yet that is exactly what transpires.

The tale deals with issues of grief and guilt, combined with love lost and love found again. The emotional baggage which is intertwined with these emotions is also explored. I enjoyed the story, but did find it strained credibility to some degree that Peter became involved with Mallory so soon after his wife's passing. I thought that perhaps there should have been a lengthier grieving process, though there is foundation laid in the story to explain that.

To me, the story's ending is bittersweet, though, based on other reviews, most readers seem to feel it is happy. If you want to read a tale which takes some weighty topics and manages to make you feel good, then this is a book you might want to try.
