



To Santa With Love

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The holidays are coming and free-spirited Jacquie Grey plans to head west and start a new life. Her solo road trip is going great - until she collides with rancher Choya Barnett in Arizona.

To Santa With Love Details

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Ramblings From A Chaotic Mind says

Jacquie is running. Running from her family, running from monotony and running from herself. She strikes out to LA, the first city that came to mind, and on the way literally runs into Choya. In the form of a car wreck. Now she is stuck in the tiny town of Tombstone, Arizona with no money, no job and now, no car.

Choya really does not want to like the 21 year old Jacquie. She is sheltered, spoiled and asking for trouble with that face and body. having already lost a young wife, Choya isn't looking to make the same mistakes twice. He needs to think of the welfare of his little boy and the fact that he needs a stable, responsible mother.

When Choya offers Jacquie the chance to work in his house, she cautiously accepts knowing no one else is going to give her a job. She needs to move on, get out of Tombstone and on with her life. Fate is a fickle thing though, it is what it is, and this Christmas what it is....is love in the desert.

While I appreciated the concept of this book...young girl gets stranded in small desert town and falls for bristly widower with small child....I did not connect with either characters and found both to be extremely flawed.

Jacquie is a 21 year old girl who has been living under her fathers thumb her entire life. Her family is wealthy and so she hasn't ever wanted for anything. Hasn't ever had a job or worked a day in her life. Her father may have thought that her focusing on education was the smartest way to push her, but only resulted in a selfish, immature woman who had no idea what it was like to live on her own. She decides to quit college and go to LA on a whim. Because that is where 21 yr old women think all dreams come true....when in reality they end up being hookers and drug addicts when they can't find jobs or places to live that aren't a fortune in rent. She takes with her, the debit card (which her daddy deposits money into every month heh) and some cash which I'm sure was given to her for extra spending money...and the car (although she points out several times, economy model) that her father bought her. She promptly wrecks this car by not paying attention in Tombstone, Az when she turns without looking and hits Choyas Jeep.

I wanted to like Choya, and in small glimpses sometimes I did. However, his personality was that of a rock. He was hard, and a lot of times mean and demanding. Not to mention manipulative when he paid for all the repairs to Jacquies car and then tells her she has to work for him to "earn" it back. Working basically entailed her hanging around his house. He never said what he was feeling and most times wore a blank expression devoid of any emotion. Only every so often did a decent man come through. Sometimes angry is a turn on...I just felt sad and bewildered by him in this book. If any man spoke to me the way he spoke to Jacquie, I'd be long gone.

The actual story line lagged a lot. I found myself hoping something, anything would happen. There is only so many spiteful comebacks a girl can take before it gets old....fast. I wanted some heat that was anger infused. Jacquie spends the entire book hating Choya but in love with him at the same time. She slaps him and then makes out with him. Teases him and then is surprised when he retaliates. Her immaturity was way too much for me to handle.

When I started this book I was hoping for a sweet and gentle contemporary romance that would jump start my Christmas spirit. I didn't get anything from it that I wanted and so unfortunately I cannot recommend this book.

I give To Santa With Love by Janet Dailey 2 stars

Lisa N says

Hadn't read Janet Dailey in a while, so gave this a try. I guess I've outgrown her. This was so predictable and drawn out. I had to force myself to finish it.

Jen says

Rating: 3.5/5

Oh Choya, how your very name sends me into a fit of immature giggles!

Maureen Hubley says

Great story

Cyndi says

I've always enjoyed Janet Dailey and this was an earlier book of hers. She didn't disappoint. The characters and story line were good. Quick read.

Shelly says

I didn't realize this was first published in '77 until I logged on to review. That explains a lot! Okay, I was mildly entertained. If my daughter were put in this situation, that rancher better be running. Creepy man grabs traveler off the road by holding her car hostage. The couple didn't really seem to have a chance to like or love each other. They seemed destined for divorce court. That chickie had a lot of growing up to do!

Ivy H says

Jacquie, the heroine, is kinda dumb. She's sweet and kind but really really dumb. She's this rich sheltered 21 year old who decides to drop out of college and drive from her home in Texas to California all by herself. Didn't this girl ever see the first Friday the 13th movie? She obviously isn't scared of being hijacked, robbed

or raped. But I digress... The crux of the story deals with Jacquie's unfortunate car accident in Tombstone Arizona. The H is the other guy in the car accident and he is NOT impressed by Jacquie's smoldering youthful sex appeal and good looks. Poor Jacquie doesn't know how to cope with a male who isn't smitten and adoring of her all her blonde perfection so she is miffed and sulky. However, she is entranced by the cute little kid who was with the H. The H's name is Choya (it's supposed to be taken from the name of the cholla cactus; the H had been abandoned as a baby and his adopted dad found him near to the cactus so he named him after it). Choya is a widower and the cute little kid is his son, Robbie.

Choya has the major HOTS for Jacquie but he is prejudiced against girls who look like walking fashion ads because he thinks they're fickle and silly. Jacquie has no money to get her car fixed and ends up having to take a job as a housekeeper for Choya. This part made me laugh so hard because Jacquie can't cook or clean to save her life but she tries because Choya paid for the repairs on her car and so she owes him. Robbie becomes enchanted with Jacquie because she's so beautiful and she treats him very well, so he wants her to be his new mother. He develops a cute little boy crush on her and he is so adorable. Choya blames Jacquie for this and he doesn't want Robbie to get attached to the heroine because the child will be heartbroken when she eventually has to leave. As time passes both Robbie and Choya develop feelings for Jacquie. Robbie soon starts telling his little friends that Jacquie is going to be his mom. Choya is mad at that and he thinks Jacquie is scheming to use his son in an effort to gain herself a rich husband.

Choya's manly lust soon overcomes him and he starts pressing for Jacquie to sleep with him and be his mistress. Jacquie might be kinda dumb and silly but she still has old fashioned moral values so she tries to fight her own sexual desire for the hunky Choya. The H's first marriage had not been one filled with grand passion but more of a comfortable type of love since he had known his late wife all his life. He had also been comfortable with his late wife because she had been a pretty tomboyish type who loved working with horses and was very happy with ranch life. He is afraid that someone as glamorous as Jacquie will neither fit into his world nor be happy being a rancher's wife. It was an understandable assumption on his part because Jacquie did come across as a bit too glamorous but she really had loving feelings for Choya and would have been ecstatic had he proposed to her and told her he loved her.

Eventually their conflict develops into an impasse of sorts and Jacquie leaves to return to Texas. I guess Jacquie's California dreams died after the huge dose of heartbreak she suffered after leaving Choya and Robbie. My heart really broke for poor Robbie because he really loved her and she really loved him as if he were her own son (even though she's kinda too young to his mom). But the bond between Robbie and Jacquie made me appreciate that the heroine was a lot more than just a silly, glamorous young woman. She really cried when she had to leave Robbie. The MC's are separated for a couple months until Choya gets his head out of his ass and finally decides that love is more important than male pride. He goes to Texas, does the gentlemanly thing by asking her dad for her hand in marriage and he tells her how much he loves her. Jacquie finally gets her heart's desire and is thrilled to be marrying Choya, moving to Tombstone to live, being a stepmom to little Robbie and having kids of her own. I have to say after re-reading some of Janet Dailey's novels, that her grumpy sexy H's are kinda growing on me a bit...

Annarose says

Jacqueline felt her studying was useless since she didn't actually know what kind of job she wanted to settle in in the future. Therefore, against her parents' will, she embarks in a lonely journey to Los Angeles to find herself! On her way, she hits Choya's car and had to wait in a motel till her car is fixed. In the main time, she gets to know Robbie, Choya's 9 years old son, and that got her in trouble with his father! He might like her

looks, but he definitely dislikes her morals! This was his reason to punish her when she crossed him!

As an old Harlequin novel it will do, but it lacks a lot. The hero, for example, doesn't know much about the heroine at all except her age, looks and damaged car! He didn't show any interest in knowing anything about Jacqueline at all so how could he fall in love with her in three weeks no less!

Julie Barrett says

To Santa with love by janet dailey

Jacquie has had it with her dad. She finishes college for the term and leaves.

She takes her foreign car and travels from Texas to LA. She stops in AZ to visit with a friend that just got married. When she leaves there she runs into a man who has a little boy with him. The garage will fix her car but it's going to take several days to even get the parts in. After spending almost all her money from staying at the nearby motel she's been enjoying her leisure time by discovering the little town and all it's treasures: museums, gardens, etc. The man she ran into comes to her help when he offers her a job at his ranch with his dad and son so she can pay off the car and be on her way. They figure it will take several weeks worth of work.

She wants to be independent and do everything on her own to show her parents that she can do it.

She goes for a ride on the horse and the horses leg is injured now, so she dismounts and looks around to find out she has no idea where she is.

Things do get better but she realizes the real things in life are meant to fight for.

Crystal Karre says

good read

Julie Barrett says

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Shh I'm reading! says

This story definitely doesn't update well thanks to the characters and some snafus. Here's the list of ways this story is dated.

The characters: Jacquie, the headstrong "plucky" spoiled girl (aka heroine with no sense) out to find herself and Choya, a rugged, widower with a child. He lives by the philosophy, "I wont have a real conversation with you; because its much better to demean you when you so obviously aren't on my level." Part of this is due to the 10+ year age gap between them. Neither character was likeable and didn't have anything in common besides their love for Robbie, Choya's son.

2. They fall in love and realize it before they ever start demonstrating that they like each other.
3. Jacquie used a rotary phone early in the novel. Really? A rotary phone? Maybe 5 people in the whole country still have one. Any story using those is automatically dated and someone from editing should have caught that.
4. Jacquie sits and tries to write her parents a letter to give them an update. Yeah, people write letters. But in this day and age with the news she wanted to give, it would've made far more sense to e-mail instead of writing a blasted letter.

This was my first foray into this author and I'm not impressed. I wish it was actually a recent novel, so I could have a more accurate representation of her current work, but certainly isn't eager to try after this.

Kesha says

This book was extremely boring. It wasnt really romantic, at least in my opinion, because Choya and Jacquie didnt have any chemistry. I liked Sam and Robbie.

Christine says

Painfully slow and outdated

Debbie says

Sheltered semi spoiled 21 year old Jaquie Grey decides college isn't for her and against her parents wishes is going to LA to find a job and grow up, however, little Tombstone Arizona got in her way and so did rancher Choya Barnett, literally as she runs her car into his jeep. Now she finds herself with a lost wallet and no way to pay for repairs.

Choya Barnett has no room in his life for a spoiled girl from Dallas especially when she's captured his small son's heart and will no doubt break it into millions of pieces. But he's caught between a rock and a cactus and has to help her when she's without money and her wallets gone missing. He gives her a job as his housekeeper and just hopes that he'll get away with his heart intact too.

These two very different people find themselves wanting the same things in life, but are they the right people for each other.

This novel was originally published in 1977 under the name of The Master Fiddler and has been expanded and updated. This talented author has given us many years of great stories and wonderful characters. The story line here is of souls reaching out to each other from different directions and finding each other despite that. The dialogue is as easy going as the lifestyle in this small Arizona town. The characters I expected better of from Ms. Dailey, it might be that the tale doesn't update well I'm not really sure and although I learned to like these two it took a great deal of the book to do it. And even though I did come to care for Choya and Jaquie it was Choya's son Robbie and his dad Sam who were the stars in this read. They stole the show with their shining personalities. Although I enjoyed this romance the more I read it I truly expected more from Ms. Dailey especially being acquainted with her work.

The main thing to remember is that you will like the story the Christmas background and the characters, you'll love the scenery and the vastness of the Arizona desert and you'll get to go back to the very start of Ms. Dailey's career and see where she came from. It's a journey worth taking and I'm glad I did.
