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When Santa Claus is a cop, you *better* watch out.

It's not looking like a very merry Christmas for San Diego cop Nick Pappas. Suspended from his job, alienated from his family, and persecuted by the press, he's sorely tempted to turn his gun on himself. Except for his first name, he couldn't possibly have less in common with jolly old St. Nicholas. But when a local mall decides it needs a secret Santa to help collar some vicious muggers preying on its holiday shoppers, Nick's persuaded to red-suit up so as to take the naughty punks down and avert a ho-ho homicide. For a chance to bust bad guys, Nick's willing to deal with crying kids, pushy parents, and a chronically cheerful "elf" sidekick. But the biggest challenge for this cop-turned-Claus is one that would confound even the real Kris Kringle: making a pair of next-to-impossible Christmas wishes come true for two children in need...before it's too late.

This book was initially released in episodes as a Kindle Serial. All episodes are now available for immediate download as a complete book.

St. Nick Details

Date : Published November 5th 2013 by Thomas & Mercer

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Author : Alan Russell

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From Reader Review St. Nick for online ebook

Ken Kuhlken says

A disclaimer: Alan is my good friend.

Still, I mean to write honest thoughts about St. Nick.

Having spent most of 2013 downgrading my view of the goodness in human nature, I opened St. Nick ion a skeptical frame of mind. And when characters performed acts of kindness, I hesitated before accepting them as authentic, even in a fictional sense.

But as the story moved along, and more and more characters, major and walk-on, responded to others and events in loving ways, the armor shielding my heart opened a bit and I became smoothing of a believer.

Thanks, Alan

Rebask says

This was a fabulous book. So very different from the other book of author, Alan Russell, that I read, titled "Shame" <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008....>

Mr. Russel HOOKED me in when I read Shame, made a believer out of me of his talents, which are extraordinary, I now see. This book is a mystery, like "Shame" was, but that is as far as the likeness goes.

This is a FEEL GOOD book, to me at least, a book of redemption of a lost soul. A "FEEL GOOD" book, a book that left me wanting to read MORE of his works!

WAIT, That sounds EXACTLY like what 'Shame' did, too! But, no, in THIS book, we have a man who had lost his way, a police officer whose actions have made HIM question his very existence. Nearly suicidal, he finds his way, and in doing do quite nearly DOES become a Saint. The book details what happened in the life of this Lawman, and how he came to BELIEVE, not only in himself again, but in the goodness of others, all the while he is nearly DRUG, kicking and screaming (or belly-aching & moaning) into becoming a Great Man.

(Slowly getting all those BACK reviews done, too. WHEW!)

Banner says

This was the perfect Christmas book for me. Just the right amount of skepticism mixed in to make it fun. The mystery was more like a subplot to the greater story of Nick's survival of a tragic episode that happened in the line of duty (he's a cop).

There were defiantly some tear jerking moments, but overall a inspiring Christmas story.

Dosha (Bluestocking7) Beard says

What an excellent read. I listened to the audio and was invested in Nick, the shoppers at the mall and two kids in particular: Laura and Raymond. This book is able to break your heart and then melt it. It can make you weep with joy and sadness. I was just as interested in what would happen to nick the cop as I was in what would happen to nick clause. I would hate to give anything away, much of my enjoyment came from the many surprises this book has. There is much more to this book than just a suspended cop contemplating suicide that ends up as a Santa in a mall where the muggers are having a wonderful time. He's undercover. There are many levels to this one so put your seat belt on and go for a great ride.

John says

The premise is great: A suicidal cop on suspension accepts a security job at a local shopping mall, only to learn that he's expected to work undercover as the mall's Santa. What we have here is the potential for another BAD SANTA, or a fun Schwarzenegger-esque comedy like JINGLE ALL THE WAY or KINDERGARTEN COP.

Instead, Russell decides to go the TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL route. Nothing really wrong with that; it's just not my bag. ST. NICK tries so hard to be uplifting that it quickly got on my nerves. And, once you realize the book was written with a Hallmark movie-of-the-week mentality, the story becomes as predictable as a straight line. Bah Humbug to that!

Amy says

Not bad for a Christmas book. A little hokey but cute and entertaining.

Kim says

I absolutely loved this one- had everything. A cop story, romance and sentimental Christmas stories. Nick is suspended from the police force pending an investigation and estranged from his family- he is finding life hard. His old partner persuades him to take on a couple of days undercover looking for muggers targetting a local shopping mall. The only problem is - he's undercover as Santa Claus!

The Chief Elf is determined to spread Christmas cheer and gets him involved in some other Santa duties which get him in contact with a reporter.

He also meets a little boy in hospital who dreams of seeing snow one last time- can Santa make his dream come true?

The storyline was totally unexpected - but loved every page. I will look out for more by this author.

Many thanks to Net Galley for a copy of this book.

Allison ?hikes the bookwoods? says

Heartwarming? Yes. Predictable? Maybe. But a letdown? No. I really liked this book since it was a classic Christmas story, but not your run-of-the-mill holiday romance.

Douglas says

St. Nick by Alan Russell is a true modern-day Christmas story. It's a book that everyone who celebrates Christmas, or wants to understand what Christmas is about, should read. And it should be read closer to Christmas, as it is in its own way, a preparation journey to Christmas.

I read it expecting it to be a crime thriller set against the backdrop of winter. But I was pleasantly surprised.

It's a story about believing in the good things in life, about having hope, about giving hope, about bringing joy to people, about falling in love, about everything that's positive in humanity.

I like the way, Mr Russell has taken the myth of Santa Claus and made it into an icon. In a way that makes the reader remember what Santa Claus is really all about. All the goodness that he represents. I like how he has taken that element and weaved it into the character of Nick Pappas.

As the story progresses, we see how Nick's life is transformed, how he begins focusing on the positives, how he begins to believe in himself. And how he learns that life is equally about making certain others are happy and cared-for, as it is about ensuring that we are happy. He finds his redemption in ways he never thought possible.

I like the prose, the pace, the elements of Christmas, the humour, and the message of the book.

Andy says

Sappy Hallmark Scroogey story, but it holds together.

Donald Hoffman says

I sit here on December 21st, 2014, the Sunday before Christmas. In the past few weeks, I have read and reviewed several Christmas themed books. All of them were somewhat magical, as befitting the genre. All of them dealt with different parts of holiday legends; Claus, Elves, Jack Frost, Magical Snowmen, the DEA, and the realization of hopes and dreams. I figured I had reached my quota of Christmas stories for the year and I could now safely return to military fiction, thrillers, mysteries, and a smattering of sci-fi.

It was Sunday morning, with nothing planned for the day, so I opened my gmail to check on the day's offerings from the many book locating services I subscribe to. In this case, it was BookBub and the genre was Mysteries. Scrolling down the list, I stopped at a cover showing a Red & White bullseye, with a picture of Santa as the center, and the title, "St. Nick", in calligraphic font over the bullseye. Up in the corner, over the Star of Bethlehem, were the words "A Christmas Cop Novel" and I saw the author was Alan Russell. Now, I was familiar with Mr. Russell's work, and have several of his older (from the 1990s) hardcover books on my shelves, but never thought of him writing a Christmas story. I clicked on the cover, to take me to the Kindle store, so I could read the synopsis and glance at the reviews. What the heck, one more Christmas story could not be too much; after all I was not currently editing or even Beta reading for anyone and tomorrow started two weeks of no school for Christmas Break. I am comfortable reading several things at once, so I would start this story, read till it started to drag, then put it aside in favor of something exciting.

Clicked the appropriate button to put this on my Kindle Unlimited account (imagine, a home library with almost 3/4 of a million books on your shelf) and opened it up. I was floored by the dedication: "To the children that Santa couldn't get to". The Table of Contents was a list of my favorite Christmas carols, each chapter a different, significant carol suggesting the theme for that chapter. I remembered that Russell was a good writer, but this story grabbed me by the front of my shirt, shook me around like a Lab with a play toy, and threw me bodily into my recliner where I stayed for the rest of the day until I had finished the book. I am so glad I did not see this story when it came out as a Kindle serial, it would have driven me crazy waiting for each episode. I laughed out loud, I worried about the characters (really great writers can make you do that), and I cried as Nick came to terms with his new job, his past, his sense of duty, but most of all with himself and his future.

This story has everything you need; good guys becoming more than they ever imagined, elves coming to terms with a tragic loss, a "lost" little girl finding that there is hope and joy in the world, very sick children finding happiness even in the cancer ward, people learning to get over their natural mistrust of one another, and to top it off, five pro football offensive linemen, dressed as Santas, delivering presents to "forgotten" children. Oh yes, a promise of "snow" in San Diego, made to a very sick young man. If you have also read your quota of Christmas stories this year, expand it for one more. You will not be sorry, but most of all you will remember what it was like to look up into the night sky, wondering if reindeer really knew how to fly.

Vfields Don't touch my happy! says

I've been in a crazy holiday-themed reading stream. For a lark, I picked up an audible book - St Nick by Allen Russell. What a whim. Even though it is totally outside my normal reading choices I enjoyed it immensely. Raymond made me cry happy & sad tears and Mitchell the Basset Hound made me laugh out loud in public. Nick is the kind of character I like too much but I avoid like the plague because they make me feel too much. Allen Russell wrote a sweet adult story that touched on some incredibly heavy subjects but somehow he was able to make it light and loving and funny and full of compassion.

One year later: I read this again because I'd thought about it off & on throughout the year and I wanted to know, was this really as good as I thought it was? I decided to skip the parts I knew would get me all misty. Guess what...I cried anyway. It really what's that good.

?Susan? says

3.5 stars. A good cozy of a tough cop who through circumstances beyond his control gets talked into playing Santa in a mall for Christmas. It was pretty good but I had a hard time sticking to the story, could be the season?

Jan says

This was my second reading of this book and I loved it just as much the second time around. I think it is a wonderful, feel good book without being too maudlin or sappy. In fact it has just enough skepticism to make it feel real and believable. I really enjoyed seeing Nick transform from being a man at the end of his rope to someone who could make such a difference in so many people's lives. Definitely a 5 star read that I recommend. It will keep you laughing and crying at the same time.

Karen Patterson says

The story starts out very briefly as a “bad” Santa type theme which had me thinking it was going to be gritty but have a feel good message too. Well, I was mistaken as it quickly turned into a Hallmark movie - very saccharin sweet, predictable and clichéd. However, if you love those types of books and movies than you will appreciate it a whole lot more than I did.
