



## Hot and Steamy: Tales of Steampunk Romance

*Jean Rabe (Editor) , Martin H. Greenberg (Editor) , Matt Forbeck , Elizabeth A. Vaughan , C.J. Henderson , Dean Leggett , Robert E. Vardeman , C.A. Verstraete , more... Marc Tassin , Mary Louise Eklund , Donald J. Bingle , Michael A. Stackpole , Vicki Johnson-Steiger , Maurice Broaddus , Jody Lynn Nye , Stephen D. Sullivan , Tobias S. Buckell , Mickey Zucker Reichert ...less*

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From the co-editor of *Steampunk'd* comes an all-new collection of adventure and romance amid Victorian steampunk settings. Sparks fly in these original stories of a steam-driven airship searching for a lost city, a crazy inventor in a powered wheelchair with a plot to take over the world, and a love story set in an alternate history version of America. Adventure abounds in these stories of love, loss, and danger- and there is plenty of steam!

## Hot and Steamy: Tales of Steampunk Romance Details

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*Jean Rabe (Editor) , Martin H. Greenberg (Editor) , Matt Forbeck , Elizabeth A. Vaughan , C.J.*

*Henderson , Dean Leggett , Robert E. Vardeman , C.A. Verstraete , more... Marc Tassin , Mary*

*Author : Louise Eklund , Donald J. Bingle , Michael A. Stackpole , Vicki Johnson-Steger , Maurice*

*Broaddus , Jody Lynn Nye , Stephen D. Sullivan , Tobias S. Buckell , Mickey Zucker Reichert*

*...less*

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# **From Reader Review Hot and Steamy: Tales of Steampunk Romance for online ebook**

## **Dharia Scarab says**

This book is misnamed in my opinion. Hot & Steamy makes it sound like a bodice ripper, but the stories were definitely PG. Plus some of these stories weren't romances at all. In others the romance felt dropped in at the end just to get in this collection.

That being said most of the stories themselves were good. A few felt too short, like a chapter cut from a longer book.

Since I don't normally write reviews unless I have something specific to say, here's the break down of how I rate my books...

1 star... This book was bad, so bad I may have given up and skipped to the end. I will avoid this author like the plague in the future.

2 stars... This book was not very good, and I won't be reading any more from the author.

3 stars... This book was ok, but I won't go out of my way to read more. But if I find another book by the author for under a dollar I'd pick it up.

4 stars... I really enjoyed this book and will definitely be on the look out to pick up more from the series/author.

5 stars... I loved this book! It has earned a permanent home in my collection and I'll be picking up the rest of the series and other books from the author ASAP.

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## **Eclectic Reader says**

Combine short stories with steampunk and you have two of my favorite pastimes. Add a dash of romance and even this cynical 40-something is along for the ride.

Editors Jean Rabe and Martin H. Greenberg have assembled a satisfying tome worthy of any enthusiast of steampunk or romance. As with any anthology, there are winners and some not-so-winners, but none that I would call losers. That alone says a lot for this book.

Because Hot & Steamy touts itself as both 'steampunk' and 'romancy' I've given each story a letter grade for its success in either category.

A=Excellent

B=Good

C=Fair

D=Poor

F=Fails

"Chance Corrigan and the Queen of Hearts" by Michael A. Stackpole is an adventure-filled story that was fun to read. It was a great opener for this collection.

Romance: C

Steampunk: A

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"Absinthe-Minded Archaeologist" by Vicki Johnson-Steger is hurt by the author's overuse of telling versus showing. Additionally, the entire premise of the story was too obvious.

Romance: D

Steampunk: C

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"The Problem of Trystan" by Maurice Broaddus was a confusing story with a high percentage of misplaced pronouns. I lost track of the number of times I had to stop to re-read a section so I could decipher which character was speaking.

Romance: D

Steampunk: F

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"Clockworks" by Jody Lynn Nye is a well-paced love story populated with living characters about whom the reader truly cares. Also, it's not your average steampunk story where dirigibles and automations are thrown in as an afterthought. In this one, the steampunk (an artificial heart) is integral to the plot and fascinating. This was my favorite story of the entire book, and I look forward to sampling other works by this author.

Romance: A++

Steampunk: A+

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"In the Belly of the Behemoth" by Matt Forbeck is another story that suffers from too much telling and not enough showing. The abuse of clichés also lessened my enjoyment; but it was the racial stereotypes - even for the time period - that left me with a sour aftertaste.

Romance: F

Steampunk: D

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"Automata Futura" by Stephen D. Sullivan is a slow tale with no discernable story problem, too much filler dialogue and the pacing of a nap. Additionally, the 'surprise' ending was visible from the start.

Romance: F

Steampunk: D

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"Love Comes to Abyssal City" by Tobias S. Buckell is the anthology's most unique story. I realize that

steampunk is a subgenre of science fiction (some would say of fantasy), but this story takes steampunk to a new level by establishing a future society that moved back to steamy tech by choice. Fascinating.

Romance: B

Steampunk: A

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"For the Love of Byron" by Mickey Zucker Reichert is a sweet story, if a predictable one. However, if you removed the few hints of steampunk, you would be left with what this story really was: a historical love story. It feels as if the author added the steampunk elements later to make a sale.

Romance: A

Steampunk: D

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"For Queen and Country" by Elizabeth A. Vaughan reminds me of The Parasol Protectorate by Gail Carriger, but without the humor. The story is fun, but again an overuse of telling versus showing hurts the tale.

Romance: C

Steampunk: C

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"Grasping at Shadows" by C. J. Henderson was a difficult story to get into due to some poor word choices and awkward sentence structures, but once those smoothed out, the story flowed better. A good action piece, I felt the ending came out of nowhere.

Romance: D

Steampunk: A

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"Go Forward with Courage" by Dean Leggett was full of short, choppy sentences that made it a difficult story to read. The dialogue was too contemporary for the time period, and the story was rife with historical inaccuracies, even for steampunk.

Romance: F

Steampunk: D

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"Her Faith is Fixt" by Robert E. Vardeman. While the romance was too convenient to be believable, the steampunk action more than made up for the sloppy love story.

Romance: D

Steampunk: A+

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"Kinetic Dreams" by C. A. Verstraete felt rushed and incomplete, almost as if the author was facing a deadline. Had there been more, I think this one could have been much better.

Romance: D

Steampunk: D

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"For the Love of Copper" by Marc Tassin almost lost me because the author does not seem to understand how to use pronouns. The repeated overuse of the character's proper names irritated me to the point that I almost stopped reading. Then, in the last two pages, the story became one of the most heartwarming tales I've read in a long time. Kudos for the twist that surprised this jaded reader, and I'm glad I didn't give up on the story.

Romance: A

Steampunk: A

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"Cassandra's Kiss" by Mary Louise Eklund is a slow, boring story that feeds the reader important details at the wrong time. I found myself wondering if the editors put this one toward the end hoping to lull their readers to sleep.

Romance: D

Steampunk: F

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"Dashed Hopes" by Donald J. Bingle was a well-written and well-reasoned story, if a tad depressing. Again, I questioned the editors' intentions for slotting this one as the last story in the anthology.

Romance: B

Steampunk: A

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In conclusion, this book is more steampunk than romantic. I wonder if that's because 10 of the 16 authors were male. While they handled the tech well, often times the male authors confused sexual intercourse for romance. I'm sure by some definitions, sex and romance are one in the same.

However, I prefer my romance to be the good, old-fashioned tug-at-the-heartstrings-type. Those stories are present in this anthology and for that reason, I recommend this book as money well spent.

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### **Stephanie Davis says**

I liked it. There were definitely some well thought out stories that would have made for great books, but in a collection, not all are equal. If you like steampunk and don't mind romance, you'll probably enjoy this. Very easy to pick up and put down as needed. Even better? Not every story was filled with automatons and goggles.

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### **Cornelia says**

This anthology of short tales of adventure and romance includes an Egyptian Steampunk story, Absinthe-Minded Archaeologist by Vicki Johnson-Steger. A lovable archaeologist, who made an amazing find, keeps

running into a lovely woman. But she turns out to be an assassin gunning for him.

In Love Comes To Abyssal City by Tobias S. Buckell, a women defies convention and the law by following her heart and running away with a travelling man.

In For The Love Of Byron by Mickey Zucker, a man and a woman, both come to love a big black dog in a time when only mechanical pets are legal. They find love with each other as their dog, Byron, becomes the town hero.

In For The Love Of Copper by Marc Tassin, a servant boy, Christopher, creates a present for Miss Eleanor, the daughter of the owner of the estate he works on. It turns out he has more in common with his present, an automation he names Ellie, than he does with Lady Eleanor.

Dashed Hopes by Donald Bingle is a heartfelt tale of two people, who, though miles apart, find love through operating the pressure-sensitive steam fixed communicator.

Those are just a few of the stories of romance in Hot And Steamy a fun, adventurous read. All the stories have a sweet romance heat level, no sex. I highly recommend Hot & Steamy.

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## Charles says

### Stuff I Read – Hot and Steamy Review

For a while now I've been looking for some good steampunk stories to get into, because I like the idea and the look and am interested in seeing some actual written works so I can gauge whether or not I would ever really want to write it. That more than anything else is the reason that I read some genres. So while looking through the bookstore I came across this collection, which is a bunch of steampunk stories all with a romantic twist. Now romance isn't exactly my thing, but I do think that good writing is good writing no matter what, and this volume does contain some good writing. Given, with any anthology there are going to be stories that just miss. But really I think this book gives a good grounding into steampunk stories, and for those who like some romance in their steam, so much the better. I found myself largely enjoying most of the stories, and glad that I made the decision to pick the book up and give it a try.

That said, there are a few issues within the collection, and one of those is general cohesive vision. While the editor does a fine job in collecting a good group of stories, I did feel that I was being bounced around at times through world that operated under very different rules even when it came to steampunk. Setting is not the only concern, but it becomes a bit confusing where in one story automations operate like pure science and in others they seem more to be the mix of science and magic, and while in one story we are dealing with the Victorian period and in another we are dealing with the distant and dystopian future. I guess a part of me would have wanted a bit tighter series of stories, perhaps set in one shared space or at least with the same basic rules. But that might just be my preference when it comes to short story collections like these, that I want to know where I am. It's not to say that I didn't understand the stories, just that some of the transitions were a bit jarring.

If the goal is to simply expose the reader to the genre and to a number of writers, though, then I suppose my argument falls apart, as the reader can simply choose then to seek out more stuff of the writers that are

preferred and leave behind the others. It does present a buffet of different flavors of steampunk, at the very least, and a buffet of different sorts of romance. And I suppose as long as I am finding things that I can find fault in, some of the stories don't exactly use the romance genre as much more than a showcase of love at first sight. I suppose it makes sense given that these are all short stories, but part of me got tired of having these couples instantly fall in love and decide to marry. Some of them did it well and some of them didn't bother with the more clichéd dramas, but some were a bit tired and predictable. Not all bad, but forgettable. Some did have fun, and there was at least one instance of bodice ripping, so I can rest easy at that, at least, and that some of the writers really did have fun with the mix of genres.

And while the stories as a whole didn't really present me with much in the way of cohesive meaning, individually a number of them did well and entertained. I found myself cheering internally as some of the characters found their ways to each other. Some others, like the Wild Wild West style (the Will Smith movie, not the old show) Civil War slave story, fell short of the mark, but in the better stories I got a feel of history and difference and a realness to them. Some really made the setting and the feel of an alternative earth where steam technology is real. And that I really liked. I liked the airships and the strange weapons and all that, and to some extent the characters as well. I also liked that there was a mix of male and female writers, as that isn't often the case with anthologies, and I liked that in the same vein there were a mix of male and female main characters in the stories. It certainly was a diverse book.

So to wrap it all up, the fact that this book served as a buffet of steampunk stories both worked for and against it. While it was interesting and fun to see such a variety, it did require some energy to jump from one setting to another. This isn't like normal fiction where the setting is the same or even fantasy where the settings would be entirely different, but a strange mesh where the settings are all similar while being different, and some of the stories were hampered by that. Still, it was a solid collection featuring quite a few good stories and acts as a good introduction to the genre, especially for those who also like romance stories. And, as such, this book gets a 6.75/10.

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## **Marcus says**

After the bad experience with Carnal Machines I was a bit weary of another collection with possibly erotic content. Then I thought I should not let one such experience detract me. After all, a sample size of one is not really statistically valid and so I got myself a copy of Hot and Steamy: Tales of Steampunk Romance, and looking back now, it was the right decision. There was a good omen right at the beginning: The first tale, Chance Corrigan and the Queen of Hearts, is by none other than Michael A. Stackpole, of Battletech and Star Wars novels fame. I have enjoyed every single one of his books I read and this little piece is no exception. A very hot story.

The collections continues strong and with quite a variety of subjects. Some stories actually tackle love on several levels. Automata Futura features love between lovers, love between husband and wife and love for humanity in general, all in one very touching tale. Doctor Von Lang's success makes you rejoice but you feel sad for Zoe at the same time. Just so you know: The story has a happy end.

Another strong point of this collection: I find every single story genuinely Steampunk. It is not just one element like an airship or an automaton wrenched in there somewhere as a token element. No, the Steampunk setting is an integral part of each story.

So, Hot & Steamy: Tales of Steampunk Romance is a pleasure to read. Not every piece in it is absolutely to my taste, but I did not expect that. Fortunately, even the weaker ones are still average. There is not a single one I consider badly written.

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### **Ninjamechanic says**

Neither hot nor particularly steampunk, this collection of stories seemed comprised of stories that had only the vaguest trappings of the steampunk aesthetic. Similarly, most of the romances lacked chemistry between the intended protagonists.

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### **Catherine says**

Received as a gift earlier this year. This is not a particularly strong collection, particularly if you're looking for romantic short fiction. I liked the steampunk elements and the alternate historical elements, which were definitely the highlights of this book for me. Most of the stories felt unfinished and rushed, and in several cases, made little or no sense. One even changed airship names during the course of a 12 page short story. I did enjoy the stories by Jody Lynn Nye, Tobias Buckell and Elizabeth Vaughan, but otherwise found this to be a disappointing read.

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### **Amanda says**

This anthology did not live up to its promising premise. Only a couple of the stories were really engaging and I think this was for two reasons. First, I didn't really find any of the relationships depicted in the collection believable. Perhaps that is the fault of the format since a short story doesn't provide a lot of time to establish romantic relationships between characters. Regardless, a believable romantic relationship is necessary for a "romance anthology" to work. Second, the fault could be that there just aren't many good romance/steampunk writers included in anthology. A good, strong writer could be up to task and not let the length reduce the emotional impact of the story. Overall, I wouldn't recommend this book with the exception of stories "Clockworks" and "For Queen and Country."

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### **Carena Wood beimler says**

This was really not that impressive. I like at least 50% of the stories to be interesting, and there was really only one.

Also, it was neither Hot nor Steamy nor was it really romance based. It was random connection based. Only two stories seemed like they could be actual romance, and one of them was the one good story. Also, it was romance in the time of tragedy. Another story that seemed like Romance was Romeo/Juliet style romance, that is to say, mis communication ending in death, but throw the veil of "love" or "romance" over it and call it a day.

These weren't bad stories, but as a whole, the book was just uninspired. It seemed that they wanted to be in an anthology w/ the title "steampunk" so they dusted off some crappy story line and glued a gear on it.

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### **Dorothy (D. J.) Emry says**

I picked this one up because I wanted to see what steampunk romance was all about (and I got it for a good price during the Borders closing sale). It gave me enough to make me want to read more steampunk, but damned if I can call up any clear memory of the stories I read.

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### **Timothy Tobolski says**

I regularly express my love for anthologies; there's no better way to sample either a smattering of stories based upon a theme you may not be familiar with or enjoy a variety of authors you've never read before. And I confess that I've taken a recent shine to the sci-fi sub-genre of Steampunk, that melding of Victorian values with technology inspired by Wells and Verne and powered by steam.

However, romance is hardly my chosen topic of fiction. So I naturally avoided this book for a few weeks, only going so far as checking out the authors when I passed by. Believe it or not, this was an instance where the authors, one in particular, swayed me enough to make the purchase.

I'm three stories in and thankfully the romance aspect is played down so far, only necessary for drawing the characters together; the plots too are fairly simple and straightforward. However, it's the hinted technology that drives the stories: dirigibles, plasma weapons, electrical defenses, expanding exoskeletons, perpetual train engines. These all play as important a role as the main characters themselves. And it's the combination of the above elements that make this a great sampling of the Steampunk sub-genre.

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### **Clarissa says**

This book is several short stories that are unrelated put into one book. I was hoping to love it as I have a large interest in the Steampunk world as well as romance. I read the first two shorts and was left bored with them they lacked romance and excitement. In the first they make several references to a past encounter that the reader has no clue what occurred, the stories are to short to enjoy the characters or even learn enough about them to enjoy it. I normally refuse to give up on a book but I have several others that I know I will enjoy more. Maybe someday I will find myself bored enough to give this book another shot, and then rewrite my review.

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### **Josh Welch says**

I reviewed this book before it was published, here is my review:

Flamingnet Student Book Reviewer JWel1111

Hot and Steamy is a book full of little stories, all of steampunk romance. All of the stories take place in the Victorian era. All of the stories are love stories. Of course, what else did you expect? But, there is more than just love in these stories, there are intrigue, danger, pyrotechnics, and plenty of gadgets. The stories have

varying settings and plots.

My personal opinion, on this book is not pretty. I rarely run into a book that I do not like, but this was one of them. A lot of the stories were confusing, and too in depth, and by the end of them you're left standing there going, HUH?! The stories were almost too old, a little dreary, for teens. This would be a very good adult book, but I think many teens will agree with me, that this isn't a very good teen book.

2 out of 10

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### **Sara says**

I love steampunk, and I admire a really well-done romance. Sadly, of the 16 stories in this anthology, I felt that only three of them were really worth reading: "Clockworks," by Jody Lynn Nye, "Love Comes to Abyssal City," by Tobias Buckell, and "Dashed Hopes," by Donald Bingle. And even these stories could have used some tightening; the steampunk elements were all there, but characterization and interaction needed some work. Some of the stories were completely unreadable, either because of sloppy storytelling or lackluster plot. I had to wonder if some of these authors had ever tried writing short stories before or if this was their first foray into the medium. It seemed like a lot of them had heard of short stories but had no idea how to write one.

All in all, a mixed bag, and not one that I plan on keeping on my bookshelf.

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