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*E.M. Lynley*

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**Gingerbread Palace** E.M. Lynley

A Novella in the Delectable Series

A week before Christmas, Alex Bancroft's bakery goes up in flames. When he runs back inside after a dog, firefighter Kevin Flint has to rescue Alex—and Quincy—from the smoldering building, endangering them and inflaming Kevin's resentment.

Now Alex can't create the elaborate gingerbread house he donates to a foster-kids charity each year. Fire Station 7 again comes to his rescue, offering their kitchen and their manpower.

Everyone but Kevin Flint, that is. A third-generation firefighter, he's fearful of stepping too far out of the closet. So when his powerful physical attraction for Alex ends in a sizzling secret encounter in the firehouse, Kevin can't push Alex far enough away, and Alex returns the cold shoulder.

After a change of heart, Kevin risks his life to prove he's worthy of Alex's affection, but without a Christmas miracle, their chances at sweet romance might go up in smoke.

Like all Delectable stories, Gingerbread Palace includes recipes used in the book.

## Gingerbread Palace Details

Date : Published December 11th 2013 by Dreamspinner Press (first published December 10th 2013)

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Author : E.M. Lynley

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Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Holiday, Christmas, Emergency Services, Firefighters

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# From Reader Review Gingerbread Palace for online ebook

## Chutchy says

3 1/2 stars. Nice short read, just what was needed after reading a few intense novels. Story was predictable but it raised awareness for an organization unknown to me: CASA. I will check out the website.

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## Karl says

A sweet holiday confection! And I'm totally going to try those recipes she includes at the end to make gingerbread!

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## Candice says

[So what happened? Any backlash at

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## F. says

An enjoyable story that wasn't as saccharine sweet as I had feared it might be.  
4 stars

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## Christy says

**3.5 Stars** ~'Gingerbread Palace' is book four in EM Lynley's 'Delectable' series, but this is a series of books which can very easily be read as stand alones. I was attracted to this particular book because, well, I definitely have a fireman kink. Who doesn't? Four years in a row, my blessed mother bought me the WA Fireman calendar, and went and met them to get it signed. That's motherly love, I tell you. So that was part of my interest, and the other part involved baking. I love to bake, it's where I get the most creative.

Alex, aka Dumbass Bakery Guy, according to Kevin, rushed back into his burning building to get his dog, wouldn't listen to Kevin, and now, Kevin is stuck doing desk duty until his captain clears him. Kevin is a little, wait, make that a lot, pissed. This is his third assignment in two years, and if he can't make it here, there may not be a fourth one. He is a third generation firefighter in the city, and his dad is deputy chief. No wonder Kevin is as far in the closet as he is. Don't Ask, Don't Tell is alive and well at Kevin's parents' home. Whereas Alex has never hidden who he is, or whom he loves, even when he probably should've, at times. Alex, and his bakery, are a neighborhood fixture, known for his generous donations and charity work. Even though these two very different men shoot off a few sparks after meeting, they definitely despise each other, which, of course, makes it all the more entertaining.

With his kitchen and all of the stock destroyed, Alex won't be able to make his annual gingerbread house

which is donated for the Home Sweet Home charity auction. Home Sweet Home helps match foster kids with prospective adoptive parents, a service which is very near and dear to Alex's heart. Alex is stunned when the guys at Station 7 tell him he can use their industrial kitchen to get the gingerbread house done. Now all he has to do is stay out of Kevin's way. Turns out, that's a lot harder to do than he thought.

I've got to be honest and admit that I didn't much like Kevin, and pretty much everything Alex accused him of being, I completely agreed with. He came around, obviously, in the end, but I still didn't connect as well with him. Alex, however, I simply adored. He was a wonderful character, and personally I think way too good for Kevin. \*grins\* This was most definitely, another cute and fun novella, which I can easily recommend.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews

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### **Anna says**

E.M. Lynley presents a nice holiday story with Gingerbread Palace. The firefighters' work is incredibly well written, educating the reader. Alex's work is also described in such detail we get to understand the hard work put into it.

Regarding the story itself, after what Kevin did and how it brought back awful memories to Alex, I believe it should've taken a lot more time for them to become more than friends. Also, the fact that Alex believed that Kevin was a nice guy after all just because he risked his life for another human being or was touched by tragic events, sounded unrealistic.

(view spoiler)

Overall, it's a really nice story, but I wish it had been more developed in greater depth.

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### **Didi says**

*Saved by stuffed turtle and bed controller! XD*

Of the stories in the series, this was the most clicked with me. Like previous books, this novella could be read as standalone. The only tie-in between each books were the mentions of MC or their brand from others in the series.

In Gingerbread Palace we met a firefighter MC with chips on his shoulders and a bakery owner who had overcome childhood abuse and harassment. One a jerk in the closet, the other a happy flirty out and proud guy. When the tease and provocation resulted in wham bam thank you fuck, he felt used. To say I wanted to smack both MCs upside the head was an understatement.

But the good thing about this novella was: it's not long, it's pretty well-paced, it actually had plot that wasn't over the top drama, AND the stuffed turtle scene came along. PLUS, there's not much smutt here; and plenty mentions of food!

All I'm saying after reading four stories by Ms. Lynley, I'm quite familiar in how she had her MC combo made. It would be just a matter of patience handling - or reading - a pair of judgey miscommunicated guys with lots of smexy scenes.

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## **Shakisha says**

I really enjoyed this.

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## **multitaskingmomma says**

Original Blog Post: <http://headouttheoven.blogspot.com/20...>

This is the very first E.M. Lynley I have read. So I really had no idea what to expect in terms of writing style. The works had been recommended to me by friends so I took this chance. And there are no regrets. However, it was a style I was not used to. It is a plot that I found a bit formulaic at first until.....

The books starts off with a fire and it is bringing down the bakery of a very popular baker of the area. Alex had been known throughout as someone who is not only talented, but he has a heart of gold. The bakery going up in flames threatened the one thing the people were looking out for every year: gingerbread.

Kevin comes from a long line of men and women in the service of the community as either cops or firefighters. However, he is new to this area so was not knowledgeable of who Alex was or what he represented. The only thing he knows is this: this guy went inside a burning building for he forgot he had been dog sitting a friend's dog. Calling him an idiot did not start the relationship well and from there on out, it just continued to crumble and become dirt. A complication did happen: they had a bit of sexual stint in the firehouse and well, let's just say, it resulted to mutual satisfaction of the physical kind and nothing else. It also resulted to the worsening of a relationship. Or, acquaintanceship.

It was quite hard reading these two men. Alex was kind of closed and Kevin was kind of a jerk. Seriously. These two men could never be considered compatible. In any way. This made me rethink my decision to read this story. I did not want to read about two -----\*&%\$#\$^&----- and end with a happy ending.

Imagine my surprise when I could not put this down. I just about wanted to hit myself. Why was I so interested with this two men?

The secret is the way the author treated the main characters and the plot. There was a lot of evolution plot wise and the men were introduced with their characters underdeveloped. As the story continued, it was only then did they start shedding off their walls and the readers now could see who they really were deep inside. Not the public persona they wanted to show out there.

In the end, the brewing romance did not brew. It just got flashed over a hot pan then simmered to completion. This was fascinating to read and in the end, I just fell in love with these two atypical main characters.

So gone is the presumption of a formulaic read. No wonder it is a bestseller. No wonder my friends kept

telling me to read this author's work. No wonder I feel so like a wallflower. This was such a great read despite my earlier misgivings and it ended beautifully.

No, there is no eroticism here unless you are thinking about baking erotica or firemen. The characters took time to get used to, as I mentioned before, but after the book was finished, I loved them and the gingerbread erotica.

Delicious!

Note

Oh yes, don't forget: the author is offering something special: "As a special thank you to readers who buy my new Christmas novella Gingerbread Palace during release week, I am offering you a special additional BONUS story featuring Alex and Kevin at New Year's." E.M. Lynley

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### **James says**

This is the first story I have read by this author so I was able to go in without expectations, except hoping for a good time, of course. I was not let down in the least. In fact, this is a fine representation of a feel good story for the season.

Ms. Lynley's characterizations are honestly descriptive without distracting from the smooth flow of the tale, allowing the reader to experience the perceptions of being a participant as well as an observer. I found myself immediately disliking one character, but that changed as the character developed; and on the flip end I instantly fell in love with another character which only deepened as the story unfolded.

I genuinely look forward to reading more of EM Lynley's tales and from pulling her up on Dreamspinner Press, I have a few to choose from.

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### **Jan says**

Boy do I want to bake gingerbread cake and fireman cookies now!

I'm a little overdosed on holiday stories, and still have lots of Advent Calendar stories to read, so no long reviews this season. I did really like how Kevin showed Alex he was serious and their date in the hospital... so sweet.

And of course, Firemen=hot any day of the year. You can't go wrong with that!

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### **Mandy\*reads obsessively\* says**

3.75\*

I'm devouring all the holiday stories I can get my hands on, and honestly this one, with all the baking was especially yummy.

Kevin has a lot to live up to. His grandfather, his father and his siblings are all in firefighters or police officers. He seems to have a chip on his shoulder and is very careful to not be outed in anyway. When he meets Alex, while rescuing a dog from his apartment, there is more than just the spark that started the kitchen fire. But honestly Kevin is an ass! He knows it and Alex knows it, and I found Alex a little pushy too. Alex is a real Good Samaritan, he had a rough childhood and he gives back as much as he can, but he's got the hots for the asshat Kevin, although he's soon cured of that...or is he? And since it's a firefighter, you know what's gonna happen, right? So, all in all a sweet, easy quick story.

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### **Tj says**

I fell in love with Alex the moment he appeared on the page. Once I got his background story, I wanted to hug him and celebrate his courage. Kevin is a different story. At first, he was easy to dislike.

On the surface, Kevin has it all, however; his life is ruled by fear. Kevin was 14 when his dad found out he was gay. Instead of talking to his son, he distanced himself and the family never really talked about it. This has a profound affect on Kevin. He has always wanted to be firefighter. Kevin is afraid he will loose that as well if his fellow firefighters find out. His instant attraction to Alex excites and frightens him. His treatment of Alex is deplorable. He has to work to regain Alex's forgiveness and trust.

Alex and Kevin have to learn to truly see each other not preconceived ideas. Kevin learns that Alex is truly a good person with a big heart and helps others not just with the gingerbread at Christmas but all year long. Alex also sees the real Kevin, the firefighter who is good at his job, and serves and protects others sometimes without regard to his own personal safety.

Like all good holiday stories, it ends on warm sweet note and leaves the reader hungry for gingerbread cookies!!

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### **Don Bradshaw says**

I enjoyed the story and the way the firemen gave their time to help Alex with the cookies and the palace. I didn't like Kevin as a person at all. He did his job as a fireman but was selfish when away from the job. Bidding on the Gingerbread Palace seemed too much too late.

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### **Morgan Skye says**

Alex (who's had a rough childhood) suffers again when his bakery goes up in flames and he's accused of causing it by a closeted fireman, Kevin.

Kevin is super attracted to Alex and that scares him. Though he acts on his passion for Alex with a night of hot sex, he turns into a raging a\*\*hole in the morning and accuses Alex of arson.

Alex is done with being treated like dirt by closet cases and decides to explore a relationship with another fire-fighter who isn't ashamed to be seen with him.

Kevin is shocked to find out that gay firemen are accepted in his company and really begins to regret how he's treated Alex – especially when he finds out what an amazing man he really is.

Will Kevin be able to win Alex back or will Alex move on?

\*\*

Kevin was a douche for 80% of this story so it was hard for me to like him for the nearly perfect Alex. The story was almost too short for me to even really accept them as a couple, but the ending really did put them together in a way that felt pretty solid.

The sex was hot and not a lot of it, which felt appropriate for the story.

I think the fireman aspect felt real to me and it was a nice glimpse at that profession.

As a story by itself I'd give this 3.75 of 5 stars – I liked it but didn't really LOVE it.

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