



Baby, It's Cold Outside

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Small town Pacific Northwest reporter Peter Fontaine wants to level up. A job offer in Austin seems to be the answer to his prayers, but there's one catch: his boyfriend, Nick Olson, artist, recluse, and snow-loving outdoorsman.

When Peter agrees to go to the Freezing Man snow sculpture competition, he thinks he's going to get a lesson in making love in a hollowed-out snowball in the woods. He thinks he'll either find a way to convince Nick to come to the Lone Star State or be forced to say goodbye. But one frozen corpse derails Peter's personal plans entirely...

Baby, It's Cold Outside Details

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From Reader Review Baby, It's Cold Outside for online ebook

Ulysses Dietz says

You don't really think this series by Nicole Kimberling, set in Bellingham, Washington, is really about the mysteries, do you?

Not that the mysteries aren't interesting, and that they don't form the architecture on which the IMPORTANT narrative is built - but these books are clearly about the developing relationship between Nick Olson and Peter Fontaine.

And that's fine.

If I'm seeing the pattern, each book moves ahead a year (book three, "Black Cat Ink" does that, at least). Each book also seems to have a theme - or a theme word, at least. The first is blood; this one is cold: snow, ice, shivering.

But really, the point of these books is to watch the slow, graceful dance that Nick and Peter do around each other, as each man adjusts to the idea of being paired for good (and for the first time) with someone they not only admire, but who is their equal. There is a delicacy about the way Peter's blunt, outspoken character counterpoints Nick's more subtle one. And it's interesting that Peter is the less butch of the two, but is also the bolder more aggressive one. This contrasts with Nick's shyness, a pleasant surprise. But gay men don't automatically adjust in the normal way, because, well, men are men. Careers intrude; ambition sings its siren song. Kimberling gives us a gentle, authentic look at the dynamics of a male couple.

Book three promises a new set of mysteries, and some new moves in this ongoing mating ritual. These books are not as slight as their novella length would suggest. Looking forward to book three...

Kassa says

This is a sequel to the book Primal Red. When I first read Primal Red, I thought the book was pretty bland. I had some issues with the characterization, the setting, and the bland mystery. Yet Kimberling is a well known and much loved author so I wanted to see what the sequel would be like. Surprisingly and happily, I found Baby its Cold Outside to be delightful, laugh out loud funny in several spots with witty dialogue and great situations while the characterization may not be perfect, it worked for the space of the story. In short, I think the sequel outshines the previous novel by a lot and even if you haven't read Primal Red, you can still enjoy this offering.

Almost two years have past since Peter and Nick have been together. Peter is a tenacious reporter who is thinking about accepting a job in Texas as the next stepping-stone in his journalist career. The only snag is his Pacific Northwest boyfriend who seems unwilling to leave the cooler temperatures. Peter decides that he's going to talk to Nick about the job opportunity over New Years while the two are off at an outdoor snow festival. Unfortunately the untimely arrival of a dead body changes everything and Peter just can't let his curiosity and reporter instinct go.

Here the mystery aspect of the plot is very well done, especially given the short length of the novella. The

mystery of the dead body is pretty easily wrapped up and the only impetus is to show more of both Nick and Peter's personalities and how others view Peter when in his reporter mode. Additionally the easy resolution doesn't feel cheap or cheated because the mystery is not the focus of the story. It's an added element that works well but doesn't take the focus away from the relationship between Nick and Peter. Thus the various secondary characters are given enough time and page space so the reader can tell them apart, but aside from that, none are very important – including the murderer.

The impetus of the murder and the very real fear for their lives, Nick and Peter must make some big decisions about their relationship and its future. Nick doesn't want to leave the northwest and feels moving to Texas would ruin his career while Peter feels staying in Bellingham would ruin his. Thus the two clash but not for long as the strength of their relationship is solid. The men are slightly better characterized in this novella, but Nick remains much of a mystery. He's quiet and rarely vocalizes his emotions and thoughts. His affection and love for Peter are shown in a myriad of subtle and quiet ways. The small details Nick sees to and his care for Peter show his emotions versus speaking, whereas Peter talks about almost everything constantly but still manages to be secretive about important topics. Their relationship is interesting and fun to read as the two very different men navigate the difficulties of a relationship.

This story is pretty fun with a lot of humor woven into the setting. The dialogue and situations offer wry wit with several very funny comments. The descriptive setting is once again a highlight of the story and Peter's internal narrative keeps the story entertaining. Although this is a sequel, it can be read alone with ease, as there are enough references to the past that new readers won't be lost. The short length is perfect with just a touch of action, mystery, slight angst, and romance to give a great chilly treat.

GymGuy says

I was hoping that in the second of this series we'd get to know Nick and Peter more. But unfortunately not. While there is a brief mystery, even that plot is very thin. I'm going to try one more of these quick novellas because I enjoy the the style and the characters (not sure why), but they are pleasant. In order to raise this series up a notch, there needs to be a whole lot more depth of character and plot.

I guess the one thing that really stands out in this series are the love scenes. They are sweet and honest without being overly descriptive. At least something is left to the imagination.

Daesy says

For our poor Nick, living with Peter must be like staying with Jessica Fletcher, bcs wherever he goes someone ends up dead or someone tries to kill him. Peter and Nick have been together for 2 years now and living in the same house for 1, they are still very much in love, but a new job offer for Peter, puts their relationship in danger. In the end they understand that they can't be apart, and Peter decides to refuse that job. They solve another mystery, this time a murder, but do u think that Peter learned something from his near death experience? nop....read book 3. xD

Anke says

3.5*

I really liked it - fast and easy read - although the whole time I thought, whether I read a mystery/suspense/thriller with the same storyline - victim hidden in the snowman. Perhaps someone can enlighten me?

Merith says

I liked the conflict that arose in this story. Job relocation is a very real problem for many couples; deciding whose job is more important to support is a lovers challenge. I adored how this conflict was resolved.

The mystery portion had many red herrings. It wasn't a surprise when the murderer was reveled, but it was done well enough. What wasn't done well is the handling of a large crowd on hand. I got the impression there were only the 8 people mentioned who were there for the *Freezing Man Festival*. As if only those 8 even knew there was a dead body in their midst.

Still loving Peter and Nick, though. :)

Kelly H. (Maybedog) says

This was so different than the first one. This was formulaic, predictable, and underdeveloped. The suspense needed longer to develop. The climax needed to be drawn out a bit. He was already safe before I had a chance to be worried. I don't buy the attraction between them, it just doesn't ring true. And having sex in what is almost exactly an igloo would be in sleeping bags, skin to skin. Having one person strip before the other person even got involved, all his junk hanging out, is just ridiculous. Plus, who lights an igloo with a candle? It's not safe because there's a big chance of fire, not reliable because it would easily be blown out, there's not nearly enough light from one candle, and it would suck oxygen out of an already stuffy tiny little room. But, I still enjoyed it.

Happy ending? (view spoiler)

Alina says

My favorite one from the series so far!

I've read it first by mistake and I'm actually glad I did, because while I enjoyed the first book Primal Red I'm not sure I'd've been hooked on these series the way I'm if I read it first. This story focuses more on a relationship and there's more Nick in it and he's my absolute favorite, so I really really liked it. Sweet ending <3

Katharina says

I just have to give this one five stars as well. And again it wasn't the mystery in here that made it so damn enjoyable for me. It was, again, Peter. I can't even say why exactly, but the humour in this story, in his character, is exactly my cup of tea. When I read the obituary he wrote for himself in his head while driving with Nick through masses of snow I laughed so loud I scared a few nearby people.

And yes, there are some things that remain unanswered regarding the mystery. Why would the murderer (view spoiler)? Why not simply dispose of him somewhere where he wouldn't be found until the next spring - in all the wilderness with all that snow, that shouldn't have been too hard, right?

... it was a pretty nice and fun idea, though, so I let the slight illogic I find here slide :-D Also, the resolution in this story was achieved almost purely intellectually. Meaning that the corpse itself gave very few hints and it was more a question of getting all the clues together from conversations and understanding the story behind it to get to the murderer. And this way the positioning of the corpse was rather irrelevant - so why not go all out with it and make it a bit creative :)

I really enjoyed Peter's and Nick's conflict in this story, too. I loved how the both of them at first struggled with their priorities and then finally got them straight. It's a part of every serious relationship and I found it a believable issue that was resolved very satisfactorily for all involved. Including the reader. :)

Again, definitely recommended!

Idamus says

Still not sure what to think of this series, but it's fun enough I guess, too short though

Lily says

3.4 stars.

Rosa says

A fast and short read. I finished it early and had to start with the next one right away. There are a bunch of suspects in this one and I enjoyed solving the mystery.

Ami says

I don't remember much about Primal Red and this one is also forgettable. I can't connect to the story, I don't "feel" it, and I end up skipping pages and pages of this quite short story. Yep, that's one series I don't think

I'll follow anymore.

Susana says

4.5 to 5 stars

Peter and Nick have been living together for a year when they spend their first New Year's Eve together at The Freezing Man Festival, at Salmon Ridge Sno-Park. Peter is worried about surviving in the wilderness because he is not as manly as his rugged and handsome lover, but he soon has to worry about having to survive sharing close quarters with a murderer...

Peter and Nick are settled in a comfortable routine, and happy together, when they stumble upon another dead body... Well, Peter does, as it seems to have a knack for it. The small number of suspects, together with the fact that they are isolated by the snow, makes tension escalate. Besides, Peter and Nick are facing their first real crisis, as Peter has been offered a job which would imply leaving his beloved Bellingham behind. Nick is not willing to leave his house and his contacts, as it would mean a big drawback in his career. They manage to achieve an agreement while solving the murder, never losing their cool and sexiness... and their sense of humour.

I really love the way these two interact, and easy pace of these stories. The characters, the setting, the flow of the narrative and the intrigue are utterly enjoyable. As the previous one, this one is highly recommendable.

Emanuela ~plastic duck~ says

I really liked this second adventure of Peter, the investigative reporter, and Nick, his artist-boyfriend.

Even if the story is short, I think it has everything: a bit of suspense in an interesting setting, paired with a little personal crises of the main couple. It also has a fluid and flawless writing peppered with a touch of humor and a bit of naughtiness (it's not scorching hot, but the chemistry of the protagonists is always there).

Best place to hide a victim of murder. It's a confirmation of all the good I found in the previous longer installment.
