

Spring Flings

SHORT AND SWEET, NOVELLAS ARE PERFECT FOR GETTING YOUR ROMANCE FIX

By Jennifer Peters

SOME OF THE most famous literary works of the 20th century were novellas — including Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. But lately, more and more of our favorite genre authors have taken the short-form novel as their own, and we couldn't be happier! Novellas are the perfect way to try out a new author or genre, visit with your favorite series characters between official entries or just enjoy a story when you don't have the time for a full novel. We've rounded up some of the best novellas of the season, and even readers with towering TBR piles will be able to make time to check out these fun literary flings!

✿ **THE ONE YOU WANT** (*Harlequin, Mar.*) is the prequel to **Gena Showalter's** new Original Heartbreakers series, and introduces readers to not only the series' sexy new hunks and heroines, but to the couple that helps bring them all together. When single-mom Kenna and wealthy bachelor Dane reunite more than 20 years after their last encounter, they seem as compatible as oil and water — or are they? Readers more familiar with Showalter's paranormal novels will find this the perfect opportunity to check out her seriously swoon-worthy contemporary romance.

✿ **J.R. Ward's THE STORY OF SON** (*St. Martin's, Mar.*) takes place in Caldwell, N.Y., and is part of the Black Dagger Brotherhood universe — a favorite among paranormal fans. In this story, Claire, a no-nonsense lawyer, is held captive, and it's in her prison that she encounters Michael, a gorgeous and misunderstood vampire. She can't help but feel sorry for the vampire, and as they partner up to plot their escape, her compassion turns to something more ...

♥ **CHANGING EVERYTHING** (*William Morrow, Mar.*) is a stand-alone set in the world of **Molly McAdams'** Forgiven Lies series. Paisley and Eli are best friends, but Paisley has been harboring a crush since they were kids. When Eli finally realizes that his feelings for Paisley are a little more than friendly, it may already be too late. Readers will have a hard time *not* devouring this heartfelt love story in a single sitting.

✿ **SHOULDA BEEN A COWBOY** (*HQN, Mar.*) by **Maisey Yates** introduces readers to Copper Ridge, Ore., the setting of her new series, and some of the most charming cowboys west of the Mississippi. Between Jake's smoldering good looks and Cassie's sweet pastries and even sweeter personality, there's no doubt this is a love story, but of course, it's never that simple, now is it?

✿ In **Christine Warren's ANY WITCH WAY SHE CAN** (*St. Martin's, Mar.*), a witch who craves love decides to take matters into her own hands and casts a spell to find her perfect match. With her powers, she's sure she'll find a man who can set her soul on fire, but when her mystery lover appears, things get hotter than she'd ever imagined!

✿ In **Red Garnier's RECKLESS AND YOURS** (*St. Martin's, Mar.*), Paige Avery returns home after seven years for her mother's funeral, clueless to the fact that she's in danger and being hunted. Though she's forgotten all about her last meeting with local cop Zach Rivers, he's right there, ready to protect her — and a whole lot more!

♥ **HARD TO BE GOOD** (*Avon, Apr.*) is part of **Laura Kaye's** popular romantic suspense series, Hard Ink. Readers unfamiliar

with the series will want to start at the beginning, but those already familiar with Jeremy Rixey will be able to dive right in as he falls for Charlie, a computer genius and Jeremy's polar opposite. As the chaos closes in, the action — and the love story — really heat up!

✿ Part of the Under the Skin series, **Charlotte Stein's TAKEN** (*Avon, Apr.*) tells the story of a young woman who's kept prisoner by her neighbor after a prank gone awry. And even though he has her chained up, she can't help but feel something for him — something that feels a lot like lust. Or maybe it's love. Only time will tell. And thankfully for readers, the time will fly, as this novella is a quick, steamy read.

✿ **Caroline Linden's ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND SCANDAL** (*Avon, Apr.*) features two devilishly charming leads: Douglas and Madeline. When Douglas wagers that he can expose the true identity of Lady Constance, the author of a scandalous erotic romance, he doesn't plan on falling for her ... or Madeline, the real woman behind the novel. Finding out if these two get their HEA won't take long, but it will be an exciting journey nonetheless.

✿ **THE WEDDING GIFT** (*Avon, May*) is the latest in **Cara Connelly's** Save the Date series. In this newest novella, Jan heads to Key West for a wedding, but the bride and groom aren't the only ones getting a happily-ever-after. When the hotel screws up and forces her to room with lust-worthy Mick McKenna, Jan has to figure out if she's going to be stuck in the friend zone, or if she's willing to ask for more.

♥ **COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS** (*Sourcebooks Casablanca, May*) follows characters introduced in **Sharon Sala's** delightfully charming *Curl Up and Dye*, and introduces readers to the changes that are afoot in Blessings, Ga., many of which come to light at the local beauty salon. While not strictly a romance, it introduces intriguing situations that we hope will be concluded in future novels — or novellas!

✿ **WHO I AM WITH YOU** (*Pocket Star, May*) is a spinoff from **Melody Anne's** popular Billionaire Bachelors series and

follows female motocross racer Taylor Winchester as she recovers from a severe injury — and a long-broken heart — while getting a little closer than she'd planned to her ex, a recently returned veteran of the war in Iraq. Their story is a slow build, but once it starts to heat up, it really catches fire!

✿ **HOME SWEET HOME** (*Avon, May*) is a prequel of sorts to **Candis Terry's** Sweet, Texas series. Paige Walker and Army Ranger Aiden Marshall appeared in the series, but this is the first time the author is sharing the couple's full story. Regular readers of Terry's series will be happy to see how this couple got their HEA, while new readers will get to sample the sweetness of Terry's Texas love stories without feeling lost. And when Paige welcomes returning vet Aiden — and gives him hope that he can finally be at peace here at home — readers both new and old are sure to swoon.

✿ **MASQUERADE** (*Pocket Star, Jun.*) is a tie-in novella to **J.S. Cooper's** popular Swept Away series and exposes even more of Jakob Bradley's family secrets. The series will conclude in July, with *Resolution*, so fans will relish the chance to spend even more time with the sexy strangers-turned-lovers, Bianca and Jakob. This is one you'll want to read after catching up with the other series titles.

♥ **Cynthia Sax** closes out her Billionaires and Bikers series with **SINFUL REWARDS 12** (*Avon, Jun.*), in which our heroine, Bee, finally chooses between her two suitors: a brooding billionaire and a muscled motorcycle man. If you haven't read the other books in the series, you'll want to catch up, but even those new to Sax's Sinful Rewards can, if they want, dive right in without missing too much of the story.

✿ **THE PRINCESS WORE PLAID** (*Pocket Star, Jul.*) introduces readers to a princess from the world of **Karen Hawkins'** Oxenburg Princes. Princess Tatiana Romanovin gets held up on her way to a cousin's wedding in the Scottish highlands and ends up alone at an inn with no proof of who she is — a princess of Oxenburg. Readers will love this fish-out-of-water tale, and Princess Tatiana will easily make you want to get to know the rest of the Oxenburg royalty. ✧

