



Another Place in Time

Tamara Allen , Joanna Chambers , K.J. Charles , Kaje Harper , Jordan L. Hawk , Aleksandr Voinov

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Welcome to *another place in time*...where one can be swept away into lands and eras long forgotten.

This collection of short stories was birthed because a sworn "I don't like historicals" reader fell in love with what have become some of her favorite books by most of her favorite writers. Surprisingly, they were all historicals. Determined to make others feel the love, these authors were asked to contribute small tastes of how amazing historical storytelling can be.

Along with a foreword written by Alex Beecroft, enjoy these original short stories that make up "Another Place in Time".

Office Romance by Tamara Allen

The post-war economy is at a standstill, much like Foster Wetherly's life until he's forced to do battle with irritatingly confident—and competent—fellow ex-doughboy Casey Gladwin for a position in their shrinking department at Manhattan Security Mutual.

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers

Lysander Winterbourne appears to lead a charmed life. Handsome, amiable, and a renowned sportsman, he is the darling of London society. As far as Adam Freeman is concerned though, Lysander is just another spoiled aristocrat.

A wealthy mill owner, Adam has no time for the frivolous world of the ton, but when his younger brother becomes engaged to Althea Winterbourne, he reluctantly agrees to be introduced to society—with the Winterbourne clan's golden boy as his guide.

Resigning himself to a few days of boredom, Adam is surprised to learn that there is much more to Lysander than his perfect surface. But will Adam have the courage to introduce Lysander Winterbourne to his own secret self?

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles

Lord Gabriel Ashleigh is a ruined man. Last night he lost everything at the card tables to his brother's worst enemy, notorious gambler Francis Webster. Tonight, he's going back for one more game. Ash thinks he has nothing left to lose. But Francis sets the stakes, and they're higher than Ash could have imagined...

Two Regency bucks. One game of cards. Everything to play for.

Unfair in Love and War by Kaje Harper

Many men lost brothers overseas in the summer of 1944. Warren Burch was one of them. For months he still clung to his big city life in Philadelphia, but finally he's made the difficult choice to return to his home town. Warren's polio-stricken leg won't let him serve, so the least he can do is be there for his mother, when brother Charlie never again will. Arriving home means a whole new life, constrained by the rhythms and prejudices of a small town. Fortunately, it's made more interesting by the mysterious and attractive young man next door.

Carousel by Jordan L. Hawk

When a child goes missing, is it a simple case of a young runaway, or are more sinister forces at work?

"Carousel" is part of the Whyborne & Griffin series and takes place between the events of Stormhaven and Necropolis. It can be read as a standalone.

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov

This is a re-vamped, re-edited, improved version of "Deliverance". It's about William Raven, a templar, who thought he'd escaped his past. (Same character as in "The Lion of Kent".)

Another Place in Time Details

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From Reader Review Another Place in Time for online ebook

Susan says

Ok...so how often do we as readers...as FANS...get to put together a dream team and ask them to write new stories for us to read?

I admit, even I am shocked that this all came together. And SO grateful to these authors and SO in love with all these stories.

Backstory: I said it time and again, "I don't read historicals". But it turns out, I do. Some of my favorites;

Blessed Isle by Alex Beecroft
Downtime by Tamara Allen
Enlightened by Joanna Chambers
Think of England by KJ Charles
Into Deep Waters by Kaje Harper
Bloodline by Jordan L. Hawk
Skybound by Aleksandr Voinov

And I started to realize how often I hear people saying that same thing...and what a crying shame! All the GREAT books out there we're missing out on because we *think* we're not into the genre.

So, I asked all my favorite authors of historical romance to write a short story for an anthology. And then the team from Boys in our Books chose the charity where all proceeds would be donated: AllOut.org. And there you have it..."Another Place in Time".

I'm biased, obviously. I do love ALL the stories. They are such TREATS...nuggets of yummy historical goodness.

I hope you'll all give this anthology a chance...cannot recommend this enough! :)

MostlyDelores says

Office Romance by Tamara Allen - 1921, two men competing for one clerical job in an accounting firm. This was stressful! The behaviour of the efficiency expert is still all too familiar 90 years later. 3 stars

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers - Regency, brother of the bride shows wealthy brother of the groom around town. A little rough in places but pretty good. 3.5 stars

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles - Regency, very Heyeresque. Young wastrel gambles

everything in a card game. Excellent. 5 stars

Unfair in Love and War by Kaje Harper - 1944 USA, it would be unfair of me to complain that this story, set during the war, is overly angsty, but who said I was fair? 3 stars

Carousel by Jordan L Hawk - early 20th century?, Whybourne and Griffin story 3.5. Nicely done and scary as dammit. 4 stars

Deliverence by Aleksandr Voinov - Middle Ages, during the Crusades. Research was front and centre, story a distant second. 2 stars

Tara♥ says

5 stars all up in here.

All the shorts in this were amazing. This book is amazing.

Buy it. Buy it now. Your money also goes to a good cause.

So why you still here?

GO BUY IT!!

1. "Office Romance" by Tamara Allen

4 stars

2. "Introducing Mr. Winterbourne" by Joanna Chambers

5 stars

3. "The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh" by KJ Charles

Yup, still raunchy. That's a game of cards I could get behind.

Adore Ash and I find Francis shivery. I wish there was more.

This story takes place in the Society of Gentlemen world of which the first book 'A Fashionable Indulgence' will be released on 11 August 2015. This story could be read any time but works really well as a prequel.

Ash shook his head, and Francis took a handful of his hair, pulling his head back. "Gabriel. I want all of this." His other hand gripped Ash's thigh. "All of you, for me. I'll make you mine."

Yeah, Francis is shivery!!

5 stars

4. "Unfair in Love and War" by Kaje Harper

4 stars

5. Reread "Carousel" by Jordan L. Hawk while reading 'Whyborne & Griffin' Series.

These were my updates when I originally read it in October 2014:

"So I'm reading this even though I've not yet gotten round to reading the 'Whyborne & Griffin' series. I hope I'm not making a mistake."

"A little peek at the Whyborne & Griffin series. I've not read it but it is on my TBR shelf. They seem really sweet together and the details given intrigued me so I might move it up. 3.5 Stars."

With reading this as part of the series I enjoyed this story a whole lot more, most of all because it is Griffin's POV and the series is told from Whybornes. Getting time with Griffin makes me super happy not least of all because this story takes place after Stormhaven where Griffin kind of went through the mill.

When originally read I could only look at the case as I didn't really know Whyborne and Griffin, reading it knowing them both bumps this up to 5 stars for me.

5 stars

6. "Deliverance" by Aleksandr Voinov

5 stars

K.J. Charles says

A historical anthology put together by the Boys in our Books blog to raise money for All Out and celebrate queer historicals. Just look at the company I'm in. /swoons/

My story, The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh, is a Regency. A young man has just lost everything at the card tables to Francis Webster, his family's enemy. Ash is ruined...till Francis invites him to play out the game with different stakes.

It was fun to write, I hope it's fun to read!

Heller says

A stellar collection of historical short stories. Stellar.

I've always been reluctant to read historical M/M stories, mostly because I'm a coward. I get afraid for the

characters in historical settings and I tend to worry about them and their safety which is kind of ridiculous I know, when each and every historical story that I've read I've enjoyed tremendously. If you're like me and hesitant for whatever reason, don't be, I can't recommend this anthology enough. This is, without a lie, the best of the best and a fantastic opportunity to try out a few of these authors if they're new to you and, in addition, you can support an amazing cause. All proceeds from the purchase of the anthology will be donated to AllOut.org in celebration of LGBT History Month, October 2014.

The anthology, as a whole, rates 4.5 Stars from me and I've rated each story (including the foreword, because it's awesome!)

Foreword by Alex Beecroft 5 Stars

Alex really made me think and reevaluate my reasons for hesitating when I come across historical queer fiction. Thanks, Alex!

Office Romance by Tamara Allen 4 Stars

The post-war economy is at a standstill, much like Foster Wetherly's life until he's forced to do battle with irritatingly confident and competent fellow ex-doughboy Casey Gladwin for a position in their shrinking department at Manhattan Security Mutual.

I've been a big fan of Tamara Allen's ability to immerse the reader into earlier time periods. The setting and dialogue always feels authentic and never jarring. The office battle between Casey and Foster and how the men come to learn about each other is subtle. I loved the ending.

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers 4.5 Stars

Lysander Winterbourne appears to lead a charmed life. Handsome, amiable, and a renowned sportsman, he is the darling of London society. As far as Adam Freeman is concerned though, Lysander is just another spoiled aristocrat.

A wealthy mill owner, Adam has no time for the frivolous world of the ton, but when his younger brother becomes engaged to Althea Winterbourne, he reluctantly agrees to be introduced to society with the Winterbourne clan's golden boy as his guide.

Resigning himself to a few days of boredom, Adam is surprised to learn that there is much more to Lysander than his perfect surface. But will Adam have the courage to introduce Lysander Winterbourne to his own secret self?

I've never read a Chambers book before. I'll be reading many more after this one. I loved this story and the characters. I'm kind of hoping that we'll see more about happens next because this feels like the beginning of a great adventure for Adam and Lysander.

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles 5 Stars

Lord Gabriel Ashleigh is a ruined man. Last night he lost everything at the card tables to his brother's worst enemy, notorious gambler Francis Webster. Tonight, he's going back for one more game. Ash thinks he has nothing left to lose. But Francis sets the stakes, and they're higher than Ash could have imagined?

Two Regency bucks. One game of cards. Everything to play for.

Charles has the ability to create characters and situations that beg for sequels. No exception here. This story was magic for me.

Unfair in Love and War by Kaje Harper 4 Stars

Many men lost brothers overseas in the summer of 1944. Warren Burch was one of them. For months he still clung to his big city life in Philadelphia, but finally he's made the difficult choice to return to his home town. Warren's polio-stricken leg won't let him serve, so the least he can do is be there for his mother, when brother Charlie never again will. Arriving home means a whole new life, constrained by the rhythms and prejudices of a small town. Fortunately, it's made more interesting by the mysterious and attractive young man next door.

Harper is another author with that ability to make you feel like you're in another time. This is a deeply emotional story between the two men and the historical events that surround them.

Carousel by Jordan L Hawk 3 Stars

When a child goes missing, is it a simple case of a young runaway, or are more sinister forces at work?

Carousel is part of the Whyborne & Griffin series and takes place between the events of Stormhaven and Necropolis. It can be read as a standalone.

This was actually a fantastic October/Halloween type story. The carousel was eerie and disturbing. Although this is a standalone, I think knowing the characters would give it another layer of understanding their characters and motivations.

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov 3 Stars

This is a re-vamped, re-edited, improved version of "Deliverance". It's about William Raven, a templar, who thought he'd escaped his past. (Same character as in The Lion of Kent.)

Knights Templar and the Crusades. There's a lot of call back to a previous story but everything was explained very well so I'd consider it a standalone. William is such a tortured character, I love that Guy pursued him and called him on his actions.

Ami says

~*~* Thank you Susan Lee for bring these amazing authors together in one anthology. The mind boggles! *~*~*

I admit that I am also one of those readers who swear that "*I don't LIKE historical romance*", be it

male/female or male/male. Being an Indonesian who was enjoying the 90's and 2000's, I totally didn't *get* the period in historical romance, especially it being all the way in either United States or Europe.

Plus my country's history would be totally different than those being portrayed in those kind of romance. I wouldn't feel connected. But then I challenged myself reading historical MMs early this year and I realized that I *could* actually love them. IN fact, few of my latest 5* read in MM were historical. Imagine that.

So of course when I saw this anthology, with some of my favorite authors, I just HAVE to read it... Detailed review under spoiler tag (to keep it short)

(view spoiler)

So in conclusion:

- Most adorable: Joanna Chamber's
 - Most SEXY: KJ Charles's
 - Most solid and well written and favorite: Kaje Harper's
-

Kat says

I'm suffering from this condition where brutal honesty gets in the way of diplomacy, regardless of the consequences. I'm usually not afraid to take on my boss when this condition plays up. However, when it comes to a *Boys in our Books* supported anthology for which all proceeds are donated to the awesome and amazing AllOut.org... Well, I almost PEED MY PANTS WITH FRIGHT thinking about possibly considering *Another Place In Time* a sucky read, you know?

Thank god, no, thank this top-notch author line-up and thank Susan, for putting together this brilliant anthology. I'm having a blast so far!

3.5 stars I was a little apprehensive to read Tamara Allen's *Office Romance* because I couldn't for the love of me resist slipping into a semi-vegetative state while reading her *Downtime*. The plot in her short story for this anthology revolves around two young men being played off against each other at their workplace during the post-war economical crisis. It's well-chosen, as it offers just enough conflict to curiously read on. Even though the writing is like I remember Allen's writing, stiff and conservative with a rather awkward rendezvous between the MCs. But...here it suits the 'straight and narrow' narrator and adds to the bleak atmosphere of the time period he lives in.

4.5 stars Couldn't sleep last night, so I thought I'd cheekily nibble at the second story in this anthology; Joanna Chambers' *Introducing Mr. Winterbourne*. What I hadn't anticipated happened. I couldn't stop reading. And smiling. And sighing happily. A wonderfully executed historical romance in the tradition of Harlequin Romances from start to finish. Puffy, tired eyed me is going to buy herself a copy of *Provoked* right away.

5.5 stars Oh my god?! Oh..my..god. So this is what my mum is talking about when she complains about hot flashes. 0_o I was feeling all funny when reading *The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh*. I have no idea why I bought *The Magpie Lord* months ago and tossed it aside after 20 pages or so, because KJ Charles mercilessly flipped on all sort of switches in my body and mind. There are several delightful -- because I'm a sucker for the enemies to lovers trope and elite/working class merges! -- parallels with the story that precedes this one, *Introducing Mr. Winterbourne*. But whereas that one is adorable and formulaic in the best possible way, *The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh* both has that intriguing cool-as-a-cucumber type of character that I find difficult to resist and heart-stutteringly intense UST. This story turned me into a wanton...no, I must refrain from getting into the details due to modesty reasons.

taking a short break from this anthology to read everything K.J. Charles

3 stars Intriguing.. apparently some people bought this anthology for the Jordan L. Hawk story alone. I thought the carousel animals were depicted wonderfully spooky in *Carousel*. On the other hand, the descriptions of the young "trembling, shivering, shuddering, shoulders heaving, back and forth rocking" boy got a little out of hand. This story is an extra snippet for a series I haven't yet read, and as such it didn't reel me in. Its immense popularity is reason enough for me to go have a look at it though!

3 stars Mmm, thanks to the gorgeous *When the Music Stops* I've developed a thing for characters that are firmly strapped into a mental straitjacket of Christian dogmas. The MC in *Deliverance* attempts to repress and repel his 'condemnable' dark desires by joining the templars. Will he be able to resist temptation when it finds and taunts him?

I liked the potential of Aleksandr Voinov's snippet and, as always, his rough men and writing ("*His own calloused hand forced his desire*"). But there were simply too few pages to evoke any emotions and make a lasting impression.

4 stars *Gott in Himmel!* So far, the Kaje Harper stories that I've read I'd label 'nice', but they always brought me to the brink of giving up bored. Not this time. There's a gentleness and a delicate beauty to the slow-paced *Unfair in Love and War*, with just a hint of suspense. It's perhaps the most 'wholesome' story in this anthology, and it didn't leave me cold.

Though I can't resist pointing out these lines, that I keep coming across over and over in M/M, be it in the form of "the old man" or....: "*His 30-year-old desk-job body wasn't that much of a treat*" and "*Amazing that Stefan had enough interest in Warren's ordinary, almost-thirty carcass..*" *studies her own carcass in the mirror*.

Bloody hell, can't we just stop this insanity already?!

Earlier ramblings:

Squee! Will you look at the author line up!? And EVERY single penny of this Boys in Our Books blog adventure will be donated to AllOut.org, a fantastic LGBTQ organization.

Grabby hands!

Adam says

BR with Mishyjo!

A great anthology, with contributions from some very talented authors.

'Deliverance' by Aleksandr Voinov'

Date read: Oct 18, 2014

Rating: 4 stars

In this Crusades era story, two former lovers meet again in an unlikely, and highly dangerous, situation. William Raven is a member of the Knights Templar. He's serving in the holy land, hoping that by fighting for Christians he'll be forgiven for his sins, particularly for loving men. Guy de Metz comes from a wealthy family, and is on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to absolve himself of the same sins for which William is serving. Six years ago, the two had travelled through Europe, making a name for themselves as jousting, and living as care-free lovers, until William unexpectedly left.

When the two meet again, they're both angry and hurt. And they can hardly keep their pants on. Despite being very short, this story had feels and an underlying sense of danger. It ends in a cliffhanger, but a note at the end says Voinov is currently doing some research to write the sequel, which I'm really looking forward to.

'Carousel' by Jordan L. Hawk

Date read: Oct 18, 2014

Rating: 3.5 stars

Whyborne and Griffin get an unexpected visit from a frantic groundskeeper, requesting their assistance. The man's 10-year-old son disappeared in the middle of the night, without a trace and under some very mysterious circumstances. Whyborne and Griffin suspect sorcery, as the groundskeeper's younger son tells the two that his brother had repeatedly been having dreams about the town's carnival carousel, and that a strange light had led the boy out of the house.

What follows is a classic Whyborne and Griffin mystery. There's some snooping around, a chase/run scene, some creepy bad guys and a sweet cutesy ending to top it off. While it was great to read more of the two

MCs, it would have been interesting to see Jordan L. Hawk expand her MM historical repertoire beyond Whyborne and Griffin. Overall it was a fun read, but I think I might not have enjoyed it as much if I wasn't already a fan of the series.

'Unfair in Love and War' by Kaje Harper

Date read: Oct 15, 2014

Rating: 3.75 stars

It's the middle of World War II, and Warren Burch is living with his mother. He can't serve in the war because of a shortened leg, and he's temporarily out of a job. After moving back home, he runs into his mother's new neighbour, Stefan Koehler. Stefan is large muscular man, with blonde hair and blue eyes, and a Germanic accent. His passport says that he's from Switzerland, but due to public paranoia, he faces harassment and discrimination. Stefan and Warren begin a hesitant friendship, after Warren helps repair some of the vandalism done to Stefan's house. This friendship soon leads to something more.

I was really enjoying this tale, right until near the end. Stefan's background story was just too convoluted and came out of left field. I felt that the odd ending took away from the story which preceded it, which was about two men overcoming adversity and social norms (both about homophobia and ethnicity). But even so, if this was a separate book, I'd round up the rating to 4 stars.

'The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh' by KJ Charles

Date read: Oct 11, 2014

Rating: 4.25 stars

Gabriel Ashleigh has gambled away his inheritance to Francis Webster, a man with whom he has a less-than-friendly history. The morning after losing everything, while he is contemplating what to do next, Gabriel receives an invitation to come visit Francis' house. When he arrives, he's surprised to learn that Francis is willing to let him play to win his money and house back. I think you can guess what follows. No? Here's a hint: (view spoiler).

I really enjoyed KJ Charles' short story. The background story between Francis and Gabriel could have been sad, but it ended up being funny and sweet. In this book, you can look forward to two dispirited (and frustrated) men, odd yet intriguing circumstances, some hot sex (view spoiler), and all of this wrapped up in an enjoyable historical setting.

'Introducing Mr. Winterbourne' by Joanna Chambers

Date read: Oct 5, 2014

Rating: 4.25 stars

When I read Joanna Chamber's Enlightenment series earlier this year, it quickly became one of my favourites. So when I found out that she'd be contributing to this anthology, I was really excited to read the short story. 'Introducing Mr. Winterbourne' definitely lived up to my high expectations. We meet Lysander Winterbourne, the younger son of an English nobleman, and Adam Freeman, a man who became rich through enterprise and hard work. Lysander's sister is engaged to Adam's younger brother, so the two come in to contact when Adam comes to London for the first time. Lysander is expected to guide Adam through aristocratic high society, something which the two aren't so happy about.

I think what I enjoyed the most in this book was the depiction of the mid-1800s divide between the fading aristocratic class and the rising entrepreneur class. London's high society look at Adam as an upstart, and look down at him for actually working to make his wealth. Reading how this divide effects Adam and Lysander's relationship was very entertaining. In comparison to most MM books, there was also actual *communication* between the MCs, which I think I should learn to expect from Joanna Chambers. My only complaint would be that the story takes place over just one day, which I'm not a fan of as it takes away from the plausibility for me.

'Office Romance' by Tamara Allen

Date read: Oct 1, 2014

Rating: 3 stars

In 'Office Romance,' Foster Wetherly and Casey Gladwin are two struggling accountants in 1920s New York. The company they work for announces that in order to be more efficient, jobs would be cut across departments. Foster and Casey, being the two newest accountants, are pitted against one another to see who gets to keep his job. In competing against one another, these two near-acquaintances get to know each other, and learn that perhaps they're more alike than they think.

Overall, this story was enjoyable. We get some enemies-to-lovers action, a bit of (seemingly) unrequited attraction and a brief look into the lives of gay men in the 1920s. I would have liked a bit more interaction between the two. A few more pages to cement that the two have something beyond just sexual attraction, and how they plan on living their new lives together would have been nice. But still, a likeable story and a good start to this anthology.

Vivian says

Overall, a strong collection of historical shorts. Ranging from medieval to World War II, these stories of love highlight love's ability to break through even in dark times and how it finds a way--transcends perceived boundaries. Thoroughly enjoyed reading this anthology even though I'm not usually a fan, but there are some stars of the short form here. None of these stories are dependent on having read anything else. That said, Hawk's contribution does make references to plot points within the Whybourne & Griffin series.

Hard to pick a favorite because each author did a nice job with their time period. In fact, I won't. Rating is 3.5, but I'm rounding up to 4 stars because I enjoyed the scope of the stories and overall tone immensely.

Office Romance by Tamara Allen - 2.5 stars

Early 1920s, postwar veterans dealing with modernization and life again. While I liked the characters a lot, there were a couple leaps in the story that made me do a double take and the setting while urban was vague and I wished for more grounding.

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers - 3 stars

A Ton tale of class divide. Of course, the two men have far more in common than they ever would have imagined. Julia Quinnesque tone with the scandal sheet introduction. Very agreeable.

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles - 4 stars

Bad blood, cards and propositions in this debauched tale straddling the class structure. Very sexy and led to much smirking on my part.

Unfair in a Love and War by Kaje Harper - 4 stars

The title is perfect. Great characters in this WWII period romance. A gentle exploration of harsh realities of the time in small town America. Beautifully done.

Carousel by Jordan L. Hawke - 3 stars

After verifying that yes indeed I am perfectly placed within the Griffin & Whyborne series--Yay! Creepy story and let's face it when there's children victims involved it always adds a certain extra horror. I love carousels, antique ones do have that quality to their carvings that makes this inspiration believable. There are some spoilers so one should read this after Stormhaven.

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov - 4 stars

Haven't read The Lion of Kent yet so hope that's not a problem :/ Actually, I don't think it was. Now, I want to read it and since it's been on the TBR for ages I'll have to rectify that. Got a love/hate relationship with William right now. Great motivation, but his actions nonetheless leave you feeling just as disappointed in him as he is. A conflicted Templar seeking peace from his demons is reunited with his greatest temptation.

♣ Irish Smurfétté ♣ says

4.5 Overall Over the Moon stars on Prism Book Alliance

We've got your royalty and soldiers, ne'er-do-wells and Templar Knights, highfalutin society types and your every-day guy, my kinda guy. What do they all have in common? Conflict. Passion. Pain. Love? All of these stories are unabashedly celebratory when it comes to that last ingredient.

Each story has a rating at the end of its mini review.

Office Romance by Tamara Allen

Foster is in the Accounting department, right along Casey Gladwin. It's 1920 and their firm is looking to become more efficient, at least it thinks so.

I like the understated tone of this writing. The characters are recognizable 'types' but not overly produced. Little details point to the depth of the ability to paint a layered picture with few words.

This started out rather light, maybe even qualifying as uncomplicated. Then everything changed, truths revealed and emotion bobbed right to the surface.

The dialogue is natural and gives us more about Foster and Casey each time they talk, especially with each other. I like these two imperfect, wounded, humorous, ambitious young guys who are determined to be a lot more.

"There has to be more to life than measurable benefits. What about values we can't calculate in hours or dollars? If this is all we fought for..."

Emotional, humorous and hopeful. I enjoyed this one and proudly say I popped my Tamara Allen cherry. I will definitely be reading more from her. :)

4 ♣

Introducing Mr Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers

We have alternating points of view in this one by way of Lysander Winterbourne and Adam Freeman. This is done well and is in no way confusing.

Gee, hmmm, adults discussing and then offering and accepting apologies whenever conflict rears its complicated head? Oh, yes. This is a trait of many of Ms Chambers' characters and I appreciate it, let alone relish in the results of such behavior. The reward for conversation, sharing and working things out is so much greater than misunderstandings cloaked in false importance. It doesn't hurt that both Lysander and Adam enjoy their sporting fun by way of fencing. ;)

When two people realize they feel similarly, especially in terms of how others should and shouldn't be treated, the heart unclenches, lungs expand and smiles usually show up. Jussayin'.

I enjoy meal scenes, any scene with any food. It's an effective way to let two characters get to know each other, lower their guards and reveal some truth. Well done here, that.

Have I mentioned yet that this is sexy? Sensual? Hot? ... no? Well, it's all of those things. It's pretty damn amazing when a storyteller can make me want to do nothing but sigh contentedly in so few pages. Still... more, please??

4.5 ♣

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles

Ash, Ash, Ash, what're we going to do with you? And you, Francis Webster. You sneak, lovely devil, you.

Two pages in and I was already sold, take down the sign, here's my money.

The pacing is smart. It starts off with a bang and then a breather, a moment for us, and Ash, to contemplate the short and long of his future. I was already smiling.

Um... excuse me, I'll be... right back, in a few minutes. *clears throat* Talk amongst yourselves...

(readthisOMGreadthisnowreadthis)

4.5 ♣

Unfair in Love and War by Kaje Harper

Warren Burch.

Stefan Koehler.

I did not take a single note while reading this. I was enthralled. I read right through to the last word. No breaks, no picking up a pen and notebook, nothing.

Wow.

Wow.

Beautiful, intense, funny, painful, clever and steamy. Thatsall.

5 ♣

Carousel by Jordan L Hawk

:D <<< that's me, while I was reading this, thinking about it, writing this right now. Me :D

This is a story told from Griffin's point of view, I believe only the second time in the Whyborne universe. It means we get more depth, more emotion, more everything straight from the investigator's mouth. I like feeling him saying "my dear" to Ival. He's the only character I've ever come across from whose lips it sounds right, perfect, loving.

Love the creepy, love the supernatural, love the sweet and love the heat. This took a couple of unexpected turns with a play on a horror story classic type. One ingredient felt a bit unnecessary, we of course I would always like more of Christine, but this was undoubtedly Whyborne and Griffin and they are forever in each other's arms in my world. :D <<<< Me.

4.5 ♣

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov

Conflict. From word one we're in the middle of conflict. Land and people... two people who fit the very definition of conflict. It's never easy to do the right thing, especially when the right thing isn't perfect and yet you know it's perfect for you.

This one put an emotional stranglehold on me and wouldn't let go. Every word has purpose, digging deeper in an unrelenting onslaught of pain and passion. In the very same moment it refused to let me go, I was shown a world packed with possibilities in ways to tumble right over the cliff's edge.

William Raven and Guy de Metz. I love watching as you try to figure it all out. There's no guessing on my part as to why you both behave the way you do. Unfortunately for you, the path is not so clear. Or is it? Heh.

5 ♣

All proceeds from the purchase of this anthology will be donated to AllOut.org in celebration of LGBT History Month, October 2014.

Jordan Hawk says

Just a quick note to mention my contribution to this anthology is a brand new Whyborne & Griffin short story, "Carousel." When a child goes missing, is it a simple case of a young runaway, or are more sinister forces at work?

Aleksandr Voinov says

Contains the re-vamped, re-edited, improved "Deliverance" that I recently freed from the clutches of the now defunct Noble Romance. It's about William Raven, a templar, who thought he'd escaped his past. (Same character as in The Lion of Kent.)

ETA: Just finished the three stories I hadn't read.

Rachel says

3.6 stars rounded to 4 stars

Office Romance by Tamara Allen - 3.5 stars

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers - 5 stars

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles - 5 stars

Unfair in a Love and War by Kaje Harper - 3.5 stars

Carousel by Jordan L. Hawke - 2 stars

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov - 3 stars

Overall one of the most successful anthologies I have read.

The Charles and Chambers stories shine the most earning 5 stars and sparking my interest in the authors. Both were well written, set in the classic Regency historical setting juxtaposing nobility and successful tradesmen of no birth rite and created the right amount of UST with satisfactory resolution. At the end of last year I passed over The Magpie Lord, despite the fervor over it and the excited reviews. The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh made me stop in my tracks and rethink that decision. I am glad I did, because days after reading Charles' well written contribution to this anthology, I devoured the rest of her catalog in a few days and it has received four and five stars from me. I had read Chambers' Provoked prior to picking this book up and hadn't been "wowed" enough to carry on with the Enlightenment series, but Introducing Mr. Winterbourne has sparked my interest to keep on the look out for more of her works. (And rumor has it that Chambers has already signed a three book series that spawned from her story.).

I enjoyed the time periods Allen and Harper's stories were set in - 1904 and 1944 respectively and both set in America. It made them a refreshing take from the usual historicals set in 19th century England. However, the development of the relationships in both stories was softer (for lack of a better word) making the UST's lacking and characters mundane when compared to Charles and Chambers' flashier ones. Yet, Allen and Harper did adequately portray the settings and the struggles the men faced both social and economically. Their stories were well composed, held my interest and I am glad to have gotten a taste of their writings.

Voinov is one writer I always like to keep my eyes on - especially when is writing solo. A couple years ago I did read *The Lion of Kent* and it was a fair three star for me, as is his latest addition to the story. I am not sure if it is the time period of the Crusades or my lack of connection to William's fervor to be "righteous", but I couldn't be as excited about this story as I wanted to be for a Voinov work. As is all his works, it is well written with always the right mix of story, sex and tension, but I think whether the reader is able to connect or like these characters is what will make or break it for them.

I had never read anything previously by Jordan L. Hawke and this contribution to the anthology has not inspired me to read anything further by her. I understand that this was a short story set after her *Whyborne and Griffin* book one, but other than being a creepy, ghost story I felt that it offered little to the anthology and what appeal it would have for M/M readers only applied to those who are fans of the series it was from. There was virtually no romance and no build up or real explanation to the characters relationship. I think it was not the wisest for her to have contributed this story rather than an original work not affiliated with a series of hers to the anthology.

So in all, what I got out of this anthology was a writer who I wasn't familiar with and now love, a writer who has rekindled my interest in them, two short stories I love, three I am entertained by and one that allowed me a taste of an author's writing, which though I didn't care for, I appreciate *and* for purchasing stories I wanted to read, I also made a contribution to AllOut.org (as the proceeds of this book go directly to them!).

(And for those who loved this anthology, stop over and thank Susan as the brain child and organization for this was hers and we as readers, along with AllOut get to reap the benefits of her hard work and thoughtfulness.)

Kaje Harper says

I'm really looking forward to the other stories in this anthology when it comes out on Oct 1st. I mean, Aleksandr Voinov, K.J. Charles, Jordan L. Hawk, Joanna Chambers and Tamara Allen?! It's like someone asked me whose historicals I enjoy the most, and put them all together.

My own story is a 24,000 word World War II home front romance, set in a small Wisconsin town, shortly after D-Day. It was so much fun to research, and even more fun to write. And then I get to share a cover with my all-star line-up. :D

Ann says

This book represents every reason I love reading historicals . . .

Office Romance by Tamara Allen

Sweet, subtle and simple. I loved the language, this is a perfect example of why I love reading historical stories. The language had me visualizing the setting, the characters and the mood so well. Casey had me completely charmed with his brave face and sunny attitude in the face of all he was dealing with. Of course,

you don't know any of that when the story begins, you have an inkling that more is there, but that comes later. These two have lived through the horror of war and now are asked to metaphorically battle it out in the office. Their story is beautifully constructed and I could feel the tension they were dealing with in the face of office cutbacks. They've both had enough of fighting and I loved how their attitudes evolved when they got to know one another. Foster is deeper in self-preservation mode, so it took him a little longer, but Casey was a perfect balance for him. It ended on a positive and realistic note for the time and I couldn't have been happier for Casey and Foster.

Introducing Mr. Winterbourne by Joanna Chambers

Fencing and fawn colored breeches FTW! I love the setup for the HEA on this one. Love it! Adam is so very stoic and strong while Lysander is so much more than his pretty package. Adam is surprised at the unexpected humility and heart of Lysander and it was so sweet reading their courting. Which it totally was. Of course it wasn't to either of them at the time, but once you get to the end and think back on all the little "moments" of their day, you can see it plain as the bulge in a pair of breeches. The "moments" are what made this story for me. The little sweet and innocent things, like when they get swoony from using their "given names" and the dance lesson. Oh, the dance lesson! They were only together one day, but it was insta lust/love done right.

The Ruin of Gabriel Ashleigh by KJ Charles

"On the morning of his destruction, Lord Gabriel Ashleigh woke up with Satan's own head."

I fell in love with the first sentence and the love affair continued throughout the story. Lord Gabriel's life is in ruin because he's a spoiled pretty boy with no thought beyond the next party. He's given one chance of redemption by a not-so-friendly adversary. Yes please! This one really did the "is he?" or "isn't he?" thing well. I love that tension before one of them finally says SOMETHING and puts all their cards on the table, in this case, literally. There was a decent amount of backstory that explained Webster's attitude well and Ash's overall cluelessness. Without it, Webster wouldn't have been a particularly likable character, but with it, I could sympathize and connect with him. I wanted him to win this. It also ratcheted the sexual intensity up a few zillion notches. Supremely sexy and really quite sweet in the end.

Unfair in Love and War by Kaje Harper

This one was both painful and beautiful to read. It read true, it read hopeful and hopeless in the turn of a page. This is the longest offering in the anthology and I'm so glad. These two characters had a lot of story to tell and to have any less for them would have been wrong. Both Warren and Stefan have lived a lot of pain before they meet. Warren is a pretty open book and I really respected his strength and attitude. Stefan is treated with both caution and callousness at the hands of the townspeople. He's Swiss, but his accent is thick and Germanic plus he looks the epitome of the blonde and blue eyed ideal of the German army. During war time this is a dangerous description and Stefan is a man sage beyond his years. He deals with the harassment with a stoic patience that belies his loneliness.

The anger and frustration Warren felt on Stefan's behalf was noble and his protectiveness was quite sweet. Stefan has a trunk load of secrets and as the two become closer and move from being convenient to one another in the stress release department to something more, it's obvious something has to give and Stefan's story has to be told. And good gravy, what a story. It really gave the war a face. The effect on the young soldiers, regardless of what side they fought on is heartbreaking no matter what role they played in battle and this story captured that perfectly. Thank God for the epilogue, it was a complete necessity to finish Warren

and Stefan's story. This is one that will stick with me. Perfectly done and highly recommended.

Carousel by Jordan L. Hawk

Loved it! Loved it, loved it, loved it! I was so excited to start this. I'm such a huge fan of this series and every little nugget I can get about Whyborn and Griffin I am on like Christine on a mummy. This was soooooo creepy and Jordan Hawk writes creepy soooooo well! She can take a sweet and innocent childhood memory and in a brief sentence horrify the hell out of you with it. The absolutely charming repartee between Whyborn and Griffin is perfectly swoony and balances the story just right. Given that most of the time, their tales are told from Whyborn's perspective, reading from Griffin's view reminds why he will always be at the top of my list of book boyfriends.

Deliverance by Aleksandr Voinov

Knights and chivalry and honor and sin, what a great setup. I loved this story, it was a frustrating struggle that I can only hope will end as well as Guy demands it to. William is a hot mess of confusion and given the time period and where he's committed his allegiance it's no wonder. Fate drops his former lover Guy into his world and everything William thought he had pushed beneath his holy robes comes rearing back to life. His story was told so well I could feel his torment and I really need more of their story. It ends on a very cautious, but realistic HFN. Anything else would not have read true and I have to respect that the author ended it there. There is a lot more story there to tell and I would love to read it.
