

He's about to  
deliver the perfect  
Christmas...

# Secret Santa

Scarlett Bailey

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## About the Book

A self-confessed Christmas queen, Sue Montaigne prides herself on organising the annual nativity pageant in her small Cornish village of Poldore.

But this year, what with having to deal with the repairs on Castle House after it was wrecked by a terrible storm, training a new – and frankly flighty – Virgin Mary and managing a Joseph who is allergic to sheep, she is distinctly lacking a little bit of ‘me time’.

And then there are the auditions for the new Santa. But nothing prepares her for the beautiful man who turns up, a twinkle in his eye and a promise to make her Christmas dreams come true...

## About the Author

Scarlett Bailey has loved writing stories since childhood. Before writing novels she worked as a waitress, cinema usherette and bookseller. Passionate about old movies, Scarlett loves nothing more than spending a wet Sunday afternoon watching her favourite films back-to-back with large quantities of chocolate.

Scarlett also writes novels under her real name Rowan Coleman. Currently she lives in Hertfordshire with her husband, five children and a very large collection of beautiful shoes.

To find out more, visit her website at:  
[www.rowancoleman.co.uk](http://www.rowancoleman.co.uk), Facebook or Twitter:  
[@rowancoleman](https://twitter.com/rowancoleman) and [@scarlettbailey](https://twitter.com/scarlettbailey)

Also by Scarlett Bailey:

*Just For Christmas*

*Married by Christmas*

*Santa Maybe* (digital short)

*The Night Before Christmas*

Writing as Rowan Coleman:

*The Memory Book*

*Lessons in Laughing Out Loud*

*The Happy Home for Broken Hearts*

*The Baby Group*

*Woman Walks Into A Bar*

*River Deep*

*After Ever After*

*Growing Up Twice*

*The Accidental Mother*

*The Accidental Wife*

*The Accidental Family*

***Praise for Scarlett Bailey:***

‘A delicious Christmas read!’ Trisha Ashley

‘Festive fun from the Queen of Christmas chick lit’  
*Fabulous Magazine, Sun on Sunday*

‘I LOVE it! It was funny, romantic and the perfect book to  
snuggle up with’ Scarlett Bailey does it again! - Miranda  
Dickinson

‘Endearing and funny, we loved this gorgeously  
Christmassy romcom’ *Closer*

‘A light, fun and fast-paced chunk of chortlesome chick-  
lit’ *Heat*

‘an awesome Christmassy read with a lot of twists and  
turns ... you can’t put it down’ Chicklit Club

‘Perfect for the festive holiday, a story of love and  
romance and a Christmas Eve wedding gone wrong . . .  
Great fun’ *Daily Record*

# SECRET SANTA

Rowan Coleman, writing as Scarlett  
Bailey



22 December



'Jago, you don't really mean it, do you?' Sue Montaigne, one-time aristocrat, and self-appointed pillar of the community sat down on the bar stool next to the old man, who stared implacably into his pint of something, well, brown and murky.

'I do.' He nodded. 'I been doing it for fifty years, man and boy. I retired from the boats when I was seventy, and now I think it's the right time for me to retire from this too. I'm eighty-six, young Susan, and I don't care if your family used to once own my family, I'm not a serf no more. Plus there's my hip. And some of those kids these days, they're hefty. There's no a nice way of putting it. Of course when I was a boy, we were lucky if we got to eat every day never mind a grotto giving toys away like it was ...'

'Christmas?' Sue suggested.

'You know what I mean,' Jago grumbled.

'But, Jago ...' Sue gestured to Lucy behind the bar to refresh his glass. It was well known in Poldore that Jago was always a lot less grumpy after a pint or two. 'It's December already, it's December the twenty-second in fact! Which means only two days until we open the grotto, where am I going to find a new Santa in two days?'

'And that's another thing,' Jago said. 'Santa? Since when did we all become Americans? I was Father Christmas, man and boy. I'm not a Santa, it just don't feel natural.'

Sue thought for a moment. She was well aware that once she had her mind focused on something she could be a little overbearing, even forceful, and that some people didn't think that was particularly her *best* personality trait.