



## Christmas Stories

*Diana Secker Tesdell (Editor) , Charles Dickens (Contributor) , Nikolai Gogol (Contributor) , Arthur Conan Doyle (Contributor) , Anthony Trollope (Contributor) , Leo Tolstoy (Contributor) , Anton Chekhov (Contributor) , Willa Cather (Contributor) , more... O. Henry (Contributor) , Saki (Contributor) , Vladimir Nabokov (Contributor) , Damon Runyon (Contributor) , Evelyn Waugh (Contributor) , Elizabeth Bowen (Contributor) , John Cheever (Contributor) , Truman Capote (Contributor) , John Updike (Contributor) , Muriel Spark (Contributor) , Grace Paley (Contributor) , Alice Munro (Contributor) , Richard Ford (Contributor) ...less*

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Now joining Everyman's Library—the most extensive and distinguished collectible library of the world's greatest works—is an appealing new collection in a small Pocket Classics format, perfect for gift giving and reading pleasure.

*Christmas Stories* is a treasury of short fiction by great writers of the past two centuries—from Dickens and Tolstoy to John Updike and Alice Munro. As a literary subject, Christmas has inspired everything from intimate domestic dramas to fanciful flights of the imagination, and the full range of its expression is represented in this wonderfully engaging anthology.

Goblins frolic in the graveyard of an early Dickens tale and a love-struck ghost disrupts a country estate in Elizabeth Bowen's "Green Holly." The plight of the less fortunate haunts Chekhov's "Vanka" and Willa Cather's "The Burglar's Christmas" but takes a boisterously comic turn in Damon Runyon's "Dancing Dan's Christmas" and in John Cheever's "Christmas Is a Sad Season for the Poor." From Vladimir Nabokov's intensely moving story of a father's grief in "Christmas" to Truman Capote's hilarious yet heartbreakng "A Christmas Memory," from Grace Paley's Jewish girl starring in the Christmas pageant in "The Loudest Voice" to the dysfunctional family ski holiday in Richard Ford's "Crèche"—each of the stories gathered here is imbued with Christmas spirit (of one kind or another), and all are richly and indelibly entertaining.

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## Christmas Stories Details

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## From Reader Review Christmas Stories for online ebook

### Amanda says

I was similarly disappointed with this like I was Cat Stories by this publisher, though slightly less so this time. Christmas at Thompson Hall was my favorite short story. There were 3 or 4 short stories I didn't like because they didn't capture the Christmas spirit well and were too depressing. I also really liked the stories by Vladimir Nabokov and Saki and want to read more by them. I wanted this collection to get me in the Christmas spirit and explore the good things about Christmas. But this is a collection of short stories by famous authors that have something to do with Christmas or snowy winters. I won't be trying anymore of these anthologies.

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### Callum McLaughlin says

My low rating for this doesn't necessarily reflect how much I enjoyed the stories that I actually liked in here. The trouble is that there are probably only about 5 stories I could say I properly liked, and out of 20, that's not a great ratio of success.

In fairness, it's an anthology rather than a collection, so I fully expected not to get on with every writer's style, themes, etc. However, my biggest problem is simply that I wouldn't class many of these as 'Christmas Stories' in the first place, and I don't think it's a coincidence that the ones I tended to enjoy most were the ones with the most significant tie-in to the season the book proclaimed to explore, but largely didn't.

Perhaps it's just me, but with a name and a cover like those on the front of this book, I expected most of the stories to be full of cosy settings, festive cheer, and the warm fuzzies. In reality, we get 20 stories that are mostly the complete opposite, most of which at best happen to be set near Christmastime, with one or two passing references to the day or season itself. The truth is that the vast majority of the stories in here could have been set at any time of the year and no details would have changed. As with Everyman's Ghost Stories anthology, I think therefore that the main issue I had with this book was that the editor played it a little too fast and loose with the concept they were given, and that the content simply wasn't what I was looking for from a festive read.

That said, it was worth picking up for the discovery of two authors I hadn't read before - Willa Cather and John Cheever - whose stories titled *The Burglar's Christmas* and *Christmas is a Sad Time for the Poor*, respectively, were easily the standouts for me. Cather's offering focussed on the unbreakable nature of a mother's love in wonderful prose, whilst Cheever's portrayed the idea that there's always someone worse off than yourself, no matter how bad things seem, and that the spirit of generosity inspired by Christmas should not be confined to the festive season. I'm intrigued to try more from both of them.

The other stories I enjoyed were *Christmas* by Vladimir Nabokov, *Christmas Fugue* by Muriel Spark, and *Christmas at Thompson Hall* by Anthony Trollope (though it did fizzle out a bit at the end).

So, whilst there are certainly gems to be found in here, it simply didn't deliver what I felt it promised overall, and as such, felt a little underwhelming.

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## **BeParticular says**

I'm having a hard time putting together a review of this collection. There are some good stories here and excellent writers, yet, as a collection, I didn't really like the book. Most of the stories are melancholy and I do wish the selection was more balanced. But Christmas IS melancholy for plenty of people and I read my share of "unhappy" material. So what is my problem? Perhaps it is that while an individual story or two stayed with me after reading, mostly the stories became more and more similar and less and less memorable as I moved through the book. I guess that having a "theme" may have diluted the intensity of any single story. At least for me.

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## **Jeffrey says**

At this time of year I naturally turn to Christmas-themed books and stories, and this wonderful collection is a perfect choice.

CHRISTMAS STORIES is a treasury of short fiction by great writers of the last two centuries presented chronologically, featuring the works of Chekhov, Dickens and Tolstoy as well as those of such modern writers as Richard Ford, Alice Munro and John Updike.

From tales of goblins and ghosts to comedic turns by Damon Runyon and John Cheever, this is an ideal choice for the holiday season.

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## **Pam says**

this what kind of hit or miss but i'm glad i read it none the less, i like using short stories to become better acquainted with classic authors i haven't read before, i'd say my favorite stories were:

a christmas memory

christmas at thompson hall (so funny!!)

the blue carbuncle

bella fleace gave a party

i'd say there were only one or two stories in this that i thought were a complete waste of time but luckily they seemed to be the shortest ones, overall i really enjoyed it!

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## **Allie B says**

I liked the more traditionally festive stories - particularly by the Russian authors, Conan Doyle and Dickens - but most of the others weren't Christmassy. Some of the stories were just set at Christmas but didn't really reflect the spirit of the season. Quite odd altogether - would give it 2.5 stars. Not a patch on 'A Literary Christmas' by The British Library which I have kept to read some of the stories again.

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### **Kirsty says**

I adore the Everyman collections, and purchased this to read during December 2017. There are such lovely, varied tales here; some are incredibly strange and did not personally appeal to me, but others are absolutely wonderful. The stories collected here are by authors as diverse as Anthony Trollope, Nikolai Gogol, Willa Cather, Truman Capote, Evelyn Waugh, and Alice Munro. Some of my favourites were included, and others were entirely new to me. Many of the stories oddly have rather tenuous links to Christmas, and I would not use the word 'festive' to describe the collection. If you're looking for a very mixed, and not entirely seasonable, selection of stories, look no further.

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### **Matt Good says**

I finished this book after putting it down half-way through a few years ago (something to do with being too superstitious to read a book of Christmas stories after Christmas Day). Because the book is arranged chronologically, the stories I read this year are from the last one hundred years or so. A review of the first half reminded me of what stuck out then too...The Gogol story, my first, was long and fascinating. I will be reading more. A very bizarre Runyon story has gangsters speaking only in the present tense...even when talking about the past. Somehow I had lived this long without being exposed to Capote's "A Christmas Memory", which is phenomenal. Re-reading Cheever's "Christmas is a Sad Season for the Poor" was a pleasure. And Alice Munro's "The Turkey Season" is incredible, if not particularly uplifting for a book of holiday stories. A great collection in a great series from Everyman's Library (sorry for the engendered language or my favorite editions of books). I received "London Stories" and "Stories of Fatherhood" for Christmas - I hope they're as well selected as these stories.

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### **Bonnie says**

I always have this book out around the holidays. My favorite story is "A Christmas Memory," by Truman Capote. This is his finest story and his writing is so perfect that it makes me cry every time. This collection also includes stories by Charles Dickens, Arthur Conan Doyle, Anthony Trollope, and John Cheever and John Updike. This is such an enjoyable thing to have out to reference throughout the holiday.

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### **Walt says**

If you desire a well-rounded Christmas read, this collection fits the bill. It features Dickens' "The Story of the Goblins Who Stole a Sexton," that reads like a run-up to "A Christmas Carol"; Gogol's "The Night before Christmas"; Sherlock Holmes's "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle"; Trollope's "Christmas at Thompson Hall"; and many, many others, twenty in all, including of more modern time, Alice Munro's "The Turkey Season".

My favorites among the stories were Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory" and Nabakov's "Christmas"

for serious Christmas themes and, for fun and a good laugh, "Christmas at Thompson Hall" And John Cheever's "Christmas Is a Sad Season for the Poor".

While many of these stories are in the public domain, the book's cover is probably worth the price of purchase.

These stories are more than capable of confirming your Christmas goodwill, Christmas frivolity, Christmas anxiety, and give you a Christmas broken heart. You might want to check it out.

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### **Diane Barnes says**

I'm not usually a Christmas story reader as such, other than Capote's "A Christmas Memory", and it's next to impossible to avoid Dickens classic at this time of year. But I couldn't resist this little pocket classic when I saw it at a library sale. It seemed to call me this season, so I settled in for a read. Everyone is here, all the greats: Dickens (with a goblin tale on Christmas Eve instead of Ebenezer Scrooge), Nabokov, Trollope, with a hilarious story of mistaken identity, Alice Munro, who can't seem to write a bad short story, and many others, all with Christmas themes smart, sad, funny, but no sappy Hallmark treatments. For me, this is a good time of year for short stories, what with all the running around shopping, entertaining, cooking, extra hours at work. Time to read is at a premium, and concentration is hard to come by, so quality stories by quality writers is a valuable book. Very enjoyable.

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### **Noelle says**

Love this book will bring it out every year

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### **Vanessa says**

My initial plan was to read this collection on the week coming up to Christmas and on Christmas Day/Boxing Day, but I ended up reading most of it in the last two days of the year. Oh well!

I do love a good Everyman Short Story collection, and this one was just as unusual as some of the others I've read. The spread of authors is good from here: you have everyone from Charles Dickens and Anthony Trollope to Alice Munro and John Cheever, so a great selection. However, as with any short story collections that contains stories from multiple authors of varying styles, my enjoyment of the selected stories was mixed.

My favourites in this collection for sure were *The Blue Carbuncle* by Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Burglar's Christmas* by Willa Cather, *A Chapparal Christmas Gift* by O. Henry, *Christmas Fugue* by Muriel Spark, and *The Turkey Season* by Alice Munro. There were a couple of stories in here that I really really disliked, namely the ones by Nikolai Gogol, Leo Tolstoy (sorry Russian authors!), and Elizabeth Bowen. And then there were some that were just middling.

My main issue with this collection though was that a lot of the stories I felt had an INCREDIBLY tenuous link to Christmas in general. However, that made it a little bit easier to read the collection after the holidays had ended, so all in all it wasn't too bad! Overall, not my favourite collection from Everyman, but worth

checking out if you like Christmas-themed story collections.

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### **Kirsten says**

This is a wonderful little collection of Christmas stories in a beautiful package. There are British, Russian, and American stories. There are stories with spirit and stories with spirits. There are sad stories, bittersweet stories, and quite funny stories. There are stories from Dickens and Evelyn Waugh, and Alice Munro.

A great way to spend Christmas Day while drinking tea and listening to Christmas carols.

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### **Behrooz says**

It was a Christmas present. Was ok. a few good stories.

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