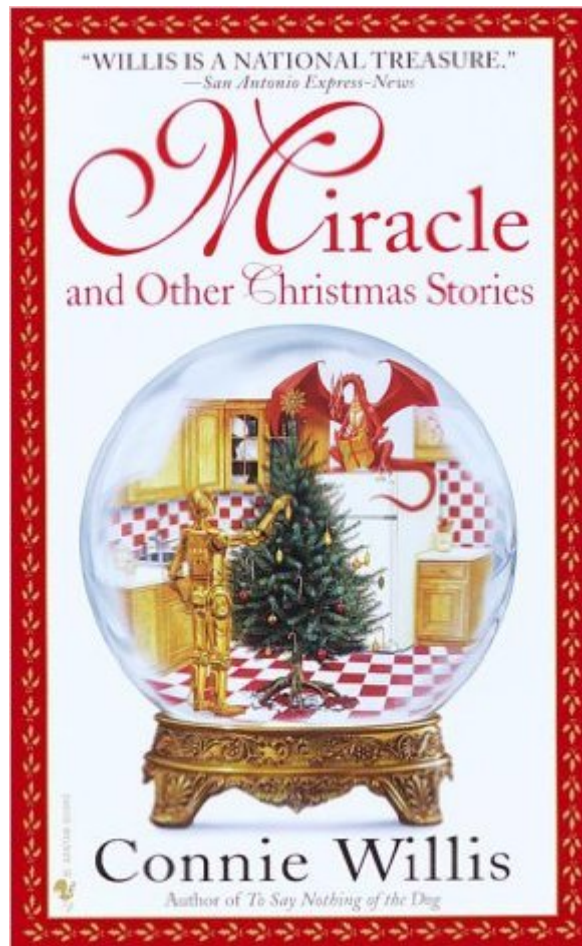


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Miracle And Other Christmas Stories



Synopsis

The winner of multiple Hugo and Nebula Awards, Connie Willis capture the timeless essence of generosity and goodwill in this magical collection of Christmas stories. These eight tales—two of which have never before been published—boldly reimagine the stories of Christmas while celebrating the power of love and compassion. This enchanting treasury includes: "Miracle," in which a young woman's carefully devised plans to find romance go awry when her guardian angel shows her the true meaning of love; "In Coppelius's Toyshop," where a jaded narcissist finds himself trapped in a crowded toy store at Christmastime; "Epiphany," in which three modern-day wisemen embark on a quest unlike any they've ever experienced; "Inn," where a choir singer gives shelter to a homeless man and his pregnant wife—only to learn later that there's much more to the couple than meets the eye. And more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have just finished "Miracle and Other Christmas Stories" today and I must say that "Epiphany" is one of the best short stories I have read by Ms. Willis (and that's saying a lot!). I find this story, along with my other favorite Willis story "Samaritan" found in the collection "Fire Watch", confirm that faith/spirituality and speculative fiction do mix, and quite well at that. Sure, some of the stories are predictable ("Inn" and "In Coppelius's Toyshop") but "Adaptation" was a fresh approach to an old and well-told story. Ms. Willis has the ability to create characters that live and breathe. By the end of the stories, you feel you know the characters because they are us, or our neighbors, or co-workers, or family...or someone we wish we knew. I have to dismiss someone's previous review

of this collection as "shallow". On the contrary, there is a richness and depth to Ms. Willis and her work, which continues to grow with each new book and story.

Connie Willis is, without a doubt, one of the finest writers of sci fi short stories out there right now. Almost every short story by her is really a delight to read, and this collection doesn't fail to meet that standard. What kind of stories can you expect here? A take off on the movie *Miracle on 34th Street*, a view of Revelation coming as a carnival, and many more. The only story in this collection that was not a perfect 10 from my point of view was *Cat's Paw*. I just could not get fully into the story and it was a little long for this collection. Willis speaks in the introduction of her love of the Christmas season and this really shines through in all of these stories. My favorite story in the collection is the final story about Revelation. It was one of the most insightful touching stories I have read this year. In addition, if you normally read sci fi and would like to expose friends and family to sci fi, this is an excellent and gentle introductory collection and makes a convenient Christmas gift. No really bizarre aliens, no "hard" sci fi edge, just enjoyable reading. Great for sci fi aficionados and those new to sci fi as well!

While I've only just received up my copy of *MIRACLE*, I've read many of the stories in it, in Willis' yearly Asimov's stories. Let me just say this: Connie Willis deserves much more fame than she currently receives, and the Christmas tales she has produced over the past few years are proof of why. The woman is a master of character, a great humorist, and a wonderful writer. Read this book, then go on and read her spectacular *BELLWETHER*.

Connie Willis offers readers an early holiday gift with this wonderful short story collection. I admit that I found this book in the sci-fi section, but I honestly think it transcends that. Yes, it's got some stories that deal with themes common to science-fiction and have sci-fi elements, but it's more than that. There is a holiday themed mystery, an examination of the original Christmas story and even a story that sets out to prove why Willis thinks "*Miracle on 34th Street*" is a superior holiday film to "*It's A Wonderful Life*." But what sets the collection apart from being just a collection of sci-fi stories with a Christmas theme is that Willis offers stories that must take place at Christmas. As she states in her introduction, it's hard to re-invent the wheel when it comes to holiday stories and she doesn't attempt to do so. Instead, she takes the conventional stories and gives them her own unique twist making them entertaining and magical at the same time. I sat down to read this collection not feeling very much in the spirit of the season. But in reading these engaging and intelligent stories, I soon

found myself feeling a bit more Christmas-y. If you're feeling a bit burned out by the holiday season, pick up this collection and give any of the stories a try. I guarantee they'll have you whistling a Christmas tune in no time.

I first read a Connie Willis story in the late-70's SF magazine Galileo. Now, some twenty years later, when asked to name my favorite author I answer Connie Willis. The Christmas stories in "Miracle.." give me eight more examples to support this answer. These stories are entertaining (fun!) and thought-provoking. Connie has it right! I know that if the "second coming" were to occur at my church, the congregation down the street would cry either foul or fraud. The only problem I have after finishing a Connie Willis book is deciding what to read next. After finishing "Miracle..." I took Connie's advice and started re-reading some of the Broadway stories of Damon Runyon. Thanks for the present, Connie.

I've never read any of Connie Willis' Christmas stories before I bought this book. In fact, the only other book of hers that I have read is "To Say Nothing of the Dog." I enjoyed that so much that I thought I might enjoy "Miracle and Other Christmas Stories." And I did. Immensely! I particularly liked "Miracle" and "Newsletter." If only I could write a newsletter as off-the-wall as the one in this book! Of course, as soon as I read the term "pod people" - and knew exactly what the author was talking about - I began to wonder if I've seen one two many science fiction movies. And she also just happened to have placed three of my favorite Christmas movies on her list. Talk about good taste.

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