



Christmas Stories

By **Diana Secker Tesdell** (Editor)

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 Truman Capote's hilarious yet heartbreaking "A Christmas Memory" to 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.

Available at Wayne in Fiction under "CHRISTMAS"

Politically Correct Holiday Stories

By **James Finn Garner**

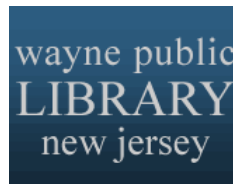
Holiday tales have long delighted and entertained us, but until now they've always been burdened with society's skewed values and mores. Stories that reinforce the stifling class system (Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*), legitimize the stereotype of a merry, over-weight patriarchal oppressor (Santa Claus in *The Night Before Christmas*), and justify the domestication and subjugation of wild animals (*Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*) abound in the literature and lore of this season. Now James Finn Garner has stepped in to revise and improve these familiar tales to free our social consciousness from the ghost of prejudice past. From the newly revised "Nutcracker" to "Frosty the Person of Snow," these stories rekindle the true holiday spirit and redefine the idea of "good will to all men" to include womyn, pre-adults, and companion animals as well.

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Ice Harvest By Scott Phillips

Everywhere you look, trashy people are doing trashy things in this darkly delicious debut comic thriller. Set in the middle of a Christmas Eve blizzard in 1979 Wichita, the novel opens with lawyer-turned-petty-mobster Charlie Arglist marking time before an important meeting with his shady partner, Vic Cavanaugh. After this meeting he plans to leave Wichita hurriedly with a load of cash and, presumably, the enmity of its rightful owner, Bill Gerard, the local head of a larger regional crime syndicate. Charlie and Vic run a string of strip bars around Wichita for Gerard, from which they have been skimming cash on the sly. But Charlie, who sets out to visit all the outposts in his "empire" one last time, lets a drunken spirit of Yuletide sentimentality (or maybe spite) trigger an unprecedented (and therefore highly visible) string of improvisations. He comps some of his dancers' shakedown money, causing a riot at a club; he unwisely lets his would-be girlfriend in on one of Gerard's blackmail scams. Then he and his ex-brother-in-law crash the Christmas gathering of their cumulative ex-family, setting off a whole new string of disasters. For Charlie there is only the imminent future of his escape with Gerard's money, and it isn't until he discovers a fresh corpse buried behind Vic's empty house that he realizes that his future isn't what it used to be.

Available at Wayne on Audio-CD



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Bah! Humbug...



Not everyone is a fan of the **Christmas Season...**

Here is a selection of books reflecting that sentiment!



Every Person on the Planet: An Only Somewhat Anxiety-Filled Tale for the Holidays

By Bruce Eric Kaplan

Edmund and Rosemary lead quiet lives in their Brooklyn apartment with their cat and their neuroses. One day, despite their preference for solitude, they inexplicably decide to throw a party. They feel obliged to invite so many people they do not particularly like that they finally decide they might as well invite everybody in the world. So they do, and most of the world's population shows up. Author and illustrator Kaplan was not only a writer for *Seinfeld* and *Six Feet Under*, but he is also a cartoonist for the *New Yorker*. Heavily illustrated with cartoons on almost every page, *Every Person* is like a children's storybook written for adults. Though Kaplan engages in surreal exaggeration for comic effect, Edmund and Rosemary's soiree is all too recognizably real. Party givers will empathize with the hosts' worries that their fete will turn into a disaster; party goers will admire Kaplan's keen observations on social behavior. Kaplan's cartoons turn adults into appealingly childlike figures, and he has a talent for visual understatement that fits the dry manner in which he describes the absurdities of this gathering of six billion in one New York apartment. Anyone who has ever given a party should be delighted by this charming, humorous book.

Available at Wayne in Fiction

Holidays On Ice

By David Sedaris

This collection presents six of David Sedaris' most profound Christmas stories into one slender volume perfect for use as a last-minute coaster or ice scraper. This drinking man's companion can be enjoyed by the warmth of a raging fire, the glow of a brilliantly decorated tree, or even the backseat of a van or police car. It should be read with your eyes, felt with your heart, and heard only when spoken to. It should, in short, behave much like a book. And, oh, what a book it is!

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction

The Corrections

By Jonathan Franzen

The story's set in the Midwest, New York City, and Philadelphia, and focused on the tortured interrelationships of the five adult Lamberts. Patriarch Alfred, a retired railroad engineer, drifts in and out of hallucinatory lapses inflicted by Parkinson's, while stubbornly clinging to passé conservative ideals. His wife Enid, a compulsive peacemaker with just a hint of Edith Bunker in her frazzled "niceness," nervously subverts Alfred's stoicism, while lobbying for "one last Christmas" gathering of her scattered family at their home in the placid haven of St. Jude. Eldest son Gary, a Philadelphia banker, is an unhappily married "materialist"; sister Denise is a rapidly aging thirtysomething chef rebounding from a bad marriage and unresolvable relationships with male and female lovers; and younger son Chip—the most abrasively vivid figure here—is an unemployable former teacher and failed writer whose misadventures in Lithuania, where he's been impulsively hired "to produce a profit-making website" for a financially moribund nation, slyly counterpoint the spectacle back home of an American family, and culture, falling steadily apart.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction

Consumer Rites: The Buying and Selling of American Holidays

By Leigh Schmidt

Slogans such as "Let's put Christ back into Christmas" or "Jesus is the Reason for the Season" hold an appeal to Christians who oppose the commercializing of events they hold sacred. However, through a close look at the rise of holidays in the United States, Leigh Schmidt show us that commercial appropriations of these occasions were as religious in form as they were secular. The rituals of America's holiday bazaar that emerged in the nineteenth century offered a luxuriant merger of the holy and the profane—a heady blend of fashion and faith, merchandising and gift-giving, profits and sentiments, all celebrations of a devout consumption. In this richly illustrated book, which captures both the blessings and ballyhoo of American holiday observances for the mid-eighteenth century through the twentieth, the author offers a reassessment of the "consumer rites" that various social critics have long decried for their spiritual emptiness and banal sentimentality.

Available at Wayne in Non-Fiction at 394.269 SCH

**NO SHOPPING
NO PRESENTS
NO GUILT!**

An Idiot Girl's Christmas: True Tales for the Top of the Naughty List

By Laurie Notaro

*IT'S LAURIE NOTARO'S HOLIDAY HANDBOOK.
PREPARE TO LAUGH YOUR TINSEL OFF.*

It's the most wonderful-and most dreadful-season of the year, when boxes of truffles attack your thighs, drunken holiday revelers stay long past their welcome, and your grandmother has conniptions at the department store over the price of hand lotion. Welcome to Laurie Notaro's Christmastime where she shares the sidesplitting daily disasters of the holidays, like finding herself on emergency feminine product recon at midnight on Christmas Eve; surrendering to the inevitable Horrible Gift Parade by simply asking for holiday dish towels and giant white underpants from Sears; battling the morons in line at the Seventh Circle of Hell, otherwise known as the do-it-yourself craft store; and trying to live down her reputation as the Most Unfun Christmas Party Guest Ever, due to an unfortunate misunderstanding involving a fake overdose and emergency paramedics.

So whether you find yourself at the Dull and Smart Party or the Raucous and Stupid Party this holiday season, you'll always know where to find Laurie—just follow the chocolate trail over to the cheese platter. She'll be the one dialing the cops.

Available at Wayne in Non-Fiction at 814.6 NOT

