



# A Dog Named Christmas

*Greg Kincaid*

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## **A Dog Named Christmas** Greg Kincaid

In this heartwarming novel, author Greg Kincaid tells the tender story of how one very special dog changed the lives of his adoptive family and an entire town forever.

*Todd, they always want you to adopt a dog. That's what they do. Besides, we don't need another animal around here, and most definitely not a dog.*

When Todd McCray, a developmentally challenged young man still living on his parents' Kansas farm, hears that a local animal shelter is seeking temporary homes for its dogs during the days leading to Christmas, he knows exactly what he wants for the holidays. His father objects, but Todd's persistence quickly wins out. Soon the McCrays are the short-term foster family for a lovable pooch the young man names *Christmas*.

But what about all the other dogs who will be forced to spend the Yuletide season in cages? In the days that follow, Todd uses his special gifts of persuasion to encourage his hometown to participate in the Adopt a Dog for Christmas Program. What follows from his small act of kindness will teach his family, and his community, about peace on earth and good will toward men and animals.

## **A Dog Named Christmas Details**

Date : Published November 4th 2008 by Doubleday Books (first published 2008)

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Author : Greg Kincaid

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# **From Reader Review A Dog Named Christmas for online ebook**

## **Diane says**

A Dog Named Christmas, by Greg Kincaid is a uplifting book just in time for the holidays.

Todd McCray is a developmentally challenged young man who learns that the local animal shelter needs some temporary homes, over the holidays for its dogs since the shelter will be terribly short staffed. He begs his parents to allow him to select a dog to care for over the holidays. Todd's dad is reluctant, as he had lost two special dogs years ago and does not want the family to experience the pain he experienced.

Well although it comes as no surprise, Todd does get to select a dog, which he names Christmas. Despite the lack of a surprise element in this sweet little book (fewer than 200 pages), the book is more about the message: how small acts of kindness can make such a difference to both humans and the animals as well.

A Recommended read for the holidays or it might make a sweet gift for an animal lover.

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## **Ronda Tutt says**

I wish I could give this book 10 Stars! I highly recommend this book to get you into the wintery Christmas spirit. Even though it is only 148 pages, it is full of love, happiness, and lots of laughter. There were several places in the book where I couldn't help but laugh out loud.

Read and find out about George McCray (vietnam veteran), his wife Mary Ann (High School Teacher), and their special son Todd whom they had 10 years later after raising 4 other children - Todd may be retarded but he has other special talents with animals that make up for his slowness.

Lets just say that the Dog Named Christmas changes their lives.

All I can say is that I will be reading this book over again ever year around Christmas.

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## **Ginger says**

I loved it! This book contains two things that are near and dear to my heart: a special needs child/young man and dogs. Todd, the young man who is a high functioning special needs child reminded me so much of the son of a friend of mine. They both have a way with dogs which warms my heart to see.

Todd involves the whole community in a "shelter a dog for Christmas" program for the town's animal shelter. I have to say Christmas (the black lab) definitely taught a few people some wonderful life lessons.

I'm going to be hunting for the rest of the books in the series. This is definitely going on my favs for this year as well as my all-time favorites.

Highly recommend!

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### **D. Carson Davis says**

I was thinking this book would be similar to a 200 page Hallmark movie, but I was pleasantly surprised. It has more heart than expected and makes for a good holiday read.

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### **MaryG2E says**

George, father of Todd who has a mild intellectual disability, gives his son the gift of minding a rescued dog from the local animal shelter for the holidays. As George points out, while Todd may not have the usual traits associated with normally developed people, he has his own unique qualities. One of these is his affinity with animals. A black Labrador cross, given the name Christmas by Todd, comes into the McCray household and melts everyone's hearts, including that of George, who is carrying scars, both physical and mental, from his war service in Vietnam. Meantime Todd launches a campaign to get every dog residing in the shelter into a family home for the holidays, which again demonstrates his special qualities.

This is a charming, mildly amusing, light read. It has some gentle, good vibes about it. The story sends some good messages about family relationships, honesty, trust and caring. It is pleasant holiday reading, which will not tax the reader's brain much at all.

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### **Veronica ?? says**

A Dog Named Christmas is a heartwarming short story easily read in one afternoon. Perfect for that Christmas holiday read.

This is not only a doggie feel good story it lightly touches on subjects like PTSD, which George seemed to suffer from after his service during the Vietnam war, also Todd's disability and how his family cope with this and their worry about his place in society.

A feel good story suitable for all ages.

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### **Sunny Welker says**

I have loved this Hallmark movie for years, didnt know it was a book. It's a beautiful story of special connection with animals, ability within disability, and just recognizing each other and love. I warms my heart. Quick listen. You won't regret it.

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### **Kathy Worrell ? says**

A cute little story about a family that adopts a dog during Christmas.

After I started reading it, I realized I had already seen the movie.

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## **Sarah Whisted says**

Such a sweet story! I've been lacking the desire to read these days and thought that maybe a Christmas themed book would put me in the mood. This book did the trick. Here's some reasons why I loved it.

1. I'm a big dog lover, so any story that centers around finding homes for lonely, unwanted dogs is going to easily win me over.
2. I have a huge soft spot for special needs people. I used to work directly with them and it was nice see one in a book for a change, especially when their inabilities aren't the main focus of their character, but rather the unique personality they have instead.
3. The story is told from the Dad's point of view and while you think you're reading a story about his "special" son, in the end it's really more about his needs than his sons. It's humbling.

Overall this story has that touching, Christmas sweetness to it that could put any person in a better mood if they read it. I cried happy tears while reading.

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## **Rebekah Morris says**

This story was so sweet! I love dogs, but I'm not one of those "save the animals" people, however, while this story did involve helping the dogs in the local animal shelter, it was so much more than that. Basing this story on his own family experience, Greg Kincaid weaves a wonderful story full of laughter, tender moments, and a dog named, Christmas. I'm planning on reading this book again this year.

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## **Karis says**

\*3.5. Stars\*

*A Dog Named Christmas* by Greg Kincaid is the humorous tale of a reluctant father getting wrangled into one of his son's ideas. It's more than that, though, with deeper life themes cleverly knit into the tale. I loved the cozy, small-town setting of the story, and the prologue was very effective in capturing my interest from the beginning.

It's a short-read set in the middle of the Christmas holidays. Christmas, the adopted dog and hero of this story, completely captured my heart as well as the hearts of visiting older siblings in the story, who thought it too harsh that their father would insist on having the dog returned after the holidays when their little brother Todd was so attached, and their prodding turns into something larger than they could have imagined.

Partly the reason why I knocked off stars was because of how the couple's relationship was portrayed in how they handled conflicts together or rather their lack of working together, which was narrated as amusing and treated as a joke. Also, as much as I enjoyed the man's humor, (as the book was written from his POV), sometimes I couldn't "get" his sense of humor as he joked with his son, an issue that might just be a personal

preference.

All the same, overall this book exceeded my expectations and was an entertaining read that also left me with some deeper thoughts.

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## **Julianna says**

Reviewed for THC Reviews

Sometimes it's nice to just kick back with an easy, uncomplicated story that doesn't have any major emotional turmoil, serious conflicts or evil villains to vanquish. In fact, the main purpose of *A Dog Named Christmas* seems to be that of providing the reader with a feel-good story that is sure to put one in the holiday spirit. *A Dog Named Christmas* is a simple, straightforward tale of looking for joy in the little things in life and about being of service to others (even if it's a dog) not just at Christmastime, but all year long. It is also a heartwarming story of the bond between a father and son and how they both grow and change through their shared experience of fostering a dog over the Christmas holiday.

Although there are several secondary characters who appear in the story, this book is really about the McCray family, the dad, George, the mother, Mary Ann, and Todd, their developmentally challenged adult son who still lives with them. I really like that the McCray family is a loving and close-knit one who get along well and don't have any major family conflicts. Mary Ann is a feisty but fair woman who is the rock that keeps both George and Todd grounded. Todd is a sweet and endearing young man who reminds me a lot of Forrest Gump. He may be slow on the uptake about some things, but he also has a very perceptive nature and is high-functioning, making him able to do a lot of things that “normal” people can do. He also has an amazing talent with handling and caring for animals. It is Todd's plea to his parents that initially sets things in motion for them to offer a temporary foster home to Christmas, the dog, and it is also Todd's determination to see every dog have a place to spend the holidays which empties out the shelter in time for Christmas.

Although he doesn't really seek to be the “star” of the story, in my opinion, the main character (besides Christmas of course) is really George McCray. *A Dog Named Christmas* is told in first-person from his perspective, and even though he plays a pivotal role in the adoption of all the dogs and is proud of the accomplishment, he tries to keep the spotlight on Todd. What ends up happening though, is that George has a transformative experience himself. After two “bad” (read heartbreaking) dog experiences as a young man, both of which occurred during his time in the Vietnam war, George is reluctant to ever have a dog in his life again. He has always used the excuse that he's a farmer who has plenty of animals to care for and doesn't need another. Todd can be very persuasive though, and eventually talks George into the temporary adoption. The two of them go to the shelter together to pick out Christmas, and bring him home to discover that he's the best dog ever. Throughout this whole process, George is seeking to teach his son a valuable life lesson about the importance of keeping his word. When all is said and done, Todd has surprised his father with a maturity that George didn't think he possessed, and George is the one who has learned a lesson about dealing with the past and moving forward to the future.

I really enjoyed the way that the author painted Christmas as an independent dog who picked the McCray family every bit as much as they picked him. I strongly believe that animals can be quite perceptive and have always thought that our pets “chose” us too. When adopting them, I always looked for that special connection, and was blessed to find it, so I can really relate to the relationship between Christmas and the

McCray's. There were several fun, light-hearted moments in the book that had me smiling, and overall, I found *A Dog Named Christmas* to be a pleasant, uplifting and heartwarming read, that has found a spot on my keeper shelf to be enjoyed again during future holidays seasons. *A Dog Named Christmas* is a very gentle story with no objectionable content which would make it a great book to share with the entire family as a holiday reading tradition. I highly recommend this book to all animal lovers or anyone looking for a short, relaxing read during this busy time of year, and it would make a wonderful holiday gift too. *A Dog Named Christmas* was also made into a Hallmark Hall of Fame movie that aired on television a few weeks ago. I recorded the program and am really looking forward to watching it.

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## **Karla says**

### **5 Wonderful Stars!! The perfect Christmas read/listen!!**

It doesn't get much better than this as far as Christmas reads go. The story was so touching, it was like the most delicious cup of hot chocolate, it warmed me to my soul and left me feeling good!

The dad in the story, George, wants to teach his son, Todd, a life lesson, but he's the one who comes away gaining the most from the experience. It will break your heart when you find out why he's been so resistant in getting a dog. Everyone should have the honor of having someone like Todd in their lives. His simple thinking, and I mean that in the nicest way, was full of big ideas! I loved him.

Mark Bramhall did an amazing job with the narration! If you have the opportunity to listen to this book...do it...it will really add to the overall experience that this book offers!

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## **Brandie says**

Cute book. Cheesy, but was to be expected for a sappy book about a dog. The story was a good, uplifting one. Makes me want to go out and adopt all the stray dogs in the world!

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## **BJ Rose says**

I've had this audiobook on my iPod for over two years - decided to start listening to it while taking a walk, and when we got back home I just sat down and listened until I finished it. Very heartwarming, with a family facing some very realistic and challenging problems - trust Todd to figure out how to do some healing!

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