



Christmas on Mill Street

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Take A Christmas Story and mix in The Sandlot

Christmas on Mill Street Details

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Natlukens says

What it's about - 1960's - A young boy and his family move to Utah (from Arizona) where he gets to experience snow for the very first time and is challenged to sled quite a big scary hill (Mill Street), having never even sled before. He wants Santa to bring him a new fancy sled for Christmas but is dared by his sister to only tell Santa in a letter about his wish. If Santa is real, he'll get the sled.

What happens - Very reminiscent of that movie A Christmas Story except this kid is Mormon and wants a sled instead of whatever kind of gun that was. This story gets a little smarmy and annoying at times. The kid gets in big trouble a few times but then really pulls out all the stops to prove he deserves to be on the "Nice" list instead of "Naughty". Spoiler....He gets the sled of his dreams in the end on Christmas morning, and with a quick physics lesson from the town's requisite scary old lady, he attempts and succeeds to make it all the way down Mill Street - and then immediately gets in trouble. *eyeroll* I have no frame of reference being a child of the 80's and 90's, but his family seems more "helicopter-y" (for lack of a better word) than I assumed would have been likely in the 60's.

Rating - 3 stars. Really dragged at the beginning and very end, but became entertaining in the middle, a nice sweet story for Christmas time. I liked that the main character referred to his future self in this town, giving little anecdotes of other adventures later on in his life.

The Scrivener's Quill says

There is a lot great points to this book. It is a fun holiday read, yes like Ralphie from Christmas Story. I'd also recommend The Great Brain and A Year Down Yonder as similar reads.

My only critique is that the absence of Mormons in Utah is pretty obvious and doesn't make sense for a book about people living in Utah.

The reality is that it appears the author is Mormon by a few allusions to cultural norms that are washed over to look protestant. If the book, however, was written by a protestant, the Mormons would have been mentioned as cultural fixtures.

I wonder why the author didn't feel comfortable adding his Mormonism into the story?

In The Great Brain it wasn't a problem to be Catholic in Utah. Mormons should be able to write their stories as well without feeling it lessens the quality of the story or might harm the overall appeal or is some kind of cultural taboo that shouldn't be mentioned.

If this book was set in Indiana or the midwest with Ralphie, sure, the Mormons don't need to appear, but it's Bountiful, Utah. It would be like Lancaster, PA, without Amish people. You have to mention them or it wouldn't make sense.

Christy says

A Utah Christmas tale of the early 60's, it ought to bring back lots of great memories. Instead, it mostly irritates, as it tries to create the "Christmas Story" atmosphere, and flunks. I tried to imagine Ralphie narrating it, but the sentences were way too unnatural and contrived. At least it's not as bad as those "Christmas Box-Jars-Sweater" books, since there's no poor suffering "family-widow-orphan" that desperately needs help, and would have a miserable Christmas without the "money-box-sweater" that kind people supply. And there's a plot that's pretty satisfying when it finally gets going. It's maybe worth reading once.

Kurt Olsen says

A great short story! We learn about this boy's adventures in overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles and prejudices both. Highly recommended.

Susan says

If you are living in Bountiful or have ever lived there you NEED to read this book, because that is the setting for this book.

Although it could happen in any small town.

It had me reliving some of my own children's adventures. I laughed out loud and could see many of the things described happening to those around me.

Chris Unwin says

This Book is set in my hometown. I loved going back in time and putting myself in his shoes. I can picture the places that used to be and even the streets that still are. There are laugh out loud times in the book and shake your head with wonder at the main character being so naïve but I would recommend the book as a fun Christmas read. Clean read.

Verona says

I loved this book! I haven't read anything by this author, but I loved his sense of humor, and his bringing in all the culture of the time period of this book. It was so enjoyable to have the fourth grade boy tell his own story. The ending was perfect! The friendship between the boy and older neighbor was natural and priceless, and she created the happy ending. I'd like to read more of Joseph Walker's books.

Ann Marie says

Hopefully the author will forgive me but I could not help but read this in the voice of Jean Shepherd...I enjoyed it...a quick read...my one issue was the focus on the mothers cooking...seemed to repeat himself and it annoyed me but perhaps that stems from my own personal issues (which I know nothing about)...would recommend for all.

Dianne says

I loved this little book. It's about young Sam Andrews whose family has recently moved to Utah from Arizona. He's trying hard to fit in at school, where the other boys are all talking about sledding down the hill to beat all hills.....Mill Street. It's a sharp drop with two very tricky turns, and before Sam really knows what he's doing, he hears himself agreeing to try it, though he has never been on a sled or even seen snow.

Sam has one hope that keeps him believing he can do it - the hope of getting a shiny new "Flexible Flyer" sled for Christmas. With a sled like that he knows he can do it. And besides, he has a secret weapon in Clara Morgan, a woman who gives the kids shivers, but who knows the secret of mastering Mill Street hill.

If you get a chance to read this, do. It delivers everything that great cover promises.

Kathleen Anderson says

This was an awesome book. Maybe I liked it so much because the setting was about the time of when I was growing up, so I recognized lots of things it talked about. The story is right up there with "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever". I'll probably read it every Christmas, and would love to read it to my grandkids. It's a quick read too. I probably read it in two nights.

Jane says

I like to read this one about every Christmas if I can, mainly because it is a cute story set in my hometown. It brings back some fun childhood memories

Jessica Mae says

Cute book! Definitely reminds me of A Christmas Story, or The Sandlot. It's a fun trip inside the head of an 8-year-old boy.

It actually got me thinking about how sometimes we view God's judgment like a "naughty and nice list." Once we mess up a few times, we think there's no going back and we'll never be good enough. Santa in this story "forgives" Sam, who is overjoyed that his dumb mistakes won't disqualify him from getting his sled for Christmas. We all make dumb mistakes, but God is more than willing to forgive if we'll just come to Him for help. Our past mistakes don't need to define us.

Anyway, it's a very cute story with a good message and some funny inner dialogue. It's one you could read to

the family for Christmas. I listened to it as an audiobook, and I think it flows best when read out loud. :)

Cynthia Egbert says

In reality, this is a 2.5 rating. I enjoyed it but not quite enough to say I really liked it. It felt too contrived and there were passages where it felt as though they had been taken straight from Jean Shepherd's Christmas Story, which rubbed me wrong. It was fun to read about a place and time that is familiar.

Sandra Strange says

This delightful story deserves to be a family Christmas classic. It's interesting to read the reviews. People either love it or hate it. It does have the flavor of other Christmas narratives set in childhood in a simpler time. The story is a bit incredible. But that said, it was really fun to read. A 9 year old tries to fit in to the Utah 60's small town he has just moved to. The plot includes adventure, as well as authentic kid's concerns, as the boy tries to make his way through the pitfalls of being "new kid" who isn't skillful and good looking.

Shiloah says

An absolutely heartwarming, sweet Christmas tale. I enjoyed it thoroughly.
