



The Judge Who Stole Christmas

Randy Singer

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It starts innocently enough in the town square of Possum, Virginia. But it becomes a spectacular national scandal: Can a federal judge outlaw Christmas? Thomas Hammond and his wife play Joseph and Mary in the annual live nativity in their hometown. But a federal judge rules the display unconstitutional. Thomas refuses to abide by the court order—and ends up in jail. From the courtrooms of Virginia to the talk shows of New York City, the battle escalates into a national media spectacle. Caught in the middle is law student Jasmine Woodfaulk, assigned to represent Thomas as part of her school's legal aid clinic. Only a surprising series of events can reconcile a stubborn father, a crusading law student, and a recalcitrant judge. *The Judge Who Stole Christmas* is a charming, warm, and thought-provoking Christmas tale that explores in a fresh way the real reason for the season.

The Judge Who Stole Christmas Details

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Nancy says

Great read!

I love Randy Singer books! I usually do not read Christmas books, but this one caught my eye and I was not disappointed. This is the only book that I can remember reading that gave me goosebumps at the end. I encourage you read it.

Angieleigh says

I am a sucker for Christmas books. It doesn't matter what time of year, I'll read one even in the 100+ degree weather while sitting inside with the central air on.

Straight off the bat, while this story did manage to keep my attention, it may not leave a lasting impression on me. There was very little character depth in any of the characters and most of the time I was left scratching my head as to how many children the Hammond family actually have because the baby kept being left out wherever her mother traveled; most of the time you only heard about Tiger and Hannah.

Thomas...I understand his stubbornness and why he felt so strongly about the manger, but in the end, will God reward you for (view spoiler) What a bitter pill it is when our pride rules us instead of God.

I felt the ending was rushed and I kept trying to figure out if I had pages missing as there was a lot of information left out.

I DID watching Jasmine grow into being more confident and managing her time appropriately. She handled everything with grace and was probably the only character that showed any potential to being fleshed out more.

To be honest, this book left too many loose ends. I hope there'll be a sequel to it somewhere down the line. I'd love to catch up with Jasmine and see what she's up to.

Paula Phillips says

What starts out as a small town community celebrating Christmas in their town of Possum, Virginia with a nativity scene set up in their town will turn to a national news story when they are told that it is against the law to have their nativity scene up during this time. For a few years now Thomas and his wife Theresa Hammond have played the famous Mary and Joseph during Christmas time and many have come to visit the nativity scene set-up and all is well until the pair are served with papers as they have been taken to court over the incident. So begins a long hard journey leading up to Christmas as the Judge won't back down on this ruling and Thomas isn't one to take his faith lying down, he is a firm believer of standing up for what you

believe in and that faith will get you anywhere you need to be. Not only did I learn about the smalltown's plight to have their Nativity scene resurrected as Jesus was on the third day after dying on the cross, but in listening to the Judge's arguments in the courtroom , I learnt a bit more about various christmas origins and other religious festivals for various religions. One of the things I did love about this book was the way that the community and even the outside larger US states all rallied around Thomas and that no matter what the judge threw in his direction - his faith and love for the Lord never wavered and in the end his faithfulness and perserverence won out.

If you love Christmas stories with a Godly perspective and Christian tale to them, then check out Randy Singer's The Judge who Stole Christmas.

Kandes says

I thought this book was an alright read, I really don't see why quite a few people gave it bad reviews. When I picked up this book, what I was looking for was a fun, light, Christmas themed read, and that's exactly what this was. I noticed alot of the other reviewers were claiming it had wrong information in it, what they mean by that, I don't know. But what I do know is this book is considered FICTION... And I'm not a lawyer so I don't know if the author stayed true to proper lawyer etiquette, but I wasn't reading it to study for the bar, so honestly I don't care. I don't see why so many people get soooo upset & say "OMG that doesn't seem real!!!" Um.... That's cuz it isn't... It's FICTION.

So overall, I found this book enjoyable.

Chris says

The Judge Who Stole Christmas is a fairly short novella which I picked up for free in the Amazon Kindle deals page last year. I haven't had the inspiration to read it until recently.

The premise of the story is that a father and family who has been acting out a live Nativity in the town square for years, are forced to stop when the ACLU presses charges. A 3rd year law student from the same town gets thrown into the high-publicity 1st Amendment court case and is fighting with her own ideals and struggles. The judge is not about to change her ruling that the display is unconstitutional and a media circus ensues.

Overall, I found this to be a good read. It wasn't a great read but, was good enough to grant it 3 stars.

The characters are developed but, I think that some more time could have been spent into adding to their background story. Particularly the judge Cynthia Baker-Kline. At the end of the book you can see what she practices in her private life does not match the actions of her public position.

The question is though, can one separate personal belief and law? If so, is it morally sound to do so?

The father in the story lives by his principals, to a fault. He even lands himself in jail for contempt charges during the Christmas season. It is demonstrated int he beginning of the novella that his family isn't well-off but, not lacking either. However, there is a clear need for him to be there to work and bring in the income for the family. This fact seems to disappear and is not re-pressed upon. The point is, this character is willing to

give up his family to stand for having a manger scene. How heroic or stupid this behavior appears is up to the reader's discretion.

The law student loses a big-time job offer in New York for pursuing the case, and she seems to flip-flop on where she stands with the case. She also used to be the local basketball star and the team is now doing poorly due to a bad coach. In the end she takes over as the coach of the team after losing the court battle.

Unfortunately, I found I could guess a lot of what was going to happen in this story. The only exception being the final chapter. Even that lacked the kind of "miracle" feeling that such a story would normally invoke in a person. The book was good, but, was also a little shallow. It brings up some good points about faith and liberty but, at the end they remain unresolved, just as in real life.

If this book shows up for free again on Amazon, go for it. If you can find it for under \$5, go for it. However, I wouldn't pay more than that. It isn't that the story doesn't bring up good points about our society. However, it lacks a certain amount of depth and substance worthy of the topic.

Lorraine says

Randy Singer has once again penned a courtroom drama focused on a Christian vs. secular problem that keeps the reader riveted to the last page. This time it is a live nativity scene in a small town square. Thomas and his wife Therese are Joseph and Mary in the local live nativity, and Thomas is served with a court summons from the ACLU as he takes part a few weeks before Christmas. Local resident, basketball great, and soon to be lawyer, Jasmine Woodfaulk, becomes Thomas' representative before the Fourth District Court of Virginia and Judge Cynthia Baker-Kline a known strict interpretationalist. Sparks fly, someone goes to jail, and the surprise ending will leave everyone astounded.

Lisa Reidinger says

Nice holiday story.

Rachel Grepke says

Christmas is a special time of the year. Holy, sacred, beautiful and joyous. Sadly, many things about this holiday have been taken out of hand in the past few years. This book, while a work of fiction, is not only well written, but also right on point. This world will oppose the Lord and those of us who stand with Him till He returns. And yet, there are those that stand up when the time is right and needed. I highly suggest this easy and meaningful read.

Wanda Burquest says

A slightly different type of book by Randy Singer. It still involves a lawyer. This one is a struggle for freedom.

Barbara says

This was not read at Christmastime, but it certainly didn't matter. I loved it! It is definitely a book that had me thinking beyond the pages. The topic is one which concerns many Americans - How far can the legal system actually go in restricting our expression of our religious beliefs? The legal argument was presented very well, yet in a way that even a layperson can grasp. I loved the way the father was courageous and willing to stand up for what he believed in, but there were some hard edges and inflexible ways that he exhibited that caused me to waver in my viewpoint of him at times. The manner in which the author chose to end the story was both sweet and satisfying, yet also a little bit frustrating. Mr. Singer shows you the beautiful character of some people that had been somewhat hidden until the end, but the resolution of the case did not seem to be completely done. It left me wondering what happened next, yet I do not think a sequel is planned. I highly recommend this for a different, stimulating, thought-provoking Christmas read.

Cindy says

Excellent Story

This isn't a traditional Christmas story.

It's well written, the story could happen in today's climate of use happy people.

There are twists you won't expect and I won't give away.

The ending isn't what I wanted, but it's really good!

It's a fast read. I recommend it.

Christine says

This is what I get for reading a "free" book for the Kindle! While the main character, Jasmine, was likable, the story was so over the top Christian conservative that it was a hard sell. The character of the father who set up the creche seemed borderline abusive to me. He had such a strong control of his family that he let his 2yo son die of appendicitis b/c he didn't "believe" in doctors, doesn't allow his young children to believe in Santa, and selfishly stays in prison at Christmas time, thus making it harder for his family to make ends meet, as he is the sole breadwinner. Sounds like magickal thinking to me.

The ending was also rather lame--you never find out what happens at the next court of appeals, only that the father gets to see the "human' side of the FEMALE judge (b/c of course a MALE judge would side with the father) when she becomes Mary in the creche scene.

While I did finish reading the book, I did wonder why I bothered with it. Not recommended.

Leslie aka StoreyBook Reviews says

I picked up this book because it worked for the ABC challenge and since it was Christmas time when I read it, another good reason to read this story.

As crazy as today's world is with what is not politically correct and things being taken away or changed, this book fits right in with that mindset. For some reason, the ACLU has decided that this small town in Virginia is violating an amendment by having a live nativity scene in the town square. It is never really said how they know about this or why the ACLU feels it is necessary to stop this from happening. That aside, this book is a look into where our world is going and how the residents of Possum dealt with this issue.

I enjoyed this book, from the political/legal side to the personal side of Jazz, Thomas & Theresa and the Judge. Each had their own insight into this issue and while the judge may have felt differently, she had to uphold the law and make sure that it was being followed no matter what she believed personally. The judge comes across as harsh in the courtroom, but has a softer side that you see outside of the courtroom.

Worth reading

Matt says

I have not read a Singer book I did not like. His weaving of the law, US Constitution, and faith make for the perfect backdrop to a wonderful novel. He will, at times, have Joel C. Rosenbergian moments of gospelizing, as I call it, but not as 'bash the heathen over the head' as some I have read.

In this, Singer uses some well-known characters from his past novels, add some family spice, and produces a true legal/faith/constitutional classic. He tackles real-life issues and uses a holiday backdrop to make it all the more seasonal. Use of actual USSC cases, precedents, and legal points makes the story come to life as well.

While some of his full-length books get more into the law and the clashes with life, this novella was just long enough to get the point across. A nice 'holiday change' to his normal writing, which can take us to the underbelly of faith-law issues, The Judge who Stole Christmas warms the heart in that made-for-tv movie way and has you pining for cider, shortbread, and a warm fire.

A great story that reads so swiftly you will want Christmas here... well it will be before you know it!

Julia Nashif says

From the beginning, I wasn't expected to like this, but I was pleasantly surprised the more I got into it.

What held me back at the beginning was the fact the Thomas was such a misguided person. He meant well, but he had killed his child a year before. Seriously. His four year old has appendicitis (something my own brother nearly died from), but he refused to bring the kid to the hospital until it was too late. Instead, he decided to tell God what to do and fully expected God to pull a miracle at the last minute. THAT IS NOT OKAY, and now one of his kids is dead. This made it seriously hard to root for Thomas.

Also, why didn't he just apply for a permit to put up the manger scene? I'm sure he would have gotten approved.

About half way though, however, I really warmed up to the story, especially to Jasmine. She's being pulled in all different directions by a potential employer, her family, and a law case she never really wanted. I had to admire how she managed to keep her sanity.

I am now completely in the Christmas mood. Bring on the carols, especially "Away in a Manger"!
