



# A Literary Christmas: An Anthology

*The British Library (Editor)*

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For as long as Christmas has been celebrated, poets and writers have sought to explore every aspect of it, from the story of the nativity to the festive traditions families worldwide have established over the centuries. And such works have forever changed the way we think about the holiday. Where would Christmas be today without Ebenezer Scrooge or “‘Twas the Night Before Christmas”?

*A Literary Christmas* is a seasonal compendium that collects poems, short stories, and prose by some of the greatest poets and writers in the English language. Like Charles Dickens’s *Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present*, the selections featured here are representative of times old and new. Readers will enjoy a convivial Christmas Day with Samuel Pepys, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, and Nancy Mitford; venture out into the snow in the company of Jane Austen, Henry James, and Charles Dickens’s ever-popular Mr. Pickwick; and warm up by the fire with the seasonal tales of Dylan Thomas, Kenneth Grahame, and Oscar Wilde. As a companion to the book, *A Literary Christmas* is also being released as a two-CD set, featuring readings of many of the same poems and prose extracts from the book. An entertaining and instructive way to survey great literature, *A Literary Christmas* is the perfect gift for anyone seeking to start their own literary Christmas traditions.

## **A Literary Christmas: An Anthology Details**

Date : Published October 15th 2013 by British Library

ISBN : 9780712309684

Author : The British Library (Editor)

Format : Hardcover 160 pages

Genre : Holiday, Christmas, Fiction, Classics, Poetry, Audiobook

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## **From Reader Review A Literary Christmas: An Anthology for online ebook**

### **Kristy Miller says**

A collection of poetry and snippets of prose related to the holidays. A short, delightful collection read by favorites Juliet Stevenson and Simon Callow. My only complaint is that the pauses between pieces was almost non-existent, and it felt rushed.

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### **Heather says**

I enjoyed the selection of stories and poems but I don't think the audiobook was the best way of reading this book. I've ordered the hardback for next year and I am sure I will read this again.

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### **Hope says**

At just over two hours, this is a lovely way for book lovers to get in the mood for the Christmas season. Intermingled with devout poetry such as Rosetti's "In the Bleak Midwinter" and Donne's "Nativity" are readings from classics such as Little Women, Emma, and A Christmas Carol. It was delightful to hear favorite passages and to be introduced to new ones. (Who actually remembers that there is a Christmas passage in Wuthering Heights?)

My only complaint is that the reading near the end from Emma, when taken out of context, makes Mr. Knightly appear to be a horrible boor, which he definitely is not, but that's a personal quibble

The two narrators are outstanding.

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### **Sharyn L. says**

Easier to listen to at a slower speed.

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### **Julie Davis says**

A quite enjoyable collection of excerpts and poems celebrating Christmas. They were perfect for getting into a Christmas frame of mind, except for the last section which was entitled Cold Weather. That bit seemed to me to be added to pad it out some.

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## **Alina Maria Ciobanu says**

A wonderful collection of Christmas literature, comprising fragments of prose and poetry from great British and American writers.

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## **Asheley says**

At 2 hours, 17 minutes: this is a great audio listen for the busy holiday time, or any time honestly. I listened today to fill in the gaps when I was baking and also while doing a few other things between family holiday obligations at this place and that place. The short holiday-themed poetry selections mixed with prose excerpts made it easy to listen for a little while, then stop...listen, then stop...repeat. Favorites of mine include submissions from Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte, Louisa May Alcott, and Thomas Hardy.

This is a really great collection, and such fun to listen to. If I had any suggestion for an edit, it would be this: there really is not enough time in between chapters to call them "breaks" - I could barely hit the pause button when I wanted to stop for a second. I wish it had been a teensy bit longer between each chapter.

Having Juliet Stevenson and Simon Callow narrate these poems and tales was utter brilliance because they are total perfection. Juliet has a lovely voice that sounds nothing short of a melody. And Simon has some of the very best accents.

I was fortunate to grab this from Audible's Daily Deal sale for 99 cents today. I'm glad I have this one so I can listen again during future holiday seasons.

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## **Laurel Hicks says**

Snippets of Christmas by Dickens, Austen, Alcott, etc. An excellent selection.

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## **Callum McLaughlin says**

This was a wonderful little treasure trove of festive writings, perfect for getting into the Christmas spirit in the build up to the big day. I liked that there's a mix of both prose and poetry, and it's nicely structured, being split into different sections (Before Christmas, The Nativity, Christmas Day, Christmas Fare, Christmas at War, A Child's Christmas, Seasonal Snow and Ice, and New Year).

As with any anthology, there were of course some writing styles featured that I enjoyed more than others. *Christmas at Sea* by Robert Louis Stevenson was easily the stand-out piece for me. It is wonderfully evocative, and incredibly poignant. I read it three times back-to-back just to soak it all in. Other highlights included: *A Christmas Carol* by Christina Rossetti; *A Visit from St Nicholas* by Clement Clarke Moore; and extracts from *Sons and Lovers* by D.H. Lawrence, and *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott.

It's beautifully packaged, and would make a lovely gift at this time of year. As a reading experience, it was thoroughly enchanting, and it also served as a nice way to sample a few authors I hadn't tried before.

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**Emmkay says**

It was very pleasant to dip in and out of this collection of classic poems, short stories, and excerpts from longer works, all round the themes of Christmas, winter weather, and New Year's. Some very familiar ones but also some surprises. I especially liked the excerpt from John Evelyn's diary of the 1684 freezing of the Thames - very evocative.

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**Lori says**

A wonderful collection of short Christmas prose and poetry from classic authors including Dickens, Longfellow, Hardy, Alcott and Austen to name a few. Excellent short snippets making it a perfect easy read for delightful listening while prepping during Christmas time. Brilliantly narrated by Juliet Stevenson and Simon Callow. Highly recommended.

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**Dosha (Bluestocking7) Beard says**

Great collection of seasonal stories by the great authors of old times gone by.

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**Barbara says**

A delightful collection. My favorite was the story from Orkney. I would have liked to have more "local" and traditional tales in the collection. Nevertheless, as a free gift from Audible, it fit the bill for an enjoyable holiday listen.

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**Deb says**

I think this audiobook was a gift last year from #Audible-or it was an inexpensive daily deal. I've been listening to it while #audiosouping ??as most of my current audiobooks didn't fit my mood today. Juliet Stevenson & Simon Callow do a delightful job narrating this seasonal anthology of the holiday 'bits' from different pieces of famous works. A fun compilation and a nice, quick holiday treat.

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**Sue K H says**

Lots of gems in here

