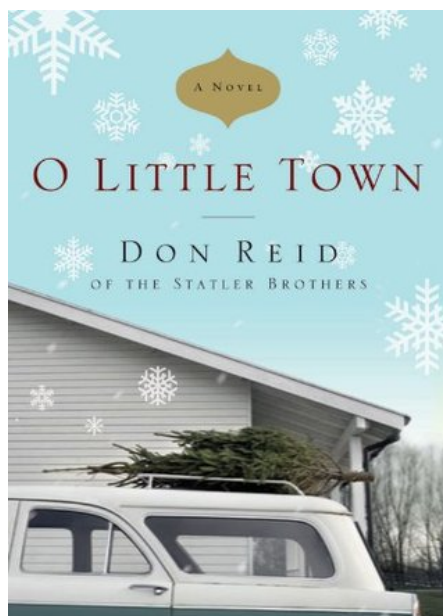




O Little Town

Don Reid

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O Little Town

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O Little Town Don Reid

Christmas 1958: Elvis is on the radio, Ike is in the White House, the Lord is in His holy temple . . . but there is no peace in Mt. Jefferson.

In a small town where everybody seems to know everybody, there are still a few secrets. Three families find they are connected in ways they never suspected: an angry teen, a dying man, a lonely wife, a daughter in trouble . . . just ordinary people, muddling their way through ordinary challenges. Marriage. Illness. Bad decisions. Friendship. Faith. Forgiveness.

Spanning three generations, O Little Town is a reminder that people still make mistakes, forgiveness can still be granted, and people still rise to the occasion and do the right thing. This tender tale of love and redemption will touch readers' hearts.

O Little Town Details

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From Reader Review O Little Town for online ebook

Hope says

The opening paragraph about Elvis being on the radio, Ike in the White House and the Lord in his holy temple might give the impression that this is a light, fun read. It is, in fact, about a whole slew of people who are suffering.

I kept dreading the fact that as the characters approached Christmas day, their problems would all automatically solve themselves. Not that I didn't want them to be solved, I just didn't want this to be another cheesy Christian novel. And though the Christmas sermon on forgiveness went straight to the heart of every listener, it wasn't as silly as it could have been.

The back story of Walter and the dying actress was interesting, but not really necessary. In the interview with Don Reid at the back of the book, he says that the kernel of this part of the story came from true events. As he embellished them, Reid's story took on a life of its own and overshadowed the seed story.

Suzanne Williams says

Reading this book was like participating in a gossip session. I was the observer being told, "Look what your neighbor has done." The characters truly seemed like average people you might pass by in any town in any neighborhood. Though it is short on plot, it's the first book I've read where the lack of plot didn't matter to me. The story was less about what was going to happen than what had happened to bring the characters to that place. I was completely fascinated by my view of each character's thoughts. Walter's story from his past was a great addition to the book. It kept me turning the page. I wanted to know why the story mattered so much to him. The author did a great job setting the scene for the town. I felt like I had been there at some point. Lastly, the author's use of repetition was a really effective way of making the point. In particular, I reference the scene where the same three teenagers are looking out at the same snowstorm. This book was a fun read, had a great Christian moral, and I really enjoyed it.

Sally906 says

O LITTLE TOWN is a wonderful feel good Christmas story, and I am not sure why it has taken me a few Christmas seasons to get around to reading it. But so glad I have now. There is a little bit of everything in the story, murder, drama and love.

Most of the story takes place around the events that occur during the few days prior to Christmas Day 1958 with one back story that links us back to the early 1900s. O LITTLE TOWN opens with Reverend Franklin's 15-year-old daughter Millie caught shoplifting at Macalbee's Five and Dime. Milton is the storekeeper and a close friend of Millie's mother Dove who is very unhappy with her life as a pastor's wife. The local police officer, Bobbie Briggs, is called in to deal with the situation but he has problems of his own. Buddy's 16-year-old daughter announces she is pregnant and is going to marry Louis Sterrett the father of her child who is the nephew of Milton's wife. Once the connections have been set up the story continues to follow the three families as they deal with the secrets that are gradually being uncovered. Weaving in and out of the main

story is that of Walter Selman. Walter is an elderly man, grandfather of Louis, and something happened in his life when he was the same age as his grandson which kept me riveted as I wanted to understand why this event was so important to him now.

I found the plot very easy to relate to – every family has their issues and these seem to get worse at Christmas when relatives that have successfully been avoided all turn up at various family functions and start to press the right buttons! Every person has someone who they can confide in – and the friendships between different characters were portrayed so well. The writing was easy to read and very smooth as the story transitioned between the various characters and into the past – at no time did the story become confusing or the flow become choppy. In fact reading O LITTLE TOWN was just like a big gossip session – as if the narrator had said to you ‘Have you heard the latest about Doris and Colleen?’ and ‘My goodness what about that Dove!’ The setting was believable, as too were the characters and the story followed not only how they got to be in the situation they were in, but what they were doing about it, and where they are going to go on from here if they can. There was one excellent scene where three of the characters are looking at the falling snow through the window of their various houses all listening to the same Christmas song on the radio (a revamped version of “White Christmas” sung by the Drifters) and reacting to the song differently – just brought the story alive for me.

Of course being a Christmas story all the problems are solved to a certain extent – then an epilogue tidies up the loose ends nicely. I loved the story and recommend it highly.

Resa says

I felt for each of the characters in this story, even if I didn’t agree with some of their life choices (like Dove’s not quite an affair-affair)I could still feel for them in their struggles. Everyone just seemed so human. No one was perfect, but no one was over the top “bad” or “evil” either. As far as plot goes there doesn’t seem to be much of one at first glance. It’s just a book about people dealing with everyday problems during the Christmas season. Yet, somehow, Reid makes this enjoyable. We all have our own personal family issues that seem to get even worse during the Christmas season (or those relatives who have the tendency to hit all the right nerves) so maybe it’s just knowing you’re not the only family with problems that makes this book so much fun to read.

The interspersing of the present day story with Walter’s memories of the Crown theater and what happened there when he was young (not to give anything away...) made the whole book seem to move along fairly quickly and managed to hold my interest. Reid also does a very good job of transitioning, not just between present and past, but also from one story to another, a task that is not always easy for writers to do seamlessly, but Reid does it in a way that the transitions are smooth and they come at times which make sense and keep stories from becoming choppy or confusing. His whole writing style makes the book flow smoothly from line to line, and left me fairly impressed considering I thought this was just going to be another decent, but not all that great, fluff novel for Christmas.

The book is an easy read and with the combination of the believable characters with Reid’s writing style makes it an effortless read. I was able to finish it in just a couple of days, and would have read it all in one sitting if other obligations had permitted it. I was pleasantly surprised at how much I liked this book, I didn’t expect to find it as enjoyable as I did. I strongly recommend this book for the Christmas season, but even if you aren’t able to read it for Christmas, it would make a good anytime read as well. A very enjoyable book.

Jeanette "Astute Crabbist" says

Early impressions:

Beaver Cleaver's Christmas in Virginia, with a little teen delinquency and coveting thy neighbor's wife thrown in to spice things up. Everybody's just so golly-gee wow *decent*, including the sinners.

Final impressions:

Peyton Place for prudes. Like eating candy floss on an empty stomach -- sweet but not very satisfying.

The best thing about the book was that it made me wonder why the author's musical group was called The Statler Brothers when none of the members was named Statler. Turns out they chose the name from a brand of tissues in their hotel room. Just think, if they'd chosen the soap instead of the tissues, The Statler Brothers might have been called Cameo Bouquet.

Erik Orrantia says

I was ambivalent on this book. The writing was good and I liked the premise--a little town with its real-life complications, convoluted relationships, connections, and attachments. The writing is crisp. However, and partly because I read before I go to sleep and am tired, I oftentimes got confused. There are many characters and quick shifts from one scene to the next. I simply couldn't remember who was who and there weren't enough hints in the text to remind me. I usually figured that it would all come together, but that never totally happened.

Dianne says

This was a sweet story, set in a small town in Virginia. The characters were interesting and the reader could easily relate to their challenges.

Cindi says

I just finished reading this book, and it gave me a feeling of hope that I haven't felt a long time.

It's written by Don Reid, who is a member of the Statler Brothers singing group. It's labeled as "religious" but I never felt like it was preaching to me, but rather encouraging me instead.. not to be a Christian, but to be a compassionate human being. I try very hard to do that.

This book shows the inter-connectedness we have with other people; our families, our friends, our neighbors, even with people we've never met. Our lives are interwoven with one another and we are each more than just a name on a page.

It takes place in a time when people lived their faith, no matter what that faith was, and didn't demand that everyone agree with them and that religion was "my way or the highway". Their faith was strong and personal and didn't need to try to make others agree with them.

It's almost 60 years since this story takes place, and I find it sad that people are becoming more selfish, narrow minded and intolerant of differences instead of more enlightened.

This book showed that people can make mistakes and learn from them and thrive. It seems like these days, it's just the opposite. To make a mistake is wrong and to admit to making a mistake is a sign of failure. When in reality, mistakes are the best lesson we can ever have.

I loved how the book included multiple generations and time frames to show much each event affects the next. That the past matters. That memories matter.

I hope you will treat yourself to reading this book during the holidays.

"Christmas, 1958

In a small town where everybody seems to know everybody, there are still a few secrets. Three families find they are connected in ways they never suspected: an angry teen, a dying man, a lonely wife, a daughter in trouble . just ordinary people, muddling their way through ordinary challenges. Illness. Marriage. Bad decisions. Friendship. Faith. Forgiveness."

Linda says

A Charming Christmas Story

I enjoyed this novel very much. The characters rang true and the parallel stories came to a satisfying conclusion. I appreciated how faith was central to the stories and that good people dealt with challenges in ways that felt both real and uplifting.

Dara S. says

I would recommend this book. A sweet read about a small town in Virginia in the 1950's around Christmas. Written by a member of the Statler Brothers it has wonderful characters.

Lorraine says

At first this book made me feel like I was reading all the gossip on everybody in "small town" America. I did like the storyline more as I got into it. I really enjoyed the minister's Christmas Eve sermon at the end and how he reached out to each of the characters with a message that person thought was just for them.

Doreena says

Interesting how all of these lives are intertwined. Great ending.

Pamelabyoung says

Sweet holiday read. Yes, the author is THAT Don Reid of the Statler Brothers. As an author, Reid has an authentic voice that weaves small town characters together in a tale that feels like truth to me. A story of forgiveness, family ties and generational connections, this is a simple, sweet and touching story for a winter afternoon read. The icing on my Christmas cake was that I got it as a free Kindle download. AND...I see that Mr. Reid has another book with the same setting coming out in January.

Kim Goff says

I really wanted to give this one a 4 because I loved the multiple conflict and plot lines that wove all of the characters together. It kept me intrigued and I actually read the whole book in two sittings. I would have liked to get to know the characters a little more closely; another 100 pages or so to really get personal with them would do wonders. I felt like I was just getting to know them when it was over. There were also a few typos that were distracting and just annoying. I did enjoy reading the book and considering there have been about 4 or 5 books this year I just couldn't finish, that says a lot!

CarrieLyn says

This is a very simple book, but very compelling and full of characters who are like people you might know or hear about in your own family or community. It is not great literature, but just a good story. That makes it easy to think about how you would react to each of the family crises that are presented in this story about several families in a little town: teenage pregnancy; grandparent confronting death; rebellious teenager; depressed/dependent wife; various degrees of marital weakness, etc. It was interesting to know that the real town on which Don Reid modeled the story was his own hometown of Staunton, VA.
