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Her reporter's intuition insisted that a remarkable story was on the verge of the front page.

Newspaper reporter Hope Jensen uncovers the remarkable secret behind the "Christmas Jars", glass jars filled with coins and bills anonymously left for people in need. But along the way, Hope discovers much more than the origin of the jars. When some unexpected news sets off a chain reaction of kindness, Hope's greatest Christmas Eve wish comes true.

Christmas Jars Details

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Author : Jason F. Wright

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From Reader Review Christmas Jars for online ebook

Rayni says

I was disappointed. Maybe I need to read it again, slowly. I have been saving my change though because of this book. I was in my congregation's Primary (children's organization) presidency & gave each member of the presidency a copy of the book as a Christmas present. The next year we used this as an ongoing Primary project. Each Sunday the kids would bring their change. They filled a large gallon pickle jar. At the end of the year, the Presidency then used the money to pick an angel off the Angel Tree.

Christy says

This may well be the worst little Christmas book you will ever read. It's based on the silly premise that jars of money, given with love, will change lives. The writing is unbelievably bad. (Richard Paul Evans doesn't come close) Strangely, this book was loaned to me by the same friend who introduced me to "At the Manger" last Christmas, which I plan to re-read, now that I've gagged my way through this one.

Melissa Frye says

Christmas is magic. Christmas stories are magical. When we read a book with this particular holiday theme, we usually go into it prepared to suspend our disbelief. Christmas Jars by Jason F. Wright is no exception.

Synopsis taken from Goodreads:

Where had it come from? Whose money was it? Was I to spend it? Save it? Pass it on to someone more needy? Above all else, why was I chosen? Certainly there were others, countless others, more needy than me...

Her reporter's intuition insisted that a remarkable story was on the verge of the front page.

Newspaper reporter Hope Jensen uncovers the remarkable secret behind the "Christmas Jars", glass jars filled with coins and bills anonymously left for people in need. But along the way, Hope discovers much more than the origin of the jars. When some unexpected news sets off a chain reaction of kindness, Hope's greatest Christmas Eve wish comes true.

This novel is lovely and should be embraced by all who believe in the Christmas Spirit. The characters are well-developed and make you want to know them, or someone like them, in real life. The story moves fluidly from one plot point to the next. Wright does a magnificent job of creating an atmosphere that absorbs the reader.

There are a few things I find implausible, but the message makes them easy to overlook. It's that message, the one of giving, that fills the reader with hope and could even wring tears from the Grinch himself.

There may be other Christmas themed books out there with pristine elements that form perfection in the literary world. They would be hard-pressed to match the magic contained with the pages of Christmas Jars.

Olga Kowalska (WielkiBuk) says

This is one of these stories that are not about their style, not even about the plot itself, but about the message - don't stay indifferent! Help when someone needs your help, always have a kind word - it doesn't cost that much. Sometimes a simple smile and "thank you" will make someones day better.

Melanie Page says

Let me just start: **This book is a steaming pile of conservative propaganda horse turds.**

The turds are both implied and blatantly steaming.

For example, after Thanksgiving dinner, the Maxwell family would get together, talk about Christmas, and decide "who was tasked with visiting the lovable and loony Cousin Gregg, forever a guest at the Greenbrier Adult Developmental Center." **You get that? Loony, as in an insulting term for a man who has to live in a home that cares for mentally disabled adults.** Not only are the Maxwell's name callers, but they have decide who goes, as if poor Cousin Gregg doesn't deserve to see all of his family!

Then, there are the families that are surprised with Christmas Jars full of a year's worth of change. One woman, sitting in her home with her infant, freezing because the heat has been turned off, receives a Christmas Jar and is able to pay her bills. She and her husband, a long-haul trucker, learn **that they simply need to budget better.** You don't get your heat shut off in winter because you're poor at budgeting, your heat gets shut off because you're living on the brink of freaking poverty.

Even weirder is a woman who has had three miscarriages. Her husband has been verbally abusing her because she hasn't carried a baby to term, and he also threatens her that when they do have a baby, it better be a boy. (Don't worry; there's some really friendly wording: "Her husband said over and over that only a baby boy would make their relationship 'relevant in the eternities'..."). The book *says* she's having miscarriages because he's upsetting her so deeply. The Christmas Jar doesn't help this family financially (they have money), but a stranger's kindness reminds her that she's "not alone." So...does she leave the husband? The book implies that now her uterus will work because she won't be so stressed; they'll have their boy, and a Merry Christmas, too.

Just to make sure the patriarch as the head of the household message isn't explicit enough for you, the novella celebrates a man for all his generosity--**despite the fact that the Christmas Jar was his wife's idea, and she kept it going after the first year.** So, you know. Dad wins.

Finally, I get that donating once per year makes everyone feel warm and fuzzy inside, and this book takes that feeling and gives it to people daily because they throw some change in a jar, but you have to remember that people living in utter poverty--and believe me, I've read many stories of real people living in poverty--don't get to share in your daily good vibes. They get to be cold, hungry, dirty, abused, stressed, sick, raped, killed, left behind in school, beat up, abandoned, FACELESS. This is Psychology 101; feeding your "superego" helps you, and it's a big part of why we love donating.

But a feel-good Christmas activity isn't the best we can do as responsible citizens--**not even close.** Do you love to donate? How would you feel about having a slight increase in your taxes to pay for more social

services, like food stamps and public housing? No? Should we tell public funding recipients just, like, you know, budget better? If you go to the Christmas Jars website, you can read about all the "miracles" of people receiving money in jars. Mostly, the stories detail the use of money to pay medical bills. Having the money to pay for medical treatment shouldn't be a "miracle."

Well... I'll certainly have a lot to say at book club next weekend.

Lisa says

This is a charming "renewed faith" in Christmas giving book! EVERYONE should read this book before Thanksgiving and watch the beautiful outcome of love pour out! Thank you to the beautiful friend who shared with me....I have a wonderful new tradition (reading) sharing my heart.

Bożena Woroniecka says

"Wiedzia? jednak, ?e tradycja wr?czania bo?onarodzeniowych s?oik?w jest wyj?tkowa, poniewa? nie ma zorganizowanego charakteru i wydaje si? zupe?nie przypadkowa. Nie by?o ?adnych sponsor?w i nikt nie odbiera? jak najbardziej zas?u?onych pochwa?. By?a tylko grupa bezimiennych, niewidocznych dobrych samarytan... powinni?my eksponowa? dobro, kiedy tylko nadarza si? okazja... bolesna prawda jest jednak taka, ?e chcia?am tylko, ?eby mnie dostrze?ono i ?eby mnie czytano." - jedyne 168 stron a jak wiele dobra i ile cennych, ?yciowych lekcji wnosi lektura tej ksi??ki

Przemys?aw Garczy?ski (3telnik.pl) says

Autentycznie rozp?aka?em si?...

Pearl says

This is more proof that a bestseller list tells you diddly squat about how good a book is going to be. The same lists that produce legitimately awesome fare like *The Kite Runner* can also get you overly saccharine flops like *Christmas Jars*. Now, I like me some tearjerkers, but this book left me completely dry. Not once was I moved by this predictable, trite story, about a journalist who discovers a "mysterious" trend of people anonymously leaving jars full of money to those in need around Christmas time. Problem is: The actual origins of the jars really aren't all that mysterious or remotely "life-changing," and by the time you get to the magically convenient Hollywood ending, you've been hit over the head by blatantly Christian themes – ranging from the sacrificial underpinnings of the jars to a significant male character named Adam. (Unsurprisingly, the author Jason Wright is Mormon and has contributed to FoxNews.) Please, leave the wholesome tearjerkers to Nicholas Sparks.

Selina says

I picked this book to read with my girls over the holiday season and was a bit disappointed. It didn't engage either my girls or I and concluded with the typical happy, but cheesy, and predictable ending.

I do like the idea of a Christmas Jar, though. From personal experience I know how quickly change can accumulate. This past summer I paid for our family vacation with extra money and any spare change stored in a jar in the cupboard. I do think I will get that jar out again and designate it for some good purpose, whether it is a family VK, savings, or charity - I will probably let my children decide... (I can hear the cries for Disney Land already!!)

Pam says

People might think this is a sappy book, but it has a great message and I recommend it. My husband keeps a big bottle where he collects money--maybe we should use it for something like this.

Carla says

OK, I must admit I am a sucker for Holiday books, for the Hallmark commercials and movies, for the happy ending.

The Christmas Jar is one of those books that combine all the above and make a great afternoon read. It is a story of giving, forgiving, the human spirit, and the things that link us all together. It is one of those books that make you take a look around, be grateful, be humble, and set out to do something good.

Hope Jensen was left in a booth at the holidays with a letter, the woman who found her took her as her own and raised her. Hope became a reporter, worked her dues, and when her mother passes she experienced a burglary and received a Christmas Jar filled with money mysteriously left in the doorway.

Uncovering the who, what, when, where, why and how is her job but the road that it leads her on teaches a life lesson that will change her and those around her.

A heartfelt, pay it forward mentality - this is not a book that you can simply put down, but one that if you let it will in fact change your life and people around it.

Juliet says

This story is all about giving and learning how your little acts could save and help someone else. The story is very enticing and it kept you reading on wanting to know the story behind the origins of the Christmas Jars.

I teared at one point because it was so sad. I could feel the regrets and sadness of Hope Jensen when she realized that she was late. (shall not elaborate more...if not it would spoil your reading)

There is a twist in the book which I had already guessed the truth when I read about the certain small scene which some would have missed out. But the ending was sweet and touching.

Conclusion: Highly recommended! This is a must read for all bookworms out there. It could change how you

view life and wealth (at least I did a little). I even had the temptation to start keep a jar (not to give to strangers) to save how much I can save in a year with the loose change that wouldn't affect my daily life if they weren't in my wallet.

I finished the book in 2 hours after I picked it up. That's how good it is.

Karisa says

While it may not be written well, it moved me enough to start the tradition in our home. So I'm giving it 4 stars. I believe that everyone should read it, to get them motivated to make the Christmas Jar phenomenon a tradition of their own.

Maureen DeLuca says

Cute idea- was looking for some brain candy-

Nandi Crawford says

I HAVE to say something about this book; It's just a short little story but boy, do it pack a wallop. I will also say that on the first go around of the book, I couldn't get into it, but as time moved on, I caught the gist of it which is why I am reading it a second time. Its a couple of stories in a book, and since then, I have started two jars(one to keep, one to give away during the holiday season which is something I wanted to do for a while now).But to say that I was changed was an understatement. I was determined to start a jar; I wasn't working then, and the very next day went looking for mason jars; come to find out I had some plastic leftover jars from some bath salts that I use and they serve my purpose well. On the story, it's about a young girl who had her home ransacked right around the Christmas holidays, after losing her mom to cancer, and someone seeing her need, left her a jar by the door anonymously; Thinking it was someone else's, she asked around about it, but no takers, but with some digging came across a little phenomom and a loving family that took her in as well. I know folks are saying, look its a recession, I have a need myself. But I feel that there is always someone who has one more than you.

Eileen says

Just happen to pick this book up last night to glance through it. Turned out to be a very unusual Christmas story. Young girl is a newspaper writer and ends up receiving a very much needed anonymous gift. She follows up on it and meets a very unusual family. She decides to write a story for the paper about them but concerned she would be doing a breach of trust. Her own life story is also a mystery and hope is still looking for the chance to have a future life with not giving up on her wish. Many peoples lives were changed due to the good deeds that were started by the family she met on her search. This heartwarming story will restore your faith in mankind and want you to start your own tradition.

Lisa says

I like the premise of this book because the true meaning of Christmas is doing good to others, especially those in need. Can you hear the "but" coming? The book was predictable, especially in the beginning and the characters seemed to be missing something--maybe unpredictability? So while the book was easy to read, the book didn't demand to be picked up and read. I like my books bossy and sassy.

The book had a good message and made me feel good in the end. This book would be best read with a kid or two in your lap, but only if you are willing to put a jar in your kitchen and give up all coins that fall into your hands.

Megan says

Some books are well written. Others tell a great story. This book fails on both accounts

I'd describe the writing as downright painful and unimaginative. The characters are saccharine sweet, the things they say and do, uncomfortably cheesy.

Things that confirmed I was reading a Bad Writer:

1) Spends way too much time describing people's eyes, hair color and what they're wearing.

"He was salt and pepper gray, but mostly salt. His chin and nose were large and distinguished but not distracting. His eyes were wood-paneling brown."

"Through the years, her once baby blue eyes had added a rich green at their edges."

2) Alludes to an incredible mystery to be solved. But once the story advances, the reader finds the incredible mystery to singularly unremarkable.

"Her reporter's intuition insisted that a remarkable story was on the verge of appearing on the front page."

This "remarkable story" is that a family filled a jar with change every year and gave it to someone in need. Wow!

3) Character in story is sure to win the "Pulitzer" for front page newspaper story. The newspaper story is as poorly written as the book (no surprise there) and out of the context of the book (read chapter 17 by itself and you'll see what a poorly written, disconnected article it is), would make NO sense to anyone reading it.

4) Uses the following phrase 3 times in the book, "Hope took her feet and jogged across the room." Don't know about you, but my feet are always attached to my legs. I don't have to "take" them anywhere.

5) Ties everything up with a big beautiful bow. Make that a Christmas bow! All story roads converge on a single destination.

Shaun says

Every once in a while, you will come across a single passage in a book that summarizes the essence of the book in a few short lines. The following quote is such a passage as it captures my thoughts on *Christmas*

Jars in one sentence.

He's an open book, thought Hope, of very cheesy lines.

Though this is meant to be an uplifting story that reminds us of the real meaning of Christmas, it seems rather weak and unremarkable when compared to the truly amazing things many people do for each other on a regular basis.

Ironically the main character, Hope, is conniving and shallow, while her adopted mother and the Maxwell family she "befriends" are straight out of *Leave It to Beaver*. But the worst part is the almost "miraculous" though unimaginative everyone-lives-MORE-than-happily-ever-after ending that requires the reader to suspend belief and accept one unlikely coincidence after another. I expect this in books written for children, but not so much in books written for an adult audience.

The writing is okay, but the story is so cliché, it's hard to believe this was a *New York Times* Bestseller. Bottom line: It's a Hallmark Christmas Special on steroids.

If you like books that don't require much thought or introspection and use cliché characters to spell out obvious concepts - like the real meaning of Christmas (assuming you don't already know), well then you might enjoy this book. Otherwise, there are way too many other books worth reading. On the flip side, if a Hallmark Christmas Special is what you're craving, the book is just over a hundred pages and a short time investment.
