



## Wait for Signs: Twelve Longmire Stories

*Craig Johnson*

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**Wait for Signs: Twelve Longmire Stories** Craig Johnson

**Twelve Longmire short stories available for the first time in a single volume—featuring an introduction by Lou Diamond Phillips of A&E’s *Longmire***

Ten years ago, Craig Johnson wrote his first short story, the Hillerman Award–winning “Old Indian Trick.” This was one of the earliest appearances of the sheriff who would go on to star in Johnson’s bestselling, award-winning novels and the A&E hit series *Longmire*. Each Christmas Eve thereafter, fans rejoiced when Johnson sent out a new short story featuring an episode in Walt’s life that doesn’t appear in the novels; over the years, many have asked why they can’t buy the stories in book form.

*Wait for Signs* collects those beloved stories—and one entirely new story, “Petunia, Bandit Queen of the Bighorns”—for the very first time in a single volume, regular trade hardcover. With glimpses of Walt’s past from the incident in “Ministerial Aide,” when the sheriff is mistaken for a deity, to the hilarious “Messenger,” where the majority

of the action takes place in a Port-A-Potty, *Wait for Signs* is a necessary addition to any Longmire fan’s shelf and a wonderful way to introduce new readers to the fictional world of Absaroka County, Wyoming.

## Wait for Signs: Twelve Longmire Stories Details

Date : Published October 21st 2014 by Penguin Books

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Author : Craig Johnson

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Genre : Mystery, Short Stories, Westerns, Fiction

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## From Reader Review Wait for Signs: Twelve Longmire Stories for online ebook

### Tilia says

Author Craig Johnson has an enviable problem: heaps of fans. To show his gratitude for their support, he sent them all a free copy of his short story, "Old Indian Trick," as a Christmas present. The following November he was deluged with requests for another one. I tell you, it's like feeding stray cats.

So Johnson wrote another one, and another the year after that; and when he had accreted enough, he put them into this delightful little anthology of a dozen short stories, all featuring Walt Longmire and his trusty band of supporting characters. Each tale is a gem in the jewelry collection which is the Longmire series: the writing is smooth, with the seemingly effortless style that is the hallmark of a master storyteller. Each story, though self-contained, adds to the overall vision of the sheriff of Absaroka County. Some are sad; some are funny; many are both. Well worth a read.

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### Angie says

Love the Longmire TV show...this brought on my desire to try some of the books. This is my first attempt and it is a Collection of short stories. Very well written, entertaining. Definitely quality. I'll try a regular length one for sure now:)

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### ?Susan? says

All the regulars are back in these twelve great stories that jump around in the series. Each one has the Longmire philosophy and his clever, charming way of going about things. There are funny parts to each but one stands out to me as the best; Walt, Bear and Vic find themselves in the woods with an outhouse dilemma. Totally Funny. Great feel good holiday shorts.

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### John of Canada says

Contemporary western adventures of a sheriff in Wyoming. Great characters, sharp dialogue and one of the funniest lines ever: "He had done a two-spot in Deer Lodge where the prison Psychologist intimated that it was all a question of comparison but that if you sat a bag of groceries next to Travis, the groceries would get into Stanford before he would." I have been binge watching the Longmire tv series and I am now hooked on the books.

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### Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

I was quite happy when NG approved me for reading this book since I'm a huge fan of Craig Johnson's Longmire series. The only thing that would have made me happier would have been a new book in the

series instead of a book with short stories, many which I have already read. But nevertheless, I was happy!

I thought this book would only have one new story that I haven't read before, but it had a couple which was a fun surprise, and I took the opportunity to read some not all of the stories that I had read before, like “Messenger”, I love that story.

There are 12 stories in this collection. A must read for Longmire fans!

Old Indian trick: Never underestimate an Indian. 3 stars

Ministerial aid: Walt as the Messiah. 4 stars

Slick-tongued devil: Never try to con a grieving sheriff. 4 stars

Fire Bird: Old ladies shouldn't play with fire. 3 stars

Unbalanced: Walt gives a young girl a lift and they talk music and life. 3 stars

Several Stations: Walt should stick to his occupation; the theater isn't his thing but he makes a good Santa. 3 stars

High holiday: Never try to fool Walt that you are Jewish. 3 stars

Toys for tots: Buying presents for Walt isn't easy. 3 stars

Divorce horse: A horse goes missing. 3 stars

Thankstaking: Walt and Henry aren't on the same page when it comes to Thanksgiving. 3 stars

Messenger: Walt, Vic, Henry, bears and an owl. 4 stars

Petunia, bandit queen of the Bighorns: Walt tells the story of Petunia, the ewe that launched a thousand strays. 3 stars

*I want to thank the publisher for providing me with a free copy through NetGalley for an honest review!*

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## **Bill Peschel says**

There's something to be said, as H.L. Mencken said, for competence in anything from adultery to zoology. It's easy to appreciate brilliance and genius. But we have a hard time honoring works with more modest goals, such as entertaining the reader.

So it's not meant to be snarky when I say that the dozen stories about Wyoming sheriff Walt Longmire in “Wait for Signs” are competent. This collection by Craig Johnson, beautifully designed and printed, make the perfect gift for his fans, even a welcome surprise coming so soon after publication of “Any Other Name.”

The stories are not just amusing in the telling. They dip into Longmire's life, showing his capacity for patience and humor on the job, such as rescuing an old woman who's waiting for Jesus to show up in a restaurant parking lot, or investigating the disappearance of a horse during a rodeo. Some are about moments

in his life that reveal aspects of his character or his relationships. “Slick-Tongued Devil,” for example, tells the story of the death of his wife, paired with the visit of a Bible salesman, and how the events are intertwined.

For fans of the series, I can cut to the chase and say these stories go down as smooth as a shot of good whiskey. These stories are in turn mournful, elegiac, sweet on its characters and, in the case of “Messenger,” funny in that “oh-no-you-didn’t-go-there” way, involving a bear family, a ranger, an outhouse and Cheetoes).

For the rest of you, these stories are best described as episodes in a lawman’s life. There are small mysteries that mean a lot to the people involved, but no challenge is issued to solve them yourself. You’re just along for the ride, spending time with mostly good people and maybe being lured into staying awhile.

In fact, the only fault I have with the book is that the stories can be started on Christmas Day and finished long before New Years. But, then, that’s what the novels are for.

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## Wart Hill says

*[I received a free ARC of this book via NetGalley. This fact has no bearing on my review.]*

You can read this and other reviews on [Things I Find While Shelving](#)

So, the trick with short story collections is, I don’t usually like all of them. That was not the case with Wait for Signs. Twelve Longmire short stories? I couldn’t resist requesting when I saw it on NetGalley. And I was not disappointed. Each story is good in its own right. They’re all funny and poignant and thought provoking in that way I have come to expect from Longmire (whether it be while reading the books or watching the TV Show). Another great thing: you don’t have to be well versed with the books or show to understand what’s going on, which is awesome - I’ve only read the first two books, and it’s been awhile since I read the second, so it felt almost fresh and new (despite the show, heh).

My only niggle was two spots where Henry Standing Bear was using contractions. Henry Standing Bear does not use contractions. This is a thing. I figure it was just an ARC issue that’ll be sorted out. Because it kind of threw me out of the story (It was only twice, but it’s a big character thing). Once I can get my hands on a published copy, I’ll have to make sure. So, yeah, little ARC niggles.

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## Aisling says

Well, wow. Like another reviewer, I am not usually a fan of short stories but I love the Longmire books so I jumped at the chance to win/review this book. And now I might have to change my mind about short stories. These were just fantastic. Johnson is an even more skilled writer than I imagined. He can do in the space of a few pages what most authors need full books to do. I laughed (often) and cried (Thankstaking) and was transported to Absaroka County every time. All the favorites are there (Henry Standing Bear, Vic, Saizarbitoria, Lucian, Vic, Dog...) Really if you are a fan of Walt Longmire do not miss these never before published short stories that Johnson penned every Christmas for his newsletter fans. These are so entertaining and pack a punch. HIGHLY recommend.

## Scott says

\*\*As I continue my Longmire series read, full disclosure requires that I openly admit I am a devoted fan of the Longmire television show (on A/E and now Netflix) and have enjoyed reading the previous books in the Longmire book series that inspired that show even more. With that said, I am still doing my best to provide objective and an honest review. \*\*

“Wait for Signs” is a hard copy collection of the Longmire short stories that Johnson has either published electronically and/or sent out each Christmas to his fans. These stories reveal more personalized moments from Sheriff Walt Longmire’s life. The themes are personal, involving his struggles with moving on from the death of his wife, Martha, and challenges with being a father to his daughter, Cady, as she grows up into the Greatest Legal Mid of Our Time.

The best stories include:

“Ministerial Aid” - On the first New Year’s morning following the death of his wife, Walt finds himself sporting a killer hangover and answering a call in his bathrobe that ends up dealing with a domestic abuse situation in a most unique well.

“Slick-Tongued Devil” - Two days before Christmas Walt sees his wife’s obituary listed in the local paper while having breakfast at the Busy Bee Café. Heading home he solaces in beer and a nap, but is woken by an unexpected knock at the door, and gentleman who has arrived to deliver a personalized edition of the Bible that Walt’s wife placed a special ordered for before she died.

“Messenger” - Walt, Henry, and Vic receive a distress call from a forest service ranger and a civilian are in trouble. They arrive to find the two trapped on top of a Porta-potty by a mother bear and her cubs. This one has some of the funniest moments ever in Longmire history.

“Fire Bird” – Walt tries to spend a quiet New Year’s Eve with Lucian at the Durant Home for the Assisted Living and ends up involved in a decades old fire-setting mystery.

The good stories include:

“Old Indian Trick” – Walt and Lonnie Little Bird find themselves accidently in the middle of a restaurant robbery and investigation.

“Unbalanced” – On his way to pick up Cady at the Billings airport for Christmas, Walt picks up an unusual hitchhiker along the way. The young female lady seems more than a bit unbalanced and provides Walt an interesting challenge as they exchange stories during the drive. The story reflects a bit on Walt’s Vietnam past and shares a sensitive side of the relationships between fathers and daughters.

“Divorce Horse” - during the annual American Days Parade where the town and fairgrounds are full of tourists over Memorial holiday weekend. Tommy Jefferson, a local, yet renowned Indian relay racer loses his favorite horse – Divorce Horse – and seeks help from Walt, Henry, and Cady to find him.

“Several Stations” – Walt’s debut as the Spirit of Christmas in the local Durant production of A Christmas Carol doesn’t go quite as he practiced and hoped for.

“Thankstaking” – Walt and Henry meet a stranger on Thanksgiving that brings out their sensitive and caring Spirit.

The lesser stories include:

“Toys for Tots” – Walt and his daughter, Cady, go Christmas shopping in what may be her last holiday home with dad before her impending wedding to Deputy Moretti’s brother. Walt is his typical grumpy self as Cady tries to get him in the Christmas spirit of giving, and an unusual opportunity arises for Walter to do just that with a young Navy Chaplain.

“High Holidays” – Walt deals with a lost and forgetful carful of guys in which all does not seem as it looks.

“Petunia, Bandit Queen of the Bighorns – Walt and Santiago are called in to deal with the capture of the legendary Petunia, queen and most hunted of all the sheep in the Bighorn mountain range.

Overall, these stories are sarcastic, funny, and full of personalized moments that reveal both the outer strength and inner vulnerability of Walt Longmire, his family and friends. Those moments are funny, sarcastic, sensitive and well-worth reading.

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### **Thomas says**

This library book is a collection of 12 short stories that Craig Johnson started writing as a Christmas gift to his website followers. He realized that he had created a monster when people started asking Where is the Christmas story? one year after the first. All of his characters are in these stories:

Walt Longmire, Absaroka County Sheriff,

Henry Standing Bear, Walt's friend since high school

Walt's daughter Cady

Victoria Moretti, Absaroka County Under sheriff

Santiago "Sancho" Saizarbitoria, Basque Deputy

Lucian Connally, previous Absaroka Sheriff

These stories are not all mysteries, but all show Walt as a caring, kind person. They are stories laced with humor, wisdom and compassion. My favorite is "Messenger"

Victoria quote: "I'm not toilet diving for an owl."

It was a short easy read and definitely 4 stars.

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### **Suzy says**

If you are a fan of Johnson's Walt Longmire mysteries, I think you will love this short story collection. Several of the twelve stories take place around Christmas and New Year's which is why I selected this book as part of my 2015 holiday reading marathon. The things I enjoy about Johnson's writing are distilled into stories featuring both familiar and new characters and locations in northern Wyoming and eastern Montana. Each story transports the reader and packs a punch in a few pages. Recommended!

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### **Sophia says**

I've been a fan of the TV show and have wanted to go back and read the books it is based on, but hadn't done it yet. This short story collection came up as an Audible.com deal and so I grabbed it. It was a delight from first to last. I found much more depth to already loved characters and a wry humor and human understanding behind each story. The narrator, George Guidall, was a great match.

This collection is introduced by Lou Diamond Phillips on the audio and then goes into a collection of stories primarily centered around the holiday season. I loved that Walt is surrounded by all the regular faces throughout the collection though there are a few where he stands alone in situations that just left me shaking my head with amusement or outright laughter. I think him mistaken as a visitation from Jesus in his bathrobe and in need of a shave still gets me to giggling, but poor Vic turned upside down inside an outhouse with Henry and Walt holding her legs while she rescues an owl and a bear has them all stuck in place just sent me into spasms. And Henry's surprising solution to help a desperate father during the holidays touched my heart.

This was great when I wanted a quick story from start to conclusion during my free moments here and there to appreciate a mystery with solution with some favorite characters.

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## Lesya says

Walt Longmire, Craig Johnson's sheriff from Absaroka County in Wyoming, made his first short story appearance in, "Old Indian Trick" about ten years ago. That story went on to win the Cowboys & Indians Tony Hillerman award. Johnson sent it in a Christmas newsletter that year, then learned the following year that subscribers were waiting for the next Walt Longmire Christmas story. What's a writer to do? He went on to write eleven more short stories, now released as *Wait for Signs*.

There are Christmas settings, a Memorial Day one, a New Year's story, and ordinary stories of not-so-ordinary occurrences in the life of a Wyoming sheriff. As Johnson says in his Acknowledgements, some are mysteries; some of the stories have some mysterious elements; and some have none. In other words, these are typical Craig Johnson, and Walt Longmire, stories. Lou Diamond Phillips, who played Henry Standing Bear in the television show *Longmire*, points out the difficulty in creating characters, settings and a plot, and making them come together in an absorbing short story. Craig Johnson succeeds beautifully in every one of the stories in this collection.

Those of us who read the books, or watched the television series, will welcome Walt, along with the appearance of familiar characters - Henry Standing Bear, Vic, Dog, Cady, Lucian Connally, and there are familiar symbols and stories, such as the owls, and Walt's Christmas connection with Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. There's the trademark wry humor, along with the kindness. Although Johnson says "Walt is kind, decent, caring", there's that same kindness in Henry. And, there's a darkness in both men as well, a loneliness at times. It makes both of them human, not super-human.

*Wait for Signs* should be added to so many collections. Consider it as a gift for those who love, and miss, Westerns. It's a perfect companion to Johnson's *Spirit of Steamboat*. I'm buying a copy for myself to keep with my favorite Christmas books, even though not all the stories are set at Christmastime. It's for all of us who want to know what Walt Longmire is up to in between his larger adventures. And, it's for all of us who love Craig Johnson's beautiful writing, his stories about Walt and his friends. In fact, Craig Johnson's *Wait for Signs* is just right, for so many reasons.

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## LJ says

First Sentence; First Story: It's hard to argue with an old Indian or his tricks.

How nice to have collection of Johnson's annual Christmas stories, all in one place. Plus, there is the added gift of a new story, and a wonderful, personal introduction by Lou Diamond Phillips, the actor who plays Henry Standing Bear in the *Longmire* television series, based on the series. Phillips introduction expresses so much of what I feel about Johnson's writing, as well as the pleasure of meeting Craig and his wife Judy.

The stories are of the same, high quality we've come to expect from Johnson. They are thoughtful and entertaining with each containing a small lesson as well. From how one should never overlook the basics, to realizing that salvation can come from unexpected sources, to forgiveness and tolerance. It's lovely that there is even a small reference to the American actor Robert Taylor, perhaps best known for the Westerns he made in the 1960s, as an homage to the Australian actor currently playing Sheriff Longmire. There are also lessons

on acceptance, remembering others, giving, priorities, desperation and redemption. But we also learn the history of the term, “Indian Summer.”

“Wait for the Signs” is a classic example of Johnson’s humor, wisdom and wonderful writing. As well as a treat for oneself, it is an excellent introduction to those who’ve not read Johnson before.

WAIT FOR THE SIGNS (Short Stories – Sheriff Walt Longmire – Wyoming – Contemp) – Ex  
Johnson, Craig  
Viking Adult, 2014

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### **Karl says**

An excellent collection of Longmire holiday stories. These stories were written one a yearly basis (one per year) for the folks who subscribed to Craig Johnson's news letter. All the stories were good to very good, though I will say, my favorite in this collection was a story called "Messenger"

Some of the stories fill in gaps between the books and add to fill in the history of Walt Longmire with many utilizing Longmire's daughter, friend Henry and his dog Dog. Most of the stories are orientated toward the Christmas holiday season.

A thoroughly enjoyable book.

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