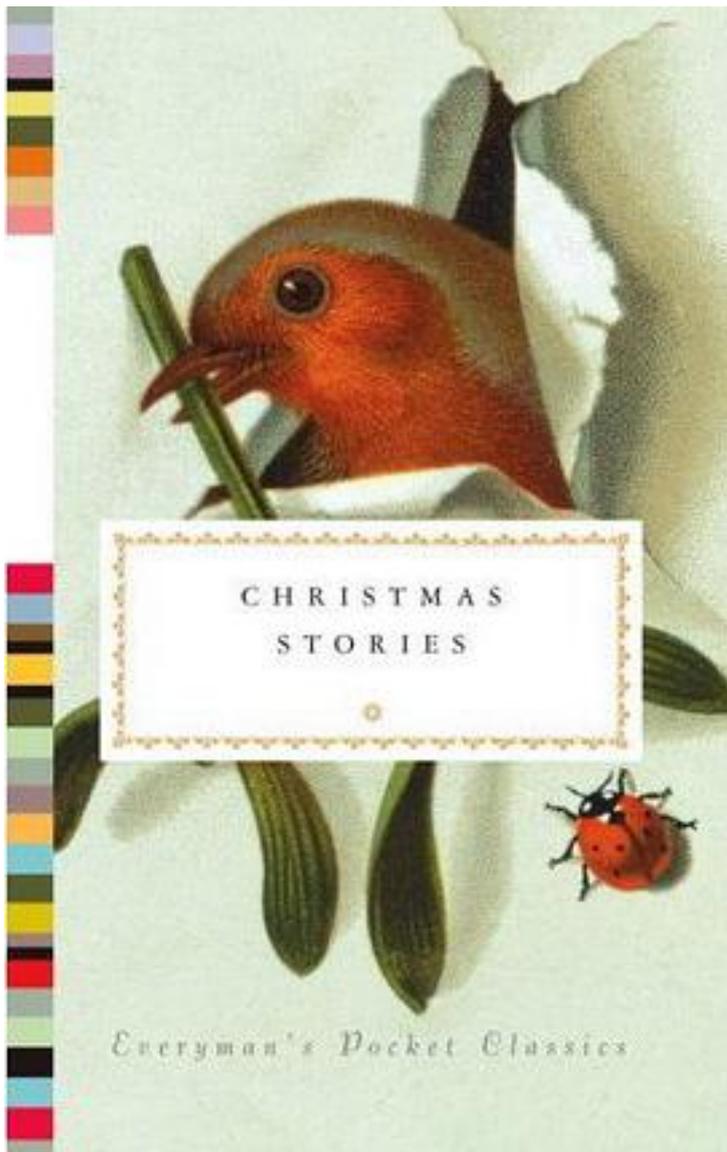


CHRISTMAS STORIES



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著者:Tesdell, Diana Secker 编

出版者:Random House Inc

出版时间:2007-10

装帧:HRD

isbn:9780307267177

(Book Jacket Status: Jacketed)

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Goblins frolic in the graveyard of an early Dickens tale and a love-struck ghost disrupts a country estate in Elizabeth Bowen's "Green Holly." The plight of the less fortunate haunts Chekhov's "Vanka" and Willa Cather's "The Burglar's Christmas" but takes a boisterously comic turn in Damon Runyon's "Dancing Dan's Christmas" and in John Cheever's "Christmas Is a Sad Season for the Poor." From Vladimir Nabokov's intensely moving story of a father's grief in "Christmas" to Truman Capote's hilarious yet heartbreaking "A Christmas Memory," from Grace Paley's Jewish girl starring in the Christmas pageant in "The Loudest Voice" to the dysfunctional family ski holiday in Richard Ford's "Crèche"—each of the stories gathered here is imbued with Christmas spirit (of one kind or another), and all are richly and indelibly entertaining.

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