



The Christmas Pony

Melody Carlson

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Eight-year-old Lucy Turnbull knew better than to wish for a pony that Christmas in 1937. Her mother had assured her in no uncertain terms that asking for a pony was the same as asking for the moon. Besides, the only extra mouths they needed at their boarding house were the paying kind. But when an interesting pair of strangers comes to town, Lucy starts to believe her Christmas wishes might just come true after all.

The queen of the Christmas novel, Melody Carlson pens another magical tale of expectation and excitement as one little girl dreams big and the impossible becomes possible.

The Christmas Pony Details

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Author : Melody Carlson

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From Reader Review The Christmas Pony for online ebook

Jenny Dohner says

Cute, but simple and predictable. Like a Hallmark movie.

Rebekah Morris says

3.5 stars. Or maybe 3.75 stars.

I really enjoyed this story (once I figured out that George wasn't 18—why I thought he was 18, I'm not sure). Lucy was so sweet, and Grandma and Mama were real. The setting was well done. I could picture the small town, the country farmhouse, and even the old car.

Though not strongly Christian like some books, it was Christian in a sense that there were prayers, going to church and even a good reminder of how Christ humbled Himself when He came and was born to a poor family.

The little girl isn't sure if she believes in Santa Claus or not, and Veronica wasn't very nice (to say the least), but it was a good story.

I think I'm going to want to read this book again another year.

Louise says

Story Description:

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Eight-year-old Lucy Turnbull knew better than to wish for a pony that Christmas in 1937. Her mother had assured her in no uncertain terms that asking for a pony was the same as asking for the moon. Besides, the only extra mouths they needed at their boarding house were the paying kind. But when an interesting pair of strangers comes to town, Lucy starts to believe her Christmas wishes might just come true after all.

The queen of the Christmas novel, Melody Carlson pens another magical tale of expectation and excitement as one little girl dreams big and the impossible becomes possible.

My Review:

It is December 1937 and eight-year-old, Lucy Turnbull knew better than to wish for a pony for Christmas. Gramma told her only rich people could afford such luxuries as that. A neighbour, Mr. Greenberg was selling or trading a pony named, Smoky who Lucy had admired for years and had run home to tell her Mom and Gramma. But disappointingly, Mama told her she could barely keep food on the table for themselves. Lucy knew Mama felt bad because she had two creases in her forehead which Lucy knew she was responsible for putting there. Mama ran a boarding house and suggested Lucy pray for “paying boarders” instead of a pony.

Lucy's Daddy had passed away when she was five-years-old so Mama knit socks which the local store traded for groceries. Mama always stayed up late at night and could knit a whole sock in one night.

While in town doing some grocery shopping for Mama, Lucy ran into two strangers whose car had broken down and were looking for someplace to stay for a few days as the garage needed to order parts.

Immediately Lucy told them about her house and how Mama had 3 rooms to rent and convinced them to come home with her. She knew Mama would be happy to have paying boarders. With paying boarders Lucy was still holding out hope that she would get the pony but sometimes we don't always get what we wish for and sometimes we do.

Will Lucy get her pony? Will the boarders stay at Mama's or will they consider it too far out of town?

This was a lovely and very cute Christmas story that I read in about an hour or so. At only 169 pages it was a quick read for an afternoon with a hot cup of tea. Melody Carlson always pens the nicest stories and this one was no different. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

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Brenda says

I have been a fan of Melody Carlson forever, and one of the reasons is because whatever she writes, whether its a story about teens, or a Christmas story I always wind up feeling like I got more than just a story. Instead she always takes me on a journey that makes me feel just a bit better for having read the story.

The year is 1937, and all eight year old Lucy Turnbull wants for Christmas is a pony, but she is pretty sure it's a wish that won't come true. After all not only does her mother caution her about making such a lofty wish, but she also learned from Tommy Farley that Santa was only make believe. So instead of just praying for a pony, she prays for the food that the pony will need to eat. She also prays that boarders will come along and rent the upstairs bedrooms, and that her momma will find her smile again.

What a touching story. There was so many things that I enjoyed about this story. First of all I felt like the author captured the Depression era very well. I also loved Lucy and her wish for a pony, something so many little girls, or those of us who were once little girls, can certainly relate to. Lucy's character was so very easy to like, and it was so nice to see how she grew as the story progressed. While this was just a short story, it isn't short on emotion or character. This is a keeper for my shelf, one that I will reread each Christmas season.

A great Christmas story that's perfect for anyone from eight to eighty.

A complimentary copy of this book was provided in exchange for an honest review.

Anna says

It's 1937, times are tough, but eight year old Lucy still believes in prayer and Christmas miracles. Her father has died, and her mother and grandmother take in boarders and laundry to make ends meet. Lucy longs for a pony, but more than that she yearns to see her mother smiling and happy. When two unlikely boarders come to stay just before Christmas, their peaceful home becomes a bit more interesting. Lucy is taken in by the beauty of the glamorous Veronica and the kindness of George. Do they hold the answers to Lucy's yearnings?

I fell in love with Lucy's big heart and her belief that God will answer her prayers.
A quick, inspiring Christmas story that will touch your heart.

Sara says

Wonderful, sweet Christmas story!!!

Melissa Coyle says

A cute little story about hopes and wishes and happy endings! :)

Anna Catherman says

I was expecting a cliché Christmas horse story, and instead I got a cliché Christmas romance. Still a decent book, just majorly disappointing that the titular pony, Smokey, is only mentioned a few dozen times and appears in just three scenes.

Renee says

*Melody Carlson's *The Christmas Pony* features old-fashioned holiday fun, a sweet romance, and an adorable heroine named Lucy Turnbull.*

*In this charming novella, eight-year-old Lucy shows the adults around her the power of childlike faith and even does a little match-making along the way. Think *The House Without a Christmas Tree*, *Holiday Affair*, or *Miracle on 34th Street*—throw in some hot cocoa in front of the wood stove—and you'll be in just the right mood to enjoy this story.*

Here's the set up: Lucy lives with her widowed mother and grandmother in Maple Grove, Arizona. It's 1937, and times are hard. Lucy's mama, Miriam, knits socks to trade for groceries and takes in laundry and borders to get by. Though Lucy knows they can't afford one more mouth to feed, she can't help but pray for a pony of her own. However, she also asks for something special for her mama . . .

“‘Please, dear God,’ she said finally, ‘help Mama to find her smile again.’ Lucy could remember when Mama had the prettiest smile ever. Back when Daddy was still alive. But like Lucy’s memories of her father, Mama’s smile had faded some over the last few years. If Lucy couldn’t have a pony for Christmas, she’d settle for Mama’s smile instead.”

When Lucy corrals two borders to rent rooms for the Christmas holiday, all she’s hoping for is extra money to convince Mama they can feed a pony. But she and her mama receive so much more. I loved this heart-warming story! It’s sure to become a classic!

All Melody Carlson’s Christmas novellas are sweet, satisfying, and perfect for gift-giving. This one is my favorite so far. Don’t miss it! You can purchase The Christmas Pony at this link.

Sheri says

Despite the title, this really isn’t a story about a pony, so if you’re hoping for a nice horse story, you’ll be disappointed. It’s more of a mild romance as seen through the eyes of an 8 year old. It’s a sweet and gentle Christmas romance with good character development and the requisite happy ending. Even though that’s why I read this holiday book, I was a bit put off by everything working out just so in the end. It was all just a bit too unbelievable for me, especially considering the time period (1937). It was a pleasant read, but not one I’m likely to read again, as for me it didn’t have the heart-warming appeal I like to feel in a Christmas read.
2.5 stars

Rebecca McNutt says

A nice holiday-themed story, but I don’t know if I’d really ever read it more than once. I really liked it but it was very generic and predictable.

Crystal says

I have come to think of reading Ms. Carlson’s Christmas books as a tradition and while I have to read them a little early for me in the season, they never fail to bring me good cheer and warm feelings when I read one of them. The Christmas Pony is no exception, in fact I think it’s one of her best of the last three years that I have been reading.

The story focuses around a young girl who’s family is making it for their small town after the great depression in 1937. All Lucy really wants for Christmas is the pony that is down the road that is for sale of trade, but she knows she probably won’t get it. But that doesn’t stop her for praying for it. Lucy lives with her Grandmother and widowed Mother and they take in boarders to make extra money so Lucy thinks it’s magical when she happens to run into a beautiful woman and a well-dressed man in town that need a place to stay. And that’s where the story and the magic start. Getting to know Lucy, George, Miriam and even annoying Veronica make the magic of this book. I adored George and his quiet wisdom and sweet ways with Lucy and Miriam.

Once you start reading this you won't want to put it down, and it's easy to read in an hour or so since it's under 200 pages. The magic of the Christmas season in the book will enthrall you and even though life isn't perfect for this little family you will learn to enjoy the little things right along with them. When I finished the book, I wanted to hug my little family, tell them I love them and carry the magic of The Christmas Pony with us right through Thanksgiving and into Advent and the Christmas season. Ms. Carlson captures the magic of the simple life, love and the spirit of giving so perfectly that you can't help closing this book with a smile on your face even if you are facing troubles in your life.

So I encourage you to grab this book, it's a quick read. It's uplifting, it's romantic, it's sweet. It's nice to see life through the eyes of a child and appreciate things that way. The Christmas Pony is a lovely book that I may just have to read again before Christmas.

Michelle Spencer says

I wanted a fast, cozy, Christmas-y read, and this fit the bill for that. It was book candy. That's all.

Unfortunately, it wasn't even GOOD book candy. In candy terms, it was like the Bit O'Honeys and root beer barrels that get left in the bottom of the candy jar after the Jolly Ranchers and Werther's are gone.

It had a simplistic, clunky writing style that would have flowed better in first person to match the narrative voice of the little girl. And for a book with "pony" in the title, there was pretty much no pony in this book. And the pony is why I wanted to read it. *pout*

I also couldn't help but notice that, barring Lucy and her family, EVERY SINGLE LAST WOMAN/FEMALE IN THIS BOOK WAS JUST AWFUL. It just got to be ridiculous after a while. I can usually roll my eyes and keep going, but after a while, I just started to feel kind of attacked.

Veronica = worldly, petty diva who only cares for herself

Helen Krausner = spoiled rotten brat

Mrs. Babcock = nasty control freak battle axe

Mrs. Dorchester = high-maintenance fussbudget (also, completely unnecessary - she and her personality-devout husband serve zero purpose in this story)

Even Mama wasn't totally safe. Mama's beauty is praised repeatedly, but the stronger side of her life is kind of ignored (such as running a farm and boarding house and caring for her young daughter after the death of her husband - especially in 1937, you had to be tough to do that). Would have been nice to key in on that instead of bring up how pretty she is on multiple occasions and point out that she's not like Veronica.

Might make a nice little Hallmark movie for people who enjoy this sort of thing, but it's not really my shtick. I just wanted more pony, I guess. Not bitter or anything that he's probably on a grand total of 10 pages in this whole story. Not bitter at all.

Why not just call it "The Christmas Husband for Mama" and set up realistic expectations, huh? Or "The Christmas Not-As-Much-Pony-As-One-Might-Expect"?

Oh right, not bitter.

Regina Spiker says

A sweet little Christmas story to fall in love with - it's 1937 and 8 year old Lucy wants a pony for Christmas, but times are hard, and her mama - a young widow - has to take in boarders to barely make ends meet. Grandma helps with the cooking and Lucy does a lot of chores on the neglected farm. When she walks into town to do the weekly shopping, Lucy comes across two stranded motorists. Asking them to stay at her farmhouse and fill the rooms while their car is repaired, Lucy falls in love with the exotic woman and George, her handsome companion. With one prayer answered for paying boarders, Lucy gives up her wish for a pony and prays instead for her Mama's smile to come back.

I love Melody's little Christmas books - this gem is told from Lucy's perspective and is so heartwarming and hopeful. Read with a snuggly blanket and a hot cup of tea!

Christian Fiction Addiction says

I absolutely love stories written from the perspective of a child, and 8-yr-old Lucy Turnbull is as precious as they come! "The Christmas Pony" is chock-full of charm, and viewing life through Lucy's eyes reveals a heart-warming story of faith and hope and love. Within pages of beginning the story, I was swept up into her innocence and naivety as she encounters 2 strangers who arrive into town, strangers who she soon convinces to move into her mother's boardinghouse. As she discovers more and more about the newcomers, she also discovers more about herself and her family, and she realizes that though she wishes more than anything for a pony, what she most wishes for is her mother to smile again.

Melody Carlson absolutely lives up to her award-winning reputation with her latest Christmas offering, with wonderful characterization and a story that pleases in every way. Though the story may seem somewhat predictable, predictable is just what's needed when you are getting ready for Christmas and for the warm feelings that you hope will arrive along with your favorite songs and snowy weather. I put down the book feeling like I was ready for the Christmas season to arrive!

I highly recommend this story for anyone looking for a cozy book to keep them company this season. 4.5 out of 5 stars.

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