



Some Assembly Required: A Daddy's Christmas Book

The holiday season is upon us. Chances are, by the time you read this review, you will be knee deep in Christmas parties, presents to wrap, cards to send, deadlines to meet, traffic to fight, shopping to finish and relatives to entertain. It is enough to send most people over the edge. For those looking to escape, I highly recommend Bill Haltom's

By Bill Haltom |

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www.billhaltom.com

latest book, *Some Assembly Required: A Daddy's Christmas Book*.

Don't let the title fool you. This is not a book for Daddies only. Rather, it is a nostalgic tour of Christmases past combined with an exposition of our current Yuletide traditions. Of course, if you know anything about Bill then you know it is funny.

It is a light and entertaining read that is a little more than 100 pages long. The book is a collection of Bill's prior articles written on various holiday topics with a few new additions to keep his long-time fans on their toes. Illustrated by Dave Jendras (you may have seen his artwork on Bill's prior books) and complete with a foreword by Santa Claus, *Some Assembly Required* would make an ideal stocking stuffer for Daddies, Mommies or anyone who wants to laugh at the absurdity of the holiday season.

The book takes the readers on an exploration of all things Christmas, from the perspective of a Southerner, a lawyer and a daddy, not necessarily in that order. It starts with a nostalgic tone that is carried throughout. Bill takes the reader back to Christmas circa 1950s — the Christmas of his childhood. He reminds readers of the quaintness of local department stores, the excitement of a child at seeing the Sears & Roebuck catalog, the obsession of a young boy in getting an electronic football game (old school with the vibrating board), and the comfort of seeing Bob Hope entertain our troops overseas each year. Through

humor and vivid description, Bill paints a picture of his idyllic Christmas. Norman Rockwell could not have done better.

Bill is also unafraid to lay bare his most sacred family holiday traditions. Whether it be his irrational desire to light his home up like a Vegas Casino, the inevitable marital discord that results from selecting and setting up the tree, the chaos of midnight mass, the onerous burden of sending Christmas cards, or his fixation on some snowman named Mr. Bingle (you'll have to ask Bill himself about that one. Apparently, it is a Memphis thing and those of us who grew up on the eastern side of the plateau just can't relate), Bill finds the humor in almost any situation and is willing to exploit it.

I won't ruin the book by divulging all of the topics upon which Bill holds forth. It's enough to say that he surveys the entire holiday landscape and nothing is sacred. There is something here that everyone will enjoy and relate to. Through it all, he reminds us that the holiday season, in all of its absurdity, is really about family, faith and fellowship.

If you need a break from the holiday madness, or just want an entertaining, light, but thoughtful read, this book is well worth your time. Happy Holidays. 🎅

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