



Once for a Shining Hour: Reflections for Christmas

Lawrence Webb

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Christmas is a most wonderful time as we think once again on the season's true focus: the birth of the Baby whose life, death, and resurrection have reshaped history. The reflections in this collection found their inspiration in a variety of sources: * Songs of the season, old and new, sacred and secular, from Canada, Britain, and the U. S., including two new carols by the author * A Christmas quote from "Hamlet" * Soldiers who stopped fighting to celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas Day * John Grisham's seriocomic novel about a man who tries to skip Christmas * Grumblings of a grade school boy who is forced to take a bath * Rheta Grimsley Johnson's newspaper column comparing Christmas with marriage * A Holiday visit to a bombed-out British cathedral * A painting in a London church basement * A three-year-old's first part in a pageant * A family Christmas letter telling about the young husband's bout with cancer * Classic Christmas stories: Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol," Henry Van Dyke's "The Story of the Other Wise Man," and O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi" * A play about men who remember Christmas while they are prisoners of terrorists * A few personal memories from the author's childhood, youth, and adult years * The title essay is taken from the plainest of tree decorations--a clear plastic disc with these words: "Once for a shining hour, heaven touched the earth." The book is written "with the prayer that the readings will provide food for your thoughts -- some of which you may need to chew on a while -- and that they will enrich your Christmas."

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