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# Redrick Raccoon and the Christmas Mystery

By Karen H. Monteith  
Illustrated by  
Christopher J. Padgett



Redrick Raccoon and Henley Groundhog are nearly ready for Christmas, but Henley needs help keeping a promise so that no one will miss out on the wonder and mystery.

This delightful Christmas story portrays the merits of keeping one's promises, and the strength of friendship, kindness, and working together as a team, while bringing to life a new world of lovable characters and beautiful forest scenes. The story gently guides young readers to the true meaning of Christmas in the simplest terms. It's a cozy story for a cozy season.

This high-spirited and beautifully illustrated children's book will engage the imagination of young readers and listeners. You will find yourself wanting to dive into Berry Hollow, with its lovable characters and quaint charm, again and again this Christmas, and for many to come.

For more info please contact [media@deeperiverbooks.com](mailto:media@deeperiverbooks.com)

*Deep River*  
B O O K S



# About the Author

## **Karen H. Monteith**

Karen H. Monteith has a BA in English from Western Carolina University. She has always loved literature, particularly fairy tales. In 2009, she began writing children's stories, and eventually discovered her lively little raccoon character—a fixture in her writing ever since. She and her husband reside in western North Carolina.

### Connect with the Author

Facebook: @RedrickRacoon

# About the Illustrator

## **Christopher J. Padgett**

Christopher J. Padgett began drawing as a young child and continued in the visual arts as a photojournalist for newspapers into college, where he earned a BFA in film with a concentration in animation at Columbia College of Chicago. Christopher has always loved children, and his dream came true when he became a father to a red-headed, blue-eyed girl named Annette. Some nights when she had a hard time sleeping, she asked for him to draw beside her, and Annette contributed here and there to help bring the illustrations of Redrick and his friends to life.

### Connect with the Illustrator

[www.christopherpadgettart.com](http://www.christopherpadgettart.com)

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# *What Others Are Saying About* **Redrick Raccoon and the Christmas Mystery**

*Monteith's efforts are not wasted in her first work. Readers are rewarded with a simple but eloquent writing style that points the way for the much-anticipated arrival of Christmas. I pray that parents and grandparents, educators and church leaders will find Redrick Raccoon and the Christmas Mystery as lovely and full of promise as I have.*

—**Rev. Jeff P. Mathis, Pastor at First Baptist Church of Sylva**

*In her storytelling, Karen H. Monteith reveals her upbringing in the richly natural world of the North Carolina mountains. Her love for and knowledge of our diverse animals comes through in her delightful characters. I hope her readers enjoy this gentle tale of friendship and promises kept as much as I did.*

—**Janice Wright, MA, Retired School Psychologist**

## **Praise for the Illustrations**

*As Maurice Sendak once said, "There's so much more to a book than just reading it."*

*Christopher Padgett's illustrations are indeed able to provide more. He has an ability to bring the characters to life through his skill by depicting gesture. Illustration is different from fine art in many ways but primarily in that it has as its purpose the need to bring to life scenes as described by an author through the written word. This requires a skill not many artists possess. Christopher has that skill.*

*One of my textbooks in art school was The Natural Way to Draw by Kimon Nicolaides. He taught for many years at the Art Students' League in New York. He was a master of gesture drawing which I had drilled into me in art school. According to Nicolaides, "You should draw not what the thing looks like, not even what it is, but what it is doing ... gesture has no precise edges, no forms. The forms are in the act of changing. Gesture is movement in space."*

***Christopher's illustrations provide that gesture and bring his subjects to life with a skill that will be evident to the viewer immediately. I suspect he has a secret gesture pen he uses for his illustrations.***

—**Craig Forrest, Sleepy Hollow Studio**

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# Suggested Interview Questions

For Karen H. Monteith, author of  
*Redrick Raccoon and the Christmas Mystery*

**Q: Tell our audience about Christmas in the world of Berry Hollow.**

**A:** Christmas in the world of Berry Hollow is a happy time, a joyous time, a time to celebrate and enjoy one's friends and family. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with a very gifted illustrator named Christopher Padgett. The illustrations are picturesque and depict quaint, lovely Tudor-style homes with cobblestone streets. The street lamps are old fashioned and decorated with green wreaths and large red bows. Strands of holly, popcorn, and dried apples hang from the Christmas tree in the center of town.

**Q: Tell us about your main character, Redrick Raccoon.**

**A:** Redrick Raccoon is a lively, high-spirited character who is always eager to help his friends. He is reliable and has a can-do attitude. Redrick is a natural leader and believes in teamwork.

**Q: One of your more minor characters, Mayor Owl, is given a subtle but significant role near the end of your book. What is his purpose?**

**A:** Every Christmas, the Berry Hollow community gathers around the Christmas tree in the center of town to listen as Mayor Owl tells about a wondrous baby—the Christ child—that was born into the world a long time ago. I want children, with the help of their parents, to dig a little deeper and perhaps ask questions as to why we celebrate Christmas. I want them to see that there is something much more to Christmas than they may have realized.

**Q: What would you like to accomplish with *Redrick Raccoon and a Christmas Promise*?**

**A:** First, I want children to laugh and enjoy reading about Redrick and the other characters. And I want children to see how, though the characters bicker some, they stick together and come up with a positive, good resolution to their problem.

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**Q: What is the main thing you want children and parents to take away from this book?**

**A:** I would like for children to begin to understand the merits of keeping a promise, the strength in friendship, kindness, and working together as a team. Again, I also want children and their parents to talk more about the story Mayor Owl began to tell, and perhaps consider that there is something far greater, special, and mysterious about the Christmas season than they may realize.

**Q: What books or writers influenced you as a child, and now as an adult?**

**A:** Without a doubt, Grimm's Fairy Tales. I enjoyed them immensely as a child. I also enjoyed *The Wind in the Willows*, by Kenneth Grahame. As an adult, I enjoyed reading Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant*—I found the story fascinating. JRR Tolkien's books influenced me as well. And for fun, I always enjoyed reading a good mystery by Agatha Christie.

**Q: What motivates you to write?**

**A:** People, life situations, and circumstances have always motivated my writing. Many times, a happy memory from childhood will prompt a story. Often, it may just be a certain smell of a flower or fruit trees ripe with apples or peaches. The seasons changing, a warm fire, or the smell of a pie baking in the oven are just some of the many things that help bring new stories to mind.

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