

MARY HIGGINS CLARK

*He Sees You
When You're
Sleeping*



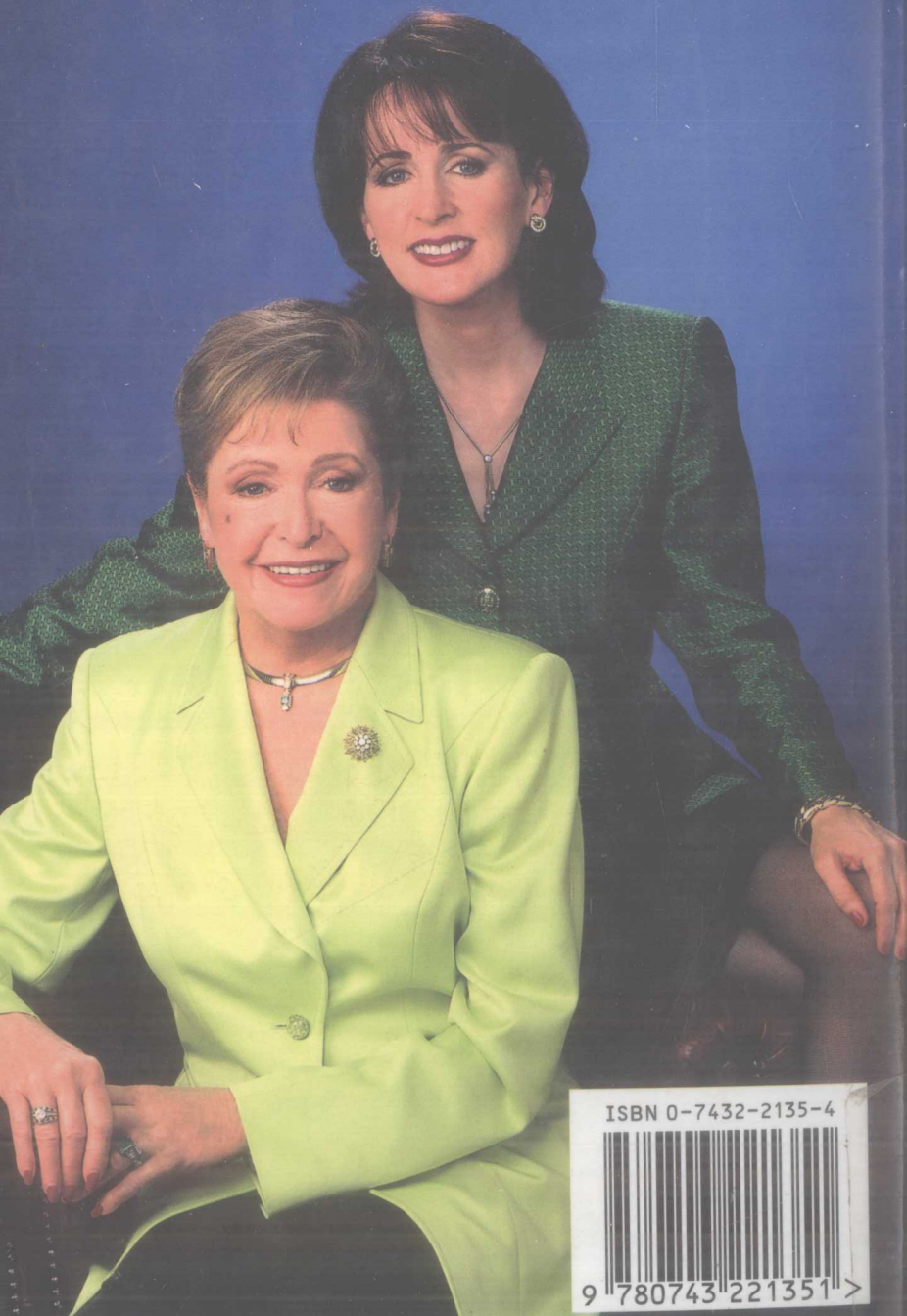
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BOOKS BY MARY HIGGINS CLARK
AND CAROL HIGGINS CLARK

Deck the Halls

BOOKS BY MARY HIGGINS CLARK

On the Street Where You Live
Before I Say Good-bye
We'll Meet Again
All Through the Night
You Belong to Me
Pretend You Don't See Her
My Gal Sunday
Moonlight Becomes You
Silent Night
Let Me Call You Sweetheart
The Lottery Winner
Remember Me
I'll Be Seeing You
All Around the Town
Loves Music, Loves to Dance
The Anastasia Syndrome and Other Stories
While My Pretty One Sleeps
Weep No More, My Lady
Stillwatch
A Cry in the Night
The Cradle Will Fall
A Stranger Is Watching
Where Are the Children?

BOOKS BY CAROL HIGGINS CLARK

Fleeced
Tiwanged
Iced
Snagged
Decked

Mary Higgins Clark

★ AND ★

Carol Higgins Clark

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THE GREAT BRITAIN

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to the families and friends who loved them,
and to the rescuers who risked their own lives to help them.

He Sees You
When
You're Sleeping

here's nothing worse than listening to the sounds of preparations for a great party, knowing that you're not invited. It's even worse when the party is located in heaven, Sterling Brooks thought to himself. He had been de-tained in the celestial waiting room, located right outside the heavenly gates, for forty-six years by earthly count. Now he could hear the heavenly choir doing a run-through of the songs that would commence the upcoming Christmas Eve celebration.

"Hark, the herald angels sing . . ."

Sterling sighed. He'd always loved that song. He shifted in his seat and looked around. Rows of pews were filled with people who were waiting to be called before the Heavenly Council. People who had to answer for certain things they'd done—or not done—in life, before they received admission to heaven.

Sterling had been there longer than anyone. He felt like the kid whose mother forget to pick him up from school. He usually was able to keep up a cheerful front, but lately he'd been feeling more and more forlorn. From his seat by the win-

dow, he had watched over the years as so many people he had known on earth whizzed past, on a nonstop trip to heaven. Occasionally he was shocked and a little irritated when some of them were not made to do time in the celestial waiting room. Even the guy who had cheated on his income tax and lied about his golf score soared blissfully over the bridge that separated the celestial waiting room from the heavenly gates.

But it had been the sight of Annie that tore his heart. A couple of weeks ago, the woman he'd loved but hadn't married, the woman he'd kept dangling had wafted past, looking as pretty and young as the first day they'd met. He ran to the information desk and inquired about Annie Mansfield, the soul who had just flown by the observation window. The angel checked his computer, then raised his eyebrows. "She died a few minutes ago, on her eighty-seventh birthday. While blowing out the candles, she had a dizzy spell. What an exemplary life she led. Generous. Giving. Caring. Loving."

"Did she ever marry?" Sterling asked.

The angel pressed some keys and moved the cursor, much like a ticket agent at the airport, trying to find confirmation of a reservation. He frowned. "She was engaged for a long time to some jerk who strung her along, then was heartbroken when he died unexpectedly. He was beaned in the head by a golfball." The angel pressed the cursor again and looked up at Sterling. "Oh, sorry. That's you."

Sterling slunk back to his seat. Since then he'd done a lot of thinking. He admitted to himself that he had sailed through his fifty-one years on earth, never taking on any re-

sponsibility and always managing to stay away from the unpleasant and the worrisome. I adopted Scarlett O'Hara's motto, "I'll think about it tomorrow," he acknowledged to himself.

The only time Sterling remembered experiencing prolonged anxiety was when he was on the waiting list for Brown University. All his friends from prep school had received thick envelopes from the colleges of their choice, welcoming them into the fold and strongly encouraging them to send in their checks immediately. It was only a few days before school started that he got the call from an official in the admissions office at Brown confirming that there was room for him in the freshman class. It put an end to the longest four and a half months of his life.

He knew that the reason he had only squeaked into Brown was that, although he was blessed with a keen intelligence and excellent all-around athletic skills, he had simply coasted through high school.

A chill that was pure fear engulfed him. He'd finally gotten into the college he wanted, but maybe up here he wouldn't be so fortunate. Until right now he had been absolutely sure that he'd make it to heaven. Sterling had reminded the angel at the door to the Heavenly Council that some of the people who came in behind him had been called and suggested that perhaps he had been inadvertently overlooked. He had been told politely but firmly to return to his seat.

He so much wanted to be in heaven this Christmas Eve. The expression on the faces of the people who soared past the

window, seeing the open gates ahead of them, had filled him with wonder. And now Annie was there.

The angel at the door signaled for everyone's attention. "I have glad tidings. Christmas amnesty has been granted to the following. You will not have to appear before the Heavenly Council. You will go straight through the exit door on the right that leads directly to the heavenly bridge. Stand and file through in an orderly fashion as your name is called . . . Walter Cummings . . ."

A few pews over, Walter, a sprightly ninety-year-old, jumped up and clicked his heels together. "Hallelujah!" he shouted as he ran to the front of the room.

"I said in an orderly fashion," the angel chided in a somewhat resigned voice. "Though I can't much blame you," he murmured as he called the next name. "Tito Ortiz . . ."

Tito whooped with joy and raced down the aisle, hot on Walter's heels.

"Jackie Mills, Dennis Pines, Veronica Murphy, Charlotte Green, Pasquale D'Amato, Winthrop Lloyd III, Charlie Potters, Jacob Weiss, Ten Eyck Elmendorf . . ."

Name after name after name was called as the pews emptied out.

The angel finished reading from the list and folded the paper. Sterling was the only one left. A tear formed in his eye. The celestial waiting room felt cavernous and lonely. I must have been a terrible person, he thought. I'm not going to make it to heaven after all.

The angel laid down the list and began to walk toward him. Oh no, Sterling thought frantically, don't tell me he's