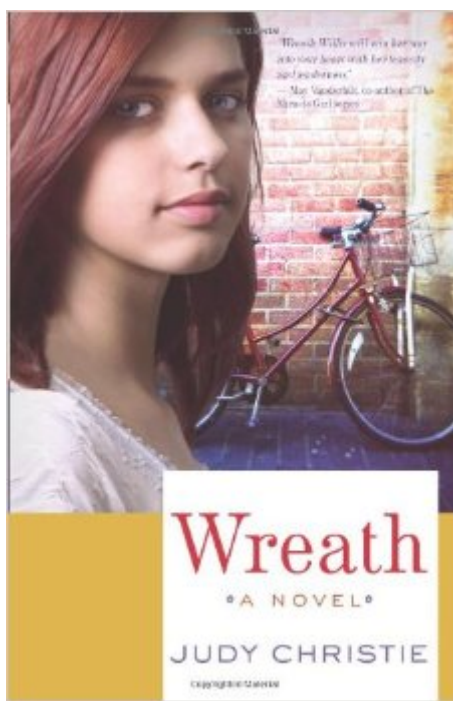


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# Wreath



## Synopsis

What do you do when you're too young to be on your own but have no one to turn to?

Sixteen-year-old Wreath Willis makes a list: Find a place to live. Buy cheap food. Finish high school. Get a job. Go to college. Now she's finishing high school by day and squatting in a junkyard by night, flying below the authorities' radar while she makes a few awkward friends and searches for an illusory "good life." But when a teacher grows too suspicious, Wreath is afraid she'll have to move on before she graduates. Could it be this was a good life?

## Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Barbour Books (October 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1616264527

ISBN-13: 978-1616264529

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.9 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,489,153 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Social Issues](#) #4865 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family](#)

## Customer Reviews

She's too young to be on her own, but Wreath has no choice. Fleeing the authorities after her mother's death, she's struggling to finish high school by day and trying to survive by camping out in a junkyard at night. But when a school counselor becomes suspicious, will she be forced to move on before she graduates? Set in a small town in Louisiana, this book tells the story of Wreath, a sixteen year old whose mother has died. Alone and determined not to end up in foster care, Wreath runs away to find a better life than the one she's known. She jots her goals down on a list. Find a place to live. Get a job. Finish high school. Go to college. Avoid notice. That last goal is extra important because her mama's boyfriend, Big Fun, is on the lookout for her, and his intentions are worse than shipping her off to foster care. The heart of this story is the cast of quirky characters that Wreath meets. There's Clarice, the overly helpful lawyer who seems to pop up when Wreath wants to go unnoticed most; Law, the cute guy who has more in common with Wreath than she thinks, Julia, the nice teacher who loves art; and Faye, the crusty-on-the-outside-soft-on-the-inside boss

who needs Wreath's creativity to turn her stagnant business around. But the star of this novel is Wreath herself. She's strong, independent, and resourceful. Even though she's living in a junk yard with little food, Wreath does her best to find the bright side of things. She names the junkyard the Rusted Estates, keeps her van home organized, and improvises with the resources at hand. In the end, will Wreath find the happy life she desires or will Big Fun destroy her and her dreams? To find out, get your copy of Wreath.

Ya know how when you read *The Help* and you could see the movie in your head long before you heard they were going to make it into a movie. That's how I felt reading *Wreath*. I would be incredibly happy to see even a made for tv movie made of *Wreath*! It is a good story. Let me say that again. It is a GOOD story. There's not enough of those for young adults anymore. This is a good story with good characters! And not one character is making a decision about biting someone's neck or having sex or any of that other stuff. I know that some of that kinda stuff is "real" but I think we've beat our kids over the heads enough with that stuff. *Wreath* is a good kid. She's just trying to get to college. A boy gives her butterflies in her stomach. Her mom dies. Oh yeah, and she lives in a junkyard... Like I said, it's a GOOD story.

*Wreath Willis* is 16 years old, she likes to make lists, she's responsible, she's artistic, she's intelligent and most unfortunately, she's homeless. After Frankie, *Wreath's* mom and constant companion dies, *Wreath* decides to head out on her own rather than depend on others. After a lifetime of taking care of herself and her mother, *Wreath* refuses to ask for help, from anyone. She sets up house in a junk yard, gets herself a job and puts herself through her last year of high school. I found parts of this book predictable and other parts really special. *Wreath* is a lovable character, someone you'd want to know in real life. The cast of friends she gathers around her are also fun easy to like and relate to. The only problem with this book is that some parts are rushed, especially the ending. After a long lead up, about 90% of the book, the climax and wrap up of the book seems to tumble down a hill very quickly. Although the ending is satisfying, it's rushed through much too quickly and could use some definite work to feel more natural. However the story is sweet, thoughtful and young adult appropriate. About the Author (From her website): Judy Christie is an author and consultant who lives in Northwest Louisiana. She writes inspirational fiction and nonfiction. Her popular Green series chronicles the goings-on in the small Louisiana town of Green and is part of Abindgon Press's new inspirational fiction line. The third book in the Green series, *The Glory of Green*, will be released Spring 2011. It follows *Gone to Green*, her first novel, published in

2009, and Goodness Gracious Green, which came out in 2010. Sponsorship Disclaimer: A free eBook copy of this publication was provided to me free of charge for review purposes. All opinions are 100% my own as always.

When I first picked up this book and read the back cover, I must say that the summary didn't tempt me too much. Plus, I thought it might be just another predictable teen read. BUT, because I am a huge Judy Christie fan (love the "Green" series)- I knew it was worth a shot. And I was rewarded!! This is a truly interesting, detailed story about a down-and-out girl with practical determination and a growing awareness of her talents and faith. I agree with another reviewer that the ending seems rushed, compared to the rest of the book, but the quality of the plot and characters more than makes up for this, in my opinion. And, Judy, if you read this- please write a sequel. I need to know what's going on in her life. :)

This story captivated me from the first page and held me until the last word. As a high school teacher, it gave me pause about the circumstances of my students' lives, even more than normal. My one small disappointment-- I'm a history and social studies teacher, so I didn't love that the teacher who most influences Wreath hated her job teaching social studies. I realize that Ms. Christie needed to give her a job she didn't like, but I hate to see social studies get dumped on when it's such a wonderful and interesting subject! Great teachers can be passionate about any subject. I loved that the author allowed the teacher to connect with Wreath beyond her own dislike of her job (and desire to teach art, instead). This is what all teachers should do-- connect with students beyond the subject matter. This story truly moved me-- I was brought to tears several times. This is a must-read!

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