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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Retired biochemist pens interstellar, spiritual short stories

“A high-quality anthology with a Christian outlook that embraces science”—Kirkus



“Faraway and Forever—More Stories”

Nancy Joie Wilkie | July 18, 2023 | She
Writes Press | Short Stories, Science Fiction
Print | 978-1-64742-454-1 | \$17.95

Brookeville, MD—Nancy Joie Wilkie, a multi-talented artist by nature, is set to release her second collection of celestial stories that combine science fiction and faith. **“Faraway and Forever—More Stories” (She Writes Press, July 18, 2023)** is a collection of novelettes that will propel readers through space and time with introspective themes that reckon with the physical and spiritual world around us. Through concise and unique prose Wilkie introduces readers to complex characters that push the boundaries of science and faith to meet at a compelling intersection.

“Faraway and Forever—More Stories” is a compilation of interstellar fictional tales that takes the reader from the not-too-distant future to a time when travel between worlds is a common occurrence. Each stop along mankind’s journey outward to the stars is accompanied by a deeper look inward—from examining how extraterrestrial beings might use our own biology against us, to whether a human consciousness can survive in a virtual environment, to how wishes are really granted. Original and thought provoking, these stories will stimulate the intellect and engage the imagination.

“Hatred and anger and a need for revenge have followed us as we’ve spread out into the stars. Perhaps such negative emotions are not things we can leave behind as we move on. Why did God create us this way?”—“Half the Sky,” “Faraway and Forever—More Stories”



NANCY JOIE WILKIE worked for over thirty years in both the biotechnology industry and as part of the federal government’s biodefense effort. She served as a project manager, providing oversight for the development of many new products. Now retired, she composes original music, plays a variety of instruments, and has recorded many of her original compositions. She also created a series of greeting cards that display her artwork and photographs. “Faraway and Forever—More Stories” is her second collection of stories. “Seven Sides of Self” was published by She Writes Press in November 2019. She will be releasing a third collection of short stories, “The River Keeper and Other Tales,” in early 2024. She is also working on a science fiction novel and a children’s story. She resides in Brookeville, MD. Her cards, prints, and more information about her books can be found on [her website](#).

Advanced Praise for “Faraway and Forever—More Stories”

“The five works here offer readers remarkable flights of imagination, occasional surprises, and an overarching sense of wonder. A high-quality anthology with a Christian outlook that embraces science.”

—**KIRKUS REVIEWS**

“I especially admire that the use of science (and fictive science) is in service of, never overpowering, the human dynamic, the human question, the human center to each story ... all of them are compelling.”

—**TOM O. PHILLIPS, MA, PhD, Associate Dean of the College, Wake Forest University, and Founder of Words Awake!**

“Wilkie has produced an amazingly imaginative and compelling set of stories that not only take the reader to new worlds, but convey fundamental life lessons we would all do well to ingest. For a non-science fiction reader, they were a revelation. I highly recommend them to anyone interested in an entertaining and enlightening read.”

—**MARY LLEWELLYN McNEIL, author of “Century’s Witness”**





In an interview, Nancy Joie Wilkie can discuss:

- Why she decided to weave the themes of faith and science into this collection
- How her career in biotechnology and biodefense influenced her writing
- How overarching themes in the collection are interwoven through each short story
- The inspiration behind crafting short stories grappling with the core of humanity
- How her writing relates to current events even though the stories are set in an interstellar landscape

An Interview with Nancy Joie Wilkie

What would you say to people who believe Christianity and science are at odds with one another? Why did you decide to weave faith and science into this collection of short stories?

I would say that while I do believe there is a divine intelligence running the show we call the Universe, I do not believe that to be at odds with science. Science is simply our attempt to understand what the Good Lord has created.

As for why I decided to weave faith and science into these stories, it really wasn't much of a decision or anything requiring a great deal of thought. I am a scientist ... albeit a retired scientist ... and always interested in how things really work behind the curtain. And I am a deeply spiritual person. I think there must be a connection between science and religion somewhere.

Can you talk about your writing process and how you add “Easter eggs” into the stories that give readers insight into your motivations behind your writing?

I do love Easter eggs! And there are quite a few in these novelettes. Friends who know me well immediately recognize them. One dear friend recently told me he wished he didn't know me so well such that when he was reading the stories his mind could stay in the story and not on me! It is me just having fun!

As for the writing process ... whenever the Muses drop something into my head, I feel obliged to write it down! It is really that simple.



What was the most difficult short story for you to write in this collection, and what was the inspiration behind it?

One of the stories was written 25 years ago while the rest were written within the last two or three years. None of them were particularly difficult to write. But I can tell you the story that was the most fun to write ... The Wishbringer! The trouble the main character has in finding a significant other is a reflection of own journey of ups and downs in that department. This story does seem to be everyone's favorite!

In one of your short stories, "The Goldfire Project" you explore what you call "spiritual dynamics". Can you talk more about that idea and why it was the inspiration for that piece?

Being a distant relative of William Thomson—better known as Lord Kelvin, a major contributor to the Third Law of Thermodynamics—and having been a scientist myself, I have always been interested in the Three Laws of Thermodynamics. After I lost my father to cancer 17 years ago, I started to rethink how I viewed the soul and the afterlife—trying to make some sense of my father's passing—and then started thinking about our "before life." It was then that I thought developing the Three Laws of Spiritual Dynamics would be an interesting analog and might be used in some of my stories. How do souls come and go from our physical bodies? A future story titled "The Natural Order of Things" (to be included in a fourth collection of stories titled "By The Light Of The Sun") will explore these ideas and how they came about in greater depth.

What do you hope that readers will take away from this collection?

- The more mankind looks outward, the more he looks inward.
- Is there really such a place as heaven? And if we are given an alternate path at the end of our corporeal life, would we take it?
- Relationships between parents and children are complicated.
- Do we really understand how the Universe operates and what if we are given a chance to look behind the curtain?
- What was the message that Jesus Christ delivered during his time on Earth? And how would we respond to Him if He were to appear again?



What's next for you in your author career? Are you working on anything new?

Oh, yes! I am always working on something new! Those darned Muses never seem to leave me alone!

I have a third collection of tales that will be released by Austin Macauley Publishers LLC in early 2024—titled “The River Keeper and Other Tales.” One of the tales is about Aurora, a young girl who discovers a ring with magical powers and uses those powers to help a young knight battle an evil dragon. It isn't until after the battle she learns that use of those powers came at a cost. The title of the story, not surprisingly, is “Aurora's Ring.”

And for the record (pun intended), inspiration for the story came from a song of the same name, written by me after an idyllic day on the beach. After hearing the tune, my musical collaborator, Stephen Bloodsworth, suggested we compose and record a concept album telling Aurora's full story! And so we did! “Dragon's Door—A Tale of Ring and Sword” was released on Christmas Day 2022. You can hear songs from it on Spotify, iTunes, Apple Music, Pandora, and our HearNow Web Page (<https://sparrows-tale.hearnow.com/>). It is also available on Amazon ... complete with a really nice booklet!

Looking forward, I have completed a fourth work of fiction titled “Who Moved My Planet? —A Story For Those Needing To Understand Something About Needs (A Novella). I have several beta readers reviewing it now and hope to send it to a publisher in early fall of 2023.