



Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams

By Nick Webb

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It all started when Douglas Adams demolished planet Earth in order to make way for an intergalactic expressway—and then invited everyone to thumb a ride on a comical cosmic road trip with the likes of Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, and the other daft denizens of deep space immortalized in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Adams made the universe a much funnier place to inhabit and forever changed the way we think about towels, extraterrestrial poetry, and especially the number 42. And then, too soon, he was gone.

Just who was this impossibly tall Englishman who wedded science fiction and absurdist humor to create the multimillion-selling five-book “trilogy” that became a cult phenomenon read round the world? Even if you’ve dined in the Restaurant at the End of the Universe, you’ve been exposed to only a portion of the offbeat, endearing, and irresistible Adams mystique. Have you met the only official unofficial member of Monty Python’s Flying Circus? The very first person to purchase a Macintosh computer? The first (and thus far only) author to play a guitar solo onstage with Pink Floyd? Adams was also the writer so notorious for missing deadlines that he had to be held captive in a hotel room under the watchful eye of his editor; the creator of the epic computer game *Starship Titanic*; and a globetrotting wildlife crusader.

A longtime friend of the author, Nick Webb reveals many quirks and contradictions: Adams as the high-tech-gadget junkie and lavish gift giver . . . irrepressible ham and painfully timid soul . . . gregarious conversationalist and brooding depressive . . . brilliant intellect and prickly egotist. Into the brief span of forty-nine years, Douglas Adams exuberantly crammed more lives than the most resilient cat—while still finding time and energy to pursue whatever side projects captivated his ever-inquisitive mind.

By turns touching, tongue-in-cheek, and not at all timid about telling the warts-and-all truth, *Wish You Were Here* is summation as celebration—a look back at a life well worth the vicarious reliving, and studded with anecdote, droll comic incident, and heartfelt insight as its subject’s own unforgettable tales of cosmic wanderlust. For the countless fans of Douglas Adams and his unique and

winsome world, here is a wonderful postcard: to be read, reread, and treasured for the memories it bears.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Webb was the editor at Britain's Pan Books who bought the book rights to Adams's *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* in 1978, back when it was a hit radio show on the BBC. While Webb didn't have much to do with Adams professionally after that, the two remained friendly until Adams's death, at age 49, in 2001, and that closeness pervades this authorized biography and its conversational tone. That doesn't mean the story is sugarcoated; Adams is occasionally chided for his emotional thickness, and Webb deals frankly with the consequences of his chronic slowness as a writer (one *Hitchhiker* novel was produced only when his editor, Sonny Mehta, booked a hotel room and sat with him as he turned out the pages). Another section addresses the thorny issue of who contributed what to the zany plot line of the radio series and how Adams's collaborator, John Lloyd, was nudged out of the book deal. For the most part, however, Webb genially celebrates Adams's comic talent and zest for life, aiming his account squarely at the large *Hitchhiker* fan base with occasional overtures to readers who don't necessarily know every nuance of the trilogy. It might be overstating matters to suggest that "before Douglas nobody had been *cosmically* funny," but Webb's tribute makes it easy to see why those who knew Adams admired him so greatly.

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From Booklist

Untimely death deprived sf of its reigning comic genius, Douglas Adams (1952-2001), celebrated as the author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979) and its three sequels. After proving its popularity as a 1978 BBC radio series, the *Guide* became a novel thanks to a commission from Pan Books editor Nick Webb, who now gives us what is easily the best of several existing Adams biographies. Drawing on a wealth of Adams' papers and authorized interviews with family members, Webb creates a multifaceted rendering of a complex, charismatic man who was less writer than idea-spinner with a passionate interest in science. Eschewing strict chronology, Webb steps back and forth among seminal moments in Adams' life, from his days at the BBC, rubbing elbows with Monty Python cast members, to his final years in California, pitching the *Guide* to Hollywood. A fascinating, witty portrait of a cultural icon who deserves an audience even larger than the present horde of his buffs. *Carl Hays*

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Review

Praise for Wish You Were Here

"Webb's tale brims with affection and humour; every page is a delight."

—The Daily Mail

"It's perhaps the ultimate credit to Webb that he can be just as funny as Adams in his writing. With many of the same veins of humour that Adams had running throughout this biography, it's as if the great hitchhiker has never really left."

—The Leeds Guide

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frances Norman:

Often the book Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams will bring you to the new experience of reading a book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. In case you try to find new book to study, this book very ideal to you. The book Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book from your official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

Clair Lemanski:

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the water world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, and then why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. One particular activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition info. Even you love Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams, you may enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its identified as reading friends.

Loyd Tyler:

The book untitled Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the woman idea with easy means. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do definitely not worry, you can easy to read the idea. The book was compiled by famous author. The author will take you in the new age of literary works. It is easy to read this book because you can keep reading your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice study.

Lucia Stevenson:

In this time globalization it is important to someone to find information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information quicker to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. The book that recommended to you is Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams this reserve consist a lot of the information in the condition of this world now. This specific book was represented so why is the world has grown up. The words styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. The writer made some study when he makes this book. That is why this book suitable all of you.

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