

## Miracles from Heaven (Film review)

Written by Kam Williams

Monday, 21 March 2016 23:32

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### 12 Year-Old Recovers from Incurable Illness in Faith-Based Drama Recounting Real-Life Miracle

Annabel Beam (Kylie Rogers) was born in Burleson, Texas where she was raised by her parents on a farm surrounded by cats, dogs, goats, cows and a donkey. She enjoyed an idyllic childhood there with her sisters, Abbie (Brighton Sharbino) and Adelynn (Courtney Fansler), until the age of 10 when she started experiencing severe stomach pains.

Christy Beam (Jennifer Garner) rushed her daughter to an emergency room doctor who snap-diagnosed the malady as a combination of lactose intolerance and acid reflux. But when his course of treatment for those conditions failed, the frightened mother next took Anna to a gastroenterologist (Bruce Altman) who determined that she was suffering from an obstruction of the small bowel which called for immediate surgery.

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He referred them to a highly-regarded physician in Boston specializing in intestinal disorders. However, Dr. Nurko (Eugene Derbez) had a nine-month waiting list which meant the little girl was likely to pass away before the appointment.

Frustrated by an inability to help her rapidly-deteriorating daughter, Christy Beam began to question her faith when Anna asked, "Why do you think God hasn't healed me?" Of course, it didn't help the situation any when a couple of fellow parishioners had the nerve to suggest that the affliction might be punishment for sin. In response, Christy Beam told her husband (Martin Henderson) she was through with church, at least until Anna was healed.

Desperate times call for desperate measures. So, Christy Beam decided to show up at Dr. Nurko's office unannounced and thereby embarrass him into seeing Anna. While the ploy did work, an MRI, endoscopy and a battery of other tests essentially confirmed that Anna was not long for this world and should get her affairs in order.

The two return home, but not before being befriended by a waitress with a heart of gold (Queen Latifah) who takes them on a whirlwind tour of Beantown in her junky jalopy. The prospects aren't very brilliant for Anna back in Burleson until the fateful day she falls down a hollowed tree trunk, hits her head and blacks out.

When she comes out of the coma, lo and behold, her bowels have been miraculously healed. Furthermore, she proceeds to relate how she had just visited Heaven and even had a heart-to-heart with her Creator.

That is the sum and substance of *Miracles from Heaven* a faith-based docudrama adapted from Christy Beam's best-selling memoir of the same name. Directed by Patricia Riggan (*The 33*), this wholesome family flick features a touching tale of survival with a measure of Christianity mixed in.

The Lord working in mysterious ways designed to elicit an "Amen!" from believers in the Amen Corner.

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Very Good (3 stars)

Rated PG for mature themes

Running time: 109 minutes

Studio: Affirm Films

Distributor: Sony Pictures

On June 21st 2016, the film will be available on DVD

[Editress' note: I watched the movie last Saturday and looooooved it. At first, when I saw that the only Black woman in the movie who had a role and played a waitress offering her services as a guide for free, I was upset because I felt it was really stereotypical. She arrived late, had a lemon as a car and the role was portrayed by the Oscar nominee [Queen Latifah](#). I said to myself, why we do not see a Black person part of the medical team for instance. I was quite pleased and relieved after when I saw later in the movie a Black man being a physician because I felt it sent a very strong message to the world about the wide range of professions that African-Americans can occupy. In addition, the actress who played Annabel Beam (Kylie Rogers) deserves at least an Oscar nomination and it would be about time that the Academy creates a special category for child actors (best child actor, etc.)].

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**About the author of this interview:** Kam Williams is a syndicated film and book critic who

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writes for 100+ publications around the U.S., Europe, Asia, Africa, Canada, and the Caribbean. He is a member of the New York Film Critics Online, the NAACP Image Awards Nominating Committee, and Rotten Tomatoes. He is a contributor to TheLoop21.com, eurweb.com and so on. He is also a columnist for our webmag [www.megadiversities.com](http://www.megadiversities.com). One of his interviews made the cover of Heart and Soul magazine last fall. One of Kam Williams' interviews with Spike Lee is included in the 2002 book entitled Spike Lee: Interviews (Conversations with filmmakers). This book collects the best interviews of Lee. Some of Kam Williams' articles are translated into Chinese and Spanish. In 2008, he was Voted Most Outstanding Journalist of the Decade by the Disilgold Soul Literary Review. In addition, he has been honored at the U.N. (for BMORENEWS GLOBAL FORUM ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT) on June 15th 2012 by the Foundation for the Support of the United Nations (FSUN). Williams is an erudite Attorney who holds a BA in Black Studies from Cornell University, an MA in English from Brown University, an M.B.A. from The Wharton School, and a J.D. from Boston University. Recently, he was featured on this website: <http://www.caribbeanlifeneews.com/stories/2015>.

Kam Williams is a member of the Bar in NJ, NY, CT, PA, MA & US Supreme Court bars. He lives in Princeton, (New Jersey) with his wife and son. Kam Williams can be reached at [kwilliams@megadiversities.com](mailto:kwilliams@megadiversities.com)

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