

AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

By Barbara Lindsay

www.youthplays.com
info@youthplays.com

December 24. Evening. Four chairs are arranged in a cozy arc facing a wall. There is a wrapped present on three of them. On the other is a plate of cookies and a glass of milk.

KITTY, early to mid teens, sits on the floor in her nightgown. She cuts out paper snowflakes, tossing each into the air when it is done. She sings "O Tannenbaum" ("O Christmas Tree"). She doesn't know the words, so she just repeats the title over and over to the tune.

KITTY

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum..

(The phone rings. She gets up to answer. There are bells on her ankles.)

Merry Christmas!

(She listens for a long time.)

All right, Mother, but are you going to...?

(Mother has hung up. Kitty hangs up also and goes back to cutting out snowflakes.)

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, fa la la la la la la la la,
la, 'Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la la la la la..

MATT, mid to late teens, comes in the door. His face is beat up.

MATT

Life is crud. Is there anything to eat?

KITTY

What happened to your face?

MATT

I had to beat up this old crippled lady to get the last seat on the bus. What are you doing?

He reaches for a cookie that's on the chair.

KITTY

Waiting. No no, don't eat those.

He eats the cookie.

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MATT

Waiting for what?

KITTY

I said don't eat them! Should I get the medicine?

MATT

Nah. I want it to fester. Give me a nice scar, make me look tough. Who made these? They stink.

KITTY

They're not for you anyway. There's lots of goodies in the kitchen.

(He goes toward the kitchen.)

You know what day it is?

MATT

Saturday.

He exits. She sniffs a cookie, bites it. It does stink. She goes back to cutting out snowflakes.

KITTY

Fa la la la la la la la la, 'Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la la la la la---

MATT (OFFSTAGE)

Cut it out!

KITTY

Don we now our gay apparel, fa la la la la la la la la. Troll the ancient Yuletide carol, fa la la--

Matt returns with a popcorn ball.

MATT

Who barfed?

KITTY

That's plum pudding. It didn't quite turn out.

MATT

Plum pudding? Oh jeez.

He heads for the hall.

KITTY

Wait with me.

MATT
 Wait for what?
 (She jingles her ankle bells
 at him.)
 Forget it.

KITTY
 Please.

MATT
 Give it up, Kits.

KITTY
 Who appointed you Grinch?
 (He exits. She picks up
 scattered snowflakes, then
 stands by the hall.)

Matt?
 (He reappears. She tosses
 the snowflakes at him.)
 Ho ho ho! Joy to the world!

MATT
 Stop that. Be normal.

KITTY
 I thought I was.

MATT
 No, normal is doing homework and breaking curfew and having a
 headache and putting gum under your seat. Plum pudding is
 not normal.

KITTY
 It is if it turns out right.

MATT
 And you better clean it all up before Dragon Lady gets home.

KITTY
 She just called. She's at an office party, so she won't be
 home until late.

MATT
 Right.

KITTY
 They may be flying her to Paris next week.

MATT
 Well ooh la la di da di da.

KITTY
 She wants us to leave a note for Pima about the towels.

MATT
 "Up the Corporate Ladder, My Vaginal Itch and I."

KITTY
 Be nice.

MATT
 I am nice.

KITTY
 Be nicer.

MATT
 Go to hell.

KITTY
 Meet you there.

(He starts to leave.)
 Matt, sit with me for a little bit. We can sing and toast
 our feet and think about nice things.

MATT
 Who's the other chair for?

She picks up one of the packages.

KITTY
 I have something for you. A little present.

He doesn't look at it.

MATT
 Huh? Who's it for? Pima?

KITTY
 You want to open it?

MATT
 Huh? Who?

KITTY
 Well, it's... It's for Daddy.
 (Matt takes one chair and
 flings it aside. The package
 on that chair hits the floor
 with a sound of breaking
 glass.)

Don't!

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