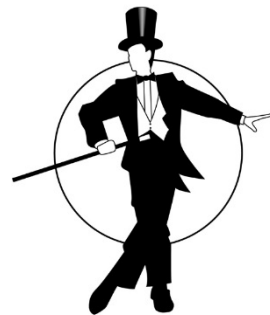


'Twas the Night

Pamela Loyd



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'Twas the Night

By Pamela Lloyd

CAST

HUSBAND: Dressed in lounging pajamas or sweats. Wears slippers. Red robe and a Santa hat are nearby.

WIFE: Dressed in a Christmas sweater and slacks, hair frazzled.

Place

Christmas Eve.

Time

Living room of Husband and Wife, with a lighted Christmas tree, a fireplace (electric or cardboard), and an upholstered chair at one side facing audience.

'Twas the Night

At rise: *Husband sits in chair. Stage semi-dark except for Christmas tree lights and glow from fireplace. Lights come up as Husband speaks.*

HUSBAND: 'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring—except for my spouse.

(Wife enters with stockings, lights now fully up).

WIFE: The stockings had *not* been hung up with care,
So I scurried to the mantel to hang them up there.
Filled with candy canes, sugarplums, and oranges galore,
They suddenly fell, rolled all over the floor.
Candies and oranges went bouncing about,
Skittering and scattering—then I heard myself shout:

Oh no! Don't do this! Don't make this big mess!
This is just one more thing that is causing me stress.
I really love Christmas, but I must confess
I don't want *more* work—I want to do less. *(picks up candy and oranges)*

HUSBAND: Our kids and grandkids had gone off to bed,
And I, in my chair, was just resting my head.
Hoping for peace on this quiet Christmas Eve,
Because everything is ready, I do believe.
Really, it seems there is nothing left to do,
So why is my wife making such a hullabaloo?

WIFE: Pies to go in the oven, the dressing yet to make,
And I've still got to frost the Christmas Yule cake.
The nuts for the fruitcake need to be cracked,
And those last-minute gifts still need to be wrapped.
This might be a night everyone looks forward to,
But for me it's a night with too much to do.
I want to make everything as good as can be,
But why is everything left up to me?

HUSBAND: Yes, why does she think she must do it all?

WIFE: And Christmas cards and cookies and visits to the mall.

HUSBAND: My wife is so busy, all rushing around,
Isn't it time that she just settles down?
This is disturbing my nap, quite unsettling to hear.
It's put a real pause in my Christmas cheer.
I wish my wife would just sit here with me.
I am content to do nothing, so why isn't she?
(turns to Wife)
Please leave it, my dear, don't do any more.
I have a good idea—just leave it on the floor.

WIFE: Just leave this mess, right in plain sight?
I can't do that. I want everything right.
Christmas must be special, all perfect and bright,
Even if I have to stay up till midnight.
But my head's in a spin, my mind's in a fog,
I know what I need—a brandy eggnog! *(exits)*

HUSBAND: Problems have arisen, as they always do,
On Christmas Eve—that's nothing new.
So I think it's time to get up from my nap

(stands, puts on robe and Santa hat)

And put on my robe and my Santa Claus hat.
I'll be St. Nick, to the rescue I'll come,
While my wife's in the kitchen I'll get it all done.
These presents here that are still all unwrapped,
I'll leave that undone, the kids will adapt.

(tosses unwrapped gifts haphazardly under the tree)

No paper, no ribbons, no bright colored bows.
If people don't like it, well that's just how it goes.
When Papa does Christmas, when it's left up to me,
I'm going to do Christmas the way it should be:
Eeeea . . . ssyyyyy.

HUSBAND: So to show my wife Christmas can still be fun
Even if things aren't perfect – or are left undone,
I'll toss the candy back all over the place. *(does this)*
Hey, it's looking pretty good. It's a real disgrace.
I've done a good deed; yep, I'm proud of myself.
Now what else can I do as the new Christmas elf?
Just a few more touches to make joy for all.
Uh-oh, slipping on candy, I'm starting to fall.

(may fall on floor or into chair)

WIFE: *(enters)* What are you doing? What is that loud noise?
Oh my gosh, you've broken some of the toys.
(rushes to rescue toys)

HUSBAND: Don't mind about *me*, don't ask if *I'm* hurt.
I'm sure I'll feel better with some Christmas dessert. *(stands up)*
See, I'm just making Christmas easier for you.
Undoing all the things you don't have to do.
Christmas shouldn't be perfect or have to be the best.
Doing Christmas shouldn't be some kind of a test.

Now I think this Christmas tree is really too grand.
I think it needs adjusting, I'll just move the stand.
And it will feel more like us if it bends at the top,
Over a bit, a little sideways, with a little more flop.
A few quirks and flaws, just like you and me,
Then we'll feel comfortable just letting Christmas be.
So sit down my dear and watch Take-Charge-Me,
While I tilt and I bend and

(tree falls over)

OOPS! knock over the tree.

WIFE: Oh my gosh! Thank you, dear. I'm so glad you did that!
You've broken the spell. I'm released at last.
Now I don't have to try, now it's not up to me.
Now that *you've* messed up Christmas, I am free, I am free.

So let's sit by the fire like you said that we should.
You can stoke it up a bit, add a little more wood.
Then we'll snuggle up warm as it approaches midnight,
And wish Merry Christmas to you—

HUSBAND: And to us a good night.

THE END