

# The Christmas Tree's Reunion



by Diane Connis



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*For my son, David, who as a young boy,  
liked to believe inanimate objects could talk.*

The Christmas Season Celebration was underway again. All the decorations had been pulled from the storage place under the stairs and most of them hung by The Mother.

The Small Boy and The Older Girl also helped, along with The Oldest Boy, who put Tree together and held The Small Boy up high to put Star on the topmost branch.

It was an exciting occasion for everyone when Tree and the ornaments came out of their boxes. After being stuffed in a crowded container for so long, it felt good to be free.

“Yahoo!” Bulb whispered loudly, “We are out of that awful dark, cramped place once again.”

He wiggled with joy on the end of his hanger.

“Be careful,” warned Tree, “you might fall off and you will break.”

“Don’t worry Tree, The Small Boy hooked me to your branch firmly enough.”

Bulb



“As long as The Cat doesn’t come,” Bell said.

Every year she worried about The Cat. Bell was made of glass, was very old and fragile and always afraid of falling.

Belle sighed. “At least in the box we don’t have to worry about breaking,”

“Oh never mind, Bell!” retorted Reindeer, “The Cat is as old and as fat as you are. He couldn’t climb Tree anymore if he wanted to, so stop worrying about it. Every time you’re out you just fret and complain.”

“Well you don’t have to worry about breaking, so what do you know. You’re made out of ice cream sticks, you one-eyed freak!” Bell pouted, drooping on her branch.

Reindeer glared at her with his one eye. “I’m not a freak! That is how The Oldest Boy made me and he still loves me this way. So just be quiet. If I could, I’d come up there and knock you to the floor myself!”



Bell

Tree ruffled his branches in frustration. "All right you two, that's enough! Please don't spend what little time we have out of the dark place arguing. We are all important to The Humans or they wouldn't put us here every year."

"They haven't hung all of us yet," Rocking Horse said. "They are late getting Tree up this time and are taking too long to get everyone out of the box. I wonder why."

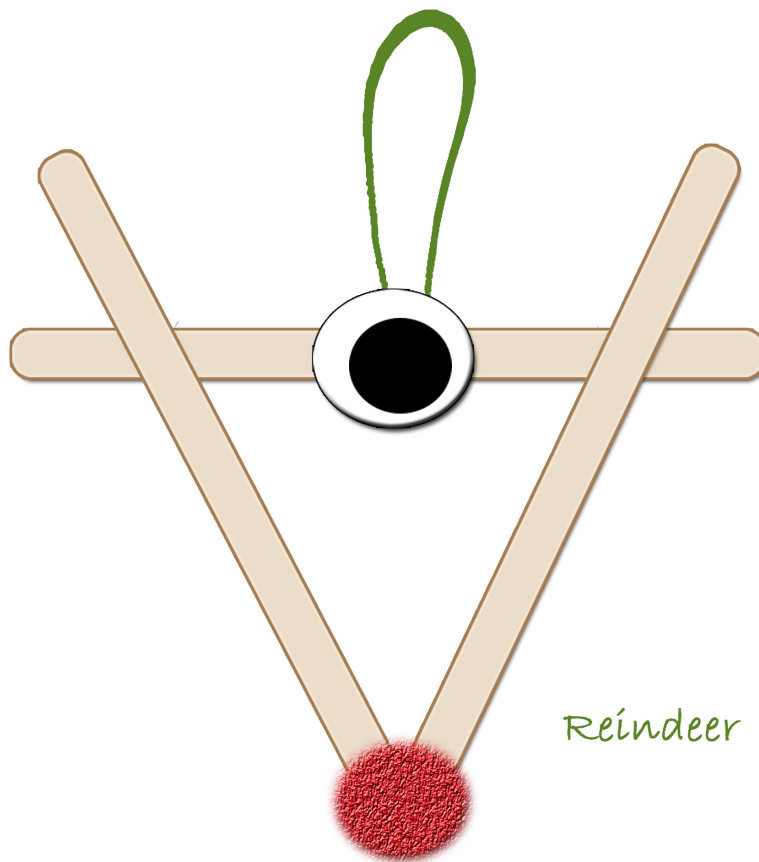
Bell looked around, "You're right, Horse. The Nativity is not out either. Something is amiss."

"Quiet!" hissed Star, who didn't speak often, but because of her location advantage, was appointed listener and lookout.

"The Mother is coming," she whispered.

It had been night for a while, but The Mother couldn't sleep. She came to Tree in her long robe, turned on Lights and sat down on the sofa, tucking her legs up under her. She sat and stared at Tree for a long time.





Reindeer

The ornaments were very still. They only whispered together after the house was dark and there was no chance of being heard by The Humans.

They often didn't understand The Humans, who seemed especially complex, and watched in wonder as water spilled from The Mother's eyes and trickled down her face in tiny streams.

She made snuffling and sniffing sounds for a long time, wiping her face with a cloth then folded her hands in her lap as she gazed up at the ceiling above Star and talked quietly. Her lips moved but they couldn't understand what she was saying.

Finally she arose, came to Tree, turned off Lights and went back through the door of her room.

Then the house was silent again.

Bell spoke first. "Something is wrong. The Mother is sad. She is never sad when Tree is here."

Star



Where is The Father?" Reindeer asked. "He has not been around at all. Has anyone seen him?"

"I heard The Oldest Boy say to The Mother he wished The Father was here. Something about...being gone far away...to war." Tree shuddered as he spoke.

"What is war?" Rocking Horse asked.

"I'm not sure," Tree replied, his branches sagging, "but it sounds dreadful. They all seem worried and I believe they miss him. That is why they are sad and have not brought us out of the dark place as quickly this time."

"Then we must be extra beautiful for them," Bell said thoughtfully. "We must make The Humans so happy with their festivity their sadness goes away."

Bell was the most sensitive of the ornaments and for once Reindeer agreed with her.

"Yes, Bell, you are right," replied Reindeer. "When The Humans

are near, everyone should try to move as close to Lights as possible and shine really bright.”

“OK then,” said Bulb. “Is everyone good with this plan?”

In unison, they decided they would work hard to make Tree be the brightest he had ever been.



Several mornings later, while The Humans ate their food, The Small Boy begged The Mother to finish decorating Tree.

The Mother put on festive music and called The Older Girl and The Oldest Boy to come help. The Oldest Boy was coming in and going out of the house often now, but he promised to help until he had to go out again.

The Mother sent him to the dark place to find The Nativity.

This time, as each ornament was removed from the box, The Small Boy was curious enough to ask The Mother, “What is this one, Mommy?”

The Mother had already explained many times, to The Older Girl and The Oldest Boy, what each trimming was and the ornaments had heard each of their stories so often they had them memorized.

Bell was passed down from The Mother’s Oldest Mother, someone called a grandmother. The ornaments weren’t sure what a grandmother was but she must have been very

important. Of course, this made Bell feel important too.

The Mother explained how delicate and fragile Bell was and taught The Young Ones to pack her away carefully so one day one of them would be able to hang Bell on their Tree.

The Oldest Boy smiled when he put Reindeer on Tree. He had made him years ago when he was the same age as The Small Boy.

“You should just leave him in the box, Mom. I can’t believe I only put one eye on him. What was I thinking?”

They all laughed but it wasn’t the sort of laughter that hurt Reindeer’s feelings.

“I could never part with him,” The Mother said to The Oldest Boy as she pointed at Reindeer. “You made him in school and were so proud when you brought him home. He’s so precious to me.”

The sight of Rocking Horse brought sighs of contentment

from The Mother. The dates of each of her Young Ones' first celebration were inscribed on him. Upon seeing Horse, she would commence with stories describing her Young Ones' arrivals and first Christmas.

The Oldest Boy seemed embarrassed when she went on about him in this way and would try to change her talking to a different thought, but he always failed. When The Mother spoke of her Young Ones, it was impossible to stop her.

Bulb was brought to Tree by The Mother and The Father when they were first united. He was embellished with two intertwined hearts and the words, 'First Christmas Together' and inscribed with a date, 'December 25, 1992'.

A detailed description of how The Mother and The Father met and united was told to The Small Boy, who was full of questions.

This returned to mind thoughts of The Father and The Mother almost dripped water down her face again.





“I miss Dad,” The Older Girl sighed, as she placed another ornament on Tree. “I wish he could come home.”

“Dad told me, when I talked to him last, not to worry. He wants us to be happy and have a good Christmas,” The Oldest Boy reassured them. “We’ll save his gifts and he can open them when he does come and we’ll have Christmas again, with him.”

The Oldest Boy looked tenderly at The Older Girl, but only for a brief moment. He was trying to be brave and be the man of the house in place of The Father.

The Mother smiled. “You are right son, we should be happy. We have many blessings and will pray for your Father to be safe and come home to us soon. Now let’s finish decorating. Then we will make sugar cookies and hot chocolate.”

The Small Boy jumped up and down with delight.

The Oldest Boy had brought the box containing The Nativity and The Older Girl asked if she could open it and set the pieces

in their place on the fireplace mantel next to Tree.

The Mother reminded her to be very careful. It would be sad if a piece became broken.

Star began to shine brighter once The Nativity was out. She always did and couldn't do anything to stop herself. But, no matter, it just seemed like the right thing to do.



After the night returned and The Humans were asleep, the ornaments talked among themselves about the events of the day.

“I heard The Humans say it is Christmas Eve,” Bell announced. “All the pretty gifts are below us and you look especially handsome tonight Tree.”

“Thank you, Bell,” said Tree. He straightened his trunk and fluffed his branches a bit. “It is so kind of you to notice.”

“I’m really excited The Humans are feeling better. Don’t you think they are?” Reindeer asked. “Tomorrow will be such a happy day!”

“Yes, they were festive today,” replied Tree. “At least it seems so. Putting The Nativity out makes all of us feel better.”

The Nativity was special. All the ornaments somehow knew that without it, they would not exist.

Reindeer had the idea first. “I know The Nativity doesn’t talk

like us, but I think we should ask it to bring The Father back safe.”

The ornaments discussed this. Bulb thought it was a dumb idea but Star, who rarely spoke, said it could work.

Rocking Horse explained how he overheard The Mother tell The Small Boy about The Baby in The Nativity. He was The Son of God and loved The Humans very much.

The Baby was called Jesus and when He grew into a man, He proved His love by dying for them, then coming alive again. Jesus was filled with powerful goodness and talking to Him was called praying.

The Humans did it often, especially before eating their food. Rocking Horse had seen and heard them. Maybe that is what The Mother was doing the night her lips were moving but they couldn't hear her, he said.

Tree agreed, saying it wouldn't hurt to try. Bulb chuckled in doubt and Bell told Reindeer he should pray, since it was his

idea. So he did.

“Jesus of The Nativity, we are just Tree’s ornaments and me with only one eye, but we ask you to bring The Father of the house back safe so The Mother and Young Ones can be happy. Thank you for Christmas that brings all of us out of the dark place. Amen.”

“What does Amen mean?” Bulb asked.

“I don’t know,” Reindeer answered, “but I hear The Humans say it when they’re done praying. Maybe that’s what makes it work.”

Suddenly, Star began to glow, lighting up the darkness. At first they thought one of The Humans had come to turn Lights on without their notice, but it was not so.

The ornaments were too amazed to speak, so they watched The Nativity in silence as Star shone softly all though the night.

Just as her glow faded with the first morning light, the front



The Nativity

door of the house gently opened. They looked and were surprised to see The Father there. He dropped his belongings to the floor and smiled as he walked to Tree and turned Lights on.

“What a beautiful Christmas Tree.” He said quietly. The Father stood peacefully for a while, gazing at Tree.

“Thank you Jesus, for this miracle of a few days leave so I can be home for Christmas with my family. It is truly the best gift I could wish for,” The Father prayed, his eyes shining as brightly as Star.

Then he walked to the room where The Mother was sleeping.

As they listened to The Mother awake and cry out in pure joy, a stunned reverence fell over all of them and they whispered another “Amen” altogether - Bulb too.

Tree’s ornaments sparkled more beautifully than they ever had before. It was certainly going to be a very Happy Christmas Day!

