

Dearest Friends:

December 2019

I'm not complaining, really. I mean, I was plucked out of the White Elephant gift bag by Mr. MacFadden at the office party, who didn't want me just as much as I didn't want him. Once the party was over, he tossed me into his trunk. I landed in a bag overflowing with stale gym shoes and athletic wear that was, at best, moist.

It was several days before MacFadden retrieved me out of his trunk, only because the clothing had begun to stink to high heaven.

But like I say, I'm not complaining, really. At least MacFadden brought me into his house, where I ended up discarded in a corner of his bedroom for another few days, in a pile of unread mail, empty takeout containers, and some crumpled receipts. His dog, Farfel, an unfortunate mix of Rat Terrier and Lhasa Apso, did unspeakable things to me while MacFadden was at work.

Then came Beverly.

Beverly came from Bumble. I don't know where Bumble is located, but it must be a magnificent place. Even before she came over for the first time, I sensed a change in MacFadden. For one thing, he cleaned up the toenail clippings, threw out the takeout containers, straightened the bedspread. I never saw Beverly the first time she visited, but her voice sounded like an angel. Her laughter was like music.

And before I knew it, Beverly came back again, and again, to visit MacFadden. I wonder if they might even be in love! And finally, one night when Beverly was looking for a hand towel, I heard her heels clicking up the hall as she got closer and closer to the bedroom door, where I lay askance near MacFadden's bed. I strained to move ever so slightly so I might catch a glimpse of her in the harsh light of the bare bulb just above the linen closet. And friends, I tell you, the sweet sound of Beverly's joyous expression is forever imprinted on my heart as she cried, "Oh, how adorable! A little reindeer!" She lifted me up into the air, and hugged me tight. It was that day I learned who I was. My heart felt as light as a feather. And from that day on, I have never returned to the dark bedroom. Despite MacFadden's protests that I'm "just a toy from the office party," I now sit in the living room, next to a sunny window, on MacFadden's couch. The big splotch of soy sauce on the back of his sofa hardly exists, now that Beverly has thrown a beautiful woven blanket over it. I sit cradled by the blanket, almost as a king sits on a throne! Farfel, with his tiny rat legs can't perpetrate any more atrocities against me, and from time to time, Beverly picks me up and squeezes me, placing me down gently again, arranging me "just so" on the couch.



I know I am one of the lucky ones. I know my fate is not typical for White Elephant gifts. That is why, during this Christmas season, I wish you the happiest, luckiest, coziest of all Christmases. I feel hope for the future, and head into 2020 with great optimism.

All because of Beverly.

Sincerely,
Rudy