

A CHRISTMAS PAST

The old house stood quiet and alone. The family of mice that resided in the basement of the structure came calling to the kitchen. They had patiently waited for the moment when Grandma and Grandpa went to bed. The mice had smelled baking all day and knew what awaited them on the floor of the kitchen, a multitude of tasty crumbs.

This was Christmas Eve and it had been a busy day for Grandma, who was getting ready for this special time of year. She had spent her day baking and preparing for Christmas dinner, which she was hosting tomorrow. Grandpa spent the day overseeing the fireplace in the living room, carrying dry wood inside the house from the outside shed.

The couple's century home sat on a hill. The cold winds and blowing snow of winter made the old structure feel cold and draughty. The crackling of the wood burning in the fireplace sent warmth throughout the room and the rest of the ground floor. Grandpa's bulldog, Buster, loved when the fireplace was lit, laying close by the fire and not straying from the same spot all day. The twinkling star on top of the tree brought a feeling of peace to the couple who lived here.

The old folks' only child, their son-in-law, and their two grandchildren would be joining them for a Christmas dinner of turkey and dressing, and turnips and potatoes from Grandma's garden, which had been kept in cold storage in the basement. Fresh apple pie, baked with the fruit from the tree Grandma's mother had planted on the property, would complete the meal.

After a joyful reunion, the family enjoyed dinner in the formal dining room, a feast not soon forgotten. Afterwards, everyone retired to the living room to open gifts, an annual tradition of loved ones joined in a spirit of gratitude and affection at Christmas.

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