



A Cup of Christmas Tea

Tom Hegg , Warren Hanson (Illustrator)

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Lori says

A charming tale, told in verse, of an adult nephew's trepidation about visiting his Great Aunt at Christmas time. Somehow, he finds himself at her door and is welcomed in for a cup of Christmas tea. While in his aunt's company he learns lessons about facing life's challenges with dignity, finding happiness in any circumstance, the importance of someone to listen, and the joy of unconditional love. The illustrations are delightful. I'm so happy to have come across this lovely book and will reread it often.

Joe Krakovsky says

Christmas was almost upon us,
It was hectic as could be.
My old Auntie called me up,
And offered me some tea.

I didn't want to go,
And see her old body bent.
A loving long life with her,
But now her body's spent.

Should I go or should I stay?
Do you really want to know?
Read this book for yourself,
And see what love did sow.

Jann Barber says

This is a tiny book with sweet illustrations. I related to it immediately, as many people will.

Time to visit a relative you haven't visited in a long time. You are reticent to go, as you know the relative will be so much older and there are other things you'd rather do. However, it is Christmas, and you set out for the visit.

Of course, once there, you are immediately taken back to times of your childhood. The smells, the decorations, the relative (yes, looking older and more fragile, but so happy to see you), and the cup of Christmas tea make the visit perfect.

For such a short book, it sent a lovely message. We might age, but our memories can transport us to times of our youth and traditions that helped make many memories.

Trisha says

A treasure of a find at a thrift store and my favorite new Christmas book this year.

Fictionophile says

I own this book and read it every Christmas to get me 'in the mood' for the season.

Jennifer says

We sell this book where I work and I've never even picked this up until today. I liked this book a lot. I liked it so much that I even bought my own copy.

Sophie says

I had never read this book before, but now I've read it, I wish I'd had it when I was a child. It's a great poem stressing the importance of spending time with loved ones, even when it's busy at Christmas time, and the nostalgic joy one can get from spending time with elderly members of the family at Christmas. It champions relationships over the commercialism of Christmas, with many nods to the many joys of festive treats. Reading this poem is like a glorious cup of Christmas tea - warming and joyful. Certainly a book to get you into the Christmas spirit, and one that young and old will love alike.

Darinda says

A heartwarming poem about joining a great aunt for a cup of tea. A wonderful book to read around Christmas.

"My spirit fairly bolted,
like a child out of class,
and danced among the ornaments
of calico and glass.

Like magic, I was six again,
deep in a Christmas spell,
steeped in the million memories
the boy inside knew well."

Duffy says

The author and I both grew up in Minnesota and met in 9th-grade English class. After Tom had this book published he had an interview with the local radio station. My Mom heard his reading and the interview and decided to get this for me for Christmas; I don't think she realized that I knew Tom since we moved the summer after 9th grade. The neighborhood I grew up in had an older woman who was an Aunt or Grandma for all of us kids. This story sparks tons of Minneapolis and Christmas memories which are long gone since I've been on the East Coast for several years now. Christmas will always bring back wonderful memories of our small corner of southwest Minneapolis and our "Aunt" Alice who would sit in the rocking chair and guide our young hands as she supervised our tree decorations. Tom - you did good!

Megan Nelson says

This book is about a young man who has been invited by his elderly aunt, who has had a stroke, to visit at Christmastime; the only problem is, the young man does not want to go and visit his aunt. However, as he is encouraged by his parents to go, he agrees and shows up at his aunt's door. As soon as he sees his aunt and she says, "Come in!", he feels completely at home and just like he was six-years-old again. When he walks into her home, he sees all of her Christmas decorations, and they bring back memories from when he was a little boy. The young man and his aunt talk, and then she goes to get the tea and cookies; while his aunt goes to get the tea, he thinks about the years past, but he also thinks about how well she is doing ("I saw a Christmas miracle... the triumph of a soul."). Then the young man and his aunt have a "cup of Christmas tea".

I really liked this book! The concept of a "cup of Christmas tea" was adorable and very homey. I think that this story could be relatable for some people because not everyone looks forward to family gatherings at Christmastime; but it is important to remember the good times and make new memories!

This book could be used in the classroom to talk about how doing something you don't necessarily want to do can turn out to be one of the best things you do. It's also a good book to read around Christmastime and let the kids reminisce about and look forward to traditions that they have with their families!

Becki Iverson says

I want to start by saying this is the sort of thing that I normally NEVER read and would find so hokey and weird and dumb. But a dear friend read this out loud at her annual ornament sharing party, which I attended for the first time this year, and I found that the environment just made it such a special story. As it is about visiting a treasured great aunt it also spoke to me, as I love to visit my great aunts and make a point of doing so as often as I can. The story and context just hit me in the right spot and I loved everything about it. Most people would probably find this silly and overly sentimental but ... this year I needed it and I'm sticking to my story.

Mayda says

Heartwarming poem about a young man visiting his aged and infirm aunt. She wants a visit, but he prefers to remember her as she was when she was younger and vigorous. But guilt propels him, and in visiting her, he makes an important discovery. Charminglly told in verse with lovely illustrations, this short poem packs a significant message.

Donna Davis says

I received A Cup of Christmas Tea as a Christmas gift from a close friend when I was in my twenties and my children were still tiny. I read the book, which is a poetic narrative that reflects on the importance of remaining connected with older people in the family, not only because they are lonely, but because if they were important to us when we were children, chances are that the connection will still prove important to us. I put it rather clumsily; the poem is brilliant.

I still have the book, though now it is I who walk with a cane. Every Christmas, two boxes of special books that are stored away for the rest of the year come out, and this is still one of my favorites.

A wonderful gift; though it isn't physically large, I would call it sort of a coffee-table book.

Marion says

Kind of book that needs to be read every year (probably more often than that!) to remind us of the things that are really important in life.

writer... says

Christmas morning I opened this lovely hardcover book received from Mrs Claus [along with a box of tea:]
A brief, but creative reminder of the value of determining priorities in the busyness of contemporary Christmas celebrations. Much appreciated and the fact it was purchased from a local charity shop added to its value! Thank you Mrs Claus :))

Loved re-reading Mrs Claus' Christmas message in the flyleaf - inspiring!
as was the reading of this so special story of a young man visiting an aging great aunt who teaches him invaluable life lessons in an afternoon over tea...
Christmas 2014 Dec 6th

Pam says

This wonderful Christmas book does not fit any of the normal holiday subjects but it is sweet and warm hearted. This is a definite must read for any adults looking for a short Christmas read. While it looks like a children's picture book, this is really for adults or older children. The illustrations by Warren Hanson, while not the traditional Christmas fare, fit the story extremely well. I hope to read it every year!

Rebecca says

Cute.

Donna says

I read this book every Christmas and sometimes other times when I happen to spot it while looking for another book. This is a favorite of mine. It is a great reminder to not forget the older friends and relatives that may not be able to get around as much. These wonderful people still get lonely and long for someone to talk to. They might not remember everything but they have much to share.

I worked briefly in a long term care facility and it is so sad to see how lonely some of people are. Some people never had visitors and seemed so lost. Even after I moved on to other employment I kept visiting my new old friends. Even those who couldn't talk communicated their gratefulness with their eyes. Always remember the ones who came before us, even if they are not perfect.

Jessaka says

It is hard to say why this book is so good. I just sat down and read it since it was recommended to me by a friend, and then I read it again. And maybe tomorrow I will read it one or two more times.

Bam says

This was read to us at a very traditional Christmas tea complete with cakes, clotted cream, finger sandwiches and, of course, pots of fragrant tea. Delightful!
