



The Christmas Find

A Short Story



TERESA TRENT

I couldn't believe my incredible luck. I had searched for years and now my hands encircled the delicate snow globe. It was identical to the one that sat atop a crocheted doily on my mother's piano at Christmas time. I found this replica of my childhood memento on a cluttered table at a flea market. The man sitting behind the table inched his beer belly up to the edge and looked at me with bloodshot eyes.

"What's it worth to you?" he said, a noticeable gap now showing in his teeth. "That's a real pretty plaything there." He tried to give me a look of neighborly warmth, but all I could think of was how I'd like to move out of his neighborhood. I looked back down at the shimmering snow of the glass dome.

"My mother had one just like this. After she died...it ended up going to somebody else." I stumbled over my words explaining it so matter-of-fact, as if there had been no emotional strain, no sadness. Just an object that went to a person other than myself. I had been devastated when I saw my older sister stick the snow globe in a box with her name on it. Even though the little piece of glass was important to me, I never said a word to her. I didn't want to fight so soon after my mother's death. We were all so sad already, and I knew I couldn't handle someone being angry. I let it go. Whenever I visited my sister's house, I would see it sitting on a white built-in bookcase surrounded by upscale art books and pottery.

I looked at the snow globe and wanted so badly to hear my mother clanging out "Jingle Bells" on her ancient piano. She played it so loudly that we would have to shout out the words of the familiar tune just to be heard. I wanted to smell gingerbread cookies in the oven and hear my father reading to my little brother in the well-worn recliner. All I heard at my sister's house was the sound of her answering machine "screening" her calls.

The man at the flea-market table interrupted my thoughts, now impatient to close the sale. "I can see it means a lot to you being like your mama's and all. You sure don't want to let this get away from you." He slanted his eyes toward me and took a bargaining stance. "How's about...\$50?"

I staggered back at the price. He was a mercenary. I was sure my mother paid a tenth of that for hers. I set it down for a second, but as I did the little house inside the snow globe caught my eye.

My mother told me once, "Some day, that's going to be our house, baby. That's my dream. We'll have room to grow and no one around for miles. No traffic, no sirens, no crime on the evening news."

This wasn't just a snow globe, it was my mother's dream. I couldn't just let it go.

I picked up the snow globe again and tried to focus when a pair of big brown eyes being distorted by the glass stared back at me. I pulled the glass orb up and a little girl about nine years old was transfixed by the cascading snow and the tiny house of my mother's dream.

She drew in a breath, "It's really beautiful, isn't it?" Her voice held a slight drawl, "It looks like my grandpa's house. He doesn't live there anymore. He had a farm out in the country, but didn't have any money to run it. He lives with us now. I wish he was out there again and us with him. He's grumpy all the time. He just wants to go back to his house. He said he even dreams about it."

There was a solemnness in this little girl that was way beyond her years. Her clothes were clean, but worn. Her sneakers were faded pink and tattered and her coat was short at the sleeves. Her mother was trying to find kitchen utensils on Beer Belly's table. This little girl would not be getting much for Christmas.

I looked at Beer Belly. "I'll give you \$10."

He picked up his double chin and then eyed me in surprise. "Well, that's got to be an antique. I'm sure I could get more..."

Okay, \$15 and that's my final offer." He shrewdly surveyed me again as if he was trying to see if he could squeeze any more money out of the sale.

"I shouldn't, but all right....\$15. You're getting quite a bargain there, regaining a family heirloom and all. It's just 'cause I'm such a nice guy, you know. My heart is too big for my own good."

I handed him the cash and delicately held the treasured globe in my hands. I had it back. It was

like it was a part of my mother standing there. I could sense her presence with me in the middle of the flea market clatter, and then I knew she wanted me to do.

The little brown-eyed girl looked up at me and smiled. "You bought it!" she said, excited for me. "Are you going to put it under your tree?"

I reached out and took her little hands and put them palms up. "I'm going to put it...right here." Her eyes widened as I gently laid the snow globe into her tiny hands.

"You mean, you're giving it to me?" She looked at me as if I had just bought a ticket to the loony bin. Her mother continued to match forks on the table paying little attention to the two of us.

"Why?"

"Just promise you'll take good care of it and think of your grandpa's house in the country. Maybe someday your family will get there. Everyone needs a dream, you know."

I walked away from the flea market and zipped up my coat as I headed for the door. Faintly, ever so faintly, I could hear it.

Jingle Bells.

About the Author

Teresa Trent writes hilarious cozy mysteries that take place in the small town of Pecan Bayou, Texas. Her books have been featured on Ebooksy, Ereader Cafe, Flurries of Words, BK Walker Books and many more reading and reviewing sites.

For updates on her books and a list of the many online retailers you can find them at, visit Teresa's Blog teresatrent.wordpress.com

Other titles by Teresa Trent

Novels

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A Dash of Murder

A Mystery for Ghost Hunters...

When Betsy's Aunt Maggie wants to drag her along on a ghost hunting excursion at the local abandoned tuberculosis hospital, she isn't sure she quite believes in spirits. When she comes upon a fresh spirit in the form of a body she starts to rethink about what is really haunting the hospital.

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