

Blume's First Christmas

One morning Hoppy rushed over to Blume in great excitement.

"Just wait until you see the Christmas tree and hear the choir singing at tonight's carol service" he said to Blume.



"Yes, it will be wonderful" agreed Squeaky. "I think we should go off for a rest now so that we can really enjoy it tonight".

Blume sat thinking about what the tree would look like and what carols the choir would sing for his first Christmas carol service. He watched as Mr Brady dusted and swept the church, making it nice and clean for the evening. Suddenly a duster fell off the pulpit and down on top of Blume, covering him up completely.

"All nice and clean" said Mr Brady, "Now where did that other duster go? Ah, here it is" he said, gathering up the duster not knowing that Blume was inside it. Then he put it into his bucket with all the other cleaning things. He took the bucket to a dark cupboard under the stairs, placed it

beside the vacuum cleaner and shut the door. Poor Blume lay under the duster in the dark cupboard. "Oh oh!" he cried. "Now I shall miss the carol service and the beautiful tree. Oh, help, help somebody, please help."

Mrs. Spider was busy in a corner of the cupboard repairing her web. She had a big hole to fix where a moth had flown into it by accident and she was concentrating so hard that at first she didn't hear Blume.

"Please, somebody, please is anybody there?" cried Blume as big tears rolled down his face.

Mrs. Spider heard him then and came over to the bucket where the voice seemed to be coming from. "Who are you?" she asked, "and why are you making such a racket? I can't concentrate on my weaving and it's going all crooked. I shall have a very lopsided web at this rate."



Blume stopped crying and explained to Mrs. Spider what had happened to him and how much he longed to be back in the church so that he could enjoy the carol service.

“Really it’s much nicer here in the dark and quiet” she said. “Still, I can see you’re upset and I certainly don’t want to have to listen to you crying all night”.

“Oh, please” begged Blume, “Could you go to one of the mice and tell them where I am? I’m sure they’ll think of a way to get me out.”

Mrs. Spider was not really keen to go and speak to any mice. Mice are very big compared to spiders and she was afraid they might eat her. Perhaps she could tell a moth about Blume’s problem and he could tell the mice. So she set out, crawling under the cupboard door and scurrying about the carpet looking for a moth or even a beetle. All the little creatures she met seemed very busy and didn’t stop to listen to her when she tried to tell them about Blume. Finally, she decided that she just had to be very brave and find the mice herself. She scuttled about the vestibule, crawled through a hole in the corner and saw them lying comfortably fast asleep. Then she had to tickle them with one of her legs until finally Squeaky woke up.



“What’s that?” he asked, reaching out with his paw as Mrs. Spider hastily jumped backwards and raced up the wall a little way.

“Listen,” she said, in a small spidery voice. “Your friend Blume is locked in the cleaning cupboard wrapped up in dusters in a bucket. And he’s crying awfully. Please do come and rescue him so that I can get some peace.”

“Poor Blume” said Squeaky. “Well, thank you Mrs. Spider for telling me. Now you go back to your web and I’ll think of some way of getting Blume out.”

Squeaky woke Hoppy, told him where Blume was, and they both began to think how to get him out.

“We can’t open the door to drag him out” said Squeaky. “But we’d better go right away and talk to him. At least we can cheer him up and get him out from under all those dusters.”

At that moment Reverend Andrews and Mrs Andrews came in with a beautiful Christmas tree and began to decorate it. They put red ribbons and coloured lights around the branches. Then they lifted shiny gold and red balls out of a box and hung on the tree. The mice agreed that it was looking very pretty indeed. Suddenly Hoppy said “I have an idea. Quick help me get some leaves and bits of paper, cookie crumbs, anything to make a real mess on the carpet.”

It seemed an odd thing to do, but Squeaky rushed to help, knowing that when Hoppy had an idea, it usually worked. They soon had the carpet looking dreadful, as if a big wind had blown heaps of rubbish through the door.

Next they squeezed under the door to the cupboard, only needing to gnaw a little gap to get through because the door didn't fit very well.

"Hang on Blume, we're coming" Hoppy said, as they climbed up the bucket, took the duster off Blume's head and slowly pushed him out onto the floor. Then they dragged him over to the vacuum cleaner and put him on top of it.

"Now you just have to wait a little while" Squeaky said comfortingly. "Someone will come to get the vacuum cleaner and see you".

Blume lay waiting in the dark, quiet and hopeful as Mrs. Spider finished repairing her web. She sang a little spider song to cheer him up while he waited.

"Doesn't the tree look lovely" said Reverend Andrews as he put on the last decoration.

"Yes" replied Mrs Andrews. "Oh, but just look at the carpet over here, goodness what a mess! I must get it tidied up before people come tonight."

She went to get the vacuum cleaner and was astonished to see Blume sitting on top of it.

"Look!" she cried. "I think Blume wants to clean the carpet. What a clever mouse he is."

Then she carried Blume out and set him under the Christmas tree before she vacuumed the carpet.

Blume sat under the tree all evening with the coloured lights winking above him and reflecting in all the bright shiny decorations. He listened joyfully as the choir sang many lovely carols. Squeaky and Hoppy hid over in a corner listening too and even Mrs. Spider came to have a peek. "Well, well" she said in her little quavery voice. "I don't mind this singing after all. In fact it's quite pleasant and the tree does look very beautiful. I'm so glad that Blume is happy now."

Hoppy said that she was a very good spider indeed, not too busy to help people, like some moths and beetles he could mention. "We will both be your friends forever, and help you if you ever need us" said Squeaky.

Blume just sat smiling and smiling, "Isn't Christmas wonderful," he whispered.

