

Spotlight Publications

Tinsellitis

A drama in one act
by Claire Scott

TINSELLITIS

CAST

A string of fairy lights of various colours and attitudes

Darla

Claudine

Lola

Gloria

Kev

Savannah-Marie

Joe

Sharon

Andy

Evelyn

Brenda

Roxanne

Sue

Raylene

Jim

Flo

Billy

Kylie

Time: Christmas

Setting and properties: basic lounge interior (couch, chair, bare Christmas tree etc.)

Fairy lights can be joined using lengths of tinsel or simply by holding hands.

Costumes can be as elaborate or as simple as is required. For example, frilled collars, tutus or coloured tee shirts.

The fairy lights have been removed from their box, where they have been for a year, and are in a tangled mess. Andy and Joe are wrestling

Sharon Oi! You two! Do you want to give it a fucking bye? I feel like the jam in a prick sandwich here.

Andy Tell him. He's the one that keeps grabbing my arse.

Joe Aye you wish! My cable is wrapped round you. I'm just trying to get it.

Andy So how come it's just my arse that's getting it then, eh?

Billy What's going on down there?

Andy Joe's copping a feel of my arse, Billy.

Gloria What, again?

Billy It must be a day with a Y in it.

Joe I am trying to get my cable off.

Lola That's a new one. Never heard it called your cable before. Your hole, your Nat King, your cracker, aye...

Joe Shut it, Lola. For fuck's sake, what is this stupid thing stuck on?

Andy Well I'll give you a clue. It's not my arse!

Sharon Oh wait a minute. I think I might be sitting on it.

Lola Ooh! Sharon's sitting on Joe's cable. Phnarr! Phnarr!

Sharon and Joe Shut it, Lola.

Andy Give it a proper tug, Joe.

Lola Oo-er, matron!

Andy Lola, I swear by all that is sacred to me, if you don't pack it in you will not make it onto the tree this year.

Lola Okay, okay. I can take a hint. And you know how much I like being "up" the tree.

All Lights Shut it, Lola.

Lola Just trying to have a bit of fun, lighten the mood, as it were. Pardon me for breathing.

Brenda Why do you think she feels the need to turn everything into filth?

Roxanne It's the beautiful, expressive nature of our language, Brenda, the employment of the double meaning of words to convey the sense of sheer, unadulterated perversion that Lola feels compelled to express every time she opens her bloody mouth. Lola, you see, is what is technically known in sociological terms as a perv!

Lola I thank you.

Roxanne Wasting my bloody breath!

Claudine (*to Darla*) Five years! Five years tree and box I have been stuck next to that toerag. Me, who until my plastic was recycled was a coat hanger in the closet of the dear, departed Lady Thatcher! Wonderful woman! An inspiration to us all! Do you have any idea how it feels to be stuck next to an annoying, irritating waste of space who talks utter claptrap year in, year out, with no hope of escape?

Lola Well, now you come to mention it...

Sharon Ow! Joe! Stop yanking it. It's stuck under my flowery bit.

All Lights Shut it, Lola!

Lola I never said a word!

Sharon It's like sitting on a cheese wire. Hold on!

She disentangles herself

Joe That's better. I feel all loosened up now.

Sharon Me? Not so much.

Sue Man alive, it feels so good to be out of that box. I was going mental in there.

Kylie I know what you mean. I was fine until June, when they shifted the box when they were looking for the paddling pool and I ended up with my nose jammed into Kev's armpit. There are no words to describe the smell.

Kev As I recall you managed to find a few. Made some up as well.

Kylie Yeah? Well now that we're on the subject of your personal hygiene can I suggest you do something about it before we go back in the box? Please?

Claudine Indeed! Some of us are used to better. In my days in Lady Thatcher's household I lived in a closet where there were little scented balls discreetly scattered around, wafting their idyllic aroma throughout the many designer suits kept therein. Happy days!

Lola Balls, you say?

Andy I thought we'd discussed this, Lola.

Lola But...balls! Balls! And aromatic ones at that! How can we not take the opportunity to extract the humour from that?

Andy Extract the humour all you want. I shall then extract your bulb from its socket and ram it up your...

Lola ...you're killing me here.

Andy Keep that image in mind.

Kev Fear not, ladies, I already have a plan. I heard a rumour that this year the humans are investing in a real tree.

Gloria A real tree? Aww but I prefer those genuine artificial ones. They're pure classy, so they are.

Kylie A bit like yourself, Gloria?

Gloria Well, I didn't like to say, but...aye!

Sue Who told you that, Kev?

Kev You remember that painted wooden reindeer that spent last Christmas hanging around half way up the tree? The one that kept telling all those shite Christmas cracker jokes over and over again?

Kylie Colin?

Savannah-Marie Oh I remember him. Colin the mental headcase! Didn't he go awol after the big New Year hoolie?

Kev The very same. Well, he turned up the worse for wear in the decorations box about half an hour ago, said he'd spent the year being royally shagged by a gorgeous and adventurous wee Cinderella keyring in that drawer in the kitchen where they keep spare batteries and felt tips with no lids. Well, he said he'd heard from the knitted doll that hides the spare toilet roll up her kilt that the tree was going to be the real McCoy this year. Anyway, I reckon if I rub myself vigorously against this tree I'll end up smelling of the pine forests of the north.

Jim Hold on a minute! This drawer! Where is it exactly?

Raylene Trust you! Out of the box five minutes and already you're sniffing around for a bit of rough. I am sick and tired of your wandering eye.

Sharon It's not his eye you want to be worrying about, Raylene. I noticed his wandering hands in the box when we were up the loft.

Jim Ha! I haven't got any hands! I'm a fairy light!

Sharon Well whatever it was if it ever wanders anywhere near my boobs again it's something else you won't have, Jim.

Raylene And about that, Sharon. If you wouldn't mind keeping your tits off my bloke's hands that would be great as well.

Jim I haven't got any hands. And I'm not your bloke.

Raylene You're what I say you are. And she is nothing but a flashy tart.

Sharon Hey! That flashing was a loose connection and well you know it.

Lola Did somebody say "flashing?"

Lola is whacked on the head by Andy, silencing her.

Kylie Ah, the season of goodwill! Don't you just love it?

Savannah Marie Right! Enough of this crap. Christmas wish time, guys. You all know the drill. We have approximately three hours before we have to go on the tree by my reckoning. That's three whole hours of being on the loose.

Billy Three hours of not being stuck on this cable. Three hours of being able to move around in any direction, and at will.

Sue Yup, three hours of freedom, which, if you think about it, would make this situation a lot easier to direct and create interesting stage pictures with if we were, in fact, fictional characters in a play.

Claudine What an odd thing to say.

Evelyn Yeah, I was thinking that.

Roxanne I think we should just blow past it and let the audience get back to the willing suspension of disbelief.

Kev What audience?

Roxanne My point exactly, Kev.

Lola (*sniggering*) Blow past it. Phnarr!

Andy You looking for another one?

Sharon We are wasting precious time, people. If we miss the wish window that's it. All right. Adopt the position. Full focus.

Gloria Position?

Sharon Yeah, the wish position. Like this.

Sharon demonstrates, they all copy in their own ways. The fairy lights are suddenly free to move

Sharon Okaaaay... Full focus. On my count, wish! Three, two, one...go!

The fairy lights are suddenly free to move

Gloria Oh, that feels good.

Joe Crap!

Gloria What's up with you? You're off the cable, aren't you?

Joe Yeah, but I was wishing for a Cinderella keyring.

Gloria Horny bastard!

Jim I'm free! Free!

Raylene Jim! Heel!

Jim Yes dear

Brenda I love that wireless feeling. Like going commando but without pants.

Roxanne Going commando is always without pants, Brenda.

Brenda Yes, I realise that, Roxanne. I was speaking in metaphors.

Jim How about that? And I understood every word! Hey, Raylene! Turns out I can speak fluent metaphors.

Raylene That's nice, dear.

Brenda No! No! Metaphors isn't a language, it's...it's a way of communicating one idea by using another.
An exercise in the creation of mental pictures using words.

Kylie Why?

Brenda What do you mean, why? It's a very effective form of communication.

Kylie So is just saying what you mean. I like it when people say what they mean. Means I don't have to stress myself working it out.

Savannah Marie You mean like, rather than talk about, "The deep, dark mystery that is Kylie" I should just say "Kylie is an arsehole."

Kylie Exactly! That right there is short, to the point and....hey!

Savannah Marie Damn! I forgot to add "a bit slow on the uptake."

Brenda Technically that's a metaphor, too, Savannah Marie. As Kylie is not, in fact, an arsehole.

Savannah Marie Matter of opinion, Brenda. Matter of opinion.

Brenda All that aside, metaphors are enriching and illustrative, thereby giving a sense of depth and gravitas to the subject matter.

Roxanne Yes, well, nobody is interested in the gravitas of your pants, Brenda.

Jim She doesn't have any pants, Roxanne. That's what going commando means. You might not have got that part of the conversation, though, if you're not fluent in metaphors, like what I am.

Brenda For the last time, it's not a language, Jim. And I do have pants, as it happens.

Jim You do? How does that work?

Brenda What do you mean? It's pants we're talking about, not rocket surgery.

Jim How do you pull them up? You're a fairy light. You don't have any hands.

Brenda I...don't know.

Claudine Of course, when I was a coat hanger this wonderful, free feeling was called being let off the hook.

Gloria Hey! Claudine made a funny. It must be Christmas.

Claudine I was being serious.

Joe Right! Where's the TV remote?

Darla You're kidding me on? You're finally off the leash and you're going to watch the telly?

Joe But Judge Judy might be on.

Kylie I'm sorry. "Might be?"

Joe You know I'm a sucker for smart, sexy women.

Brenda Judge Judy?

Lola Sucker! Phnarr!

Andy Right, that's it.

Andy pulls Lola down behind the couch and pummels her

Darla You can't waste an opportunity like this watching crap telly. You have to live, experience the world in all its magnificence, taste the rainbow, grab life roughly by the balls.

Lola (from behind the couch) As the actress said to the bishop.

Andy leaps on top of Lola and we hear the sounds of a further pummelling

(Still from behind the couch) I regret nothing!

Andy That's because I haven't finished.

Lola Oh Matron!

Andy You are driving me nuts!

Lola As the bishop said to the actress. Aaaarrrrggghhh!

Kev Andy! Try not to kill her. We're old technology, remember. They wired us in series. We need her.

Andy But she's a bastard. Can you imagine, year in, year out, that nipping your brain with constant innuendo?

Kev I understand, I really do. Remember I had Colin last year.

Lola *(weakly from behind the couch)* Had Colin did you? Phnarrrr!

Kev Yeah all right, kick her another couple of times. But that's it.

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A challenging and very funny play about Xmas fairy lights, full of colourful characters and racy humour.

Plot Summary

There's almost a full year from the day the fairy lights go back to the loft and the day they are unpacked for another festive season. A very full and busy year. For them, not us. As the lights are unpacked once more the story of their year unfolds. Sometimes, sweet, sometimes harrowing, sometimes just plain daft, the fairy lights air their grievances and share their memories with us.

Running time: about 30 minutes.