

# **CHRISTMAS TEA**

**A One Act Play**

**By**

**ROBERT NEIL PORTER**

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**Denver, Colorado**

## CHARACTERS

MISS DOLLY DRESSUP	a modern doll
MISS OLD-FASHIONED ALICE	an antique china doll
TEDDY BEAR	a stuffed bear
SANTA CLAUS	an offstage voice

**For preview only**

## CHRISTMAS TEA

AT RISE: The curtain opens to reveal three toys sitting in the corner of a child's playroom. About the room are large cardboard boxes painted as children's alphabet blocks. A TEDDY BEAR sits alone at STAGE LEFT with his arms open wide, in teddy bear fashion. Seated at a table are two DOLLS. There is a tea service on the table, with cups and saucers. STAGE RIGHT of the table is seated MISS DOLLY DRESSUP. She is a modern doll, very beautiful. She wears the latest afternoon tea dress, gloves and a smart hat. At table LEFT is seated MISS OLD-FASHIONED ALICE, a doll with a china face which is highly rouged and vividly painted. She wears an Alice-blue gown of our great-grand-mother's day, with many ruffles and a high lace collar. After a moment the THREE TOYS yawn and come to life. The TEDDY BEAR scratches his ribs, enjoying the luxury.

DOLLY: A cup of Christmas tea before Santa arrives tonight, Miss Old-Fashioned Alice?

ALICE: Yes, thank you, Miss Dolly Dressup. I do hope Santa arrives soon. I'm anxious to see him.

DOLLY: *(As she pours the tea.)* Do you have a complaint about our little girl? If you do, Santa might not leave any toys for her tonight.

ALICE: I have no complaint about her . . . *(Points to TEDDY BEAR.)* But I do have a complaint about HIM!

DOLLY: Have you changed your mind, Mr. Teddy? Will you join us this time for tea? It's Christmas Eve!

TEDDY: Grrr . . . ! *(Each time TEDDY growls the DOLLS jump as if scared out of their wits.)*

ALICE: Really, Mr. Teddy. I wish you would stop that awful noise!

DOLLY: *(Politely.)* Sugar, Miss Old-Fashioned Alice?

ALICE: *(Courteously.)* One lump, Miss Dolly Dressup. *(The DOLLS sip their tea.)*

DOLLY: We'll have to forgive Mr. Teddy. He's practicing his growling.

ALICE: I don't know why. He's not a real bear.

TEDDY: *(Loudly.)* And you're not drinking real tea, either! *(He lunges at them.)* Grrr . . . ! *(Again the DOLLS jump, startled. They regain their composure.)*

DOLLY: *(Politely.)* Cream?

ALICE: No, dear. It's fattening.

TEDDY: *(Approaching nearer to them.)* Oh, why don't you dolls stop pretending?

ALICE: *(Indignantly.)* Pretending!

TEDDY: You dolls are always playing make-believe.

DOLLY: What else is there?

TEDDY: Be yourself, like me. *(He walks about in front of them, rolling his shoulders, bear-like, and growling softly. The two DOLLS watch him suspiciously as they sip their tea. He crosses in front of them to STAGE RIGHT.)*

DOLLY: Well, what can you expect, Miss Old-Fashioned Alice? He's only a teddy bear.

TEDDY: *(Suddenly turns, jumps at DOLLY, growling.)* Grrr . . . ! *(Both DOLLS are startled again, particularly DOLLY.)*

DOLLY: Oh!

TEDDY: *(Laughing.)* Ha ha ha! Well, I may be only a teddy bear, but I can sure make you jump, Dolly! Ha ha ha!

DOLLY: You scared me!

TEDDY: I'm glad I can scare somebody.

DOLLY: You've been looking at too many of those circus bears in our little girl's picture books.

ALICE: *(Emphatically.)* Mr. Teddy!

TEDDY: Oh, Alice, why don't you call me just plain Teddy? Or even Ted would do.

ALICE: *(She rises, again very emphatic.)* Mr. Teddy, since you arrived last Christmas Eve, you have spoiled every one of our tea parties!

TEDDY: Oh, I'm just trying to be myself. Do you want me to act like you do? Like a doll or something? *(He imitates the DOLLS with mincing gestures and a high voice.)* A cup of tea, dear? Yes, dear. Thank you, dear! *(DOLLY giggles.)* And the stuff's not even real!

ALICE: *(Crossing to him.)* I realize you would like us to call each other by our first names. I don't. Remember, I was in this playroom first! I belonged to the great-grandmother of this household when she was a little girl, and I insist that we address each other like the dolls did in my day.

TEDDY: And just how was that?

ALICE: By our full, Santa Claus given names.

TEDDY: I think it's silly! There's only three of us. Let's not pretend with each other but be real friends. *(He suddenly offers his paw to DOLLY.)* Have a paw, pal!

DOLLY: *(Jumps up and takes his paw in her hands, laughing.)* Oh, Teddy, you're a ray of sunshine in this old playroom.

ALICE: Humph!

DOLLY: But I never know if you're going to hug me or chase me!

TEDDY: How about a teddy bear hug or a whisker rub? *(DOLLY giggles, flattered and pleased. ALICE clears her throat reprimandingly. DOLLY sits down in her chair.)*

ALICE: Mr. Teddy, you probably consider me old-fashioned. It's true I do not possess the modern . . . what I call *(A slur at DOLLY)* FADS of some of the dolls I've seen come and go here.

DOLLY: *(Jumping up.)* FADS? I'll have you know, Miss Old-Fashioned Alice, that all of my accessories are the latest thing. I have hair that can be put up in any style. I also come with seven dress-up outfits.

ALICE: Mercy!

TEDDY: Dolly, you're a wonder!

DOLLY: *(She giggles and sits.)* Thank you.

ALICE: Well, I want you both to know that I have none of these fancy accessories. I don't have to, for I . . . *(She feels her face lightly, lovingly.)* . . . have a face made of real china glass!

TEDDY: Is that why you sit all day propped up on pillows in the front room and can never come out and play?

ALICE: Yes. I am very special. I am an antique. *(TEDDY gives a low whistle.)* I have worn out two cloth bodies and three Alice-blue gowns. *(She feels her face delicately.)* But my face is as pretty today as it was fifty years ago.

DOLLY: Seventy, dear. You forgot the twenty you spent in the trunk.

ALICE: Those extra twenty years in the attic I consider my years of rest.

DOLLY: *(Coldly.)* I see. More tea?

ALICE: *(Acidly.)* No thank you, dear. Not for me.

TEDDY: Grrr . . . ! *(The DOLLS jump again, startled.)* Oh, tea, tea, schmee! What you both need is a good chasing! Grr . . . ! Grr . . . ! *(He chases the DOLLS about the room. The DOLLS ad lib "Oh!" "Oh!" "Oh, dear!" etc. After the chase ends, he holds his sides and rocks back and forth with laughter.)* Ha ha ha! *(The DOLLS, winded, collapse in their chairs.)*

DOLLY: You see, Miss Old-Fashioned Alice, you never know if that Teddy Bear is going to hug you or chase you!

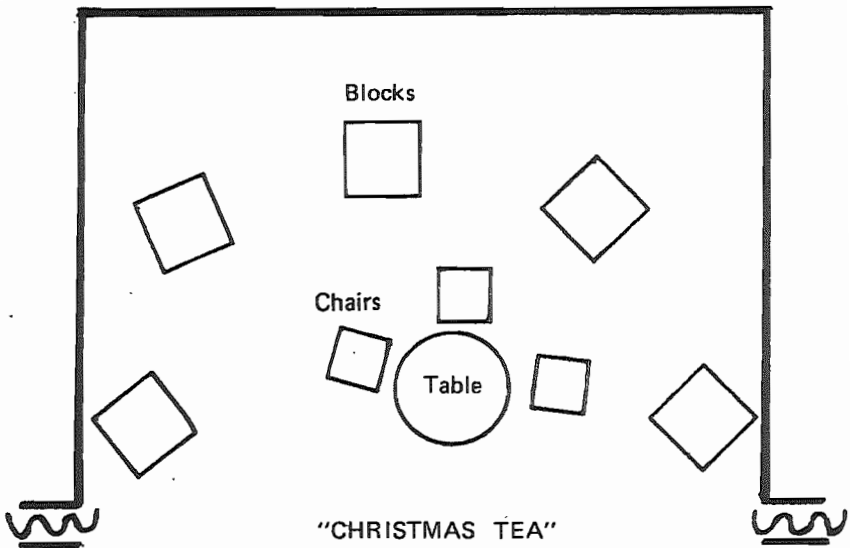
ALICE: *(Confidentially.)* I know, my dear. That's why I think he was delivered here last Christmas by mistake.

DOLLY: *(Whispered.)* Really?

ALICE: Yes. I'm sure of it.

TEDDY: What are you two dolls whispering about?

**End of Script Sample**



#### PROPERTIES

Tea service with cups and saucers  
Alphabet blocks  
Table and chairs

#### SOUND EFFECTS

Sleighbells  
Voice over microphone for SANTA

For preview only

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