

MISTLETOE
by
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Based his short story MISTLETOE

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CHARACTERS

SAM: 10 boy who plays recorder

DEREK: 18 brother who plays guitar

APPLE FARMER: 40 male

Scene One:

Time: weeks before Christmas.

Scene: A countryside. Stage left stands an apple tree with mistletoe hanging from branches. Stage right is a mobile home with open side, exposing Derek and Sam's bedroom.

Lights up stage left: Twilight. SAM, wearing school backpack, stands under tree, gazing at mistletoe.

SAM

(to self)

All that mistletoe. Every apple tree is filled with it. That's the same stuff they sell in stores for Christmas. So why couldn't I sell mistletoe, too?

(Arm stretched upward, SAM runs and leaps, but can't reach mistletoe clump. He tries again and fails.)

SAM (cont'd)

Missed it by a mile. So I tried. So that is that.

(SAM starts toward stage right, but spots pile of mistletoe at the base of the tree and stops.)

SAM (cont'd)

(looking around)

Wait a sec. It's mistletoe. How'd that get there? It's as though the tree dropped it just for me.

(SAM removes backpack and fills it with mistletoe)

SAM (cont'd)

Perfect mistletoe sprigs with the berries still on them. Perfect for kissing under.

(Carrying backpack, SAM starts toward stage rights. Lights fade stage left. Lights up stage right. Derek sits on bed in mobile home bedroom, playing guitar. Sam enters trailer and stops to listen. He pounds on bedroom door.)

SAM

Derek let me in.

DEREK
Hold on. Hold on!

(DEREK wraps guitar in towel. He puts on coat and stocking cap and opens door.)

SAM
(to Derek)
Where are you going?

DEREK
Out.

SAM
How long will you be gone? I need to do some work in here and I need to practice my recorder for school.

DEREK
I'll be gone long enough so I don't have to hear you squeaking on that instrument. Just don't mess up the room. And don't touch my stuff, and stay off my bed.

SAM
Right. Sure. I never touch your stuff.

DEREK
(begins to leave)
Well, don't start. Especially my guitar. I don't want your fingerprints on my guitar.

SAM
Right. Right. No fingerprints on guitar.

(DEREK exits trailer. SAM dumps mistletoe on his bed. He pulls box from under bed and takes out red ribbon.)

SAM
(to self, sorting through mistletoe)
Now all I need to do is tie a ribbon around each sprig and put them in a Baggie. I'll sell them at the mall tomorrow. A dollar apiece. There's maybe twenty sprigs in this pile.

(SAM looks toward guitar on bed)

SAM (cont'd)
Derek always wraps his guitar in that old towel. He needs a case, a good one.

(SAM reaches into backpack. He pulls out plastic recorder and toots it a few times.)

SAM (cont'd)

That's what I'll do with the mistletoe money. Buy a case guitar case for Derek. He'd like that. Yeah, a guitar case would be a great Christmas present.

(SAM plays Jingle Bells on his recorder.)

SAM (cont'd)

I'll check out guitar cases at the mall tomorrow. After I sell the mistletoe. I can also check out the recorders. Man, those wooden one they have at the music store are beautiful. What I would give for one of those, instead of this cheap plastic thing.

(SAM plays Silent Night as lights fade.)

SCENE TWO:

Lights up stage left: Next evening. SAM wearing backpack, enters stage left. He reaches in pocket and pulls out wad of dollar bills and counts them.

SAM

(to self)

Twenty-two, Twenty-three smackaroos? That was easy. Every mistletoe sold and I could have sold a lot more. At this rate, I'll be able to buy the guitar case in a few days.

(SAM looks up in tree.)

SAM (cont'd)

That's weird. Some of the mistletoe is gone. Someone's been taking the mistletoe from these apple tree. Maybe I have competition.

(SAM spots pile of mistletoe by trunk.)

SAM (cont'd)

Well, whoever's picking the mistletoe isn't selling it. It's like a gift from the trees to me.

(He loads backpack with mistletoe.)

SAM (cont'd)

And tonight I'll make twice as many packages. I'll sell twice as many at the mall tomorrow after school. Thank you trees. Derek will really like the guitar case. It has leather with brass buttons around the edges on the outside and a fuzzy red inside. It even has a lock and key. That case is better than the guitar.

(SAM starts for stage right. Lights fade stage left. Lights up stage right. SAM meets DEREK coming from trailer.)

SAM

Hey, Derek.

DEREK

(without stopping)

None of your business.

SAM

I didn't ask you anything.

DEREK

Tell Mom I won't be home for supper.

SAM

OK, good. I got to use the bedroom to practise my recorder.

DEREK

Keep off my bed.

SAM

(starting into trailer)

Right. Right. And I won't lay a finger on your precious, crumby guitar.

(SAM enters trailer and bedroom. He dumps mistletoe on bed. He takes out recorder and toots a few notes.)

SAM

(looking toward guitar wrapped in towel on other bed.)

Derek's really not that bad of a brother. We just get on each other's nerves a lot, having to share this dinky room. He'll really like that guitar case. I know he will.

(SAM plays JIGGLE BELLS. Lights fade.)

SCENE THREE:

Lights up stage left: Next evening. SAM enters stage left. APPLE FARMER stands under tree looking up. SAM stops.

SAM

(to APPLE FARMER)

Oh, hi.

APPLE FARMER

(to SAM)

Hello, young man. Chilly night out.

SAM

Yeah, that's for sure.

APPLE FARMER

Well, what can I do for you?

SAM

I was going to collect some mistletoe. I didn't expect to see anyone.

APPLE FARMER

Is that right? Fact is, these are my apple trees.

SAM

Oh, I didn't know. I hope it wasn't like stealing. I'll leave all your mistletoe alone.

APPLE FARMER

(laughs)

Fact is, I'm paying a guy to cut the mistletoe out of my trees.

SAM

You are? How come? What's wrong with mistletoe?

APPLE FARMER

The plant is a parasite. Fact is, that very plant people kiss under can do these apple trees harm. It attaches itself to the tree branches and sucks out food and water. Mistletoe can kill the entire apple grove.

SAM

It can? So you don't want it?

APPLE FARMER

You're welcome to take all the mistletoe you want, young man.

SAM

Great. I just need one more bag full. You see, I clean it up and sell bags of it at the mall. Tomorrow I should have enough money for the Christmas present I want to buy.

APPLE FARMER

Good for you. Enterprising ideas like that will get you far in this country.

(SAM gathers mistletoe from base of tree. Two legs dangle from tree branch, and DEREK drops down. SAM hides behind tree.)

DEREK

(to APPLE FARMER.)

That tree's all clear.

APPLE FARMER

Good. A few more night ought to take care of the whole grove.

DEREK

(bangs hangs on chest)

Yeah, a few more nights.

APPLE FARMER

So what you going to do with all the money I'm paying you to clear my trees of this pesky stuff.

DEREK

(shuffling feet)

Saving up to buy my kid brother something for Christmas.

APPLE FARMER

Is that right?

DEREK

Yeah, he's been wanting a wooden recorder for ages. He can play pretty well.

APPLE FARMER

A recorder, huh? Very thoughtful.

DEREK

And you know how it is. He's my brother.

(DEREK exits stage right. SAM comes from behind tree and holds up backpack. Lights fade. End of play.)