A Very Hayffie Christmas

by shadow_in_the_shade

Summary

Pure and unadulterated domestic christmas fluff. Hayffie with a side order of Katniss/Peeta.

A Very Hayffie Christmas

It was three years since the rebellion had ended and District Twelve was a picture postcard of snowy delight. Since they had taken down the fence, the forest now encroached upon the town, and this morning you could see the leaves shivering with snow and dancing in the sunlight.

Effie got down from the train, flitting her way like a Christmas fairy through the district to the victor’s village. She beamed to see they had finally advanced far enough for Christmas lights; oh it was nothing to the excessive glitter and neon shine of the Capitol but in some strange way it was better. The lights were all the warmer for touching the darkness beyond and you could see the fall and stretch of the light cross the street and spilling out goldenly from windows and doors.

She was a frequent enough visitor to the district by now that those who saw her smiled and offered her the greetings of the season, and she in return was happy enough here by now to smile back and offer back a quiet seasonal salute.

She smiled as she tripped through the streets, pleased with herself at the particular news she had to impart this year.
The Victor’s village lay quiet in the snow, only the one light shining out from Katniss and Peeta’s house. She smiled in its glow and held off the temptation to go straight in and announce her presence. She held back and headed for the predictably darkened windows of Haymitch’s house, from which emanated only a faint orange glow more evocative of Halloween than the festive season.

Actually, as she let herself in unannounced, she noticed it really wasn’t that bad. The faint glow came from a fire that had actually been lit in the hearth and Haymitch, bizarrely, could be found on the floor in front of it, face set and intent over some work she could not quite make out. He did not immediately see her come in and he jumped to hear a flamboyant cry of –

“Well! This is festive!” coming from the doorway.

He looked up to see Effie staring pointedly at the one rather limp sprig of holly over the mantelpiece and could not quite work out if she was genuinely pleased with his effort or being deeply and cheerfully sarcastic.

“Yeah well –” he rocked back on his heels – “I do like to make an effort.”

“So I see,” she said archly – sarcasm then, he decided – “Well thank goodness I arrived when I did.”

His eyebrows crept up his head when no less than three couriers from the station trailed in behind her, dumping bags and boxes across the floor. They nodded at Effie who smiled brightly, thanking them out.

“What the –” Haymitch began, but Effie had already opened the first box which erupted like a small volcano in an explosion of glitter and tinsel.

By the time he had caught on, to his despair, Effie was dancing round the room, positively skipping like - as he could not help but state- a demented elf, as she decked the room and indeed the halls with Christmas decorations, finally coming to light nearby and throwing tinsel round his head.

“Effie,” he stated, in a tone of terrifying reasonableness, stood there dripping tinsel as though he was himself a Christmas tree – “Why would you do this. It looks like Christmas threw up all over my house.”

“Which is a vast improvement upon the usual state of affairs in which you have thrown up all over your house, let me tell you,” she replied brightly. Her eyes darted suddenly to the floor – “Haymitch, what in god’s name is that?”

“I was –” Haymitch mumbled, positively shuffled – “Making mince pies.” He admitted.

“In front of the fire – festively,” he grumbled.

“Hmm” she sniffed – “I don’t know whether to be delighted by your festive cheer or appalled that you chose to do it on the floor.”

Then she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him like it was some horrible picture postcard –

“Miss me?”

Haymitch wished it wasn’t the truth when he replied in the affirmative.

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Christmas morning shone out bright and early and Effie was up at the crack of dawn like a child dragging stockings into the bed. Haymitch grouched and tried to hide under the pillows beneath her exuberant festive flurry of attempt to get him to wake up. Eventually he came up groaning.

“If there’s not a bottle of something excellent in mine I’m going back to sleep.”

“What is this?” Effie wailed, going through her stocking to find presents that looked as though they had been wrapped in newspaper – “It looks like newspaper!”

“It is newspaper.”

“And this bow! It smells of old goat.”

“I got it from Katniss,” he groaned – “She tied it round a goat once.”

“Oh god.”

“Just open things, woman and stop your wailing!”

She picked through the papers delicately as though afraid she would catch something, but her eyes widened in delight upon finding all the presents within to be beautiful shining things that she had been dropping hints about all year even though she had assumed he was too drunk to have listened.

Haymitch found a bottle of fine port in his stocking and after much haggling with Effie, drank only a third of it for breakfast.

An hour later they appeared upon Katniss’s doorstep, Effie beaming, Haymitch looking awkward in a shirt that struck him as suspiciously clean.

“Effie, you look lovely,” Katniss said pleasantly – “Haymitch you look….”

“Sober,” he groaned – “Tell me you’ve got some festive cheer happening inside or I’m going back to bed.”

As Effie flitted through to the kitchen to help Peeta with the dinner Haymitch and Katniss slouched into the sofa with a bottle of sherry that Haymitch declared to be girly but found highly drinkable all the same –

“Katniss, she got me clothes –” he moaned – “Clean ones – and she’s making me wear them.”

“Poor Haymitch,” Katniss grinned, not enormously feeling his pain, though they both swung their feet up onto the coffee table with a satisfied sigh at the absence of significant others.

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More due to Peeta’s prowess in the kitchen than Effie’s well-meaning attempts to help, dinner was a resounding success. Nobody even accused Effie of being rude when she announced that Peeta’s Christmas cake could not be beaten even in the Capitol and since she had meant it as a compliment anyway Peeta smiled and answered –

“I’ll have to send you some now and then.”

“Actually –” Effie looked down at the table, blushing slightly – “That won’t be necessary –”

“Why not?”
“Well –” she looked up brightly “I suppose this is a good enough time as any – I’m not going back to the Capitol.”

“You’re not?” Katniss frowned.

“Well it’s – I seem to come down here so often and after all it’s not so bad out here anymore and - when all’s said and done – I decided I might just stay here.”

Katniss and Peeta erupted with gentle joy, grinning, Peeta announcing, inexplicably to Effie that he owed Katniss an extra Christmas present and Katniss announcing that now they could really be family.

Haymitch just grimaced at her and, half grinning asked –

“So, where you planning to stay then?”

The others booed at him and threw chestnuts and Haymitch smiled wryly and squeezed Effie’s hand under the table.

-x-

“You’re such a Grinch,” Effie sighed affectionately as they headed out into the icy air, having made their goodbyes later that evening.

“Am not –” Haymitch reeled slightly, clutching on to Effie for support – “I’m full of the Christmas spirit.”

“Yes, I can smell that,” she sighed, pretending to gag on his breath.

“Effie –” Haymitch breathed it out heavily, peering down firmly at both of her. They were both pretty he decided, he liked them – “Effie, Effie, Effie – are you sure you want to stay?”

“You don’t want me?”

“I cut out pastry in front of the fireplace –” he frowned down at her – “I let geese into the house, I am frequently in-e-bria-ted –” he got the word out with great care – “And sometimes I fart in bed. This ain’t exactly the Capitol, princess.”

“I know all that –” she smiled up at him, stepping in close and putting her hands in his coat pockets for warmth – “And if you tell me you don’t want me –”

“I’m a good liar sweetheart, but I’m not that good –”

She smiled and nodded a silent that’s settled that then and when she stood on tiptoes to kiss him the snow obliging began to fall prettily around them in the square.

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A pure does of festive fluff, children. This may evolve into a series of fluffy anecdotes, possibly a Keeping up with Hayffie after all…..watch this space. O__O

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