

The Cat Lady Christmas

Allison Engel & Margaret Engel





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THE CAT LADY CHRISTMAS

By Allison Engel and Margaret Engel

CAST

ANNOUNCER/ENGINEER: At radio station KKAT

FOLEY ARTIST: Sound effects operator for radio station KKAT

Five voice actors:

CORLY: An interior designer in her early sixties.

MEREDITH McGUANE: Corly's flamboyant cousin, mid-seventies.

DANA: An actress and Corly's best friend, early sixties.

CLIFF: A just-retired software entrepreneur, mid-sixties.

MITCH: A charming allergist in his mid-sixties.

Place

Large studio of radio station KKAT.

Time

The present. Shortly before Christmas.

THE CAT LADY CHRISTMAS

Setting: Five standing microphones are arranged in a semicircle. A table with sound effects instruments is to one side, and the Foley Artist sits there. On the other side is a sound board where the Announcer/Engineer sits. There is an "On Air" sign on the wall that lights up. A decorated Christmas tree is in the back, to provide holiday atmosphere. The female actors wear holiday themed skirts or pants. The male actors wear sweaters and slacks appropriate for Christmas.

At Rise: The actors casually ready themselves for a broadcast. They greet each other and the Announcer/Engineer and Foley Artist, flip through their scripts, look at the ornaments on the tree, etc. The Announcer/Engineer and Foley artist take their seats.

ANNOUNCER/ENGINEER: Places, everyone. Two minutes 'til air time. Two minutes 'til air time.

(The actors line up, each in front of a microphone.)

ANNOUNCER/ENGINEER: Five, four, three, two...

SOUND: Call letter jingle identifying "Radio KKAT, Theatre of the Air"

ANNOUNCER/ENGINEER: Welcome to today's holiday offering, the radio play "The Cat Lady Christmas." Let's meet our cast of actors.

(As the Announcer/Engineer says their names, the Actors smile, bow and interact with each other.)

ANNOUNCER/ENGINEER: In order of appearance, playing Corly is *(give actual name of Female Actor)*, playing Cousin Meredith is *(give actual name of Female Actor)*, playing Dana is *(give actual name of Female Actor)*, playing Cliff is *(give actual name of Male Actor)*, and playing Mitch is *(give actual name of Male Actor)*.

And now, "The Cat Lady Christmas."

SOUND: Doorbell buzzes twice

CORLY: Cousin Meredith? Cousin Meredith? It's Corly.

SOUND: Door knocking, several times

CORLY: Meredith? It's Corly. With the greens for your mantle. (*No answer.*)

SOUND: Armload of branches and greens hitting the floor

CORLY: I've got your key here somewhere.

SOUND: Key in lock and door opening

CORLY: Meredith! What's wrong! Oh geez, oh, geez.

SOUND: Running footsteps

MEREDITH: I'm fine. Everything's good.

CORLY: So why are you all dressed up and lying on your back on the floor?

MEREDITH: I'm dressed up because I was at bridge club. I'm lying on my back because of my blasted vape pen. It rolled down behind the radiator, and I'm trying to get it out. Such a wicked thing it is. Been rolling just out of my reach for ten minutes.

CORLY: I thought you had a heart attack or something. You about gave me a heart attack.

MEREDITH: You don't happen to have a wad of duct tape on you, do you? I can stick it on the end of this ruler and...

CORLY: Well, of course I do. An interior decorator doing Christmas decor comes prepared. Please get up. I'll get it.

MEREDITH: Bless you, dear. (*pause*) There, vertical again. What a lovely bunch of greens you brought. (*sniffs*) It smells like an alpine forest. And did you bring the mistletoe?

CORLY: Yes, three little bags full. You planning a wild party?

MEREDITH: You never know, dear. As the Boy Scouts say, "Be Prepared." Two bags will be plenty. You keep one for yourself.

CORLY: Not needed.

MEREDITH: What? No news on the romance front? You should be making up for lost time now that Mr. Narcissist is out of the picture.

CORLY: Don't want to talk about it.

MEREDITH: You think that's going to satisfy me? Spill the beans to your cousin.

CORLY: There's literally nothing to report. Really. I've been decorating houses nonstop since before Thanksgiving. I'll think about it after New Year's. (*grunts*) Yes, got it! Here's your vape-y thing.

MEREDITH: You're the best. Stay for a snack?

CORLY: Thanks, but no. On my way over to Dana's to put the finishing touches on her place before the weather gets worse.

MEREDITH: Well, Merry Christmas, darling. And take that bag of mistletoe. Here, I'll just tuck it in your purse.

SOUND: Kiss

SOUND: Door shutting

SOUND: Different doorbell buzz

DANA: C'mon in. It's open.

SOUND: Vocal version of "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth"

CORLY: Odd playlist, Dana. What's next, "Alvin and the Chipmunks?"

SOUND: "All I Want for Christmas" turned off

DANA: That doesn't put you in the Christmas spirit? I love those corny old songs. They remind me of all the corny old productions I've been in over the years.

SOUND: Music being turned back on. "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth" plays again, but softer.

CORLY: OK, it's your apartment, and your holiday vibe.

DANA: That's right, and you totally have captured that vibe. Thank you so much, Corly, for my Santa cats tree. Where DID you find those kitty lights? And the red and green paw prints marching over the door, the yarn balls on the coffee table, everything. It's the best Christmas present ever. A fully decorated place and all I did was sit here, drink hot cider, and watch my best friend do all the work. And, now, special delivery of greens for the mantle. Oooh, that smell!

CORLY: I love doing it. Ms. Decorating Diva, that's me.

DANA: No, really. You've outdone yourself. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." The Best of John Keats, Long Wharf Playhouse. Or was that at Theater in the Round in Dubuque? Oh, who cares. One of them that was smart enough to hire me. And look, both Ziggy and Marley are already curled up on the tree skirt, right next to their names that you embroidered on it.

CORLY: Did you notice I put their outlines on it, too? Sort of like the chalk outlines at a crime scene.

DANA: That's your clever way of pointing out they sleep all the time. Remember when they were little, and we couldn't keep them from climbing up the tree? Lots of broken ornaments in their past. Now, they are furniture cats.

CORLY: I love those two. You're so lucky to still have them.

DANA: Oh, so sorry. Your first Christmas without Miss Maisie has got to be tough.

CORLY: I do miss my fur baby. Sixteen good years, and then four terrible months of pills and shots and her too sick to eat. I wouldn't want her back to go through that again. And now I can honestly answer "No" to the "Do You Have Pets" question on Match.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!