

# Midnight's Christmas

by Delia Hamilton

*Midnight is a little rescue cat whose original owners reluctantly had to leave her behind when they moved away from England. She has come to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, a kindly older couple with a large house in the country. Midnight has a number of adventures with the Joneses and the other cats they've adopted, including a big ginger cat named The Colonel, two beautiful Siamese cats named Lucy and Sally, their house cats Jeremy and Jemimah, and an aging street cat missing half an ear, Scotty.*



**MIDNIGHT WAS HAPPILY** settled with her new family when some strange things began happening.

Mrs. Jones was singing funny songs about someone called Santa Claus, and Mr. Jones kept muttering *Ho! Ho! Ho!* in a deep voice. What did it all mean?

Midnight asked The Colonel, and he told her it was about Christmas, when the Baby Jesus was born, and how the world celebrated his birth. He also told her how the whole house would be decorated with Christmas trees and tinsel and lights, and Mr. Jones would dress up as Santa Claus, a jolly man with a great white beard who wore a red suit and big black boots.

“It sounds very exciting,” thought Midnight, and she asked The Colonel what the cats did.

“Oh, we have great fun chasing the baubles and helping Mr. and Mrs. Jones hang the decorations and trim the tree.”

Sure enough, the next day Mr. Jones brought in a HUGE tree, which was planted in a bucket covered with silver paper. Of course, before the tree could be planted, Mr. Jones had had to lift Midnight out of the bucket at least twice, as she kept trying to climb in and see what it was. Finally, the tree was in place, and Mrs. Jones came to see it.

“Oh, that’s a fine big tree. We will have fun decorating it!”

Illustrated by Michael Chesworth

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HERE, BAUBLES ARE  
THE CHRISTMAS  
BULBS.



MWEE!



I LOVE DECORATING FOR  
THE HOLIDAYS.



Mrs. Jones brought down a big box, and Midnight and the other cats, even Sally and Lucy, had a grand time trying to get in the box and play with the brightly colored baubles and tinsel before Mr. or Mrs. Jones could get hold of them. In the end the tree was finished, and Midnight held her breath as Mrs. Jones put an angel on the top of the tree. Then the lights went on, and she could see the tree all lit up and looking beautiful.

“I wonder if I could just reach that lovely light,” Midnight thought to herself, and quick as a flash she was in the tree and caught up in all the decorations. Mrs. Jones sighed “Oh, Midnight, come on, get out of there.” But before anyone could move, the whole tree came crashing down! There were lights, tinsel, and baubles all over the floor. Oh! What a mess. The cats were scurrying around, Mr. and Mrs. Jones were trying not to step on things, and there was little Midnight, all wrapped up in tinsel with an angel on her head. Mrs. and Mrs. Jones had to laugh. “Midnight, you are naughty, but you do look funny.”

Finally, all the mess was cleared up, the tree once more looked beautiful, and all the cats stayed well away, especially Midnight. Mr. and Mrs. Jones decorated the rest of the room, and it looked wonderful with all the lovely colors and Christmas toys. Midnight stared in wonder as the big lit-up Santa Claus cried “Ho, Ho, Ho, Merry Christmas!” every time someone passed him.

“Who is that?” she whispered to The Colonel.

“Oh, he is just a toy. It’s OK, little Midnight, don’t be afraid,” answered The Colonel.



The next day was Christmas Eve. Mrs. Jones bustled around the kitchen baking cakes and biscuits and making soup and getting a huge turkey ready to cook the next day. The smell from the kitchen was very nice, and all the cats were sitting in a line wondering if they could just get a little something should it fall from the table.

Eventually Mrs. Jones sighed and said, "Well, thank goodness that's all finished, just in time for tea." The cats were slightly disappointed that not very much had to be cleaned up.

After tea, people came to the door singing carols. Midnight thought they sounded very good and wanted to join in. She started to meow, quite loudly. "Listen," said one little girl, "the kitty is singing, too." Everyone laughed at the little cat trying to sing. Midnight was having great fun. She enjoyed people making a fuss over her,

Soon the carolers went away, after having some biscuits and hot chocolate, of course, and the house was once again quiet.

"Now," said Mrs. Jones, "it's time for bed. But before we go, we must get the milk and biscuits for Santa and some carrots for the reindeer."

The milk, biscuits, and carrots were left on a plate on the table, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones went to bed.

"What happens now?" Midnight asked The Colonel.

"Well, we go to sleep, too, and in the morning, Santa has come, and there's lots of gifts for the humans and for us," he answered.

"Oh, I can't sleep. I'm too excited," Midnight replied, jumping around the room.

"Well, you must try, or Santa won't come."

"Oh dear. I will certainly try, then."

So, all the cats went to their beds, Lucy and Sally, Jeremy and Jemimah, The Colonel and Scotty, and of course, little Midnight, who was far too excited to sleep. Midnight tried and tried but couldn't sleep. She tried relaxing her eyes, she tried counting sheep, she even tried dreaming of fish and cream, but nothing helped.





Sometime later, still too excited to sleep, Midnight thought she might like a look at the tree, although she wouldn't try to catch a light again. She sat in the big room and saw all the lights twinkling, and the angel on top smiling. Suddenly, she heard a noise.

"What was that?" she thought to herself and saw a big pair of black boots coming down the chimney. "Oh dear, oh dear, who is that?"

After the boots came red trousers, then a big red tummy, and finally a fat, jolly man who said, "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas!" very quietly to himself.

"It's just the toy," thought Midnight, "no need to worry. But why is it in the chimney?" Midnight thought this was very strange.

Then Santa Claus, for it was the great man himself, saw Midnight and said, "Hello, little Midnight, are you not supposed to be asleep?"

"Oh dear, sir, I am, but I am too excited to sleep. I'm waiting for Santa Claus!"

"Ho, ho, ho, I am Santa Claus!"

Midnight was too excited to speak and watched silently as Santa left some gifts.

When he was satisfied that he had left all the gifts, Santa spied the milk and biscuits. "I do like coming to Mrs. Jones's house. Her biscuits are lovely, and she always leaves big carrots for the reindeer." Santa asked Midnight if she would like a biscuit, and they sat eating in friendly silence.

IF SANTA LIKES  
HER BISCUITS,  
HE'D LOVE MY  
CHOCOLATE-  
CHIP COOKIES.



MUNCH-  
MUNCH-  
CRUNCH!



Eventually Santa said he would have to move on, as he was very busy that night. Midnight said good night and was finally able to fall asleep.

There was such great excitement when everyone woke up the next day that Midnight never told the other cats that she had seen Santa.

There were lots of toys for the cats, and gifts for the humans, too, and at lunchtime the table groaned under all the food. The cats got a special lunch. Midnight, of course, had fish and a little cream, and then she had a great time chasing all the little bits of paper as Mr. and Mrs. Jones opened their presents. Midnight's favorite toy was the box that Mrs. Jones's slippers came in.

All too soon the day was over, and little Midnight was very sleepy. She was so sleepy, she fell asleep in the slipper box, dreaming of meeting Santa. Midnight really was a very contented little cat. 🐈

