

Intermezzo

by stephen hastings-king

Xmas music is everywhere.

He wears a pointy hat.

She has draped strands of tinsel over her shoulders; her décolletage glitters in the strange green and red light. His gaze follows the glitter over a dune of white fur and down the front of her elf dress. She leans forward a little and smiles.

He gestures toward the sliding glass door and indicates that she should follow.

Outside, Santa Claus has put on cat eye sunglasses and lights a cigarette.

She says something that he can't hear.

From another room comes the sounds of stumbling and glasses breaking.

She turns toward the shatter. He follows her sightline to a grove of empty bottles and fragments of cheese spheres on a table in the corner of a kitchen.

And it's Mele Kalikimaka and zones of drunken hula.

He thinks of all the lush and lovely places that may be hidden beneath her dress.

Outside, a Santa Claus hand arrives on someone's ass.

Almost against his will he says: "Grope the pope" and when an interval comes between Xmas songs he is still talking about Pope Joan.

She puts an index finger to his lips.

