



Cobweb Christmas: The Tradition of Tinsel

By Shirley Climo



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All her life, Tante had heard tales about marvelous happenings on Christmas Eve. Animals might speak aloud. Bees might hum carols, or cocks crow at midnight. Tante wished she could witness a bit of Christmas magic, too.

Everybody loves Christmas at Tante's. The old lady decorates a wonderful tree and makes certain to have something for all who come to visit, be it the nearby village children or the shy animals of the pine forest. The only creatures Tante overlooks are the spiders she has swept out of her cottage while cleaning. But the curious spiders want to come inside and see Tante's tree, too. When a midnight visitor lets them into the old lady's home, they unknowingly spin Tante the very gift she has longed for--a gift that has inspired the draping of tinsel on Christmas trees ever since.

This Old World tale about the warmth and wonder of Christmas will leave children enchanted with the magical possibilities of the season.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Youngsters can learn about the all-important tree trimmer in *Cobweb Christmas: The Tradition of Tinsel* (1982) by Shirley Climo, illus. by Jane Manning. Set in Germany, this charming story asserts that curious spiders paying a visit to Grandma's tree are responsible for the tinsel tradition.

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From School Library Journal

reS-Gr 1-A revised and newly illustrated version of a story published in 1982, illustrated by Joe Lasker. An old Bavarian woman does her annual cleaning and then invites children and animals in to admire her beautifully decorated Christmas tree and eat goodies. Only the spiders, which are ushered outside every year, miss out on the festivities, so Kriss Kringle (Christkindel in the earlier edition) lets them into Tante's house as he passes by, and they leave cobwebs all over the tree, which he then transforms into silver and gold-the first tinsel. Climo explains in a note in this edition that the story is based on a folktale whose roots go back more than 200 years. The modest text revisions result in a trimmer, more succinct story, while the new illustrations (still retaining a folkloric, old-fashioned quality) and larger format enhance the book's use in group storytime. Libraries owning the earlier edition will want to keep it while adding this welcome new interpretation of the appealing story.-E. M.

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About the Author

Shirley Climo's love of folklore began in her childhood and has provided the background for many of her children's books, such as *The Korean Cinderella*, *Magic & Mischief: Tales from Cornwall*, *A Treasury of Princesses: Princess Tales from Around the World*, *A Treasury of Mermaids: Mermaid Tales from Around the World*, and *Someone Saw a Spider: Spider Facts and Folktales*, an NCTE Teacher's Choice and Library of Congress Best Children's Book that was originally inspired by her research for *Cobweb Christmas*. Mrs. Climo and her husband live in Los Altos, California.

Jane Manning is the illustrator of dozens of children's books, including the I Can Read! *Books Baa-Choo!* by Sarah Weeks and the *New York Times* bestselling *The Witch Who Was Afraid of Witches* by Alice Low. She currently lives in Deep River, Connecticut.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ivan Caputo:

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