

John Prine, A John Prine Christmas

Pretty paper
Pretty ribbons of blue.

[Spoken:] Man oh man,
I just love Christmas it's just so darn neat.
I kinda wish every day was Christmas,
Except Christmas eve and the Fourth of July.
We wouldn't want to miss out on the fireworks, would we?
When I was a kid, we used to get the Christmas catalog from Montgomery Wards in Chicago.
Sometimes we'd get it as early as late August.
It was the big book of wishes, hopes and desires.
My three brothers and I were allotted twenty-five bucks a piece, including tax.
So I'd make up a different Christmas list every night
From the first of September 'til the twenty-fourth of December.
Matter of fact, let me present you with my Christmas credentials.
When I was three years old, at least that's what my mother told me,
I ate an entire ornament. I ate a big red one, I thought it was an apple.
They kinda freaked out and was gonna take me to the hospital
But they couldn't stop me from laughing so they just left me alone.
So I guess I still got that Christmas in me all the time, you know?

One year, I got a wooden Roly-Poly for Christmas,
You know the things you knock down and they bounce right back up.
They made 'em out of wood back then, that's how old I am.
Nowadays, they make 'em out of plastic.
My mom says, "They just don't make 'em like that anymore."
And I says, "No ma, they don't".

Then there was the year I came home only a day from the army,
From Germany to marry my high school sweetheart on the day after Christmas.
My little brother Billy, who was twelve at the time,
Had just gotten his first job so he was able to afford to buy some Christmas presents
For his brothers and his mom and dad out of his own pocket.
Billy had a job selling subscriptions for the Chicago Tribune.
He told me this guy named Rocky would pick him up in a station wagon,
Him and some other boys, and he'd take 'em out to some strange neighborhood
And drop 'em off and he gave them this whole spiel to give their potential customers.
Supposedly their little brother had won a free trip to our nation's capital Washington, D.C.,
But he couldn't go on the trip if his older brother wouldn't accompany him
So if you would please buy a subscription to the Chicago Tribune then my little brother will be happy
Wow, what a shyster! Some people'll do anything to get to the Whitehouse.

Then there was the year that my mom and dad gave me my first guitar.
Ah man it was gorgeous, I still got the thing. It was a like aqua blue. Kinda dark aqua blue with a chrome
Was a Silvertone from Montgomery Wards. The model was called Kentucky Blue and man when I started
First year so I didn't know how to play it,
I'd just stand in front of the mirror with a string around my neck with that guitar and I'd try to look like
Then my brother Dave taught me a couple of chords,
Now I'm here in your living room singing and talking to you.
It's funny how things work out.

So-a why'n't you go find a stranger and extend your hand to 'em.
If you see somebody looks like they ain't doin' quite as well as you, slip 'em a buck,
'specially if they don't ask for spare change.
Go buy your honey a cuckoo clock or a musical snow shaking water ball,
That when you wind it up it plays,
"I want you, I need you, I love ya with all my heart."
'cause after all, hell man, it's Christmas.

Away in a manger no crib for a bed.
The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky look down where he lay.
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the (1-2) hay.

[Spoken:] Merry Christmas Everybody.