Lovereading4kids.co.uk

Helping you choose books for children

0-5 5-7 7-9 9-12 12+

opening extract from

# The Bloomsbury Christmas Treasury

written by

## Sally Grindley

published by

**Bloomsbury**

All text is copyright of the author and illustrator

please print off and read at your leisure.

# The Reluctant Fairy



When Priscilla was told that she was going to be a Christmas tree fairy, she was very unhappy.

"I don't want to sit amongst a load of prickles for the whole of Christmas," she grumbled. "Why can't I be a flower fairy or a sugar plum fairy?"

"Everyone has to take their turn," said the Queen of the Fairies.

Priscilla stuck out her tongue when the Queen of the Fairies wasn't looking, but she had to do as she was told.

She was taken to a shop and put on a shelf full of Christmas tree fairies. She tried to make herself look as ugly as possible so that nobody would want her, then perhaps she would be sent back home. It didn't work. A little girl came into the shop and pointed to her straight away.

"That one, Mummy," the little girl said. "Can we have the one with the bright red dress?"

"Her face isn't very pretty," the girl's mother said, much to Priscilla's annoyance, but the girl pleaded until her mother gave in.

The little girl skipped all the way home with Priscilla in her hands. She played with her, stretching her legs this way and that, bending her in half and twizzling her head from side to side. Priscilla gave her her worst glare and was relieved when the little girl dropped her on to a chair and ran to help her mother and her brothers decorate the tree. By the time the tree was ready for its fairy, Priscilla was



glad to be placed on top, out of the girl's reach.

"There," said the girl's mother. "All finished. It's a pity that fairy looks so grumpy."

"She'll look happy on Christmas Day," said the little girl.

As soon as they had gone out of the room, Priscilla stretched her wings and shook her legs. "I bet they'd look



grumpy if they were in my place," she grumbled. She looked down through the branches of the tree at the brightly coloured baubles and golden tinsel. "If only I could untie myself, I could have some fun with those," she thought to herself. She pulled at the string then wriggled from side to side. The string felt looser. She wriggled again and it dropped from round her waist to round her knees. "That was easy," she smiled. She twisted this way and that. The string dropped down to her feet. She quickly grabbed hold of a branch because nothing was holding her any more. "Easy-peasy," she grinned. "Watch out baubles, here I come!"

Priscilla scrambled carefully from branch to branch. Every time she reached a bauble she sat on it and rocked backwards and forwards. "Whee!" she cried. She clambered down to a snowman covered in silver foil



and discovered that it was chocolate inside. She took a big bite. "Yummy," she said. She stood next to a glass angel holding a sheet of music and pretended to sing with her. "La, la, la," she sang. She came to a plastic model of Father Christmas in his sleigh and jumped in next to him. "Giddy-up, Rudolph," she yelled.

She was just about to leap on to a flying swan, when she heard a loud THUMP! A cloud of black smoke filled the room. "HO, HO, HO!" a voice boomed. "Mince pies, my favourite!"

"It's Santa!" Priscilla squealed. She was so shocked she couldn't move.

"Did I hear a mouse?" she heard Santa say. A shadow fell across her and a very large finger prodded her shoulder. "Who's this next to me in my sleigh?" he chuckled.

Priscilla looked up into his beaming face.

"Shouldn't you be on the top of the tree?" he asked.

"I was just exploring," said Priscilla nervously.

"Ah, yes, exploring," said Santa. "Something I've done