

## A CUP OF CHRISTMAS TEA



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PW Annex

In rhyming verse, Hegg tells a familiar, uplifting story of the onerous family obligations that often descend around the holidays. The narrator is almost perfectly happy as Christmas approaches, enjoying the "30 days reprieve 'til VISA could catch up with me." Unfortunately, he has received an invitation to tea from his great aunt, and he has no desire to go. He remembers the old woman "as vigorous,/ as funny and as bright," but she recently suffered a stroke, and he thinks it will be depressing to see her. Before long, though, he succumbs to "an acid rain of guilt" and forces himself to go, and the experience is ultimately rewarding. Hegg doesn't employ continuous rhyme or meter, so the writing never becomes overbearing or stilted but rather has a conversational lilt. In its first edition, published in 1982, the book sold more than 1.5 million copies, and this reissue takes the shape of a special gift format that is nearly stocking-size and, with its rich red jacket, almost looks gift-wrapped. The packaging also highlights the Christmas colors in Hanson's fine, minimalist watercolors, which are bright on the golden pages. The beautiful presentation combined with Hegg's simple yet resonant story may help this book draw an even larger readership this time around.

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