

Jewel Christmas

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A tale of old and brave new Christmas
A message of hope in simple verse
Of two dates separated by just a year
A family facing an unexpected fear

In life there is little of certainty
Tax and death, being two out of three
A lifetime spent in avoidance
We seek joy as correspondence

Planning begin several months ahead
To set a theme of joy and be well fed
Much thought is given to this preparation
To contemplate food wine and decoration

But alas the months are stalked by fear
A deadly cancer found in one so near
Focus shifted to medical care
Chemotherapy the cross to bear

With theme selected and menu clear
The Christmas book begun for the year
In page after page of thoughtful text
Festivities planned to be relaxed

And in the ward many a fragile soul
First cycle begins remission its goal
Hopes are high and target set
Alive at Christmas and no regret

Tinsel sought and tree resurrected
Decorations bought and lights are tested
Dress the tree a sight to inspire
The final flourish the fairy on the spire

The days pass slowly the chemo acts
Within the ward we face hard facts
Health's return needs a prayer at mass
Morale raised by the promise of Christmas

In parallel Catherine builds a grotto
Never give up her heartfelt motto



Retains a brave face her head held high
So strong in love he shall not die

Though rain and pain creates a manger
A place of love for a familiar stranger
A shadow of the Man before
Stumbling balding nursed to the door

Christmas passion builds anew
Friends and family all pass through
Immune system at an impasse
Weight and strength cut like grass

Keep the faith and optimism
Anticipate release from the clinical prison
Daily trek to the welcoming ward
Ensure any doubts are never heard

And as the patient fights his war
Those who love and visit suffer more
For them no succour or medication
Instead the lonely pain of dedication

Memories of Christmas past support us all
As tinsel streams across each wall
The grotto grows in gentle nature
A labour of love and rare nurture

So in this tale of parallel paths
A celebration in words for the love of Cath'
A recognition of a troubled time
A jewel of Christmas recorded in rhyme