

Dancing Doll

Monica Raymond

Comic

DOLL: 7 to 12, a girl

BOX: 7 to 12, a boy

DANCE FAIRY: 7 to 12, a girl

The scene takes place on the night before Christmas, or perhaps a birthday. The characters are a DOLL and a wrapped BOX. The DOLL tries to dance, but she can only make pathetic, spastic moves.

DOLL: Wake up! There's something wrong! [Box yawns noisily.] Come on—wake up! There's something wrong. I need to talk to someone or I'll burst!

BOX: Okay, okay—what is it?

DOLL: I'm supposed to be a dancing doll, but I can't dance.

BOX: Did you try?

DOLL: Yes!

BOX: That's the trouble. You shouldn't try.

DOLL: Why not?

BOX: You're a present, right?

DOLL: Yes.

BOX: A present is just supposed to be *present*. If you *try*, that makes you a **FUTURE!!** Hah! Hah!

DOLL: But how can I do it without trying?

BOX: Simple. You just . . .

DOLL: I know, I know—do it!

[DOLL tries to dance. She gets all mixed up and starts going backward.]

BOX: Forwards! Forwards! You're in reverse.

[She tries to go forward. She fails. She falls.]

DOLL: You are so *no help!*

BOX: You probably just need a battery. That's why I don't worry. I know they'll unwrap me and put in my battery and **CAPOW! CHING! VOOM! BLAM BLAM BLAM!** [He makes amazing video-game noises.] I'll be just fine.

DOLL: How do you know?

BOX: [Singing.] 'Cause I've got **FAITH**
Give me **F-A-I**
I've got **FAITH**
And that's the reason why
Add an **H** and **T**
And my new battery

And I'll fly—
Oh yes, I'll fly!

So no need to worry
No need to complain
Wet and dreary
Sitting out in the rain
I'm high and dry
With my F-A-I-
[T-H]
With my F-A-I!

DOLL: But what if they put in a battery and I *still* can't dance?

BOX: Mmm. That would be bad. You might get returned.

DOLL: Returned?

BOX: Yup. Sent back to the store.

DOLL: And then, would they fix me?

BOX: What do you think? [*Muttering to himself.*] Oh yeah, they'll fix you, all right. [*He falls asleep, snores.*]

DOLL: Oh box—oh game, oh whatever you are in your beautiful wrapping paper. I don't want to be returned. I hated that store—always having to look pretty and smile so that someone would buy you. And all the other dolls giving their fake smiley-smiles, too.

[*A twinkly sound. Twinkly lights. The DANCE FAIRY appears in a pink tutu, with a magic wand.*]

DANCE FAIRY: I can help you dance.

DOLL: You can?

DANCE FAIRY: That's right. I can make it so you never need to be returned.

[*The DANCE FAIRY touches DOLL with her magic wand. A twinkly sound. Twinkly lights. Instantly, the DOLL does a complicated and beautiful routine.*]

DOLL: Wow, thank you so much—but who are you?

DANCE FAIRY: I'm the Dance Fairy!

DOLL: Wow, thank you so much, Dance Fairy!

DANCE FAIRY: And now, watch this!

[*The DANCE FAIRY touches the DOLL with her wand. The DOLL does an amazing ballet routine, including pirouettes, arabesques, deep bows, and so on.*]

DOLL: Wow!

DANCE FAIRY: Do you think you could say "Thank you, Dance Fairy" again?

DOLL: Sure! Thank you, Dance Fairy. I'm so happy. Now I know I won't be returned!

DANCE FAIRY: Do you think you could say it again?

DOLL: I guess. [*Hesitating.*] Um, thank you. [*Pause.*] This is creeping me out.

DANCE FAIRY: Do you think you could possibly say "Thank you, Dance Fairy" every single minute of your day? Like when your person takes you off the shelf or

when she puts you back on the shelf or when you are just resting *on* the shelf, or at night when she turns out the light, or in the morning when the sun comes up and the rays touch you—do you think you could possibly say “Thank you, Dance Fairy” every waking moment of your day? And maybe some of the sleeping moments, too?

DOLL: No. I don’t want to say “Thank you, Dance Fairy” every minute.

DANCE FAIRY: But I’m the one. The one who taught you this amazing dance. I’m the one who’s keeping you from being returned.

DOLL: No, I’m sorry. But I can’t. Thank you again for all the amazing steps you showed me. But if I can’t do them on my own, what good are they? If I have to be returned, I’ll be returned.

DANCE FAIRY: Well, if that’s the way you feel about it . . .

[Lights darken. Thunder sounds. The DANCE FAIRY turns and turns until she vanishes in a tornado of a pirouette.]

DOLL: Good-bye, Dance Fairy. *[The Box snores.]* So here I am. All alone. Let’s see what I can do. *[She tries the fancy routines the DANCE FAIRY gave her; but she can only remember a part of them. She’s getting incredibly frustrated. She stops. She waits. She finds her own dance as the sun comes up.]* Wow. Thank you, Sun. *[The Box snores.]* And of course, Box. Thank you, Air. And ground. Even that weird, needy Dance Fairy. Thank you all. Muchisimas gracias. Merci. *[She sings.]*

Merci

Merci

Thank you sky and thank you floor
Everything that came before
Everything that brought this moment
Home to me
Merci, merci

Thank you night
And thank you box
Thank you ringing morning clocks
Sunlight shining light on me
Everything I’m gonna be—
Merci, merci
Merci, merci

It takes a little bit of magic
And a lot of follow-through
To keep feet and fingers dancing
When you don’t know what to do—

But now you do!

So thank you stuck
And thank you scared
And thanks for
Coming unprepared—
This mystery
Merci, merci
Merci, merci

BOX: *[Yawning awake.]* Was that you singing?

DOLL: *[Suddenly shy.]* Mmhm.

BOX: What's up, buttercup? Got the stuff, powder puff? I can't wait! It's almost time. When they put in my battery and I can go POW CACHUFF CACHING VOLLY-OOP SPLAT CACHIZ BOOM!!POW POW POW POW— WOOO-OOP!

DOLL: It turned out I don't need a battery.

[*She dances.*]

LITTLE GIRL: [*Voice from offstage.*] Look, Mom, look! She's dancing!

Different Friends

Paige Steadman

Comic

TAYLOR: 7 to 10, a girl

LEE: 7 to 10, a boy

SUMMER: 7 to 10, a girl

TAYLOR has walked into a new elementary school. LEE is the popular kid. SUMMER is not very popular. TAYLOR has befriended both LEE and SUMMER, but that doesn't mean that LEE and SUMMER get along well. They are on the playground. LEE is bouncing a ball. TAYLOR and SUMMER enter:

TAYLOR: Hi, Lee!

LEE: I didn't say you could bring her.

SUMMER: Fine. I'll go.

TAYLOR: Summer is my friend, too.

LEE: You're my friend.

SUMMER: No, she's my friend.

LEE: She's my friend. You're different.