



DEJA VU by Sherri Turner.

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

Welcome to Stories for Lipreading. If you haven't used our website before, we suggest you look at our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this magical story, which is called 'Déjà Vu' by Sherri Turner.

Déjà Vu by Sherri Turner.

It all seemed so familiar: the bushy tree, the presents wrapped in red and gold, the twinkling fairy lights. Holly laughed.

Of course it did. Kevin always picked the fattest tree, he knew she loved red and gold and they'd had those lights for years. It was an almost perfect replica of their last Christmas.

Still, she had the strangest feeling that Kevin would offer her a sherry, knowing she hated the stuff.

"Fancy a Christmas Eve sherry?"

Holly jumped.

"Hey, sorry. Just a joke. How about this instead?" Kevin reached behind the sofa where he'd hidden the champagne.

"I knew you were going to do that," Holly said. "Merry Christmas Eve."

"Getting predictable in my old age?" Kevin joked.

"I expect it's déjà vu. I am pretty tired with extra shifts at work."

"How are the old dears?"

"Don't call them that. They're lovely."

"Sorry," Kevin said. "I'm jealous because they get to spend Christmas with you."

"We've got tonight," Holly said, "and dinner tomorrow when I get back. Mrs Wade said she had a special present for us."

"Witchy Wade? Careful she doesn't put a spell on you!"

"She's just an old lady the kids made up stories about. Though maybe she could bewitch you to cook dinner while I put my feet up..."

"Message received," said Kevin, and Holly lay back on the sofa and closed her eyes.

It all seemed so familiar. Holly laughed. Of course it did. A fat tree, red and gold presents and the ancient fairy lights. But how did she know that Kevin would offer her sherry, then bring out champagne?

"Hi, darling! Fancy a sherry?"

Holly jumped.

"Sorry. How about this?" Kevin reached for the champagne.

"I knew you would do that," Holly said. "But I am tired. Mrs Wade has a special present for us. Maybe it's a spell so you'll cook dinner..." She lay back and closed her eyes.

It all seemed so familiar. Too familiar. This wasn't déjà vu. The tree, the presents, the lights – they weren't similar to before; they were exactly the same.



And Kevin would do the sherry and champagne thing, they'd talk about the home, he'd cook dinner and... it never got past her taking a nap. What happened next?

It all went as she'd predicted, but when Kevin left, Holly didn't close her eyes. She sat still and focussed on the room. There was something she was missing, something that made this version of Christmas different.

There! There it was - a sudden spark, a gust of smoke – the fairy lights!

“Kevin!” she shouted. “Call the fire brigade! And get out of the house!”

Holly arrived for work at the care home on Christmas Day with an enormous poinsettia.

“Holly!” Mrs Wade called. “Did you get my present?”

“Yes,” she said. “I believe I did. Thank you.”

“Christmas wouldn't be the same without you, dear,” Mrs Wade said. And the twinkle in her eye reminded Holly of the tiny lights on a Christmas tree.