

Excerpt from my essay "Klutzin' Around the Christmas Tree"
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I waited until the family was asleep before lugging the Christmas boxes from the attic. I envisioned their joy when they awakened to a classic holiday atmosphere: fire crackling in the fireplace; baked cookies perfuming the air; twinkling lights illuminating the living room. All completed by me, the klutz.

Four hours and a scratched hand later (I'd mistaken my cat's ear for a Christmas ornament) my living room resembled a crime scene. Boxes occupied the sofa, beaded garland hung from the ceiling fan, and only the lower half of the eight foot tree was decorated.

"It's for my family, gotta get it done" I chanted, ignoring the searing pain in my calves as I stretched to hang a glittered snowflake.

"The same people who allow you to butt-dip because they leave the toilet seat up at night," my inner voice pointed out.

Still, it was the holiday season, and my brood would have the childish wonder and joy a decorated tree brings. The only thing unfinished was the top.