

The Christmas Tree and the Wedding

author: Fyodor Dostoevsky

2026-06

Synopsis

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"The Christmas Tree and the Wedding" is a bittersweet story written in 1848, the year of revolutions throughout Europe. The story has an undercurrent reflecting the tumultuous changes of that year. The narrator, attending a Christmas party with the Christmas tree referenced in the title, sees the Guest of Honor take an undue interest in a young girl, the daughter of his host. He orders the girl's friend, a young boy, out of the room, but the girl keeps him close. For this, the Guest of Honor punishes the boy by not recommending him for a position the host has tried to obtain for him. Some time later, the narrator sees this awful, rotund, rather grotesque and bestial man marrying the same young girl he had seen at the Christmas party. He sees her sadness, resignation, and unhappiness in being essentially sold to the grotesque. A haunting story with no final redemption, this is Dostoevsky at his short-story best.

Reader's comments

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