TORI'S STORY

by Torry Martin

Adventures in ODYSSEY

A New Tree-dition



"Go stand in the corner."

"But, Dad—"

"Now," he said firmly.

I felt so embarrassed. I hadn't been told to stand in a corner since I was 8 years old. And to think, this all started over a Christmas tree.

We never had a Christmas tree in Japan. Correction, not a real one. We had an artificial tree, but it never smelled the way Christmas should smell. Since pine trees are plentiful in Odyssey, I thought that would change this year. If only I could convince my dad.

Dads are tricky—especially mine. I can ask him for something once, but only once. Then I have to wait for his answer. No nagging. No begging. That means I have to be subtle with follow-up hints.

Sometimes I take things just one hint too far . . . like this time.

Hint 1—Put a Christmas tree-shaped bookmark in Dad's Bible.

Hint 2—Set the CD player to blast "O Christmas Tree" when Dad started his car.

Hint 3—Decorated his car air freshener with green glitter. (Although the glitter did look beautiful floating in the air when he turned on the heater.)

Then it all went wrong.

I thought it'd be a good idea to turn my head into a Christmas tree. First, Olivia sprayed my hair green with washout color spray. Then we meticulously pinned it onto a foam cone. Finally, we decorated my hair with ornaments and lights. Olivia even tried to make a star on top. I had an extension cord running down my sweater, so I could only walk a few feet. It looked great!

I plugged myself in and stood in the center of the room. As soon as my parents walked in after work, I yelled, "Hairy Christmas!"

Pretty funny, right? Wrong. Dad immediately sent me to the corner.

"I think Tori should stand by the front window where the neighbors can see," my mother suggested.

Was this some kind of public shaming?

Dad unplugged my hair lights. "You heard your mother," he said.

I trudged to the living room. Dad plugged my extension cord into the closest outlet. Once again, my hair glowed, but I didn't feel bright and cheery. I hid my face in my hands, hoping none of my friends would recognize me.

"Oh, and make sure you open the curtains," Dad said.

Blushing redder than the ornaments in my hair, I opened the curtains. Through the window, I could see our car—with a real Christmas tree tied to the roof.

"We got a tree?!" I screamed in delight.

My father smiled. "I thought it would look best in the corner. But your mother's right; it'll be perfect where you're standing now."

"Go on, Tori," Mom said with a smile. "Help your brother unload."

"I'd love to!" I said. "Umm, can somebody unplug me?"