



Birthday Hijack

JO is 13 years old and has a birthday that falls on Christmas Day. Here Jo describes to a friend why it's not a good day to have a birthday.

JO: (Slumped on the sofa) | can't believe how unlucky I am that I was born on Christmas Day. Christmas Day! There are 364 other days in the year, and my parents choose to bring me into the world on that one. A day when everyone is so consumed with opening their own presents, stuffing their faces with turkey, pulling crackers and falling asleep in front of the TV. Why would anyone be interested in celebrating someone's birthday when there's so much else to do?

(Gets up and starts pacing)

Do you know how many times I have heard the phrase, 'I am so sorry, I forgot it was your birthday!?' Nobody remembers to buy me a card and if I do happen to get one or two, there's nowhere to put them because the house is stuffed full of Christmas cards. And what's the idea of getting a 'joint Christmas and birthday present'? I mean, what is that? Doesn't everyone else get separate Christmas and birthday gifts? Don't even get me started on the time my so-called best friend gave me a book wrapped half in Christmas paper and half in birthday paper!

(Getting worked up)

Do you know how many times my parents have forgotten to get me a birthday cake? Being given a lighted match stuck in a mince pie is not really the same thing is it? And I've never had a birthday party because all my friends are too busy celebrating Christmas with their families. The trouble with families is that they aren't used to being cooped up in the house with each other all day, so by Christmas Day evening, everyone is grumpy and bickering with one another. Not exactly the time to start a birthday bash.

(Sits)

I seriously think my mum should have realized what she was letting me in for, and just held me in for another few hours. Just until a minute after midnight would have been enough. Then I could have had the 26th December to myself. But no! Apparently | was 'the best Christmas present she ever had'. I was cheated! Cheated!

By Caroline Petherbridge