

Ding Dong Merrily

by Lee Benoit



"Ding Dong Merrily" is the first in the Paulo & Preston series about a cheeky singing sub and his world-weary Dom. See the end of the story for other titles in the series.

Amid the clatter of music stands adjusting, fake-books flipping open, and folding chairs unfolding, Hal heard Paulo's sweet tenor singing.

"Angels frothing on my thigh, sweetly stinging bites and pains..."

Other guys snickered and there was a smattering of applause, but Hal stared at the dusty black and yellowed white of the old piano's keys and resolutely ignored his friend.

Which, of course, the little shit took as a challenge. Over the background noise of the other guys warming up, Paulo's next volley lilted:

*"O! My master looked coldly out
O'er his wintry dungeon
Bottom boys lay round about
Lubed and stretched and open
Brightly shone the stripes that night
Master's crop it was cruel
When one poor trainee came from fright
All bound cocks did droo-oo-oo!"*

By the end, Jim and Alejo had hoisted Paulo up onto the makeshift stage, and Paulo took his applause amid the stacks of folding chairs and plywood tabletops. Hal sighed and stood to distribute this week's sheet music.

"Requests!" Paulo shouted.

Oh, no, Hal thought, making his way toward the stage.

The calls came fast and thick.

"He came upon a midnight clear!"

"We three kings, oriented to arse!"

"O come all ye faithful!"

Paulo inclined his head like a stage diva and launched into an improvised "Little Drummer Boy." Hal kept quiet as long as he could, aware the guys would love an outburst from him almost as much as Paulo would. But when Paulo trilled, "*I have no gift for him, pa-RUMP-pa-pum-pum, except my bum,*" Hal had had it.

"We are rehearsing in a *church*, for Chris...mas sake! Do you really want to offend people that badly?"

"Nice save." Paulo looked triumphant. "How about this, then?"

And he belted out his version of "The Holly and the Ivy," which included a BDSM verse Hal knew for a fact reflected Paulo's fantasy rather than reality.

*"Sir Hollis and boy Davey
When their lust is full blown
At a leather bar sporting massive wood
Davey swallows Hollis' crown
O the rising of the spunk
And the pistoning of hips
Davey plays Hollis' mighty organ
To raucous cheering of the bears."*

"Still offensive," Hal sang back, painfully aware of how prissy he sounded.

"To whom?" Paulo demanded from his stage.

"Um, pagans?" came a tentative voice from the doorway.

Oh, fuck, please don't let him be from the rectory, Hal thought as he approached the newcomer.

"I'm looking for the Sister City Gay Men's Chorus?"

"You found it," Hal said, extending his hand. "Hal Allred, director."

"Arlie Tremayne. I think Father Sheridan called about me?"

"He sure did. Said you were the real deal."

"Don't know what you'd want with a bunch of old queens like us, then," Paulo called from the stage.

"Speak for yourself," came more than one voice from the ersatz audience. "*I'm* in my prime."

"Sorry about them," Hal said, drawing Arlie into the room, unaccountably reluctant to let go his hand. He busied himself gathering sheet music and rehearsal and performance schedules for his new member, trying not to be distracted by wide blue eyes. But he *was* distracted, and when Paulo shouted, "Can I at least sing *secular* holiday songs?" Hal simply waved his hand.

"Let him blow, let him blow, let him blow" drifted right over him, and he was even able to ignore "I saw Daddy kissing Santa Claus," before he noticed Arlie standing with his head down, an exaggerated expression of concentration on his youthful face as he examined the music for this week's rehearsal.

Hal caught himself staring at Arlie's ears, wondering if they'd steam if they got any redder, when the boy looked up at him. "Is it always like this?"

"It's their first season with a new director. I think they're testing me."

"I've never heard 'All I want for Christmas' quite like that before," Arlie stammered, then hid his face again, but not before Hal glimpsed a shy little smile curving those angelic lips.

Wrenching his attention away from his newest tenor, Hal tuned in.

Paulo had reached a crescendo.

*"All the Daddies pause and stare at me
Lashed to this cross tight as I can be
Yes I begged my master to display me publicly
But he left me bereft of the final touch, bare as can be*

*All I want for Christmas
Is my penis sheath
My penis sheath
See my penis sheath...*

Everybody!!"

And as the members of the chorus lifted their voices in praise of genital restraints, Hal sank to the piano bench, let his head fall onto the keyboard, clanging discordantly. He was never going to survive his first rehearsal, let alone his first concert season.

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