

**J** is for **Christmas jumper**. Formerly an embarrassing, cheesy gift knitted by an ancient, palsied aunt. Now a hip, "ironic" garment. So much less fun.

**K** is for **Kelly Bronze**, the sought-after turkey that sounds like a stripper.

**L** is for **lights**. How long exactly does it take to find the one fused bulb among the 103 lights on your tree? That's what the 12 days of Christmas are for, silly.

**M** is for **Midnight Mass** in a chilly church, filled with drunks straight out of the pub and surprised, as we are, by a longing for something spiritual.

**N** is for the **liquid larynx** of **Nat King Cole**: "Yuletide carols being sung by a choir, Merry Chriss-mass..."

**O** is for the **Orange** believed to be secreted like a giant sixpenny bit inside Heston's mythical Christmas pudding, which is said to be available every year, but never is. Also, orange is the colour of last-minute self-tan applied to improve appearance for Office Party. Now you, too, look like **Kelly Bronze**.

**P** is for **Panto**. A form of torture akin to waterboarding. Also Peace on Earth. Good luck with that, folks.

**Q** is for **Queen's Speech**. Unthinkable without it.

**R** is for **Regifting**. Euphemism for the ill-

mannered passing on of unwanted present to someone else. Can backfire if you return gift to original giver.

**S** is for **socks**. Much derided, dull present that everyone is actually really pleased to get.

**T** is for **trifle and tippie**. "Oh, go on, then."

**U** is for **unsuccessful attempt** at Mary Berry's finest white chocolate cheesecake. I didn't know you needed full-fat cream cheese so I used yogurt, OK?

**V** is for **vomit** after grandchildren consume chocolate liqueurs intended for grandparents.

**W** is for **wrapping paper**. Never enough, no matter how much you buy, and always filched by younger members of the family.

Bloody glitter everywhere. Who's got **MY SELLOTAPE?**

**X** is **NOT** for Xmas. Spell. It. Out.

**Y** is for **Yule log**. Made and decorated by Himself, the Giacometti of chocolate icing, and no one is allowed to touch it, let alone eat it. (True story.)

**Z** is for **Zzzzzzzzzz**. Same time next year.

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