



# The Little Blue Store with No Shelves



## A Christmas Story

Once upon a time, in the little village of Suttons Bay, there lived a little blue store.

For 150 long years the little blue store sat at the end of the main street and watched the village grow. The little blue store was always a store of some kind for as long as he could remember. Sometimes clothes for the winter, sometimes beautiful antiques. The little blue store liked being a store. It liked all the nice people who looked after him over the years and all the lovely people who came to buy things.

But the little blue store was sad. All the other stores looked so much happier. They had so many more people in them and they were looked after so nicely. You see, in all that time the little blue store had a special secret wish.

The little blue store wanted nothing more in the whole world than to be a bookstore! A brilliant bookstore! Especially a brilliant bookstore at Christmastime! Full of all the characters ever created in all the stories ever told. Sad stories, happy stories. Stories for children, stories for grown-ups. Books with pictures, books with lots of words about amazing adventures and books with really big print so Grandpa can read them. Brilliant new books! The little blue store wanted to have them all.

One day just as the little blue store was about to be 150 years old, new people came to take care of him and he was very excited indeed. What was all this? They washed his walls and cleaned his windows and put up pretty lights for Christmas. He hadn't felt so fresh and crisp since he was a hundred!

And best of all – dare he say it? Oh it was too exciting! He was finally going to be a bookstore! A brilliant bookstore! At Christmas! He was so happy he could cry with joy. His special secret wish was about to come true.

But then, Oh No. Terrible news. Something had gone wrong. The men who were going to put in his shiny new shelves for all his lovely new books couldn't find the strong, sturdy wood they needed. They searched everywhere but could only find feeble wood that just wasn't strong enough to hold all his new books. This surprised the little blue store as the beautiful village of Suttons Bay was surrounded by trees, and there were lots of men who lived there who had lots of tools and who probably knew how to put up shelving.

But it didn't matter. There was nothing he could do. There was nothing his new owners could do. Everyone was very sad. No one could get the sturdy wood in time and the little blue store wouldn't have shelves for all the new books.

He was sad and his owners were sad. The little blue store wouldn't be a bookstore at Christmas.

Then, as often happens at Christmas, something magical happened. The new owners looked around the inside of the little blue store and said to themselves. Who needs shelves! We can put books on tables, and boxes, and desks and in the window. Special Christmas books for the lovely people of Suttons Bay. We might not have room for all our books now, but we can still have Christmas books and Christmas things and we can still give the little blue store his Christmas wish!

The little blue store was so happy. He knew that his sturdy shelves would come along later, and for his 150th birthday he would finally be a proper Brilliant bookstore. But this special Christmas, even with no shelves, he'd still be a bookstore. He knew he was a bookstore and the people shopping knew he was a bookstore and that's all that mattered.

The wonderful people in the lovely village of Suttons Bay would watch him grow into a magnificent bookstore, the type he always dreamed about. Full of all the characters ever created in all the stories ever told. Sad stories, happy stories. Stories for children, stories for grown-ups. Books with pictures, books with lots of words about amazing adventures and books with really big print so Grandpa can read them. Brilliant new books!

The little blue store was very happy. Finally he was going to get his special secret wish. Some say that in the dark snowy nights of that December, when the little blue store was being made all ready for his first Christmas as a bookstore, that if you looked very carefully, and made sure he couldn't see you looking, he was smiling.

And that's the story of how the little blue store with no shelves got to be a bookstore at Christmas.



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