

Whoever says that scenery can't be admired at night? Down to the left, Ascott nestles with another long glow-worm stopped / parked / moored / tethered / privatised by the level crossing. Minutes later it can be seen again, passing silently through Bruern down to the right, it's passengers thinking little of my world outside.

Stow perches on distant slopes, but the way is down, contented, warm and damp. The final plunge past the poultry farm, with the flour mill's urban facade contradicting a speckled village that is strung loosely around its defiantly bright Christmas Tree, Christ's birth shall not be dimmed.

And so back home, counting my blessings; as one hymn writer once wrote: "Blessings all mine and ten thousand beside". An hour of uninterrupted karma, seeing sights appreciated by so few, in conditions so usually decried. Mine was the privilege.

Luxuriating in a hot shower while listening to Wagner then down to tea in front of an unchallenging video, a restful evening stretching in front of me. A final wipe round the plate and coffee was called for. "How about a slice of your delicious Christmas Cake?" I smile winsomely. "Of course" she answered with a glint in her eye, "My lovely fruit cake".

CINDERELLA – our Village Pantomime

The stage is still, the hall is silent,
 The Panto's over, performance done.
 Lines that were learnt can now be forgotten.
 The writer is thrilled, the Producer relieved,
 This season is finished, the audience pleased.
 They cheered and clapped at Cinders and Buttons,
 But whistled and booed at both Ugly Sisters.
 We had lady bikers and some agile dancers,
 A shapely Dandini and small cuddly Beasties.
 The Baron and his wife were all well supported,
 By lesser known stars in all their small parts.
 During the break, the raffle was drawn,
 Mince pies were served and drinks dispensed,
 And all who attended thought it money well spent.
 'Twas a lot of hard work, but we all had fun.
 A good sum was raised for our new Village Hall.
 Thanks to all who took part and helped with it all,
 I expect that next year we'll do it again.
 The Panto has ended.

Anon.