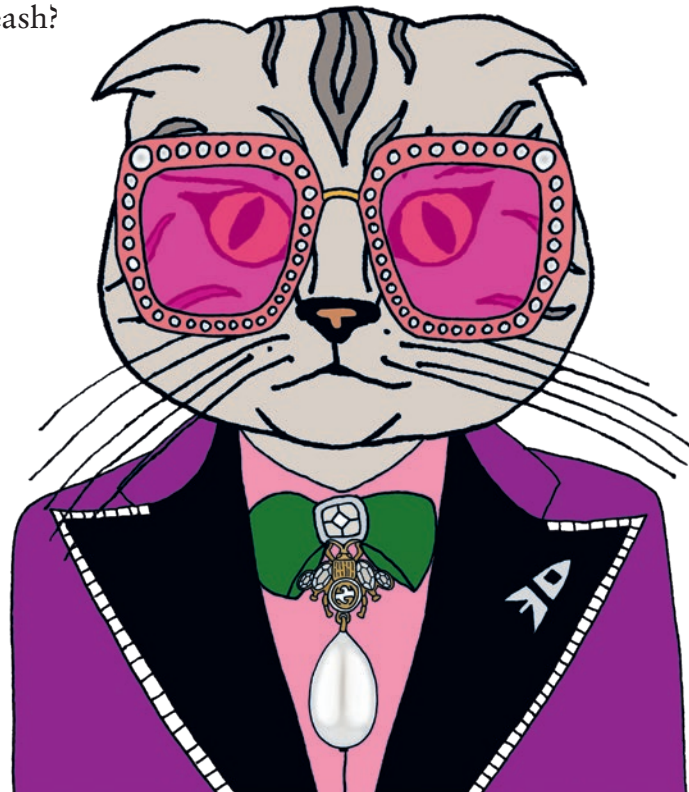


Now is falling and silly season is upon us. Off to a very flamboyant evening of carols by candlelight, what could be more festive! I'm sporting my Christmas jumper, but I draw the line at the red nose the kids wanted me to wear – I'm a cat, not a novelty reindeer. Everyone is full of mulled wine and song – it makes the heart sing. All the family friends are here, blasting out the final chorus of 'O Come All Ye Faithful'. Elton was on the piano, of course, leading us seamlessly from the carols into the classics. I was pride of place atop the Steinway, conducting the merry crowd like Santa's little helper...

Oh God, who let Rollo off his leash?
The mince pies!



"Simply having a wonderful Christmas time..."

When I hear people say they prefer giving presents to receiving them, I'm immediately suspicious. Christmas shopping, is there anything more dire? The stores are heaving, the traffic is glacial, and you end up splashing the cash on people you really don't have time for. I mean, what on earth am I meant to get Smartie – a guide to living with an inferiority complex? Actually, that would be a rather good present... As for Rollo, he'll be lucky if he even gets a sack of coal.

Urgh, St James is at a standstill, I ask the driver to take me to Liberty – it's a smash-and-grab job and then a much-needed cocktail!

