



Santa Tease
By
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Santa Tease

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DEDICATION/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
To my Family, Friends, and Fans

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Chapter 1

Manda Staver shoved the car door open and stepped out onto the concrete driveway. Moving quickly around the vehicle she removed two full paper shopping bags from the front seat of her Mustang. Pushing the door closed with her foot she shifted the bags into a workable situation, and then hurried up the sidewalk. The door of Tommy Carl's recreation room was standing open. Striding inside she hurried toward the small kitchen area on the side of the cavernous room, intending to relieve her arms of the burdens. Tommy's sister, Terry, hurried across the room to help, reaching the table at the same time as Manda. Taking one of the bags from her arm Terry settled it on the table. Manda sighed heavily from relief as the weight left her arm, and then placed her sack on the table.

The music was playing softly in the background, because Terry preferred noise when working. The room was cheerfully decorated with streamers, garland, and holly leaves with red berries. Terry had arrived at lunchtime, and they had been working on preparations since. She had remained to continue working, while Manda went to the store to fetch the perishable items. Removing the meat, fruit, and cheese platters from the brown paper bags Manda sat them onto the tablecloth. Standing to the side Terry moved the items away to make room for the next deposit.

"Terry, I rested while riding in the car. You sit and rest awhile. If you are too exhausted to enjoy the party tonight then there is no need to have it. The whole idea is pleasurable companionship." A splash of freckles across her cheeks and nose made Terry feel it was necessary to cover what she considered a blemished complexion with foundation and rouge. Her deeply blushed cheeks complimented her burgundy hair. The same shade of lipstick as the rouge that graced her cheekbone darkened her pale lips to a lush red. Envy tugged at Manda's emotions. Her own pale hair, lightly tanned complexion, and navy eyes faded into nothing when she was with Terry. When away from her friend, she felt like an attractive woman, but Terry made her face the fact that she was merely average.

Crushing her present envy beneath the weight of a long friendship, she refused to allow the wayward emotions to destroy her evening. She loved her friend and wouldn't allow insecurities to spoil her evening. The Christmas party was an annual event for the friends to gather and celebrate. Tommy provided the location and everyone pitched in to purchase all the supplies. The

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party grew larger each year as new friends were added to the group. The men took turns playing Santa and passing out the gifts. Normally the only gifts exchanged were for the person you were dating. It was a private joke that the gift exchange put a burden on no one except Tommy, as he kept a harem, which was why he provided the location and gave no gifts.

Moving to the refrigerator she removed a bottle of water, spun off the lid, and then drank a sip to wet her throat, but mostly she was distracting her mind from the envious feeling.

"Charlie Towns said Al Gabe is going to be Santa this year."

She smiled as Terry was sitting on the loveseat facing the kitchen area watching her.

"Really, it will be amusing to see him with a padded belly, white hair and beard." Silently she contained her cry of joy, Al was coming. He had been away for several months working. Working as a bridge architect sometimes forced him to travel the country. It was a plush job, but he had worked hard to achieve the training and skills necessary for his trade. "You know, they may not have a suit with shoulders wide enough for Al."

Terry laughed, "Well then he shall have to go without the coat, and with luck his shirt too."

Manda's mouth fell open and her heart skipped a beat over the idea of Al running around all night without his shirt, displaying that muscled body. He wasn't bulky, but his muscles were predominant enough to define his chest above a lean waist and hips. "Yes that would be interesting," she managed to say. Licking her lips she moved to the counter, and arranged the packages of snacks she had brought for the party.

"Well, I'm going to run and take a hot shower. I'll come back and take over while you dress."

"Thanks." Breathing a sigh of relief she was glad to have the room to herself for a few minutes. She had to get a hold on her emotions, if she was going to spend an evening in the same room with Al. Moving to the fridge, she removed a decanter of chilled wine, and poured herself a glass. Her hands were trembling. She had suppressed her feeling for him, she could continue to do so. One day a man would come along that would absorb all of her attention, and then Al would no longer be a problem.

She gulped down the wine, then inhaled and blew out a few slow breaths to calm down.

The party guests began arriving, and Terry returned to greet and meet, while Manda ran into the shower to refresh, and change into her party clothes. She had chosen a cute little pleated hot pink number made of jersey material with white inside the pleats for contrast, with the hem ending at her fingertips. The matching blouse had pleated sleeve accents, and was trimmed with white

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lace around the square neckline. The outfit caressed her curves as she moved, making her feel alluring. Days like today when she was feeling a little envious, anything that helped her feel attractive was welcome.

She laid her clothing on the bench seat against the wall, and stepped into the shower. She could already hear the thumping noises coming from the speaker in the rec. room. Humming, she washed quickly. Wrapped in a towel she stepped from the shower and dried. When she began dressing she couldn't find her panties. A tiny white satin thong was lying on the floor beside the seat where her clothing had been. Frowning, she wondered if she had picked the thong up by mistake while packing. Stuffing her dirty clothing into her bag, she shifted things around, looking for the panties at the bottom. Failing to have results she lifted the panties from the floor. She knew they didn't belong to her because the store tag hadn't been removed, showing the size, which happened to be her own. Although the price had been removed when the purchase was made she knew the store and the normal prices. She whistled in appreciation of the posh purchase.

She hadn't worn any underwear beneath her slacks coming over, but the skirt was short, because of dancing she needed to know there was something under it to feel confident. Tilting her head she considered the thong she had found on the floor. She couldn't go into the party without anything on beneath the skirt, with typical luck someone would knock her down and the skirt would fly up. Someone had paid a pretty penny for it, and now it was hers, because she certainly wasn't going to return it after wearing. Removing the tag she tossed it into the trash. "Oh well, if they belonged to one of Tommy's girlfriends, she has just lost a thong." Slipping the thong on, she giggled, thinking of her new boyfriend Mark. His reaction, should he discover she wore so little beneath her skirt, would be priceless. "The night is off to a good start." Drawing the strings over her hips she admired the fit in the mirror. It looked good on her body, too bad Mark and she weren't on intimate terms, but their relationship seemed to have stalled at the sweet kiss stage.

Mark Abraham and she had started dating when she had stopped dating Paul Dark. Mark had been there in a snap asking her out, eager for her to agree. She didn't usually date someone new immediately after a parting; she liked to mellow between failed relationships and let her ego rejuvenate. But Mark's desperate expression had softened her heart, and she had agreed. He was a sweet man, and she needed to let him down easy, because it just wasn't working between them. Only she didn't want to hurt him, nor leave him alone at Christmas, or immediately after. Sighing, she accepted the fact she would have to wait until mid January before she could show him to the door. "You are such a soft hearted sap," Manda told the reflection of her oval face. Applying fresh deep pink lipstick, she puckered, and blew a kiss with the bowed mouth to the reflection.

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Stepping back from the mirror she inspected herself, smoothing her blouse over her flat stomach. Her waist was small but the rounded curve of her buttocks, and the full line of her breasts gave her body curves. Approving her appearance, she turned in a circle making her mid-thigh skirt flare out in a small umbrella shape.

As she really hadn't been in the mood to start a serious relationship with anyone new, she didn't see the harm in being nice to Mark for awhile longer. It wasn't as if she had anyone she wished to be with at present, and besides Mark was a good companion.

Smoothing her skirt over her hips Manda quit the bathing room, and strolled down the hall toward the rec. room where the party was already starting to get loud. A smile on her face, she felt the hem of her skirt bumping against her, cupping beneath her buttocks as she moved.

"Umm, you are looking good." A deep male timber that she recognized as belonging to Al spoke behind her. Twisting she glanced down the hall behind her. Dressed in a red suit trimmed with white, his short powdered black hair was his concession to the costume. He had a handsome smooth face, with rounded baby cheeks, and a straight nose. A sprig of hair curling over his brow above slashing black eyebrows added to his adorable appeal. His beard shadowed his square, smooth shaven jaw. Long dark lashes surrounding his eyes that sparkled with merriment made them the focus point her gaze was drawn to. He had a lovely, masculine, pale pink mouth that looked so soft she longed to kiss, and feel it against her skin. She had forgotten how many nights she had lain awake imagining kissing that mouth, imagining the feel of it brushing against her skin. How many times had she masturbated dreaming that those lips were suckling her nipples or clit? She didn't like to remember the details afterward, because she tried to pretend that each time was the first experience. Her shattering climaxes were the direct effect of those repeated first experiences. If she ever did have the opportunity to explore his lovemaking she didn't know if she would be able to resist. It was the God's truth that she wanted him in her bed, but she also wanted to keep him in her life. If that meant keeping Al at a distance then that was what she needed to do.

In his presence she couldn't think of those intimate moments she mentally shared with him. It took all of her wits to keep the meetings casual and lighthearted. She was tempted to plant a big Christmas kiss on him to discover his reaction. Tempted, but unwilling to risk their friendship. If she lost that then she wouldn't have any moments with him, that was the one thing she knew she couldn't bear.

"Al, great to see you. What are you doing in here?" Stopping she twisted to face him then hurried forward to give him a hug. Squeezing him around the waist she laid her head on his chest, and gazed up at him then chuckled. "Sorry Santa, I got a little carried away." His seductive aroma mingled with her breath,

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and it touched the sensual part of her excited body. As usual, the region around her heart clenched with longing when around him. And as usual she couldn't have him. Clinging to her smile, she gazed at him.

"Get carried away all you want it's all right by me, everyone loves me this time of year," he playfully responded, squeezing her gently to his chest with his hands flattened against her back. "What would you like Santa to bring you this year little girl?"

A wide grin spread her lips, she rose up on tiptoes to whisper in his ear, "Hot delicious sex." Seeing him made her feel wicked, and slightly giddy, or she would never have said such an intimate thing to him.

He chuckled. "I'll be happy to do what I can to assure that you receive satisfaction."

What am I doing? Why am I trying to make him think of me in a sexual way, when I need to keep things light and friendly? Closing her eyes against the pain of longing she murmured, "Thanks Santa, I hope I can do something to please you also." Releasing his waist Manda turned, and strolled down the hall at his side, his arm around her waist, and her hand holding onto his back.

"Look who I found," she announced to the room filled with guests, as they stepped through the doorway into the rec. room. Everyone exclaimed, and rushed forward to greet Santa.

"This is your show." Manda slipped from his grasp, and made her way through the crowd to the open area behind her huddled friends. Terry was holding a glass before her mouth and snickering when she walked up. "You should have seen the look on Mark's face when you entered with Al in your arms. Are you trying to chase him away?"

"He wasn't in my arms. Where is Mark?" Scanning the crowd she searched for his sandy brown hair. Mark was her height and difficult to spot in the crowd.

"Over there greeting Al. I guess an old friendship is more important than a new girlfriend." Terry was sounding decidedly catty.

"Hey! What did I do to deserve that dig?" Confused, she looked at Terry, wondering what was spurring her anger. The frolic taking place on the opposite side of the room was forgotten.

"Mark is a great guy, you shouldn't be hanging on other guys when you are dating him," she scolded. Lifting her glass to her lips Terry didn't turn to face her. "He deserves better treatment from you."

"It was just a friendly hug." Smoothing her blouse, she could still feel Al's hand on her waist. It was like she was brushing her fingers over the lingering ghost of his hands.

"Tell that to Mark, not me." Facing the crowd, although Terry didn't look her way, Manda sensed her friend's animosity.

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"Sounds like I needed to justify myself to you too." Turning she walked to the table and poured herself a fresh glass of wine. They were using plastic glasses, so she used a magic marker to write her name on the side of the glass. Smoldering with righteous anger over being scolded for greeting Al like a friend, she leaned against the counter and drank the wine, watching the other cheerful expressions in the room. Spotting Mark, she took a healthy swig from the glass, replaced it on the table, and then went to greet her date.

"Hi." Manda pecked him on the cheek. "Merry Christmas."

He chuckled. "You are in a friendly mood, did you start drinking early?"

"Just a little to relax me." Frowning she wondered if he was going to start lecturing her about drinking now, first it had been exercising. She wasn't a heavy drinker, but she did drink at social gatherings like tonight and he knew it.

"How do you like Al's get-up?"

Shifting her gaze she took her first good look at Santa's clothing. He wasn't wearing a beard, but he did have on the jolly hat with a white puffball on the end. His coat was a lightweight fiberfill material trimmed in white, but hanging open to reveal a red silk shirt beneath. His pants were made of soft gabardine and showed the bulge at his crotch. Quickly she shifted her gaze away. "Great costume. You think he had it made special?"

"Sure, how else would he find something to fit so well?"

"True. Would you like to eat?" Should she explain why she had hugged Al to Mark? She decided against it. After all Al had been her friend for a long time, if Mark was curious about her relationship with Al then he should ask.

They moved to the refreshment table and filled their plates with finger foods, then went to sit in chairs along the wall to eat. Groups had started dancing. Tommy was playing DJ; he had prepared the music to be upbeat one song and slow the next, as the professionals did that he knew.

After eating they danced, then started mingling with the other guests. By then Manda had time to get over being scolded, and was having a good time. Mark stopped to talk to Al, and she moved on to speak to one of her coworkers that she had invited into their gang a few months ago. Sally had fit in perfectly as Manda had known she would. Now Sally was Tommy's favorite of his many girlfriends.

A hand touched her on the back. "Dance with me?"

Twisting, she smiled up at Al. "What would Mrs. Claus say?"

"She told me to ask. She said I wasn't being social enough. Although I imagine the truth is, her feet are aching from my tromping feet."

A grin spreading her lips, she said, "Oh, well we mustn't disappoint her." Mentally she shrugged. *What could it hurt? It was a fast song. It's not as though she was going to be in his arms.* They started across the room, unfortunately Mark stopped them.

"I'm going for a quick run in Al's car, do you want to come?"

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"I promised Al I would dance." The music was already going, and they needed to reach the floor before the song changed. Tommy had the whole evening programmed so that he didn't need to worry over each song. He merely checked on it occasionally.

"I'll be back soon," Mark promised.

"Sure."

Turning he moved away through the crowd. They started across the room toward the dance area, but as they arrived the song ended and a slow song started. *Oh my! Dancing in Al's arms. What a treat. No I mustn't think that way. He is hands off. Merely a friend.* She couldn't help being excited over the prospect of Al holding her against his body. Smiling she moved into his arms. Al had never been anything but kind toward her. Had he shown an inclination to make their friendship into more, she would have considered it, but she would have been forced to say no. Losing a good friend for a short fling would be total stupidity, and she tried not to be a foolish female.

"I got scolded for entering the room with my arm around you, so we need to keep some distance between us." She resisted as he attempted to draw her close.

Al's frowning gaze shifted toward the doorway where Mark had departed to take a spin in his car. "Mark complained?"

"No. Terry," she corrected with a sigh.

"Ah." His expression cleared. "She has a crush on Mark." He drew her against his hard torso.

"Not that I am aware of." *Is that why Terry was scolding me about mistreating Mark?*

His dark eyebrow arched. "I doubt she would mention it, because you are dating him."

"Oh, do you think I should step aside?" *This could be the solution to my problem. I wouldn't be disappointing Mark, I would be a gracious loser.*

"Certainly not. You have the right to date anyone you wish. You aren't married."

Just like that, a snap of the fingers and my excuse floats away. "Yes, I suppose you are correct." He felt so warm and perfect, sighing, she laid her head on his shoulder. "I missed you, Honey Bear."

"Me too, Puppy." Al knew of her love for animals and had given her the nickname. Teasingly he had told her if she wasn't careful she was going to turn into someone's puppy one day, and everyone knew how constantly people played with their new pets.

Leaning his head against her hair, he cleared his throat. "We have known each other a long time now."

"Yes, we are almost like family. I wish you would get a job where you could stay here."

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"I live here Pup, I travel for my job, and it is quite a normal thing."

She sighed, "Yes I know. But you can't have a normal relationship."

Tommy told me you and Betty parted ways."

"When I find the right woman, she will travel with me. He mentioned you and Peter had parted about the same time. When did you start dating Mark?"

"Almost immediately."

His dark eyebrows arched. "Hum, sudden attraction on your part?"

She knew she should say "yes." So he would know there was no chance of seducing her. "Not really, but he is nice."

"Nice? You have been dating a month, maybe longer, probably sleeping with him, and he is nice?"

"I'm not sleeping with him," she admitted softly.

"Good. You shouldn't bed men you only think of as nice." His deep timber purred with satisfaction.

The music stopped, and they separated.

"Would you like me to fetch you something to drink?"

Nodding, she walked with him to the table. Al poured her a drink and passed her the cup before filling one for himself. They moved to stand before the bar to have a place to set the drinks, yet not be blocking the table.

"Al, it is time to start buddy, are you ready to play the big man?" Tommy stepped up beside Al.

"Play? I am the big man tonight. Just ask Puppy here. She has already told me what she wants me to give her for Christmas." Smiling he twisted and set his glass on the table. "See you later Pup."

She nodded in response to Tommy's glance, but she wasn't about to reveal what she had boldly asked Santa to deliver. Biting her bottom lip she watched his broad back cross the room to the throne chair that had been placed on the platform beside the tree. Gifts were passed to Santa, and he called out the person's name. Mark's name was called as he entered the room returning from his ride. Shaking Santa's hand, he accepted the box, and then advanced across the room swinging the package. "Mark." Santa called. Turning, he went back for his second gift. The first one she recognized as the gift she had slipped under the tree for him. Manda wondered whom the second gift was from? Soon it became obvious that everyone was receiving at least two, and some three gifts.

When she went to fetch her packages, Al made her sit on his lap and kiss his cheek, as he did all the ladies before they could receive the gifts.

Sitting on the side chair at the end of the sofa she opened the first package. It was a pair of running shoes. "Thank you, Mark." Mark was a runner, and although there was no card she knew the gift was from him. Standing, she moved to his side and kissed his cheek.

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Opening the second gift she found her panties in the box. The panties she had brought to wear beneath her skirt. The panties that had disappeared from the bathroom! There was a card. Keeping it inside the box, so no one could see, she silently read, *"Do you like the thong?"* Heat rose in her cheeks as she read it. Someone had entered the bathroom, and taken her panties while she was in the shower. No one had known she was in the shower except Terry. *Terry?* She forced a smile to her lips; it had to be a gag thing.

Closing the box to prevent prying eyes from seeing inside she looked across the room at Terry.

"What was in the box?" Mark queried.

"A gag gift from Terry, something personal."

"Oh." As expected he didn't pry.

Later she managed to speak to Terry when no one else was around. "Cute gag?"

"What?"

"Stealing my panties, while I was in the shower."

Eyes rounding Terry faced her. "Someone stole your panties while you were in the shower? My God, do you realize that means someone was probably peeking at you? Do you think they did it to me too?"

"No one had arrived, when you were in the shower. I hardly think your brother would be spying on you, and he was the only one in the house," she pointed out. "Seriously Terry, you didn't do it?"

"I swear. Cross my heart and hope to stick a needle in my butt cheek if I 'm lying."

She didn't believe it was Tommy that had entered the bathroom and taken her panties. Tommy wasn't the type to play gags on people. "Who was here while I was in the shower?"

"Nearly everyone arrived at the same time."

She kept the box with her panties in her hands until she departed. She didn't want anyone to see what was inside, and ask embarrassing questions.

* * *

The following afternoon she opened her door after the doorbell rang. Al stood on the stoop. "Hi." He held up a box. "Found this before the door. You don't want anyone to steal it." It was wrapped in the same paper the box with the panties had been wrapped in at the party.

"Thanks, come in." Opening the screen she allowed him to enter, accepting the box as he moved past. Turning the box she looked for a card. Frustrated she felt certain there wouldn't be a card inside either.

"Secret admirer?" Al teased, looking at the box in her hands. "Aren't you going to open it?"

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"Later. It is probably Terry playing a joke. Come on to the kitchen, and I will prepare some tea. Would you like something to eat, sandwich and salad?" she offered, placing the box on a side table as she walked past.

He chuckled, following behind her. "Actually, I thought I would feed you. How about having dinner with me? I thought you might have a date with Mark tonight, but as you are home.... I am guessing you don't have plans."

"Actually I don't. We only see each other on Friday and Saturday. Then you don't want tea; did you want to go now?" She glanced down at her jeans and then up at his suit. "I need to change."

A grin tugged his mouth. "I'm hungry now. I could nibble on your bones instead. You do appear to be a tasty morsel."

She chuckled. "I'll run and change." Opening the refrigerator, she tugged out a tea pitcher, and handed it to him. "Make yourself at home. You know where the glasses are."

"I'll do that." A grin tugging up the side of his mouth melted her insides. She liked that he felt comfortable in her home. Although he may not live here, while visiting she liked it when he acted as though they were living under one roof. It was almost as though they were family. Al was easy to talk to. They seemed to have an endless supply of subjects that they enjoyed talking about when together.

She left him standing in the kitchen and hurried down the side hall to her bedroom. Swatting at her bedroom door she didn't even bother to make certain it was closed. Al wasn't the type to follow her to the bedroom. *Darn it, at times I wish he was, that would mean he was interested in me physically and not just as a friend.* Sighing, she stood before her closet, and took down a pale peach dress. Stripping out of her outer clothes, she tugged a slip over her head, and followed it with the simple dress. It was a classic a-line dress, which was stylish enough to enter any restaurant he might choose, yet casual enough to visit the local pizza parlor. Running a brush through her short tresses she examined her face. Only a light refreshing of her makeup made it suitable for a dinner date. When she had finished with her continence she slid her feet into slippers that matched her dress.

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Chapter 2

When she returned in a fresh linen dress, she knew where she would find him. Al was sitting in her front room on the sofa. He pointed to the wrapped gift she had left on the table. "Aren't you curious what's in that gift box?"

"Not really, I can wait until later." Pretending she wasn't interested, she waved it aside.

"You must be fearful that it will be private." Shifting dark eyes that were almost black with emotion to her face, he studied her expression. She wondered if he knew just how seductive that look was to her physical appetites?

"Could be, knowing Terry." Lifting her purse from the desk she started toward the door. "Let's go feed Honey Bear's tummy. Terry's gag gift can wait until we return."

He growled, rising from the sofa and started after her. It was a frustrated sound. Al was apparently a curious type, and the package left on her doorstep had pricked his curiosity. She hoped he would let the subject drop.

She had never ridden in Al's Corvette. Sitting on the plush leather seat was a treat. She ran her hand over the leather console, while Al circled the car, and entered on the driver's side.

"Feeling up my car?" he quipped, his amused expression making her want to lean over and kiss those lush lips. He had a slightly wide mouth and a special scent that was all his own. It was a light scent of vanilla. Leave it to Al to choose something tasty to tempt her to draw closer for another whiff, and maybe a lick or two.

"It is a beautiful lady. It is a she isn't it?" she queried, still speaking about the luxurious vehicle.

"Definitely, I pamper her the same I would my wife."

"Then I imagine she is a happy car." Smiling she sat back, and buckled her seatbelt. How she would love to be the one pampered by him. She knew enough about him to know that Al would do an excellent job. Silently she sighed, if only she had the nerve to risk their present relationship to make a play for him. Fear of losing him completely was keeping her frozen. What she needed was a guarantee that he was interested in having a real relationship with her.

"Thanks for believing I would try to make my wife happy."

"I'm certain that when you wed, the woman will be well taken care of."

They drove to the center of town and Al parked in the restaurant's parking lot. Once he helped Manda from the car, he kept his hand on her back as they crossed the parking lot. His gentle touch was protective and made her feel

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special. Shoving the door open, he slid his hand from her back, and grasped her hand. Pulling her against his side they entered the reception area of the luxury restaurant. Sensitive to his every touch, rubbing shoulders with Al was a seductive treat.

"I have reservations for two." Al gave his name to the hostess.

He made reservations? If he had assumed that she had a date with Mark why had he bothered to make reservations at an elegant restaurant? It was as though Al was treating this as a real date. The thought made her shiver. The logical part of her mind reminded her that he had to eat with or without a companion, and that she was merely projecting her wishes upon his simple actions. Forcing a smile to her lips she glanced around. "Nice place."

A porter arrived and escorted them to a table in the corner. Shadowed by surrounding potted flowers, and dimly lighted by a shaded candle on the table it was an intimate atmosphere. It was a romantic setting that wasn't suitable for two friends.

Did she dare hope there was more behind this offer of dinner than a simple meal? Was it possible after knowing each other for so long that he had taken a personal interest in her? *Finally*. Frowning she wondered if he was merely interested in a gap filler until his next relationship. Where would that leave her when he moved on? This was making her nervous. Maybe she was overreacting when he was only in the Christmas spirit and wanting to share an evening with a good friend. There was only one solution to prevent awkward silent moments, humor.

"Do you suppose if you had been with Charlie or Tommy, he would have seated you at this table?"

"Well, to be honest, Tommy and I have shared similar tables," Al admitted, with a half grin.

"Alone or with dates?" Immediately she didn't wish to know the answer to that question. She hoped that he wouldn't reply. He must have read her mind because he passed her a menu, and told her to shut up. If he had been intimate with Tommy, Al wasn't talking, nor did she want him to talk about women he had brought here while on a date. Theirs was not an official date, and she needed to keep that in mind.

Smiling she accepted the menu and gazed at the daunting list of foods. "Oh dear, Al, it will take me forever to work through this list. If you have eaten here before, then you know the choices. Will you choose for me?"

"Glad to Pup, then I can feed my bear's tummy faster." He ordered wine, and stuffed mushrooms for an appetizer, lobster and steak with garden vegetables for the meal.

"Heavens, I would be a rollie pollie if I ate with you often."

He grinned. "When you become my Puppy, I will help you exercise it off. I have an excellent exercise to work off the calories."

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She shook her head. "Never happen. I don't diet for anyone. I exercise a little, but I'll not dedicate my life to it as Mark has."

"He runs, they have to do it often to stand a chance in the marathons." Shrugging, he dismissed Mark.

"I know, he is trying to draw me into the routine. He gave me a pair of running shoes for Christmas."

"How utterly romantic. He must have picked up the idea since he started selling Health Insurance. Keep 'em healthy and limber at the same time." Dropping his voice to a deep sultry timber, he leaned close to say, "I must remember that gift for all my future ladies."

"Will there be a lot?" Frowning she pulled back to search his expression.

"If I don't find the right lady, there will be a lot in my future. I run through them like grains of sand run through a sifter." He sighed.

"One night stands can get boring," nodding understanding she commiserated.

"You're telling me nothing new. I grow boring with all the simpering women do, when they want to be appealing to a man with money. You can actually see their eyes light up, and they stare as though looking at dollar signs. There may be men that don't mind. I'm not one of them."

"Poor you." *Women simpered to attract his attention!* "It must be insulting to think someone only wants to spend time with you because of the gifts you can purchase them."

"Which is why you are here with me. You don't simmer or bore me."

She shook her head. "Money won't be the reason I date anyone. Besides, you aren't rich just affluent." She grinned, and then teased, "Now if you were a multi-millionaire, I might be impressed, but only if you worked to gain it, and didn't sit back and wait for employees to do all the work."

The wine steward delivered their wine, and they continued talking as though he weren't there. Their conversation wasn't private, it was foolishness, so if the man overheard and repeated what was said it wouldn't be juicy information.

"Tell me, how do you know they are dating you merely for your money? After all you are an attractive man." It was a statement of fact, no reason to deny it, or pretend that she thought he was ugly.

His dark eyebrow arched. "Thank you. I'm glad you think I am appealing." Lifting the wine sample he took a sip and then approved before the steward filled the glasses. He left the bottle in the ice bucket. Its stand was on the floor beside Al. "Where were we? Reasons I know women are dating me merely for my money. First they cling and whimper, which is irritating. Usually they will be all over me some as soon as I arrive, and others, in the car before we even arrive for dinner. Then after dining they make it clear they are eager to go to my bed."

Belita Renn

"You don't think they find you irresistible?"

"No." He smiled easily. "Some don't even bother to learn my first name before offering themselves to me."

She sighed. These were things she hadn't wanted to learn, but now she knew what he did with his time when she wasn't around. "It must be very trying for your masculine ego. Being forced to perform, when you feel as though you are being used for your money. Why not toss money on the bed and send them home?"

He chuckled. "I may do that one day, merely to see the reaction."

"Would you record it, so I can watch?"

"I'll see what I can do."

They shared a pleasant evening, teasing, and exchanging quips. When they returned to the house, Al insisted on escorting her to the door.

"Do you want to come in for a drink?" unlocking her front door she queried.

"Or something?" His dark eyebrow arched.

When her head came up he grinned. Shaking her head, she unlocked the door and stepped inside, leaving the door open for him to follow. "Don't worry I'm not going to drag you to my bed and demand satisfaction."

"Shame."

Startled she glanced over her shoulder and saw his grin. He had been teasing, of course he had, what was she thinking? Al never propositioned her. It would never occur to him to attempt to seduce her. She sighed, what she wouldn't give to live that experience she couldn't imagine.

"So what would you like?" she queried placing her purse in the hall cabinet.

"Anything you've got." Closing the door, he locked it, as it was so late. "I'm open to offers."

She didn't know if he was doing it deliberately, or if it was coincidence that all of his statements were sounding provocative. *Hell it could be wishful thinking.* "I cannot believe you are hungry this soon after eating a meal."

"Oh, I'm hungry all right." His deep timber was a provocative purr. Strolling behind her to the kitchen he bumped into her back when she stopped. "Something wrong Pup?"

"No." Shaking her head she continued to the kitchen. It had to be her imagination. Tonight she seemed to be hearing more than was said. She was starved for physical release since she had started dating Mark, that was her problem. Next she would be thinking the milkman was coming on to her. Entering the kitchen area she turned to gaze at him, tilting her head. "Alright Honey Bear, what would you like?"

Santa Tease

"What are you offering?" He stared into her eyes with his dark penetrating gaze for a long moment. She hoped he couldn't see the hunger there. "A sip of wine will do for now."

Removing a bottle from the refrigerator she passed it to him. "You do the honors." Turning to the cabinet she took down two glasses, while he popped the cork. When she turned he was sipping from the bottle.

"Al, now no one can drink out of that bottle but us. I thought you said you only wanted a sip."

"This is my favorite." A sheepish expression on his face, he shrugged. Holding the bottle dangling from his hand he turned and strolled from the room. "I'll buy you another, if you will keep this one for us."

Following him into her private den, she placed the glasses on the table while he settled in a sprawled position in the center of the sofa. He patted the seat at his side. He looked so appealing she could easily understand why women were crawling all over him before they had even dined, and were eager for his bed.

"I like this room, it is comfortable. Do you entertain here a lot?"

"Only close friends." Moving to the end of the sofa she flipped on her favorite music and then dropped onto the sofa at his side. "You could give me some room," nudging at his side with her arm she teased. The soft sounds of flute music flowed around them.

Sliding an arm around her shoulders, he tugged her against his side. "You need to sit close so we can share this wine. Now there is a full foot on your opposite side so stop complaining." He held the wine bottle up before her lips. "Want a sip of nectar?"

He was so adorably seductive she couldn't stop from smiling. Taking the bottle she took a drink, he held up the base holding it to her lips forcing her to take a deep drink. When she was able to lower the bottle, she laughed. "That hasn't been pulled on me since high school."

"I thought it would amuse you." His fingers rolled a strand of hair around their tips and allowed it to slip off, only to repeat the process. "Pup, I think you and I should have a serious discussion."

"You force wine down my throat, and now you want to have a serious discussion. I don't think so." She pushed the bottle toward him. "Your turn."

Chuckling he lifted the wine bottle to his mouth, but when she reached for it, he grasped her arm and held it away.

"No fair," she pouted. "You cheated."

"Your turn." Shifting to face her he held the bottle to her lips. After a drink she pushed the bottle away. "Al, you are getting me drunk, you know I had wine with dinner. I don't have the stamina for a lot."

"You drank much more than this at the party." He held the bottle back to her lips. After a small sip she tipped it away.

Belita Renn

"Over a period of hours I drank more. It has only been an hour and a half since we began drinking at dinner."

"All right no more wine for the Pup. When you decide you want a sip let me know."

The phone rang.

"Don't answer it." Holding her shoulder he held her in place. "This is our private time."

Smiling she met his dark gaze. "It probably isn't important anyway. If it is they will call back, or leave a message."

"I brought you a gift back from my last job."

"Really, where is it? What is it?"

"I will give it to you Christmas."

"So you only told me to tease me?"

"Yes. Want a sip?"

"Sure, a small one," she warned.

Lifting the bottle to his mouth he took a drink, lowering the bottle he leaned over and kissed her, filling her mouth with wine. Only he didn't pull away. His tongue invaded and plundered. Al had never kissed her, not a real French kiss, but he demonstrated that he knew what he was doing. She was panting and aroused when he finally released her. Staring at him with a stunned feeling, she didn't know what to say.

He cleared his throat. "I guess I had better leave." Withdrawing his arm from about her shoulders, he placed the bottle on the table as he stood.

"Wait. You have been drinking. Is it safe for you to drive?" She should have realized sooner that he was drunk. Why else would he kiss her so passionately?

"Yeah, I think so." He grinned lopsided, but he swayed slightly.

Shaking her head she grasped his hand. "Please don't go so soon after drinking. I think it would be wise if you slept here tonight, on the sofa or in the spare room. I have a comfortable bed in the guest room, and you don't have to get up early to go to work in the morning so there is no reason you must go home."

"You're certain you want me to stay?" He had never slept over, but friends did such things all the time. Why shouldn't he spend the night?

"Of course. I'll fix you breakfast in the morning," she promised to tempt him to concede to her wishes.

He grinned, revealing even white teeth. It was a smile that charmed women out of their pants and into his bed. This was a man that had no difficulty seducing women. God had given him a natural appeal for the emotional female sex. "I'd like that." He eyeballed the sofa. "I think I'll take the guestroom. My back wouldn't appreciate sleeping on your sofa."

Santa Tease

"Fine, come on, I'll show you where everything is at." Taking his hand, she guided him down the hallway to her bedrooms. Inside she felt like skipping down the hall to rejoice. *Al is going to be sleeping in my bed. Perhaps I have a little bit of a wolf in me.* She glanced up at Al with a reassuring smile. *If I were to tell him I felt as though this was a fairy tale, would he think I have gone insane?* Mentally she giggled like a frolicking child.

"I could sleep with you," he suggested in a seductive timber. His large hand touched her back, and caressed downward to the curve of her buttocks. He stopped before his touch became too intimate, but his fingertips caressed the curve of her buttocks.

"I don't think that would be wise in your condition." It would kill her if he regretted it in the morning.

"Yeah, you are probably right." His hand fell away from her hip. Following her down the hall he stepped into the spare room behind her. His large shape filled the doorway, blocking her escape. It suddenly felt as though he had planned it and the thought made her feel nervous. Playing hostess gave her an excuse to conceal her reaction to his proximity.

"The bathroom is there." Crossing to the doorway she stepped inside the guest bath and opened the cabinet with towels. "Towels and wash cloths here. Fresh soap is out. I have a new razor I will bring you. Do you shave at night or in the morning?"

"Depends if I have a woman staying over," he drawled.

"I'm just down the hall, last door, should you need me. The bed has fresh sheets. I'll just fetch you that razor." Squeezing past him, as he didn't move aside to give her room, her breasts brushed against his chest. Puffing breaths between her lips she crossed the room and entered the hallway. Hurrying to her room she crossed to the bath. Going straight to the cabinet she removed a razor, and then searched around for a new toothbrush. Finding it, she snatched up a new tube of toothpaste and hurried from her room.

The door was still standing open so she walked straight in and stopped abruptly. Al was nude to the waist, dressed in slacks and socks, his shoes sat against the wall. Eyes glued to the delicious lines of his naked chest she didn't realize she was gawking until he twisted his head and looked at her, a dark eyebrow arched. "I brought you a toothbrush and toothpaste also."

"It was nice of you to prepare for me to stay overnight."

"Oh, I didn't prepare for you, I mean no one in particular. I just try to be prepared in case, you know." Nervously she babbled, crossing the room she entered the bathroom and placed the items on the sink. When she turned back Al was standing in the doorway, leaning an arm against the frame he effectively had her trapped. Why hadn't she passed the things to him and left? There had been no reason for her to enter the bathroom again.

"Do you want anything else before you retire?"

Belita Renn

His dark gaze slid slowly down her body, and lingered. Feeling as though her insides had just turned to mush along with her mind, she knew he couldn't possibly realize what kind of an effect he had on a woman's libido. "Well, if there is nothing else I will say goodnight Al." Slipping his arm around her as she started out the door he drew her against his hard frame.

"Goodnight Pup." He claimed her mouth in a gentle kiss, feathering lightly over her lips, then invading and dancing with her tongue. She didn't remember wrapping her arms around his neck, but she was clinging to him when he finally released her. Her heart was racing and her breathing heavy, which embarrassed her. She dropped her eyes and lowered her gaze to his chest.

"I guess we are both in an intoxicated condition tonight." He spoke in a gentle timber.

Instinct told her he meant they were both aroused. "Yes." Breathless she admitted, stepping away from him. There was no need denying what had to be obvious to a man with his experience. Crossing the room she stepped into the hall without glancing back. Pulling the door closed behind her, she leaned against the wall and covered her tingling lips with her fingertips. No amount of scrubbing could ever erase the memory of his mouth against hers.

Returning to the front rooms, she went from room to room turning off the lights. Picking up the bottle of wine she returned it to the kitchen, capped it and then shoved it into the refrigerator. They were turning in early, but she didn't want to disturb his rest. Al must have been doing a lot of celebrating since his return. After those kisses she couldn't suggest a late night pajama party. Of course he didn't have pajamas. Groaning she wished she hadn't thought of that detail.

Strolling down the hall she heard the shower running in Al's bathroom. He was singing softly, "I'm gonna make you mine."

Smiling she remembered hearing an old love tune with those words. It pleased her to know that he was feeling good enough to be singing in the shower.

Entering her bedroom she closed the door. Moving to the bed, she fell onto it backwards. The words he had been singing rolling around and repeating in her mind. If only he had been singing them to her.

Sliding her fingers across her lips a contented smile spread her lips. "Oh Al, if you only knew the thoughts that dance around in my head, you would treat me with more contempt than the women that date you for gifts."

It was a betrayal of their friendship for her to lust after Al. In spite of the guilt it caused her she continued to lust, long for, and dream about being Al's love. Now that he had devastated her with his wonderful kissing abilities she knew that her dreams were going to move from courtly love to more erotic avenues.

Santa Tease

Tapping her fingers on her stomach she closed her eyes and relived the kiss. Only this time Al became so carried away he was unable to stop. This time he was unable to resist her intoxicating appeal. Sweeping her into his arms he would carry her to the queen size bed and place her on it with loving reverence. Following her down, he would angle his body snuggly against her side, and then claim her mouth. His free hand would caress her soft stomach as her fingertips were doing. Plundering her mouth, his hand would slip up her body and cover her breast. Sliding her hand up, she mirrored his action. The lance of desire in her body made her groan with regret. If only he hadn't been drinking, if only his proposition to spend the night in her bed had been serious, she mused.

Later after she was certain he was no longer using the water, she showered then slipped into a shortie gown with little briefs before retiring.

A cry in the night awakened her to the darkness surrounding her. Her heart thundering in her chest, she stared at the blackness, wondering what had awakened her. Then she remembered Al was sleeping in the guest room. Wondering if he was troubled by bad dreams, she slid from the bed and crossed the hall to his door.

"No." She heard him gasp.

Tapping softly she opened the door. "Al?" she called softly. "Al, are you awake?"

"I am now."

"I am sorry, but you seemed to be having a bad dream."

"Yes, a bridge had collapsed and crushed someone dear to me." He sounded exhausted. "I have it all the time. Since you are up anyway, come sit with me for a while and help me get my mind off of it. If I go immediately back to sleep I will dream about it again."

Easing open the door she stepped into the dark room. "You'll need to talk to guide me. I don't know the lay of the furniture in here as well as I do my bedroom."

"Certainly, I could turn on a light if you like," he offered.

"No, just talk, I'm nearly there."

"I started having the dream all the time of late. It is so real, it is almost like I am actually living through the horror of losing a loved one."

Touching the bed, she crawled up onto the mattress, then over to where he was located in the center of the bed. Leaning against the headboard she gathered him into her arms. "Have you ever lost anyone that you knew in a collapsed bridge?"

"Yes, my cousin. He was working on a site with me. I was still in training at the time. The accident was so quick; there was no chance to react. I have vowed to make certain foolish mistakes like that never happen on a site I am working."

Belita Renn

"I am certain you take every precaution." Shifting his body, she felt him place his head on her breast. Stroking his silken hair above his ears to soothe him she murmured in a soft tone. "I am certain your cousin wouldn't want you to suffer from these nightmares. He would want you to be happy."

His breath warmed the material covering her breast. Hot fingers with mildly abrasive fingertips stroked her thigh. It was painful torture having him this close. Although she had longed for it so long she had almost become immune to the pain. Since he had returned from his last trip he seemed to be around more. He seemed to be behaving more personally toward her. Knowing that it was her fault that her mind was twisting his comments and giving them the double meaning. It was her mind that was making her believe that his comments were more personal than usual. Wanting him as much as she did, and having no boyfriend to distract her concentrated attention, all of her desire was focused on him.

The longing was always there deep inside, but until the Christmas party she had been able to keep those feelings buried. The feelings were refusing to stay buried now. It frightened her that she was going to destroy the relationship they had shared for so long. One false move on her part, one sign that she was attracted to him in a physical way would make Al feel uncomfortable around her. He wouldn't want the burden of her emotions; therefore he would surely start avoiding her.

Holding him to her breast she stroked her fingers through his hair, savoring the silken texture of the soft strands sliding between her fingers she closed her eyes and memorized the sensations. The wrenching pain in her heart was almost too much to bear.

Tears filled her eyes. Thankfully it was dark in the room. He couldn't see the glittering diamonds in her eyes. The stroke of his fingertips upon her inner thigh may have been absent movements for him. To her it was heavenly punishment to have this precious time with him. To be spending even a moment on the bed with him was a dream come true.

"Sleep with me, let me hold you through the night? I am certain I would rest better just knowing there is someone beside me that cares for me." He spoke softly, almost in a pleading tone.

"Close your eyes and go to sleep. I won't leave you alone."

"Thank you. Slide down beside me."

Sliding until she was lying on the pillow with him. He shifted down as she moved, keeping his head upon her breast. Laying his hand upon her stomach he stroked her through the silken material of the shortie nightgown.

"What are you wearing?"

"A short gown set."

"With those cute little bloomers?"

"Yes, now go to sleep if you want me to stay."

Santa Tease

"You are the best friend I have ever had. That is why this feels so natural. It feels normal doesn't it; you lying here with me?"

"Yes," softly she admitted, feeling so full of awe she could hardly articulate.

"Thank you for not laughing at me," he spoke in a lazy timber, relaxed as he was growing drowsy.

"I would never laugh at you. I tease you but you know I don't mean it in a vicious way." Speaking in a soft murmur she didn't wish to have an adverse effect on the sleep that was claiming him. The poor darling needed rest.

"I would never hurt you, Manda." His hot breath warmed her nipple and she felt it harden before his mouth. Silently, she prayed that he didn't know the effect he had on her body. Shifting his head he covered her hard nub with his mouth and began suckling on her nipple.

Silently she gasped, too shocked and stunned to reach. Knowing he was half asleep and wasn't aware of whom he was suckling she didn't speak, fearful that he would be startled into awareness and realize he was suckling her and stop.

The deep tug of his mouth upon her nipple was something she didn't want to lose. This would be her only opportunity to experience this act of carnal loving by him. The edge of his teeth scraped over the hard bud. Then his tongue would stroke and ease the sharp abrasion against the delicate tissue.

Her body ached with need, her sheath throbbed and she knew her little bloomers, as he had called them, were soaked in the crotch.

Firm lips tugged, a wet tongue licked over the nub. There was a long pause and she knew he was asleep. As with a baby after a minute he suckled deeply, tugging on her nipple for several moments then stopping again and the pressure would cease. Then after another long break he would suck again. The periodic suckling, and rest between, allowed her to know for certain that Al slept. His actions were reflexive; Al had no idea what he was doing to her body.

Her mind relaxed, accepting the position of comforter he had placed her in. She was no more than a mother figure. There were no real sexual implications behind his behavior.

Fatigue finally dragged at her mind, pulling her into the darkness of slumber. Holding Al against her body she drifted to sleep.

When she awoke Al was still lying on her breast. Morning's white light was brightening the bedroom; making it easy to see the position she had gotten herself into again. She had forgotten that Al had no pajamas. He was naked, his lean hip and thigh exposed above the sheet. Lying on his side he had his private area concealed beneath the cover and she knew she was going to regret it later. For now she was relieved that he wasn't exposed while asleep. She didn't want to embarrass him. His long tan torso stretched out beside her. His heritage had determined his tanned flesh not the sun. The left side of his body exposed

Belita Renn

revealed his slick flesh from his shoulder, down his arm to his torso from ribs to hip. The firm line of his hipbone concealed the rounding buttocks. The contour lines of his thigh were designed to resemble the tasteful renditions of the perfect male body by sculpture artists. Following the strong muscles of his arm to her body it disappeared beneath the hem of her shortie gown. The large hand was on her ribs, fingers spread wide the space between thumb and index finger was filled by her nude breast. How was she to extricate herself from this awkward position?

Tugging her shoulder and the top of her torso to the side she attempted to slide from beneath him. Al's eyelashes fluttered, his fingers flexed and wiggled against her flesh. Tilting his head he glanced up at her. His cheek sliding on her nipple she prayed that it wouldn't react and harden beneath him.

"You are beautiful in the morning." He smiled, lifting his head from her breast, he rose above her. "Good morning Puppy. I think that is the best night's sleep I have had in months." Leaning forward he pressed his lips to her mouth. Pulling away a grin tugged his lips up on one side. "Now I know why people have sleepovers."

"I think you should be giving the wine some credit."

Rolling onto his back he tugged his hand from beneath her gown, and placed it on his stomach. "Or blame. They have scientific studies that say you don't sleep well if you drink."

Turning her gaze toward the door, she didn't wish to discover if he had bothered to keep the sheet over his pelvis. Men were not by nature modest creatures, she didn't want to be caught gawking at his naked body. Rising to sit on the side of the bed she smoothed her gown over her hips. "I will prepare breakfast as soon as I throw something on." Standing she walked to the door and out without looking back.

Closing the door she hurried to her bedroom and shut the door. Strolling into the bathroom she was ready to start her daily dressing ritual.

Santa Tease

Chapter 3

Once dressed, she went down to her kitchen to prepare the morning meal. She had thought that this morning neither of them would mention the previous night's kisses. Kissing her this morning had startled her. Had they moved into a new area of their relationship? Waiting to discover how he felt about kissing her was what she needed to do. No way was she going to ask him if he was interested in changing the nature of their relationship. Waiting was all she could do, and still maintain her pride if she was mistaken about the situation change.

Logically she had to admit he had been drinking and could not be held accountable for what had taken place last night. It had partly been her fault; if her nipple hadn't been standing up and begging to be kissed he probably never would have taken it into his mouth. One thing she knew for certain was that if she ever had another male overnight guest she wasn't entering their bedroom if they had a nightmare. Al was special; she wasn't willing to comfort anyone else in that manner.

She prepared breakfast while he dressed. It felt domesticated, as though they were a couple. Before the meal was complete, he entered and poured himself a cup of black coffee; taking a sip he made a sound of approval.

"Good Puppy, shall I pat you on the head, or stroke your nose?" Moving to the breakfast nook, he slipped onto a chair. "I don't get to read the morning paper with my breakfast?"

"Careful you don't ruffle my fur," she warned in a teasing tone. "I don't take the morning paper." Taking their plates to the breakfast nook, she placed them on the table, and then remembered the silverware. "A considerate helper would have set the silver on the table." Hurrying to the counter she opened the drawer and took out silver then carried it to the table. She settled in the chair facing him. Ignoring him she sprinkled salt and pepper on her food, acting as though it were normal to be entertaining a gentleman at breakfast. They chatted as usual, exchanging an uncomplicated repartee, before he departed for work. He never brought up the subject of the kiss or the fact that she had slept with him. It was a relief when he stood to leave and she knew she could stop worrying.

Once the door was closed behind him, she raced to the spare bedroom and leapt onto the bed. She rubbed her face in the pillow and squealed with delight. Al had kissed her. It might never happen again, but it had happened once and she had the memory. She didn't really count the suckling because he

Belita Renn

had been asleep, but still he had her nipple in his mouth. It was another thing that might not happen again in this lifetime.

A damp spot on the sheet touched her leg. Looking at it she wondered if he had masturbated while lying in her bed. Had he thought of her while he did? *Oh I hope you did, Al. I hope you did, at least this once. I don't care that you were drunk at the time, or if you did it this morning.*

She hated to strip the sheets, and wash away his scent, but someone else might need to stay and she couldn't expect them to sleep on dirty sheets.

* * *

Leaving the laundry room she spotted the package that Al had found on her front stoop. Picking it up, she tore open the wrapper. Inside the box was a matching string bra with only enough cup to hold her breasts up, not to cover. It was a perfect match for the thong she had worn at the party. Carrying it to her bedroom, she placed it in the drawer with the thong. She couldn't ask Mark if he had sent it, she would have to wait to see if he mentioned it.

On Thursday a package arrived by special carrier. After signing, she carried it inside to open. Inside was a diamond engagement ring. Sinking onto the floor with the box held before her, she stared at the beautiful emerald cut, with the prism lights bouncing off it with each movement. Dragging the box off the table she looked inside for a card.

Her hand started trembling when she found one. Opening the card she stared at the words. *"Marry me."* There was no question mark. She didn't know if it was meant as a statement, or a command.

Oh God, I have a stalker. A rich stalker. What should she do? Call the police and tell them someone sent a huge diamond ring by special carrier. "Right, they'll lock you up as the nut."

Shoving the card back into the envelope she dropped it and the ring box into the gift box and closed the lid. She carried it to her room and placed it on the dresser. All she could think to do was wait until he, or she, appeared for the answer to this mystery.

Friday when Mark arrived, she waited anxiously for him to say something about the gifts. He didn't. He was as usual a considerate companion. He drove a little red roadster in which he usually escorted her. They went to the theater, when they returned to her home Mark opened the car door, and assisted her from the vehicle. He bid 'Goodnight,' and returned to the driver's side of the car as she walked to the front entrance of her home.

On Saturday she was a nervous wreck and again she waited for Mark to mention the gifts. When he didn't she decided to grab the bull's nuts. "Mark I received another gag gift, only this one was delivered by special carrier. You wouldn't happen to know anything about it?"

"No, what did Terry send this time?" dryly he queried. "Or is it another vibrator or something you cannot talk about."

Santa Tease

"What makes you think the last was a vibrator?"

"Because of the way you held onto the box, like you were afraid someone would see what was inside. I decided as you said it was a personal gift that you meant that literally, which would mean that the gift was something like a vibrator."

"Oh, well it was only a thong." She waited for a reaction, but received only a discouraging response.

"Ugh." He scrunched up his nose. "I tried one once. I didn't like it."

Her eyebrow arched. "I'm surprised you tried one." She hadn't believed he was that audacious. In truth she hadn't believed that he was adventurous at all. This was a whole new side of Mark and she was curious.

"I was surprised too at the time. I was drunk though, and it was a bet." He shrugged.

So he wasn't an explorer at all. No big surprise. "Ah, I see." An average guy, Mark wasn't the type to sweep a woman off her feet, but apparently he had some strong appeal to Terry. Perhaps she should start pushing him in that direction.

"I think Terry sent them because she resents that I am dating you." It was a broad hint; she wanted to see if he reacted.

"Really, I hadn't realized Terry was gay."

The side of her mouth tugged down. Was he really that dense, or merely putting on an act? "She isn't." After filling two glasses with wine she returned the bottle to the ice bucket, and then passed Mark a glass. Mark liked to be waited on when at her home. He refused to make himself at home; she had reasoned it out that he didn't want others making themselves at home at his place. He certainly had never invited her to make herself at home in his house. "I think she is interested in you."

"Terry is a cute kid." Taking a sip from his glass he avoided looking at her.

The darn man wasn't giving anything away under her subtle hints. A more forward approach was necessary. "Would you be interested in dating her?"

"Sure." He shrugged.

"Well?" Inside she heaved a frustrated sigh.

"What?" Looking at her with an innocent expression again he avoided a direct answer. It made her more determined to probe deeper.

"Don't be vague. Tell me what you think of Terry?"

Mark shook his head. "That is out of the question. It would be a very ungentlemanly thing to do."

Frowning she studied him. Ungentlemanly sounded as though he was thinking sexual thoughts about Terry. "You think she would be a good lay," she decided aloud.

"Yeah." Sheepishly he grinned. "I'm betting she is hot in the sack."

Belita Renn

Her eyes tightened. "Why haven't you asked her out?"

He looked at her as though she had dropped a few screws. "Because I'm dating you."

She had a feeling he couldn't wait to dump her so he could ask Terry out. Maybe he was doing the same as her. Maybe he didn't want to dump her at Christmas, so he was waiting for a more favorable time. Taking his glass from his hand she sat it on the side table. Tugging his arm she signaled she wanted him up from the sofa. "Out."

"What is wrong with you?" Frowning, he stared at her with a confused expression.

"Out." Pushing she shoved him across the room, reaching around him she yanked open the door and tugged his arm until he walked out her front door. Standing sideways he opened his mouth to protest. Slamming the door in his face she locked it into place. Going to her phone she blocked his number. If that didn't give him a hint after being tossed out on his ear, nothing would. *So he is betting Terry is hot in the sack. He obviously didn't feel I would be.* Since he had never attempted to discover, she had to assume he thought of her as a pal. She had enough pals, too many, as Al was one of them. Not that she didn't want Al as a friend; she just wanted him to think she would be hot in the sack. Suddenly, she felt angry and frustrated.

Lifting the phone she dialed Terry's number. "You can have him," she blurted when Terry answered.

"Who?" Was she mistaken, did Terry sound hopeful?

"Mark, he is all yours."

"You broke up with Mark?" Terry did sound excited.

"Definitely." Replacing the receiver she went to the sofa, sat down, and started drinking her favorite wine. She fumed for a while, and then she finally started feeling better. She was heavy into the bottle when someone knocked on her front door. Ignoring the knock she took another drink.

Then a fist pounded on her door. "Manda." It was Al's deep voice.

Sighing, she put the bottle on the side table. "Coming." Rising, she wobbled and swayed, but made it to the door. "What you want?" she demanded throwing the door open, and then falling back against the wall.

"What the hell. Are you drunk?" Frowning, he stepped inside and grasped her shoulders.

"Why are you here?" Helping her stand, he braced her against the wall before releasing her.

"Mark said you tossed him out. I came to see if you were all right." He closed, and locked the door before reaching for her. Wrapping his arm around her waist he pulled her against his side.

"I'm fine. I am celebrating." She smiled up at him, feeling pleased that he was worried about her.

Santa Tease

"Or drowning. I didn't think you were gone on the guy." Lifting her in his arms, he carried her down the hall toward the bedrooms.

"I wasn't. I'm not, but he is insulting, and I wanted him gone." She laid her head against his shoulder, and kissed his neck.

"What did he do to upset you?" Nudging open a bedroom door he peeked inside "Yours?"

She nodded. "He thinks Terry is hot stuff in the sack, and I'm not, that is why he never made a pass at me."

"Well, then it is his loss," Al dismissed, pushing the door inward.

"You should bet on me this time; I can be wild," she admitted.

"I'm certain with the right man, you can be very hot."

"Absolutely."

He laid her on the bed, and began removing her clothing by tugging her blouse up and over her head. "Mark just wasn't the right man to make you wild."

"No, he didn't turn me on."

Al removed her bra, and tossed it on the floor.

"Like I do, you mean?" He caressed her, his hands skimming across her breasts, and down to the waistband of her pants.

"I don't turn you on either?" she pouted, mournfully.

"Sure you do Pup." His hands worked her pants down, and dragged them from her legs.

"You're just being nice to soothe my ego. It's not necessary, you know. I was just insulted tonight. Tomorrow I won't care what Mark thinks."

"I know Puppy." Removing her pants he tossed them against the wall.

"Are you going to sleep with me tonight?"

"Do you want me to?" Sitting on the edge of the bed he touched her cheek and ran his fingertip across her pouting lips.

She nodded. "I would like you to hold me."

"I will be honored. Shall I remain dressed?"

"Why, I'm not going to rape you." She snickered at her funny. If she thought she could seduce him she might give it a shot, but her ego couldn't survive if she failed.

"Then I'll just get comfortable, and join you." Kicking off his shoes he stood. He removed his shirt and pants. Standing beside the bed in white briefs he was a sexy sight.

She whistled.

A wolfish grin on his lips he moved to the door, and flipped off the light switch. A few moments later he was sitting on the bed, stretching out beside her, he gathered her into his arms. Laying her head on his shoulder she snuggled her cheeks against him.

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She remembered holding onto Al's naked thigh, while retching over the toilet and on them. Then she awoke lying against his hairy chest, his warm arms wrapped around her. Lifting her head, she gazed into smiling eyes. Laying her head back on his chest she patted his breast.

"You are a good man, Al. Few friends would have bothered to come over, and fewer would have stayed, and taken care of me."

"You took care of me not too long ago. I was merely returning the favor."

Stretching she felt her body rub against his flesh. "Al, I feel naked and you feel naked."

"We are."

"Why?" Her throat seemed to close over the word. Suddenly she felt as though she couldn't breathe.

"We didn't make love if that is what you want to know, I removed our clothing and you proceeded to retch all over. We did shower together, if you want to know."

"Oh, sorry." There was nothing romantic about being vomited upon. He certainly hadn't been aroused by her performance during the night.

"No need to apologize I assure you. I enjoyed the pleasure of touching you."

"You didn't, not under those circumstances." Heat of a blush rushed into her face. She punched him lightly on the chest, and he chuckled. Still she couldn't resist wiggling a little against him. He felt delicious against her flesh.

"You keep doing that, and we are going to make love this morning," he warned.

"Promises, promises." Teasing she rolled from his body dragging the cover with her to conceal her naked flesh.

"Too late, I've seen it all," he quipped in an amused timber.

"Ha, ha." Covering her face with a pillow she longed to go to sleep, and awake to discover that this had all been a dream. An embarrassing bad dream, if Al was going to be seeing her naked, touching her and showering with her, why couldn't it have been for a reason other than she had vomited on him?

"The least you could do is cook me breakfast, before I go to work," Al complained good-naturedly.

Moaning she clutched her stomach. The mere thought of food made her feel sick. "Please don't mention food."

"Alright, I will let you off this time, but next time I spend the night I expect breakfast."

"Sure, bye Al, and thanks." waving she spoke from behind the pillow. Al pried the pillow from her face, and kissed her lips swiftly.

"See you tonight," he said, replacing the pillow over her face.

Then he was gone, and she went back to sleep.

Santa Tease

Later in the day a new package arrived. With trembling hands she opened the package, anxious to see what had been sent to her this time. Inside was a long gift box. She opened it and was grateful that she was sitting on the sofa. Inside was an emerald cut pendant dangling from a gold chain! She took a drink from a glass of tea, while she tried to calm the tension in her body. Inhaling a calming breath, she removed the envelope from the box, and removed the card.

"Wear only the gifts I have given you on Christmas Eve night. Thong, Bra, Ring, and Necklace." Replacing the necklace in the box, she carried it to her bedroom, and placed it on the dresser with the other items. On Christmas Eve, it would be wise not to be alone. The logical thing to do was find someone to stay the night with her. At the moment she wasn't feeling logical or wise, she was excited by the idea of her mystery man. She didn't receive danger signals from the messages or gifts, none of it was threatening. Weren't women supposed to have a sixth sense about such things? *After all he did ask me to marry him.* Which was why she had decided that it had to be a man sending the gifts.

That afternoon Al arrived. She had forgotten that he had mentioned returning. Dressed in black casual slacks and gray oxford shirt he was a walking temptation. She had to find something to distract her from thinking of Al in the sexual sense. The mystery man popped into her head. Perhaps he would be the answer to the dilemma.

"Good evening Al. I'm afraid I forgot you were coming. I haven't prepared dinner, but we can cook up some steaks in no time."

"That won't be necessary. I didn't expect you to feed me. I know you are probably still feeling poorly. I just wanted to make certain that you were all right, and were not going to repeat last night's drinking party."

Sighing from relief she relaxed. Food was the last thing she wanted. "No, I don't feel like drinking. I told you last night; at least I think I told you, I wasn't that upset. I was mostly feeling insulted. I still cannot believe he said that to me." Turning back into the room she strolled to the front room, knowing that he followed. "Would you like tea, or wine?"

"Tea would be good?"

"Salad?"

"Salad would be good."

After preparing the salads she nibbled at hers, until she started feeling better.

"You have some color now. Do you think you could eat that steak now?" he asked in a considerate manner. When she agreed, he went to the kitchen, and cooked the steaks. The aroma didn't turn her stomach. By the time he brought the steaks to the table she was able to eat.

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“Thanks Al,” she said while they were eating. He nodded understanding. By the time he departed she had decided he was perfect and that her mystery man could never compete.

Santa Tease

Chapter 4

On Christmas Eve she paced her bedroom floor, trying to decide what to do. Finally, she donned the gifts and then hid the sexy underclothes beneath her clothing. The sun was setting and she had no idea what time this mystery man was arriving. It was ten o'clock when the doorbell chimed. Her insides felt like they were trying to jump outside her skin. Swallowing a nervous lump she went to the door on quiet feet and peeked through the spy hole. Sighing with relief when she saw Al standing outside, she opened the door with a smile.

Opening the screen, he stepped inside. "Sorry I'm arriving so late, but I had a few things to arrange for tomorrow."

"I'm glad you found the time to come by. Have you had dinner?"

"I ate something light earlier. I could eat." A smile tugged at the corner of his luscious, masculine lips

She grinned. "Good, I haven't eaten." She prepared salads, and they ate before the fire in her private den beside the Christmas tree.

"What have you got planned for New Year's Eve?"

She shook her head, "I haven't made any plans really. I figured I would go to Tommy's party. It's what I usually do."

"You aren't going home at all?"

"I went over Thanksgiving. I will go again in the summer."

"How long is your vacation?"

"It ends on the fourth. They are remodeling the office, and everything is supposed to be finished by then, so we can get back to work."

After dinner they sat before the fire drinking a glass of wine. At first she was nervous that Al would notice the diamond on her finger or the necklace, but she relaxed, as he never mentioned them. Removing her glass from her hand, Al sat it on the table.

"You have drank enough tonight. I don't want you to get drunk."

"I promise I won't be doing that again for a long time. I don't like the after effects." Smiling he slipped an arm around her shoulders as he returned to her side. She cuddled next to him. It was a natural thing to be against him, and she did it by animal instinct without realizing. "There's my little Puppy, eager to be held, and stroked." Tilting up her chin he gazed at her with dark probing eyes, before finally claiming her mouth.

His deep kisses stirred her trembling emotions to full bloom. Her heart raced, her hands having a will of their own were determined to touch him, and so she caressed his throat and chest. When he cupped her breast, exposed

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beneath her blouse by the mini-cup bra, he thumbed her nipple. The delicious sensations raced straight to her clit, which had started throbbing with the first touch of his lips. Moaning she pushed her breast into his large hand more than willing for him to touch her intimately. Momentarily she wondered what he thought of her naked breasts. His heady aroma filled her lungs, merging with her breath, and she forgot the unimportant thought.

It was the most natural thing in the world to sink onto the sofa with his weight on top of her. His hard erection pushed against her sex, and rubbed her through her clothing when he moved. Leaving her mouth he kissed down her throat then suckled her nipple through the soft material of her cotton blouse. Her hands caressed his ribs, and worked on the buttons of his shirt. It was a slice of heaven to be in his arms, and to be the object of his desire was ecstasy.

Manda didn't care if she was a one night stand. She only knew she wanted this night to continue until its natural conclusion. She wanted him in her bed, and body, desperately. Moaning she rocked her pelvis against his engorged shaft.

"Manda, I want you."

"Take me," she encouraged, her hands sliding inside his shirt and caressing his hot flesh. She raked his nipple and explored the soft hairs covering his chest. "Please Al."

His hands moved down her blouse releasing the buttons. Too late she remembered the revealing bra. If she were lucky he would believe she dressed this way all the time. Pushing the material aside Al claimed her turgid nipple and suckled. Panting, she arched into his mouth, her pelvis grinding against his erection. She sank beyond thought as sensations swamped reality. She was in her own fantasy; none of this was real, Al would never seduce her. Yet he was. Sliding from her body, she moaned in objection, fearing he was withdrawing. But his hand moved to her pelvis and began stroking her crotch. Opening the waistband of her slacks he tugged down her pants and she kicked them aside. His hand moved between her legs, stroking her labia and applying pressure to her clit.

"It's not too late to say no, Puppy."

"No, don't stop."

"Thank you for wearing my gifts." Pushing the tiny triangle covering her mound aside, his tongue pushed between her labia and licked her clit. Crying out, she gasped to catch her breath.

"Your gifts?" She chuckled and arched against his tongue.

"I told you I brought you a gift."

"Yes?" she panted, groaning as he plucked her nipple. "Thank you, but the diamonds are too much."

"They aren't the gift I brought you." Moving over her body, he tugged the thong aside and pushed into her sheath. "This is."

Santa Tease

"Oh. I accept."

"Good." His hips moved above her, withdrawing and pushing his hard shaft into her aching sheath.

"My Puppy has a little pussy and I want it to."

"That sounds a little perverted."

"Only if you think in terms of animals. You are my human Puppy, eager to be loved and petted." Claiming her mouth he drank in her cry of delight as he wrung a climax from her body.

While her body was still throbbing in aftershocks he withdrew.

"Wait, you haven't cum."

"I will, I want you to move to the bed. I want to love your body properly."

Sliding from her body, he helped her from the sofa. "You are so beautiful in firelight I hate to change rooms. I have had dreams of seeing you in my jewelry and underwear."

"We could move to the floor," she suggested, feeling awkward in the skimpy clothes now that he wasn't making love to her. She moved against him, rubbing against his protruding erection, while shoving his shirt from his broad shoulders. When it fell away, she reached for his pants.

He stopped her hands. "I'll do that while you go to the bed. I want you waiting on me. I want to see you in my gifts, lying on your bed before I remove them for the first time and reveal your lush body completely."

"I'm all but naked now."

He grinned. "Yeah, I know." Turning her toward the bedroom, he swatted her buttocks gently. "Go to bed Puppy. I want to claim your pussy and your purr."

She started walking. "I don't know that I have been claimed yet," she teased.

"Oh believe me, you're mine to pet."

Moving into her bedroom, she crawled onto the bed and propped on the pillows watching the door. Eager anticipation kept arousal aching through her body. She needed him more than she had ever needed anyone. When the door opened and Al entered, the light from the hall outlined his magnificent body. Naked, he stood beside the bed gazing at her for a moment.

"You are beautiful Manda." Sliding a knee onto the bed, he slid his hand along her thigh to the apex at her crotch. "When I asked Mark to keep you occupied so you wouldn't start another relationship, I was taking a risk that you wouldn't develop emotions for him. I dared him to seduce you. Warned him I would beat him until he begged to die. So don't be mad at him for being so cool to you." Sliding his fingers beneath the thong he toyed with her clit. Stroking and pressing on the nub he sent electric current deep into her womb. "You cannot imagine how long I have longed to do this. But every time you were free

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I was entangled, and by the time I discovered and dumped my current lady, you had started another relationships. I couldn't risk waiting any longer. I feared you would fall in love. But first I had to rid myself of Betty and get back here, so I used Mark." Drawing the thong down her legs, he removed it, and tossed it to the floor. "With each new courtship I lived in fear that this one would be the one that would take you away from me. At the party, when you asked me to make hot delicious love to you, I knew I had been a fool for waiting so long. You really are my Puppy."

"It appears I am." Moving between her thighs, he opened her labia and licked her throbbing clit. Closing her eyes she prayed that this wasn't a wet dream brought on by alcohol poisoning.

"Al, please don't leave me." Emotionally she was already clinging to him. Did he dislike clinging women?

"You are going with me the next time I go anywhere."

"How, I cannot leave my job? It's not like you go away for a weekend."

"I need an assistant. Work for me."

"Wouldn't that be dangerous to our relationship?" Oh no she had said relationship, would he run away now? "I mean our friendship."

"No, I want to keep you close, so no one can attempt to steal my pet."

"That will never happen."

"As for our friendship, friends can make perfect lovers."

She wasn't about to argue the point; she did want this friend to be her lover.

"We will remain friends after?"

"Absolutely."

Why fight it, he was only going to find the perfect answer to every question, although she knew there was no perfect answer to this problem. Only time will reveal the future. She was willing to take the chance, and her body was telling her to shut her mouth and accept what was offered.

"Please Al, I need you," she pleaded, thrusting her pelvis up to meet his tongue, she whimpered. "See you have turned me into a whimpering fool. Now you will think I am after your money."

Sliding slowly up her body he tortured her. "You are my Puppy. You are allowed to whimper all you wish, and I think your sweet little cunny is after my cock. I don't think money is going to satisfy your hunger." His shaft moved between her thighs, then pushing into her sheath without ceremony.

"I believe you are correct," she gasped, as her muscles adjusted to the hard invader.

"I'm going to love you all night long." He pushed into her until his root smacked against her pelvis, and then withdrew. "You are my precious Puppy, therefore your pussy belongs to me too."

Santa Tease

"Yes," she purred. Lying above her he kissed her hands, and then frowned. "Sweetheart didn't you get my card? Why is your engagement ring on the wrong hand?"

"I didn't know who sent the card."

He met her gaze with eyes dark with passion. "I love you Puppy; will you marry me?"

She nodded. "I love you."

Lifting her hand he removed the ring and moved it to her left hand. After kissing her finger he bent down and kissed her lovingly. Slowly he entered her body again and loved her slowly until she could stand the strain no longer. Speeding his thrusts he kissed her deeply, his tongue dancing with her. His hands poured forth his desire as they stroked and caressed, while powerful thrust pleased them inside until they both shattered and he collapsed into her arms.

Cuddled in his arms, she gazed into his eyes and smiled. "What until you see what I have planned for New Year's."

Belita Renn

Author's Bio

Belita Renn is a dedicated romantic. She lives in Georgia with her family. A collector of gargoyles, she does crafts, and studies psychology. A relative of actor Buster Keaton, she has written under the name Belita Keaton and Kim Parson. A retired hairstylist, and real estate agent, she writes full-time. Visit her website to learn more about her works and what she is up to.

The main question most people want an answer to is why erotica? Answer, Sexual situations are a real and natural part of life. It should be included in our writing. Belita's first Sensual Romance was released in Feb 2005, however she continues to write spicy romance. With reviews stating she is a recommended read that reveal the quality of her writing, this author is expected to provide us with hours of pleasure. Watch for her Books.