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SUGAR  
PLUM  
#8

*Make the  
Yuletide Gay*  
LENA AUSTIN

**Sugarplum: Make the Yuletide Gay**  
**Lena Austin**

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## **Sugarplum: Make the Yuletide Gay**

### **Lena Austin**

Dr. Gary Lord was comfortable and out in his homosexuality anywhere but his southern hometown and certainly not at his parents' house. But, in Yulee, Florida, secrets are very hard to keep when the folks across town know how you season your greens the minute you say, "Pass the salt."

And there's an old high school classmate who's been waiting patiently for Gary to come home... and he plans to crash Gary's Yuletide celebration in a big way.

Beware the cowboy bearing gifts... who may make Dr. Gary Lord's Yuletide much gayer than he'd planned.

## Chapter One

Gary Lord slowly stirred his coffee and eyed the nearly empty diner. Yulee, Florida, wasn't a large town in any case, but with only two days until Christmas, those few who weren't raiding the discount stores were home spending time with friends and family. Thus, he was the only customer at 9 PM, in a town that was no longer his home, and hadn't been for ten years, but he still called it that.

Mom and Dad's home was where he'd been, until he'd had enough of his parents' unsubtle hints regarding his lack of a feminine companion and their lack of grandchildren to spoil. Gary sipped the slightly burned coffee, sighed, and swallowed frustration. After all, he'd been too cowardly to ruin their holiday with those fateful words, "Mom, Dad, there won't be any grandchildren. Ever. I'm gay."

Yeah, erudite double-doctorate maritime archaeologist Dr. Gary Lord was gay, and the whole fucking academic world knew it, but no one in Yulee ever gave a damn about what happened in the exciting -- yeah, right -- world of people who put on wetsuits to work.

Gary stretched out his long legs and smiled when Georgia Woods, the owner of the diner since he'd been in short pants, bustled over and refilled his cup without asking.

Georgia slid him a double-sized slice of her famous pecan pie, with whipped cream that had probably been in the cow the day before. She winked her big brown right eye at him. "You jus' eat that there pie right up, you hear? Don't give me no lip, or I'll call your mama and tell her where you're hiding."

Gary blinked up at his unexpected partner in crime. He saw sympathy in her dark face as well as wisdom. Georgia was no fool, and never had been. "Am I that obvious?"

"Hell no!" She picked up the fork and handed it to him. "Eat. Don't they feed you good in Egypt?" She leaned closer. "You always did come here when you was troubled, that's all." Her eyes flicked up, and then back down. "Oh, I get it. Your mama's been matchmaking. Here comes Harriet McPhearson, and her eyes is pinned on you like a hunting rifle on a deer. You needs a rescue."

Gary just closed his eyes and sighed. Even the prospect of Georgia's famous tooth-rotting dessert couldn't sweeten the prospect of sharing a table with the divorcee who, it was rumored, was looking for husband number four.

Georgia straightened up and shook her finger at Gary. Her voice was deliberately loud. "Now you just eat that up, you hear? You're too skinny, swimming around all the time. You forget to eat or something?" She tightened her apron and smiled when the bell rang over the entrance. "Well, hello, Ms. Harriet. What brings you out tonight?"

Gary filled his mouth with a generous forkful of pie so he wouldn't have to do more than politely wave at Harriet, but that one gesture was more than enough to encourage the blonde tigress.

Before Gary could swallow the mouthful, Harriet was seated across the booth from him, flipping back her perfectly highlighted tresses. She barely gave Georgia a glance, but did answer the question. "Just coffee, Georgia. I was out doing some last minute shopping." She sighed dramatically and stuck her foot out from the table so she -- and, ostensibly, Gary -- could admire her bright blue heels. "My feet are killing me!"

Gary took one glance at the impossibly high platforms and bit the inside of his lip to keep from laughing. Even a camp drag queen wouldn't wear the tastelessly gaudy blue patent leather with -- ugh! -- fake plastic shells for ornaments. He choked a little on the last bit of crust in his mouth, and crushed a napkin to his lips to hide his smile. "Those heels certainly do make a statement. I can't imagine the local Payless selling

those. Where did you get them?" He winced when his voice slid back into the drawl he used when surrounded by his friends back at the local Metro Lounge, two hours away in distance and a million miles in tolerance.

Her bright blue eyes, enhanced by the latest Botox and a pair of aqua contacts, gleamed. "Why, the Internet, of course! I love shopping in my nightie!" She batted her eyes like she expected his cock to rise at the very thought of her sitting in front of her computer in some frothy lingerie, but the image he got was her hair in rollers, a ratty chenille robe falling off her shoulders, and a tattered pair of bunny slippers on her feet. Nope, not sexy.

Rather than try to come up with an answer that might encourage the huntress, he shoved another forkful of pie in his mouth. "Mmm!" Seemed like a noncommittal enough comment.

Harriet grinned, showing off her perfect white teeth. Rumor had it she'd beggared husband number two with her trips to the dentist and plastic surgeon until he'd run out of money, then she'd dumped him. With the Barbie doll looks she'd acquired, she'd had no trouble latching on to husband number three. No doubt she'd used him to death, too. However, she'd been a nice kid in school, so Gary tried to give her the benefit of the doubt.

Georgia brought over a cup of coffee and a bowl of whipped cream. "Sugar, do me a big ol' favor and use this up in yo' coffee. I wanna close up without wastin' it, and I think y'all will be the last customers of the night."

Harriet eyed the gleaming white mound greedily and unwrapped her spoon from the napkin. She dug in and plopped a third of the mound in her coffee before reaching for the pink packages of sweetener. "Yum! Thanks, Georgia!"

Georgia grinned down at them both. "Y'all make do for yourselves for a few minutes. I gotta make a phone call back in the back. You know where I keeps the coffee. Git it yourself 'til I come back, you hear?" Without waiting for an answer, she marched off, wiping her hands on her apron.

Gary put another forkful of pie in his mouth and tried to come up with a subject suitable to discuss with his unwanted guest. He just couldn't think of anything he had in common with her.

For her part, Harriet sweetened her coffee to her liking, sipped delicately, and put down the cup. She kept her eyes focused on the lipstick she'd left on the rim, but her smile turned slightly wry. "Don't worry about having to talk to me, Gary. I'm here to please your mama, and then I'll go home." She lifted her gaze up to wink at Gary's startled expression. "I'm not as stupid as most would like to believe, and I know my reputation 'round here. I'm leaving after the holidays. You see, I'll be graduating from online college in January. That's when my degree in Internet Marketing should arrive in the mail, anyway. Then I'm going to shed this tawdry persona I've been hiding behind and live like I'm meant to, without a man around."

"Congratulations, Harriet. Do you have a job yet?" Gary was so pleased for her that he completely forgot the awkwardness of the past few minutes.

She nodded coolly and her chin notched up another half inch with pride. "Yep. Soledad Corporation. They're small, but they make wind turbines." Her eyes gleamed with true humor and purpose. "My presentation was accepted, and I got the offer letter today. I'm moving to southern Colorado. There's a huge wind farm on the Comanche Grassland, you know."

"Not my area of expertise, Harriet." Gary shrugged. "If it's not wet, I'm probably not fam... um..." Gary blushed. He knew the joke he'd just made.

"Hari. Just call me Hari." Her lips twitched, aware of how her name sounded.

At the same time, they both burst out laughing. For several minutes, they both laughed every time they looked at one another.

Hari wiped her eyes with a napkin, carefully blotting her mascara. "Just my luck. I finally find someone to share my good news with, and I end up looking like a raccoon."

"Nope, you're good." Gary shrugged and acted like he didn't care, but he knew more about makeup than he cared to admit.



His last lover had been a professional drag queen with a real singing voice, so he didn't have to lip synch when he was "Chesty Barnes." Unfortunately, Charlie needed someone who stayed home more than a few months out of the year. Their parting had been amicable, but final.

A battered and rusty Silverado pulled up to the diner, and the headlights glared directly into Gary's eyes. Whoever got out was bundled up against the chill evening in a denim jacket and a black cowboy hat. He kept his head down and sprinted inside.

Hari chuckled under her breath, and sipped her coffee until the newcomer had sauntered over to have a few words with Georgia. "Well, now. That's a mighty fine ass."

Gary turned to look before he realized what that revealed. Quickly, he turned around and ate his pie.

Hari mimed shooting at Gary with her fingers. "Gotcha. Thought so." She winked again to let him know she wasn't offended or likely to blow the whistle on his closet door. Her aqua gaze slid back to the newcomer, and then she grinned up at the approaching man. "Well, hellooo stranger."

"Yeah, and they don't get any stranger than me." The deep, graveled voice was familiar. "Hiya, Harriet. Gary. Mind if I join you? Georgia says y'all have all the cream."

Hari shook her head. "I'm leaving. You can keep Gary company." She tottered upright, gained her balance, and clapped a hand on Gary's shoulder. "Nice seeing you, Gary. Stop by Springfield if you ever get a chance." She slung her purse onto her shoulder and left.

The new guy slid into her place and picked up her coffee cup. He used the napkin to wipe away her lipstick, and then sipped without raising his head so Gary could see who his new guest was. "Blech. She always did use too much sweetener." He raised his head until his brown eyes laughed at Gary's surprised expression. "Long time no see."

Gary's heart skipped a few beats. Adam Crider had been the focus of more than a few of Gary's adolescent fantasies when Adam had been captain of the football team,

Homecoming King, and all around guy most likely to succeed at anything he wanted. Even now, the weathered tan was a few shades darker than it had been in school, but the face was still just as handsome. "Hi, Adam. How have you been?"

"'Bout the same. Nothing much changes around here, if you haven't noticed." For some reason, Adam's lips twisted into a half smile. "Gets damn boring, to be honest."

Gary couldn't help but agree, so he took his last bite of pie and nodded.

"You've changed." Adam took another sip, but didn't lose the ironic smile on his face. "You always were skinny as hell, but you've filled out. Guess all that diving does that."

One of Gary's eyebrows shot up. Someone besides his immediate family knew what he did? Okay, that was possible, but 90% of Americans couldn't give a damn about what he found in Alexandria's harbor unless it had to do with Cleopatra herself. Even then, they wouldn't understand half of what he said concerning what he'd found. "Yeah. That and I did a little experimental archaeology."

"Yeah, I know. Saw the pictures of you helping engineers figure out how the pyramid blocks might have been made with dolomite." Adam's answer was bland. "Bet it was hot as hell. You looked funny stripped down to that itty bitty loincloth thing they made the workers wear, but you got one helluva tan." Adam studied Gary's surprised face. "Sun bleached your hair, too."

"How did you know all that?" Gary knew he'd never sent the pictures of himself wearing the linen costume of an Egyptian stone worker because his mother would have had a litter of kittens at his being half-naked and crouched in the hot sun, beating on one big rock with a smaller round one.

Adam tipped his hat further back and lounged all over the red Naugahyde bench. "Just 'cause I'm a worthless ol' cowboy, doesn't mean I don't read. Happens I got a degree in structural engineering and I still get the trade magazines. You made the back pages of *Cadalyst*, because Doc Aimsley used a CAD program to map out the project on my computer."

Gary snorted. Aimsley was a publication whore who'd put his byline on any article, no matter how obscure. In the cutthroat world of who published first, Aimsley was a real pirate. No one liked him, but he got the money to get projects done in the first place. "Structural engineering jobs would be hard to come by around here."

"I know. My dad got sick. Cancer. I came home to take care of him. He died just after Thanksgiving." Adam swallowed, the pain still fresh in his eyes. "Least he's with Mom now." He slugged back a large gulp of coffee. "Blech. I wish she'd make it taste less like a chemical factory. Anyways, you ever ride a camel?"

He took the hint. Gary recognized Adam's need to change the subject to something less painful. He snorted and shoved his pie plate to the side. "They stink to high heaven, but you get where you're going. So, yeah, I've ridden a camel."

Adam's hat tipped lower, and he leaned in. His voice was softer than an angel's kiss, and so low Gary leaned in to hear him. "How about a cowboy?"

## Chapter Two

Oh, hell. What was Gary supposed to say to that? Was Adam just making fun of that damned country song about saving a horse? If Gary were among his friends at the Metro, or even slurping coffee at E Street Café, he'd have taken the question as an offer. As it was, Gary's brain stuttered. Normally, they called him Quick Draw McGraw, he was so fast with the quips, but Adam had him flabbergasted into silence.

Rescue came in an unexpected form. Georgia came over with the coffee carafe and refilled both their cups without asking.

Adam snorted at the refills. "Girlfriend, you're going to make it so we'll shake out of here from the caffeine jolt." Adam sounded like a true queen when he drawled like that.

Georgia just laughed and smacked Adam on the shoulder. "Now you be good! Stop scaring Gary and play nice."

Was Gary out of the closet to everyone in this town? Yes, Yulee was so small, you could say, "Pass the salt, please," and the folks across town knew about it before you could sprinkle the shaker's contents on your greens, but damn. The place was so insular that people did their best to sell their land to family and neighbors rather than chance an outsider coming in. Folks around there were crackers and cowboys.

The cowboy in question waited until Georgia left. Adam's grin twisted up, sort of wry, and definitely ironic. The only problem was, Gary had to admit his fascination with kissing those lips, and so between Gary's frantic search for an answer to his question and his rising lust at the possibility, Adam had all the advantages. Adam was never one to waste an opportunity, on or off the football field. In the same soft whisper,

Adam blew Gary's mind again. "Stop looking like a deer in the headlights, Dr. Lord. Someone will think I'm about to run you over with my truck instead of politely asking if I can suck your cock and fuck your ass."

Did Gary's cock harden at the thought? Do bears shit in the woods? Of course. Any gay man would drop to his knees in a heartbeat for one shot of Adam. Was Gary more cautious than that? You bet your ass. He lived for months every year in a Muslim nation where being gay was more than a crime, it was a death sentence. Oh, yeah, Gary knew how to play this game. He drew up in self-righteous dignity. "What makes you think I'm gay, Adam?"

"Because I am. They say gaydar always works, and mine sounded the alarm on you way back in high school. We both were just smart enough to wait until we got out of this damn town before we came out of the closet." Adam leaned back again. "Me, I didn't do much until I hit my job in Atlanta. Worked there with a corner office in the Peachtree Plaza for a few years before Dad took sick." Adam grinned and stood up. "What say we take the rest of this conversation back to my place? Ain't anyone home but me these days."

Okay, Gary might have been a nerd but he wasn't stupid. That was an engraved invitation if ever there was one. Besides, it was darker than the inside of a cow, and judging by the way the wind had picked up, a lot colder. He still didn't want to go home. So, Gary opened his cell phone and texted his Mom -- "Going to visit with Adam Crider. Don't wait up."

Mom, a retired teacher, was a gadget freak. She had the latest toys, and was probably the one who had turned Hari into an Internet shopper. The UPS delivery guy knew Mom by her first name. Dad hated the perky chime of her phone, but enjoyed all the pictures Gary sent from his camera phone. She'd get the message. Gary closed his phone and put it back in his pocket.

When Gary's phone was safely tucked away, Adam leaned over the counter and yelled toward the back. "We're leaving now! Come lock us out!"

"Be there in a minute! Jes' throw yo' money on top of the register. Merry Christmas, y'all!"

Gary was still confused and definitely out of sorts. Dr. Gary Lord, assistant supervisor under the head archaeologist, and strong enough to even stand up to the man they called The Pharaoh, Dr. Zahi Hawaas. He needed a minute or two to absorb the revelations, and the opportunity was at hand. "I'll follow you to your place, Adam."

Adam nodded, dropped a five on the register, and sauntered off to his truck. Everyone knew his family's place. Fox Run was twenty acres of cow pasture, and not much else. To get there, you turned off the paved road and drove for another ten minutes through an oak and palmetto scrub until you wondered if you'd ever see civilization again.

Gary's SUV could take the trip, but could his heart? He'd never know until he tried, and the scientist in him was born curious. He threw down a ten to cover his pie and Hari's order, just in case. The bell above the door tinkled merrily when he left.

On the short drive in nearly total darkness, all Gary had were the red lights of Adam's truck to follow, and Gary stuck reasonably close. That gave him plenty of time to convince himself Adam was playing a trick on him. Adam hadn't been in on the clique of guys who'd stuffed him into a locker in middle school before Gary learned he had a mean mule kick in him, but Gary had every reason to be cautious and no reason to trust. By the time he parked his Durango next to Adam's Silverado, Gary was on his guard.

Adam waited for him on the wide front porch of his parents' -- and now his, Gary guessed -- ranch house. He'd never been inside before, despite knowing Adam all his life. Adam had been a jock and Gary a nerd. The two just didn't mix. Adam opened the door, and two black and tan coonhounds with gray muzzles bounced and danced on the other side.

Gary took the sniffing of his hand in good part. The dogs had clearly been his parents' pooches, so Adam was all the family they had left. They were just doing their job, checking out the newcomer. Once they'd gotten Gary's scent and a few pats, they

ran to the back door, ready for their yard time. While Adam let them out, Gary lit a lamp and scoped out the house.

Over the upright piano in one corner was a picture of Adam's parents. Gus Crider had done well, but no one knew how well. Gus and Mrs. Amy had kept to themselves as much as anyone was able in a small, insular town. They'd just had Adam between them. Gary's mother often said Mrs. Amy tried hard, but just couldn't carry to term, so all six of Adam's potential brothers and sisters were buried in tiny neat rows at the back of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church's graveyard, and Gary assumed Adam's parents were there, too. Gary stepped over to grin at the picture of their graduating class -- all hundred and eleven of them, decked out in mortarboards and hideous taffeta robes.

"We have being only children in common."

Gary jerked around.

Adam stood right behind him, trapping him with his arms, one on each side of Gary's head. Adam looked a little like a cowboy Phantom of the Opera, with the light only illuminating one side of his face and his hat still on his head. "Only mine are gone, and they don't need to know their son is gay. You're still in the closet to yours, too, I guess."

Gary admitted nothing. He didn't care how much he wanted those firm lips on his or how much he'd fantasized about those rough, weathered hands on his body, Gary still didn't want to believe his high school crush was within reach and offering. Somewhere, down deep in his soul, Gary dredged up one word. "Why?"

"You mean why am I doing my damndest to get you to do a horizontal tango with me? Hell, Gary." Adam lifted his arms away from the wall and backed off. His left hand scrubbed at his forehead. Gary'd forgotten Adam was a southpaw. "I wish I knew what attracted me to you, but I've been running scared from you since our sophomore year, when I finally came to grips with my sexuality. You kept pushing those damn glasses up on your nose and sticking your chin in the air when you were outclassed in gym, and... aw, hell, you drove me nuts."

"I had laser surgery on my eyes three years ago." So maybe it wasn't the most intelligent thing to say and in some ways was cowardly, but Gary just couldn't accept what Adam was saying. "I don't get it. You could have anyone. Why the nerd?"

Adam chuckled under his breath. "Finally, I get a real question. Best answer I have is that opposites attract. I've been waiting all year for you to come home for the holidays so you could make my Yuletide gay."

"Very funny, Adam." No one had popped out of the woodwork with a camera, yelling how they'd caught him in the act and were going to tell his parents and ruin their holiday, so Gary got a little bolder. "You realize I've no reason to trust you? Right?"

"Ye-up! I know." Adam's voice deepened, torturing Gary just a little more. "Guess I'm just gonna have to prove I'm serious." His right hand touched Gary's shoulder and gently pressed him against the wall. His left caressed the outline of Gary's cock. "Leastways one part of you believes I ain't lying."

Gary had held fossils that were less hard than his dick was. So much blood had left Gary's brain he was light-headed. Gary's ass craved what Adam could give, and Gary let the ex-jock push him up against the chilly wainscoting for fear he'd do something stupid like beg if he opened his mouth. Hell, he'd dreamed about Adam for the past fifteen years, and now Gary was afraid to accept what Adam offered. "Fifteen years ago, I'd have been on my knees thanking Upstairs if you'd so much as blinked in my direction. I kinda idolized you."

"I was a wuss." Adam tossed off that statement and leaned in until Gary could feel his breath on his right cheek. "I took the easy road and let everyone believe I was the Marlboro Man, all perfect and shit. I wasn't. Far from it." Adam's lips brushed his, and then Adam backed off to study Gary's face for an objection. "Instead of all those squishy girls, all I wanted was a skinny nerd more interested in amphoras and some weird-ass device from Anti-something Greece."



"Amphorae. The plural is amphorae. And the place is Antikythera." Gary's correction was automatic, considering how Adam was scrambling his brain and his pulse. "I... I can explain."

"Later." Adam reached around and yanked him right up to him for a little tongue duel.

Was Gary a sucker for a little domination? Okay, yes, he was. Working around Egypt, knowing his work could be yanked away at the least provocation, was stressful. Gary craved letting go and allowing someone else to take over, so he could stop thinking even for an hour. With Adam, that part was easy. Gary's brain clicked offline as soon as Adam's hand slid from his waist to cup Gary's ass. Fortunately for him, Gary had a subconscious with more sense than intelligence. In response to Gary's rising lust levels, one of his hands reluctantly slid around Adam's waist and completed their clinch.

How long they locked lips was anyone's guess, but eventually Adam broke off. Adam studied Gary's glazed eyes and nodded. "'Bout time you stopped fighting me. Mind if I just bend you over the sofa? It's the right height, I think."

He wasn't a shrimp, but Gary was about an inch or two shorter, so Gary gave the big leather-backed sofa a glance. "Looks pillow soft, but I won't break if it isn't."

All Gary could hear was Adam's breathing. Then Adam released him entirely. "Get naked. I want to see you. All of you."

"Same goes, cowboy." Gary lifted his chin and dared Adam like they were still in the schoolyard.

Adam nodded. "Fair enough."

With hurried movements, they kicked free of jeans and turtlenecks before coming back into each other's arms. Adam's hand moved on him with easy expertise -- a warm, slow glide -- the right amount of pressure, the right angle, the right rhythm.

Gary tried to reconcile that he was indeed where he'd dreamed, holding on to the man of his fantasies who was -- incredibly enough -- giving Gary an expert hand job.

Adam flicked his thumb over the moisture pearling at the tip of Gary's cock, making use of the natural lubricant. The slickness and rough friction of Adam's hand pumping him harder, faster, sent Gary's heart flying.

Just the astonishment of being naked together and putting hands on each other was more than a dream come true. There was a concession of trust about it, placing your balls in another man's hands. The feel of Adam's hard calloused hand cupping Gary's sensitive sack while Adam's other hand made those long, stroking slides was overwhelming. Gary moaned.

"You like?" Adam's hand slowed to a mere tease, but his voice rasped like he'd run a mile. He pushed Gary toward the sofa. "Lube's over there. You still willing?"

Gary's own breath was ragged. "Yeah. Oh, yeah." It had been too long. Way too long. Gary's body wanted to erupt like an adolescent boy's. His body didn't want to be put through its paces. Like a fine Arabian stallion, it wanted to race off. "Slow down, or..."

"Fine." Adam spun Gary around so fast, the man who scuba dived in a world with no limits couldn't find his balance. Gary went down face first into the quilt thrown over the back of the sofa. Adam's breath tickled his back. "Present your fine tight ass for a ride by a cowboy."

## Chapter Three

After all those years of considering Adam an unreachable dream, Gary still had difficulty reconciling that, A) Adam was gay and B) he was about to fuck Gary. The delicious chill of lube and burn of entry told Gary that dreams really could come true. Those were Adam's calloused hands grasping Gary's hips, and Adam's cock sliding slowly home in his ass. The heater kicked on, pumping out the smell of natural gas for an instant before a blast of warm air caressed them both. Caught between the quilt and Adam's body, Gary should have been fine. Now all he had to worry about was coming all over the quilt.

For his part, Adam just moaned deep in his throat when he hit rock bottom and his pubic hair tickled the crease at the bottom of Gary's ass cheeks. He gripped Gary a little tighter when Gary's ticklish skin reacted to that hair, and he wriggled. Adam chuckled. "Oh, I've got me a bucking bronco to ride."

"You haven't ridden a bull, ever." Gary couldn't resist the taunt. "You're a cracker, just like me."

"Want me to prove how much of a cracker I am?" Adam slapped Gary's ass and made him jump. "That's more like it."

They'd both been born of Florida cattlemen, called crackers for their abilities to crack a whip. Adam's family still managed cattle, whereas Gary's had managed game for Fish and Wildlife. Crackers knew each other by family name, even if the spelling changed, but Lourdes had been difficult for dirt-poor farmers to pronounce, so Gary's was Lord. Gary felt even sorrier for the Thibodeaux, Rhoden, and Thigpen families.

Adam's hand cracked on Gary's ass again. "Pay attention when you're getting laid, son!" His big rough hand caressed the sore spot. "Now that you're opened up, we can rock."

Gary could see Adam's grin in the big mirror above the mantle. In fact, the whole tableau of his fucking was right there, like feelie porn in sci-fi. Gary could not only see that gorgeous tanned hunk fucking him, he could feel the glory in every nerve ending. "Want to see if we can destroy this monster sofa of yours, cowboy?"

Gary's drawling challenge had the desired effect. Adam's eyes lit up. "Ye-up! Let's do that." Then Adam set to pounding Gary until he was very grateful Adam's grandma had been a champion quilter, because those few layers protected Gary from going right through the back of the sofa and pitching face first into the coffee table. Adam didn't waste any time making Gary's Yuletide gay.

In fact, he was getting crushed and pounded to the point where Gary no longer cared if he lived or died as long as he felt the next few strokes. Gary was building up to one helluva orgasm, and that was without his cock feeling even his own hand, so Gary reached down and found Adam's already there, ready to tug Gary into Nirvana.

Adam didn't seem to mind when Gary put his hand on top of his and guided him, telling him without words how Gary liked his hand job. He'd have done just fine on his own, perhaps, but little squeezes and tugs at the right moment sent Gary right over the moon.

Seconds later, Gary buried his face in the quilt he was soiling and howled. While he wasn't as experienced as he'd wished, Gary knew he'd just had the best orgasm of his life, hands down. No pun intended.

Adam didn't let go until Gary was milked dry. Then he pounded until he, too, came, grunting into Gary's ass with a load so large Gary swore he felt every jet. Adam's sweat-slick body collapsed on Gary's back until the heater blasted away the moisture and their overheated bodies cooled.

Gary tightened his ass, trying to hold on to him just for a few minutes more, but eventually he slid out. Damn. The idyll was over. Gary shuddered and wondered if

he'd see them fucking on YouTube or something equally inglorious. It would be his luck if the mirror was two-way. A little paranoia had kept him alive in Egypt. The habit was hard to break. Slowly, Gary worked his way back upright despite the weight of Adam's body still on his back.

Eventually, Adam got the hint and moved away. Gary heard the squeak of latex while Adam discreetly disposed of the evidence. The bang of a foot-depressed trash bin lid descending rang with a certain finality to it. Gary guessed Adam was in the kitchen, probably trying to figure out a polite way to shove Gary out the door and on his way.

Gary eyed the quilt. The stain was minimal. He pulled on his pants and found the bathroom. With a wet washcloth in hand, Gary wiped up the quilt, dropped the cloth in the sink, and rummaged on the floor until he found his turtleneck, jacket, and boots. He'd just make a nice, discreet exit. There'd be no awkward moments of promising to write emails or whatever. Gary sat on the edge of a chair, and pulled on his boots. He'd be out the door in a heartbeat. The fact that Gary's heart didn't want to go meant nothing. He told it to shut the hell up and quit whining.

While Gary struggled with getting his turtleneck over his head, he heard a rattle behind him. He yanked down the deep green neckline and clamped down on his jaw before it made a one-way trip to the floor at supersonic speed.

Adam, naked as the day he was born, brought in a tray full of holiday cookies and two steaming mugs of coffee. And -- Gary couldn't believe this -- he was humming, "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." Yeah, the one with the line, "make the Yuletide gay" in it. Adam's smug grin faded a little. "You're not going, are you?"

Anyone could read the disappointment in those big brown eyes, and no one with a heartbeat could kick a sad puppy. Quickly, Gary readjusted his thinking. Maybe the song was accurate. "I suddenly feel a little over dressed." So maybe he was going to have himself a merry little Christmas and his Yuletide was going to be very, very gay, after all. And maybe, just maybe... all his troubles would remain many miles away for a very long time.

## **Lena Austin**

Lena Austin is a “fallen” Southern Belle with a checkered past. She has been a licensed minister, hairdresser, and Realtor, radio DJ, exotic dancer, telephone service tech, live-steel medievalist swordswoman, BDSM Mistress, and investment property manager. Not necessarily in that order. She never finished that degree in archaeology, but did learn to scuba. After a life like that, writing about it is pretty restful. Of herself, Lena writes, “I’m tall, and I look like an unholy mating between an Amazon and a librarian. Everything else is subject to change on a whim.” She presently has over thirty books written, and has no plans to stop “until they pry my cold dead fingers from the keyboard.”

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