

# Christmas Magic

*By*

*Marianne LaCroix*

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*To my friend, Desiree Erotique.  
Thanks for being my model for the sexy Mrs. Claus.*

# **Christmas Magic**

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## Chapter One

David Bradley tapped away on his laptop in the dim firelight of his living room. On the stereo, a radio station played Christmas carols. Seemed good enough to listen to, this being Christmas Eve. But it didn't truly feel like the holidays.

He never seemed to celebrate anything, ever since his Internet business took off four years ago. Always too busy. Even his marriage had taken a nose-dive since he had found success.

Running his fingers through his long, dark brown hair, he stared into the orange flames in the hearth while thinking on his marriage. Mary had taken a back seat to his career. He really should let her go and give her a divorce. She'd probably welcome it after years of being second in his life. She deserved better.

He remembered back to the early days in their marriage. They talked of babies and career success. He had found his success, but it took up too much time to devote to anything else.

Even their love life had suffered. He couldn't even remember the last time they'd had sex. That was something he missed, but he took care of his bodily needs in the shower, whacking off to images of Mary naked.

David still felt the attraction. Seven years of marriage had not dimmed Mary's beauty. At thirty, she looked just as beautiful as she had when he had met her at twenty-two. He, however, had changed, had grown older. He worked out in the mornings before heading into the office, but it was more to work off the sexual frustration than physical fitness. By the time he figured he wanted to make love to Mary, changing the course of their marriage, he thought that she wouldn't want him. It had just been too long. And now he felt like he had lost her. Yes, it would be best to let her go.

Yet, the thought of her with another man angered him. Jealousy. The green-eyed monster reared its head, but he had to stamp it down.

“David?” a familiar feminine voice called to him from the stairway. With it being after midnight, he thought she’d gone to sleep hours ago.

“In here.”

He looked up at her approaching figure. Lord, she was all woman, and tempting in her satiny teal nightgown. It came to her knees, giving him a wonderful eyeful of her strong calves. An ample woman, generously endowed with all the right curves, Mary turned him on. Her long auburn hair fell about her shoulders in soft waves. His fingers itched to dive into its silkiness, but what would she do? How would she react to his desires after four years of neglect?

“David, it’s Christmas Eve. Think you can quit working for a few hours and just relax?”

“I’d like to, really, but I’m working on this one deal that needs attention. We meet with the president of Oxford Connections the day after tomorrow to discuss it.”

She sighed, a breathy, sexy sound. Lord, she was so unaware of how beautiful she truly looked. So feminine and soft, she could bring him to his knees in a heartbeat...

But no—he had to resist. He had to make sure the Oxford deal went through without a hitch. Looking at her in the firelight, he knew he was entirely too selfish. He needed to give her what she needed—freedom.

“All right. Don’t stay up too late, though. Mom is coming over tomorrow night for dinner, and so are Patrice and Joe with the kids. I want a few moments of normalcy in this house on a holiday.”

“Sure thing, Mar.”

He turned back to the laptop and began tapping at the keys, dismissing her, unable to stop his rudeness. Tomorrow as a Christmas gift, he’d tell her his intentions. Divorce was the only way he’d know she’d be happy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mary padded up the stairs. She didn't know why she bothered reaching out to him. He had closed off his emotions years ago. At this time of year, the pain from the loneliness seemed more intense. A tear slid down her face. Oh, how she wished he would open his heart once again. She loved him still, and needed him desperately. Things just seemed too far gone, and she had about given up hope to ever reoccupy a space in his heart.

She had only one wish for Christmas—to reclaim David's heart. It had been the same wish each year since he'd created Bradley Internet Services, Inc. Everything in their lives had changed since that day. They had moved to a bigger home—a mansion, in her view—in addition to acquiring expensive clothes, luxury cars, and so forth. None of it, however, held much meaning to her without David's love. She couldn't enjoy the luxuries without him.

When they had first married, they were poor and struggling, but at least she'd had his heart. He had loved her completely. Now, her body warmed at the memories of his loving caresses. She had been always a bit reluctant to love her own ample body, but he thought her sexy. It did wonders for her self-esteem and self-image. He had taught her to love herself and become more daring in their sex life.

Lately, however, she had started to doubt her sexual appeal. Not even dressed in her sexiest satin nightgown could she tempt him into bed. What would it take for her to turn his head these days? The damned laptop got felt up more than she did! She was tired of reverting to a battery-operated lover. She needed warm flesh and intoxicating masculine scents surrounding her, penetrating her core into repeated climaxes. No vibrator could give the entire sensual experience, and not just any man would do.

She wanted David.

Her body quickened at the thought of him entering her, his cock so hard, like a satin-covered rod of smoldering steel. The heat from it could melt her from the inside as he moved within her sheath, bringing her closer to the edge. Her juices flowed at the

erotic remembrance of him pumping his seed into her receptive body. God, if he'd just once brush her sensitive clit, she'd probably shatter in an instant.

Stepping into their bedroom, she wondered why she still *thought* of it as "their" room. David slept there, certainly, but his back was always turned toward her. He'd pull away whenever she touched him in any manner. Talk about rejection.

Maybe they were beyond helping. Should she stick it out any longer? It felt like torture to have the man she loved ignore her needs, her heart. She wanted so much more than this...

Slipping between the cool covers, she thought of ways to reclaim the love she'd lost. Her husband had to still love her, didn't he? After all, they were still married. Maybe all wasn't lost. There had to be hope to save their marriage...

\* \* \* \* \*

At about one-thirty in the morning, David stretched and rubbed his tired eyes. Maybe he should quit and go up to bed. He just didn't know how he could resist plunging into Mary. Earlier, she had looked so damned tempting, leaving him with a painful hard-on. No private shower time would ease that pain. He wanted so much to just make love to her.

Glancing about the living room, he thought back to Christmases they'd spent in the early days of their marriage. The tree was about the same, glittering with glass balls and other assorted colorful trimmings. Lights twinkled, casting more reflections along the cheerful decorations. Even the fire in the hearth glowed upon the metallic and glass ornaments. Stockings hung ceremoniously along the fireplace; only two, though, his and Mary's. Kind of depressing after seven years. The stone fireplace framed the crackling embers as their heat cooled, and nearby, a stack of wood sat waiting to enliven the dying flames back into a welcoming blaze.

Mary had decorated the room, reflecting her love for the holiday season. Various symbols of Christmas lined the typical tan walls. It didn't look overdone or tacky, but

warm and festive. He loved the sprigs of evergreen tucked behind paintings on the wall. The effect was natural, and the scent completely Christmas. Of course, Mary's preference for a real tree added to the ambiance of the entire decor. He hated those plastic trees, too.

Within the morning silence, the old poem came to mind. " 'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring...except the workaholic unable to bring himself to share his bed with his tempting wife..."

David sighed, rising from his seat to work out the kinks in his back. He really should shut down and go to bed.

Then, out of the silence, a clatter outside jolted him to full wakefulness.

Where is it coming from?

The roof!

"What the hell?" He strode to the nearest window. Pulling back the curtain, he tried to see anything that might be causing the racket.

The noise stopped as soon as he glanced outside.

Moments passed...

Something stirred within the chimney. Out from the hearth came a cloud of sparkles, glitter on air, swirling and catching the twinkle of the tree lights in a merry dance. The cloud scrambled and condensed. Good Lord, it was forming into –

David stood in awe before Santa!

## Chapter Two

"Holy crap!"

Jolly old St. Nick brushed glitter from his long red cloak. He stood there like any child's image of Santa, but real, incredibly real. The plump man's clothes made him appear even larger, but the gentle twist of his mouth, surrounded by a snowy white beard, gave him a gentle, teddy bear-huggable character.

"Watch your mouth, young man." Santa stepped closer.

David drifted toward the fireplace, still in shock. "You're...you're...Santa," he managed to stutter.

"I prefer to be called 'Nicholas,' but you may call me 'Nick.'"

"Uh, sure...ok, Nick."

The big man cocked a brow as his gaze swept over David. "Tsk, tsk, tsk, David. You really disappoint me."

"And how's that?"

"Well, look at you. A man in his prime with a beautiful wife, and you're letting it all go to waste. Over what? Money?"

"It isn't the money –"

"Then what drives you to succeed?"

What *was* the reason, anyway? David didn't even know. He hadn't really given it much thought lately.

"And what about Mary? How could you treat her like you do? She loves you too much to deserve that." Nick propped his large hands on his ample hips, looking like a menacing mountain of red fur and leather.

"Mary doesn't love me anymore, I'm sure."

"Don't be so sure, boy. That woman has made you the man you are, even if she suffers for it."

“She suffers? I doubt I even cross her mind anymore. We hardly see each other these days.”

“And whose fault is that?”

“Mine,” he whispered, sitting in a nearby chair. “I hate that I hurt her. I wish we had never met so I could’ve spared her the pain.”

“You wish you had never met the love of your life?”

David ran his palms over his tired face. “Yes, I wish I never met her.”

Nick turned away from him, stepping to the fireplace. “So be it.”

A wind swept through the house, blowing away the structure as if it was made of sand. Walls melted into nothing. The fireplace disappeared. The entire house vanished as if it had never existed.

“What the hell?” David gasped as the chair beneath him disintegrated into a pile of leaves. He landed with a thud on the cold, hard ground.

Wind blew dried brown leaves on the crisp December air. Dressed only in a flimsy flannel robe and boxer shorts, David clutched at himself against the cold.

Nick chuckled his signature laugh, but David found it hardly amusing.

“What are you laughing at? I’m going to freeze off my nubbies out here!” His teeth chattered as he tried to warm himself.

“Be lucky you have on those garments. Mary bought you those. I spared you becoming naked so you could get a glimpse of the way things would be if you had never met her.”

“What are you talking about?”

“I’m saying, you’ve been given a generous gift. You can see how much your life depended on the woman you love.”

The chilling wind ripped through the thin layers of David’s clothes. What the hell was going on? This was too incredible to be real. It wasn’t happening, was it? A man who looked like Santa Claus was judging him, and now everything was gone?

“What happened to the house? I bought that house.”

“True, but Mary was the *reason* you bought it. You wanted her to live in a grand place. Besides, I doubt your Mary-less self could afford such a luxurious home.”

“What do you mean my Mary-less self?”

“Hello? Anyone home?” With his knuckles, Santa playfully knocked on David’s head. “You heard me. This is your life if you had never met Mary.”

Seemingly in a second, a magical glitter cloud transported them out of the cold and into a warm, dimly lit room. A small hovel of an apartment, from the shabby look of things. Wallpaper flaked off the walls, while the worn couch cushions had ripped in several spots, with padding showing through the thin fabric. Dirty bowls stood stacked on a nearby coffee table.

“Pitiful, isn’t it?”

“Where are we?” David asked.

“Your home.” Nick’s hand gesture added flourish to his statement.

“Good Lord, this is a dump. I wouldn’t live—”

The shadowy resemblance of David, himself, walked into the room.

With a shocked, questioning glance, David turned to Nick.

“These are but shadows of the alternate life you would have led. They can neither hear nor see us.”

David glanced at the poor soul walking around the deteriorated apartment. “So, what happened to...er...me to live like this?”

“You never met Mary. You never started your Internet business. You work at a video rental store during the day, and go to chat rooms at night. Adult chat rooms, mostly.”

“But, why didn’t I start the business? I don’t underst—”

Then he remembered. Mary had suggested the business, putting his technical computer knowledge to work.

“Just remembered, didn’t you?” Nick asked.

They watched the “other” David boot up his computer. Sure enough, in a few moments, he began surfing an adult website, checking out cam ads.

“He has a favorite, you know,” Nick added.

“Favorite what?”

“A favorite girl he likes to watch.”

A picture of a woman flashed on the screen. Her auburn hair fell in free-flowing waves over her shoulders. A slinky, black, lacy negligee barely covered her luscious curves. Her full, pouty lips looked seductive and kissable.

God, it was Mary.

“You mean to tell me, Mary is a cyber sex wench?”

“Yup, and she has a steady client in David. Every night, he watches her give pleasure to herself. That’s where all his money goes, aside from rent and food, of course.”

David stood in amazement as he watched his “other self” unzip his fly to release a straining hard-on. His “other self” stroked his cock as Mary smiled and charmed the camera, touching her large breasts, teasing the nipples beneath the see-through lace. Licking her lips brought a groan to all three men.

Seeing the other David obviously interested in his sexy wife, acting out an erotic play for the camera, was hard to bear. Hell, he had a huge hard-on. Well, both Davids did. Lucky for the “other” David, he got to stroke that painful erection. It seemed hardly a reason to envy this pitiful soul.

David glared at Nick, and asked in a terse voice, “Don’t you have presents to deliver tonight?”

“You forget. I’m magical. I have all the time in the world. My time with you will be only a fleeting moment in reality – a mere few minutes will have passed. How else do you think I can do my work?”

A feminine moan drew David's attention.

"What do you want me to do tonight, baby?" Mary asked from the computer speakers. "Want me to suck my nipples for you, first?" Through her negligee, she teased both her nipples, one per hand, pinching them into tight, pebble-hard berries.

The "other" David typed something with one hand as he stroked his cock with the other.

Mary laughed softly, a throaty sexy sound that sent thrills through David's body. "Mmm, that sounds wonderful, baby," she cooed. She pulled at the thin straps of her flimsy negligee, exposing her full breasts, dark aureoles surrounding the erect nipples. David's mouth watered to sample their lush beauty.

Continuing to pinch and pull at her nipples, she moaned once again. David's cock jumped in response. Her excitement just made it more painful. Damn, she was fine. A temptress. He didn't know she was capable of such delicious seduction.

"Other" David typed something else, which was met by another feminine giggle.

"Oh, yes, baby. I'd love to have you fuck me."

Mary came toward the camera, her figure blurring with the movement. She stripped away her lacy outfit and parted her legs to reveal her shaved mound. It filled the screen with its moist richness. Her love juices already glistened against the lips. She laid on a bed so David could see her full body in all its voluptuous loveliness. With her legs spread wide, she gave the camera a good view of her gaping, wet pussy. With one hand, she dipped her finger to the hooded button and lightly touched it, groaning as she rubbed the sensitive surface.

"Fuck me," the Davids whispered in unison, drawing a chuckle from Nick.

She moaned as she passed her fingertips over her labia, slick with her juices. Though Mary tossed back her head onto the mattress, David could see her excitement. Her breathing increased as she picked up the pace, masturbating for the "other" David. "Oh, yes, baby, feels so good. I bet your cock is so fucking hard and big right now. How

I'd love to have it rub against my clit, soaking it with my cream, getting it ready to fuck me."

David adjusted his cock, aching to be released, to spill forth. Mary was so incredibly hot. The "other" David must have thought so, too, since his own stroking increased.

She plunged her fingers into her slit as she asked him in a barely controlled voice, "Can I come for you, baby? Want me to scream for you as I come for you?"

David's alternate self typed a response, and an instant later, Mary shattered. Her weeping pussy clutched at her fingers, juices running over her moving hand, drawing out her orgasm. She screamed in ecstasy, and it was the most erotic thing David had ever heard. The "other" David yelled as he shot come from his cock, joining her in a mutual cyber-orgasm.

David turned away in frustration. God, he had just viewed his sexy, arousing wife make herself climax online for a stranger. He didn't know if he should be angry or intrigued. He hated the idea of her doing this type of work, let alone having all types of men watching her do the things to which only he had been privy.

Damn, he had really fucked up – big time.

## Chapter Three

"Quite a show, huh?" Nick clapped David on the back. The apartment faded into nothingness, and they once again stood in the empty woods where his house had once been.

"I sometimes forget how much she influenced my life. She made me a success."

"And you want to throw it away."

"Well, not really. But, she probably won't want me back."

"No?" Nick sighed and shook his head. "Boy, you are one of the densest men I've ever met. How can you say she wouldn't want you? She loves you more than you know."

A cold wind whipped through the trees, biting through David's thin robe as he shivered. "How could she want me after all this time?"

"She does. Would you like to see what would happen if you left her? Maybe that would beat some sense into that thick head of yours."

"What would happen to her, Nick?" David suddenly got a bad feeling about this.

As the glittery cloud once again transported them into another vision, walls appeared out of nowhere. David didn't think any amount of experience could prepare him for such a strange trip.

He was back in his house. Nothing was different. "I thought you said we'd see what would happen to Mary if I let her go?"

"We're five Christmases into the future. She would stay in the home you gave her."

Just then, Mary waltzed into the living room. She was gorgeous, wearing a silky teal robe tied about her waist, and matching slippers. She looked comfortable and sexy, yet somehow sad. It wasn't on her face, but her body language spoke louder than any words. She sat in David's favorite chair. Firelight danced across her bare legs and her hair reflected its fiery beauty. She looked like a fire goddess, so tempting.

She rested her chin onto her hand as she gazed into the flames. The corners of her mouth lowered, and a single tear rolled down her cheek.

“Why is she alone on Christmas Eve? I would’ve thought she’d surround herself with family.” David felt guilty over her silent crying. He yearned to reach out and brush away the tears as they slipped from her lashes.

“She chooses to remain alone, mourning for her lost love.”

Mary reached to the small table next to the easy chair for a short glass of amber liquid. Brandy? She took a large gulp, and bit back the fire trail that surely burned down her throat.

“And she drinks alone as well,” Nick added solemnly. “You know what they say about people who drink alone.”

“I don’t believe it. Mary *never* drinks. She can’t even handle a glass of wine on special occasions.” David stood beside her. When he tried to caress her face, his hand moved through her.

“I told you. These are but shadows. She can’t feel you.”

“Oh, David. Why? Why did you leave me?” she murmured as another tear ran down her face.

David crouched beside the chair, watching her cry over him. How could he have known she cared so much? His stupidity had made him blind to her feelings. Damn, he had *really* fucked up.

“Nick, why doesn’t she tell me she still loves me? Why sit here and suffer?”

Nick sighed as he placed a comforting hand on David’s shoulder. “Because she can’t.”

Straightening up, David turned to Nick. “What do you mean?”

Once again, walls melted away, but this time they stood outside in a valley. Hills covered in a white blanket of snow appeared peaceful. Too peaceful. An eerie chill ran

down David's spine. Something wasn't right. He felt out of place in the vast open field. "Where are we?"

Nick walked through the field, then stopped. He outstretched his hand. "Come here, David." A painful reluctance edged the big man's voice.

David slowly stepped over to Nick, afraid of what would come next. Damn, this was just like *A Christmas Carol*. A bit too much like it. Was he that much of a Scrooge, a miser of his own emotions?

Nick pointed to an area of the ground. The overwhelming chill through David's body left him numb. It wasn't because of the weather, but the creepy feeling of what lay at his feet.

"Fuck. I'm dead?"

"Sorry, son." Nick turned away to allow David a few moments alone.

"Wait. Tell me...tell me how I died."

Nick gave David a partial view of his bearded face. "Of a broken heart, boy. A broken heart."

Crouching, David touched the smooth gravestone to brush away the snow. Shivers ran up his arm. He pulled back his hand as though it burned. Standing up, he knew he couldn't bring himself to read the words. It was just all too much.

"Nick?" he called. The big man looked completely disgusted, and rightfully so. "Nick, tell me what happened?"

"Son, you divorced your one true love, then drank yourself into oblivion. Not a pretty end, I assure you."

Glancing back to the snowy grave, David asked, "Do I still have a chance to not end up like this? And Mary, can she be spared from her fate as well?"

As David asked, walls appeared around him, bringing them back into his living room.

“Of course, my boy. Asking such a question with such emotion, such loving purpose, shows me you aren’t beyond rehabilitation. You love your wife, and she loves you. Go to her and rekindle your love and passion. Live your lives in happiness. Don’t waste any more time. Life is short enough.”

Then in a swirl of glitter, Nick’s solid form evaporated. As a sparkle cloud swept into the chimney, David heard him exclaim, “Merry Christmas, David, and have a fruitful night!”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mary, wake up,” a kind, sweet voice said, breaking the silence.

Groggy, Mary opened her eyes and scanned the dark bedroom. Through her hazy, sleepy vision, she saw the silhouette of a woman.

Mary flicked on the table lamp, illuminating the room. There stood a shapely woman dressed in a skimpy red leather dress. It was so short, it ended at the apex of her thighs. Her full breasts filled out the dress to skintight perfection. She wore a matching red leather jacket trimmed in white faux fur. Her pale blonde hair was swept up and secured with a red ribbon. On her long curvy legs she wore black fishnet stockings and frilly red and white faux fur garters, complete with small red ribbons. She looked like a naughty Christmas elf, complete with a red velvet bag clutched in her hand.

“Excuse me, but who are you and what are you doing in my house?” Mary asked, an edge of fear to her voice.

“I’m Desiree Claus.”

“Well, of course you are.” What the...?

“You probably know me better as Mrs. Claus, wife to the big guy, Santa.”

“What?” Okay, this was very weird. Insane, actually.

Desiree laughed softly as she glided around to the side of the bed. “Do I surprise you, Mary?”

“You know my name?” Certifiable craziness.

“Of course I know who you are. I’m here to help you with your Christmas gift, to gain back the love and attention of your husband.” Sitting on the bed, she continued, “Well, he loves you, so you never lost that. He’s just a bit...narrow-sighted.”

“You can say *that* again.” Sitting up in bed, Mary looked at the woman. “How do you know he loves me?”

“Don’t worry about all that. Nicky is taking care of that end. I’m here for *you*.”

“Me? How can you help me?”

“First of all, we need to make you look like a seductress. Gain his attention by using the natural weapon every woman owns – her body. Then, we’ll add a few surprises.”

Mary cocked a brow and eyed the mysterious red bag. “What kind of surprises?”

Desiree smiled as she placed the bag between them. “Well, let’s take a look in here to see what we can find.” She winked.

## Chapter Four

Reaching into the red velvet bag, Desiree pulled out a flimsy black lace bustier and black G-string.

Mary laughed. "Oh, you've got to be kidding."

"What? I wear something like this for Nicky, and he loves it."

Somehow Santa getting hot and bothered was just not an image Mary could fathom.

As if reading her mind, Desiree added, "The image the world has of Nicky is hardly what he is at home."

"Oh..."

Desiree handed her the lingerie. "Put this on, then we'll go from there."

Mary looked at her full curves, still covered by the bed sheet, and her concealing nightgown. Though beautiful and sexy, it didn't compare to the see-through quality of this scrap of lace. "I can't wear this. I've got more body than you do," she said with her face lowered.

"Mary..." Desiree tilted Mary's chin to meet her eyes. "David loves you, and you have a body that turns him on. Use it to your fullest advantage. Trust me, he'll fall to the floor in awe."

"You think so?" Mary was never confident of her body, always being a bit on the rounded side.

"Love thyself, Mary." Desiree rose from the mattress, pulling back the covers. "Now, get out of bed and put that on. I've got some thigh-high stockings to match and a sexy pair of strappy high heels to go with it."

Suddenly eager to see what she'd look like, Mary leapt out of bed. Pulling the nightgown over her head, she didn't feel ashamed to undress in front of this magical woman, but anxious for help in becoming a temptress to David. The bustier covered,

albeit barely, her torso. The gently boned bodice pushed her ample breasts into soft, inviting globes. The lacy G-string covered her shaved pussy, and rode up between her ass cheeks. Small suspender straps dangled from the bustier to hook onto the thigh-high stockings. Glancing into the mirror over her vanity table, Mary stood amazed at the effect the simple change had made. She looked really sexy.

“We’re not done yet.” Desiree handed Mary the stockings. “Put on these, and here are the high heels.”

Mary slid on the stockings and attached the suspenders. The shoes fit perfectly, but were much higher than her normal and sensible one-inch heels. These had to be four inches high, at least! She attempted to keep her balance. Another look into the mirror, and Mary hardly knew herself. “Damn, who is that? That’s not me!”

“Sure is. It’s the new bedroom-seductress you! Poor David is going to faint away at the transformation of his wife into the sex goddess.”

“Let’s hope he stays conscious long enough for me to have sex with him.” Mary stepped closer to the woman, again careful to keep her balance. “It’s been so long since...since we made love.”

Desiree hugged her, the floral scent of her rose perfume filling Mary’s senses. “It’ll be okay. I don’t know how you lived without getting a bit of sexual satisfaction.”

Mary laughed and pulled away from her new friend. “Well, a vibrator comes in handy.”

The women laughed together. “Good. I’m glad you aren’t afraid to use accessories to help yourself. Speaking of which...” Desiree stepped to the bed. “Let’s fix your hair, then we can take a look in my bag for a few toys to play with.”

Desiree stroked Mary’s head, an oddly sensual sensation. Comforting, yet intriguing. The woman’s long red nails ran through her hair, lightly grazing her scalp, sending tiny shivers through her body. “You have gorgeous hair,” Desiree said in a husky voice. “So thick and silky.” She lifted the massive tresses off Mary’s neck and secured them with a hair clip, then worked some of the loose hairs to fall about Mary’s

face in soft waves. It was an elegant and romantic look, a stark contrast to the harder, naughty outfit she wore.

Mary felt alive and sexy for the first time in years. Amazing what a wardrobe change could do to make a woman feel appealing. She had never thought she could pull off the look, but then, there she was...incredibly hot.

"So, other than a vibrator, what other toys have you experimented with?"

Desiree glided her nails across the back of Mary's neck, bringing goose bumps along her arms and legs.

"Well, I never really went beyond the vibrator."

"Ever try ben-wa balls?"

"What's that?"

Desiree retrieved her bag of tricks and pulled out two silver balls connected by a string. "Ben-wa balls are one of my favorite secrets. I slip in a pair and clean the house, and when I'm done, I'm so damned horny..." She handed Mary the toy.

Mary just looked at them. How could a couple of balls get her horny?

As if reading her mind once again, Desiree said, "They swirl around inside you and clank together, vibrating through you. It's quite a rush." The woman shivered and smiled. "And, man, the orgasms can come unexpectedly, yet are very welcome. It's like walking around in a constant state of arousal."

"How about I keep those?" Mary said with a laugh. Those might be fun when going to the supermarket. That secret would be quite exciting as she did the mundane search for cucumbers.

Desiree rummaged in the bag. "Ah-ha!"

"What?"

"I have the perfect accessory to your outfit," she said with a wink, pulling out a black leather riding crop. "Oh, yeah, perfect," she cooed as she handed it to Mary. "Dominate his body and heart into submitting his love."

The women laughed as Mary tried out the crop against her thigh. The leather stung the area, turning the skin pink and hot.

“Try that on his ripe ass.” Desiree waggled her eyebrows.

“Punishment for neglecting his wife, right?”

“Exactly.”

“Oh yeah, this is going to be fun.”

“Don’t forget these, too.” Desiree lifted a pair of furry red handcuffs from the velvet bag. “And to make sure he stays put for his punishment, lock his wrists into these.”

“Oh, my.” Mary traced her finger over the soft fur. “I’ve always wanted a pair of these.”

“They’re fun. I like it when Nicky uses them on me.”

“Sounds like he can be naughty.” Mary giggled.

“Where do you think the saying ‘Naughty or Nice’ came from?”

They laughed as they plotted Mary’s seduction of her wayward husband. David was in for quite a night to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

David flopped down in his favorite easy chair, trying to soak in all that had happened. Sure, should be easy to digest. He had a visit from St. Nick, who took him on a *Christmas Carol*-esque trip. Or was it more like *It’s a Wonderful Life*? Probably a combo, really. But, how could he even tell anyone, let alone Mary, that he got a glimpse of what life without her would have been like? And a view of life after a divorce? Neither seemed promising or attractive.

So, now he knew—he had to do something to save his marriage. He hated the thought of Mary in pain, and he didn’t want to even think of being without her by his side. She had stuck by him through his business’s beginnings, and lived in silence of her current unhappiness.

The fireplace crackled with a renewed flame. Did he put on an extra log? He couldn't remember. Or had Mary?

Then he heard her. She wore some sort of heeled shoes, he determined, as her steps echoed on the bare wood floor in the hallway. Click, click, click. He closed his eyes and wondered how he could possibly face her. How could he even begin to make up with her?

She moved behind his chair. He could smell her spicy perfume. Different, yet exotic. Mmmm...

She placed her hands on his shoulders. A shudder of excitement shot through his veins. He had to make love to her tonight. It was a must. God, it had been way too long since he had plunged into her inviting wetness. Her standing so close and smelling so enticing, he had to make her his once again.

Right then, he decided to ease up his business duties. It was time to hand over more to his staff. He could afford to delegate more to keep his wife happy.

"Finished working for the night, David?" she asked in a sultry voice. When had he last heard her sound so...sexy?

"Yeah..." He gasped as her long fingernails grazed his face. His eyes drifted closed as he enjoyed the touch.

"Good, 'cause, I've got plans." She lifted his arms and softness wrapped around his wrists.

When he heard the click of metal, he realized he had been bound with fuzzy handcuffs. "What the—"

"It's about time you gave me your attention, David. And tonight, it won't waver. You're mine to do with as I please."

## Chapter Five

Mary had him right where she wanted him—at her mercy. After stepping around the chair to face him, she let his hands fall to his lap. She felt sexy, and a heated intent reflected in his eyes the moment he gazed at her. She had his attention. “Surprised?” She cocked an eyebrow. In one hand she held the black leather crop, which she slapped into her other palm.

“Uh, yeah...wow. You look...hot.” David seemed to be rendered nearly speechless. He wouldn’t be for long.

She leaned down to him, her hands braced on the chair arm. Her face only a breath away from his face, she whispered, “You’re about to learn the consequence for ignoring me all these years. Never again will that happen. Understand, slave?”

“Uh...yes.”

Straightening up, she cracked one of the armrests with the crop. “Yes, what?”

“Yes, uh...Mistress.”

She smirked, then strutted across the living room. She moved fluidly, knowing it would tantalize him. The high heels accentuated the curvy strength of her legs, and she used it to her fullest advantage. “I’m tired of being second in your life, David. No more. I refuse to step aside for anything. From now on, I am your first priority. My pleasure will be your duty.”

“Yes, Mistress.”

She gazed at him. He learned quickly. Too quickly. “You may speak and tell me how you feel about this.”

He hesitated a moment. “I think you’re right. I shouldn’t have let the business take me from you.”

Desiree mentioned that Nicky had taken care of David. Could this be easier than she had thought? Did he truly realize how much he meant to her? “Exactly. I’m glad

we're in agreement on that point. However –" She strode to the chair and leaned down toward him. "That hardly excuses the years of pain you've caused me. And for that, you'll have to be punished."

"Punished?" At her arched brow, he added, "Mistress."

Tracing the crop down his furry chest, exposed by his open robe, she said in a hushed tone, "Punished so it will never happen again." She teased one nipple with the crop's leather tip, then the other. His quick intake of breath told her she affected him. Of course, the bulge in his boxers was further evidence. "Now, on your knees, slave!" She backed away, standing before the fireplace.

"On my knees?"

"And strip off those shorts, too. Don't question me, slave!"

He looked at her, questions in his eyes, but rose from the chair. He stripped off his shorts, then kneeled on the floor.

She stepped around him. "Give me your hands."

He raised his arms.

She unlocked the handcuffs. "Now, take off your robe so I may look upon all of you."

He shed the garment, revealing his toned physique. A moan rumbled in her throat. God, how she missed his hard body pressed against her. With the leather crop, she traced the curve of his spine down to the crack of his firm ass. His muscles twitched.

"David, you have a wonderful body," she said appreciatively, then again secured his wrists in the fuzzy handcuffs. She stepped in front of him, putting her crotch inches from his face. "Can you smell my excitement?" She guided his head to her apex.

His breath felt warm and enticing as it grazed over her lace-covered pussy. *No...too soon. Must hold out longer before losing control.* But she remembered how, years ago, his tongue would bring her over the edge...

He groaned as his nose nuzzled her mons.

With a sharp slap across his buttocks with the crop, she commanded, "Enough!" She stepped back.

His breathing became ragged, and his body flexed as he fought for control. "Please, Mistress. Let me pleasure you."

"Soon, pet, soon. Right now, show me how much you worship me. Beg for my forgiveness. Kiss my feet and tell me how much you wish to please your Mistress."

His warm lips touched the toes of her left foot. Even through the stockings, the sensation felt highly erotic. His tongue flicked out over her sensitive digits, sending shots of prickly chills through her body.

"You're so beautiful, from your head right down to your toes, Mistress," he whispered, continuing to kiss her feet. "Please forgive me."

His tongue was already driving her wild. The telltale liquid heat gathered between her legs, and at the moment, all she wanted was for him to be inside her. *No...just a bit longer...*

"Now, I want you to lick me. Worship me with your tongue."

No sooner had the words left her mouth, when he proceeded to lick and kiss her ankles, one, then the other. He caressed her silk-covered skin with his mouth, the inside of her calves, then her knees. Moving upward, he stopped at the top of her thigh-high stockings. Catching the feminine fabric with his teeth, he snapped it back, stinging her flesh. Highly stimulated, she inhaled, anxiously anticipating his mouth on her throbbing sex. So wet and aching for his touch, she wanted him more than ever.

When his warm breath grazed her lace-covered cleft, she moaned. Running her fingers through his thick hair, she pulled him to her. Even through the thin scrap of fabric, his mouth felt hot against her skin. His teeth tugged at the lace, and after he pushed it aside, his tongue darted into her cleft. The slight grazing over her clit sent shivers through her body. It had been too damn long since he had tasted her.

He became more insistent, and his tongue licked her nubbin harder, twirling and tasting her heated juices. His mouth moved over her cleft, driving her closer to the

edge. When he groaned, she gasped, her intimate muscles contracted, and all restraint was broken. Waves of an intense orgasm spilled over her body. Clutching his head to her sex, she begged for more. Spasms swept over her. "Oh, yes, David."

The words she longed to say, however, remained unspoken. It had been so long since she had uttered words of love and devotion to him. She was scared to reveal her innermost feelings. Desiree had said he still loved her, but Mary wanted to be sure her heart wouldn't be broken. A few moments of passion were wonderful, but she wanted much more than his physical loving.

She needed his heart to make her complete.

\* \* \* \* \*

David liked the change in Mary. She not only looked the part of a dominatrix, but acted it. She was beyond sexy, beyond enchanting. She was completely bewitching, and she had him under her spell. She used her body as a weapon against his senses. He had always loved how she filled out her clothes with soft, luscious curves, her inviting feminine beauty for his pleasure alone. God, what an arousing thought. All her body was his to love and worship.

And now, she took command over their sex life. This change couldn't be more welcomed. He wasn't sure, however, he liked being handcuffed. He wanted to touch her, sample all her curves to the fullest, and the handcuffs prevented that.

Or maybe, they helped prolong his enjoyment.

Her scent filled him as he had tasted her pussy. A heady scent, and he'd missed smelling her excitement for too long. Never again would he miss out on her intoxicating perfume.

Mary held his head to her apex, urging him to pleasure her, and he was all too willing to comply. He only wished he could spread her legs farther apart so he could plunge his tongue into her tight channel. Having her come around his tongue while he massaged the pink rosebud of her ass, it would take all of his strength not to ram into

her with his straining cock. He wanted to grip her hips as he ground his tongue into her. But, he remained restrained, and left with a painful hard-on.

She recovered from her orgasm, his name music to his ears, then she eased her grip on his head. She moved away and stood with her back to him in front of the fireplace. With the orange glow silhouetting her figure, she never looked more desirable.

“Did I please you, Mistress?” he asked. He knew the answer, but he longed to hear her praise.

“Yes, David.” She slipped from her role when she turned to gaze at him, tenderness reflected in her eyes. “But that’s only the beginning...”

## Chapter Six

David moaned at the seductive sound of her voice. The promises of a night filled with passion with the woman he loved was all he wanted. The sole gift for Christmas.

Was that true? No, not entirely. He wanted more than one night of sex. He wanted many nights of sexual discovery with his beautiful, neglected wife. He'd make up to her all the times he ignored her needs by loving her body and soul.

Love. Yes, he wanted to earn her love again. He knew she loved him, but the words hadn't passed her lips. He didn't say them, either. Why? Maybe because it had been so long since he *had* said them. He was actually afraid to tell her those deep-set feelings. Perhaps later that night, when passions ran hot and sweaty, he could say those words on a heated impulse.

She moved behind him and released his hands from the cuffs. She threw them onto the chair and stepped around to face him. "David, I want you to fuck me."

He saw the intensity in her face. "You mean 'make love'?"

"No. I want you to take me hard and fast. Right here. Right now. I've waited forever to have you, and I'll be damned if I want it slow and easy."

God, that was music to his ears.

She slid her hands along her body, tracing the curve of her hips with her fingertips. Her usual neatly manicured fingernails took on a whole new sexy appeal. Her slow seductive movement held his gaze, entrancing him. One by one, she unhooked her garters. Slipping her fingers under the thong string, she eased the garment over her hips and smiled as he gaped at her. Then she bent over, drawing the thong down her legs to pool on the floor. She kicked it over to him, while he remained kneeling, mesmerized.

Mary lowered herself to the thick hearth rug. Leaning back on her elbows, she opened her legs. Pink feminine lips opened before David, inviting him to delve into her depths.

A low laugh sounded in her throat. "What are you waiting for, slave? Fuck me."

He nodded, then crawled toward her lounging form. "Yes, Mistress. I'm here to obey your command."

Hovering over her body, he looked down at her face. So beautiful in the firelight, she held his heart within her grasp. She'd had it right from the beginning.

When David's cock rubbed along the wet folds of her pussy, Mary moved her hips against him, urging him to enter her. "Take me. I need to feel you."

He touched her face with one hand, his fingertips relishing her soft skin. Without a word, he lowered his mouth to hers. She opened to him, her tongue brushing against his in growing feverish demand. Her arms wrapped around his neck, bringing him closer.

His cock, so hard and throbbing, paused at her entrance. He thrust into her. When Mary screamed at the invasion, he stilled.

"No...please...don't stop..." she pleaded.

"I thought I hurt you."

"I'm okay. Please," she gasped, "love me."

He kissed her roughly. His heart filled with adoration and love, and he wanted to please her. He wanted to love her.

She wrapped her legs around his hips, guiding him farther into her channel. He moved in and out of her satiny sheath, her heat burning his cock with each thrust. Only the sounds of their accelerated breathing and the crackle of the nearby fire filled the room. The thick rug under his knees hardly made padding for David's movement, but the slight amount of pain seemed worth the enormous pleasure of loving his wife.

It became frenzied, and Mary panted and met each of his thrusts. He tried to withhold his own pleasure, but she felt so good. When her vaginal muscles squeezed him as a climax overtook her, David couldn't resist. He pumped his cock into her, spilling his seed into her wet core. Grunting with each wave of desire, Mary screamed her own pleasure.

As their bodies regained control, David eased out of Mary and rolled to her side. Gathering her into his arms, he held her on the floor until their breathing returned to normal.

He lightly kissed her forehead. "You okay, honey?"

"Never better. I missed having you so much." She touched his face, tracing his bottom lip with her thumb.

"Agreed. Never again will I ignore you."

"Better not, or you'll force me to whip you into shape again," she said with a slight giggle.

"You can do that anytime. I like you taking charge. Makes me feel...needed."

"That's true. I *do* need you." She propped herself up on one of her elbows. "Promise you'll not let your work drive a wedge between us again."

"I promise. In fact, after Christmas, I'll hire an assistant and delegate more to the staff."

"Sounds like a good start. Sure you can do it?"

"Yes." He gently caressed her face. "Nothing is more important than you in my life." He kissed her on the lips. She tasted of cinnamon and peppermint, a heady, holiday combination. Completely delicious. "Can you ever forgive me?" he asked, whispering against her lips.

"Keep kissing me like that, and I may find it in my heart to forgive you."

He laughed. "Oh, so you haven't forgiven me yet?"

"Nope, but keep working on it."

\* \* \* \* \*

David stirred the dying embers and poked out the fire as Mary went into the kitchen to gather a few snacks to take upstairs. They had both agreed a soft bed would

be a better place to continue their re-acquaintance. He heard her high heels tap on the floor before she climbed the carpeted stairway.

“Bring up something to drink, okay, David?”

“Sure.”

Darting up, still fully naked, he rushed into the kitchen. He grabbed a bottle of white wine from the fridge, two glasses from the cupboard, then raced upstairs. Stopping outside their bedroom, he took in the romantic view of his wife, naked except for those black thigh-high stockings and the staggering high heels. Only the glow of a few candles set on the dresser and night tables lit the room. An inviting scent of cinnamon filled his nostrils. Must be some potpourri she had scattered in a bowl on the dresser.

On the night table stood a small platter of grapes, strawberries, a can of whipped cream, and a bowl of chocolate sauce. He walked over and set down the glasses. Dipping a finger in the chocolate, he smiled. “Warm chocolate? How?”

“I was warming some while we were...playing,” she said with a wink.

He popped the cork on the bottle of Chardonnay. “Expecting to use it on me earlier?”

“Well, a woman could hope. Besides, you know I love strawberries dipped in chocolate and whipped cream.”

He poured them each a glass of wine and handed her one. Raising his glass to her, he said, “Here’s to a new beginning.” After sipping his wine, he sat on the bed. “Shall I feed you, Mistress?”

She rested against a pile of pillows and took another sip from her glass. “Yes, slave, you may.”

After placing his glass on the table, he grasped a large strawberry and dipped it into the warm chocolate. He started twirling the strawberry over the bowl, allowing the excess chocolate to drip off, then thought better of it. Instead, he leaned over and

dripped the chocolate on Mary's naked breasts. She inhaled quickly when the sweet concoction made contact with her skin.

"I think my nipples need to taste that first," she said in a breathy voice.

David smiled and touched the tip of one of her taut nipples with the strawberry. Chocolate oozed over it. He slowly rubbed the fruit against the sensitive nub, gaining her moan.

Mary closed her eyes and gripped the sheets in an obvious attempt to control her body. After a moment, he brought the strawberry to her lips and she bit into the juicy fruit. A drop of the sweet nectar and chocolate caught on the corner of her mouth.

\* \* \* \* \*

David sat in wonderment as he watched her tongue lick it away. Such a sensual act in a simple gesture.

He brought the half-eaten strawberry to his mouth and took a bite. "Mmm."

She opened her eyes to slits to watch him enjoy their treat.

"Another?" he asked.

"Yes," she cooed.

This time he covered another strawberry, then straddled her hips. His cock gently brushed her cleft when he leaned over to coat her other nipple with chocolate. She arched her back and groaned at his teasing.

He brought the strawberry to her lips. She licked it. Her slow, seductive strokes almost made him lose all strings of control. Damn, her tongue moving over that berry was erotic. When she finally bit into the fruit, he wanted to plunge inside of her...

But no, he had to wait. She hadn't given him permission to go any further than feeding her.

"Mistress, your breasts look as if they need attention," he said in a husky voice, gazing upon the chocolate-covered globes. His mouth watered to taste her.

"You may lick off the chocolate. But take care, do not enter me...yet."

"Enter you? I wouldn't—"

"Nonsense. I feel your cock rubbing through my folds. You feel how wet I am for you?"

"God, yes." He grasped his cock, and in a slow caress, slid the purple head through her juices.

"Not yet, slave. Now, lick my breasts!"

## Chapter Seven

"How're they doing, Precious?"

Desiree clutched her fur wrap closer about her body. Up in the sleigh, sitting next to Nick, she gazed into a magical snowball, looking in on David and Mary's progress. "I'd say they're on the way to a better relationship. Mary's enticing him in a few new ways tonight. I think David likes her taking charge of their sex life."

Nick nodded. "Good. Has he told her he loves her yet?"

"Unfortunately, no. She hasn't, either."

"Hmm." He sat in silence as the sleigh soared higher. He was close to finishing the night's deliveries. Good thing, since the reindeer were getting tired. Sure they were magical, but they got fatigued after traveling the entire globe. Good thing some countries had different days for him to visit, like Holland. The Dutch had Sinterklaas Day, where he rode a white horse to deliver presents earlier in the month. Those little differences made his job much easier.

"How long should we wait for them to admit their love before intervening?" Desiree asked in a concerned tone.

"Give them until tomorrow. Let them enjoy the night of passion. After reaffirming their physical bond, the emotional and psychological bonds will be close behind. I'm sure of it."

"Hope so, Nicky. I'm worried for Mary. She loves him so much."

"David loves her, too. There is hope for them, Precious." He laid a gloved hand against her face. "Trust me."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mary had never felt so incredibly sexy. There she was, naked beneath her husband of seven years, trying new things to rekindle the spark in their dying marriage. For the first time in so long, she truly had hope of happiness.

David sucked her nipple, licking away every trace of the sticky-sweet chocolate. He teased her already-taut nipple with his teeth, creating pleasurable pain. At each lick, hungered excitement shot through her every nerve.

His body rubbed against hers, his tiny chest hairs brushing her nipples as he moved up to kiss her lips. He tasted of chocolate, and she moaned into his mouth. She just loved chocolate. Some people said it was better than sex. She had to laugh, because sex and chocolate were equally good, and having them together was heavenly.

She ran her fingers through his thick, long hair, relishing the feel of its smooth softness. She wanted to inhale him, fill herself with all of him, bonding her body and soul to him forever. God, how she missed having him love her.

He cradled her face between his hands and tenderly kissed her. Emotions bubbled over at each pass of his lips over hers. She burned to say the words to him, but still felt afraid. What if this was only one night of passion? Would things be different in the morning light?

The head of David's cock poised at her slick entrance; Mary gasped as its silky heat rubbed against her sensitive clit. He nudged open her legs more then thrust into her. Gently, he moved in and out of her passage, stoking the fire within with each stroke.

"Mary, I've missed you so much, honey. You feel so wonderful. God, I missed this," he said between his increasingly labored breaths.

His slow rhythm only made her burn for completion that much more. His words drove her closer to the edge, and she thought her heart would burst with the love she held there. "Promise me, David," she pleaded in a gaspy whisper, "promise to never let us drift apart again."

"I promise..." He grunted and pounded into her while his body climaxed. The sounds of his pleasure, the smell of his skin, and the feel of him within her was all too much. She met him over the cliffs of passion with an orgasm that led into another and another.

*I love you, David,* resounded in her mind, but again, the words remained unspoken.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning, Mary awoke alone.

After they had made love the previous night, they had gone into the shower together to cleanse off any remnants of the chocolate. It turned into another sensual rediscovery of their passions. As David fingered her folds, she stroked his penis. Their mutual masturbation brought on another round of lovemaking once they returned to bed. Afterward, Mary fell into a deep, satisfied sleep.

But now, she was alone.

Getting out of bed, she stepped to the closet and picked out a red angora sweater and a pair of black leggings. After dressing and slipping on black flats, she glanced in the mirror to brush her long auburn hair and apply a touch of make-up. The effect was soft and romantic.

But really, what good was it?

David hadn't told her he loved her. She hadn't uttered the words to him, either. They really needed to open those lines of communication before it was too late. Sex was wonderful, but she needed to hear the emotions, too. She needed to tell him that she loved him.

After going downstairs, she rounded the corner into the living room. She stopped dead in her tracks when she saw him leaning over his laptop, just like last night. Just like every night!

Damn it, nothing had changed!

Mary went into the kitchen to start preparations for the evening's dinner. Her family would be there in a few hours, and she just didn't know how to act. Right now she felt so angry she could beat the turkey to release some of her frustration. She doubted it would help much.

\* \* \* \* \*

David tapped away another email, setting up his delegation of duties to his staff. He had wanted to get things underway before Mary got up, but it was taking him

longer than he had first expected. It being Christmas, not many of his employees were online.

But his vice president was, and his emailed questions were making this longer to arrange. In light of the meeting the next day, David informed the Oxford reps that the meeting was rescheduled until after the New Year.

When complete, it would be the perfect gift for Mary. She had always said years ago when money was short, that the best gift he could ever give her was his time. And that was what he intended to do this Christmas.

That and another little surprise. He thought a nice trip to Hawaii would be most welcome, an opportunity for them to continue their rediscovery of the love and passion that had lain dormant for so long. He figured the announcement of his easing away from business and the trip would be perfect over dinner.

He heard pans clanging in the kitchen. Must be Mary getting ready to make her turkey and stuffing for the family get-together. He smiled as his mouth watered for her apple and raisin stuffing, his favorite dish of the meal.

Getting up, he walked into the kitchen and leaned against the doorframe, watching her slice the apples into small pieces.

“You know, I love your stuffing, Mar.”

She looked up at him, surprise written on her face.

He smiled warmly. “Good morning, sweetling. You look absolutely beautiful today.”

Smiling back, she seemed somehow relieved. “Thanks. I thought you were working.” Irritation laced her voice.

He had better tell her now, he thought. “I was emailing Dan, my Vice, about the changes I’m planning. He seems anxious to do more for the company, I think. So, it should all go pretty smoothly.”

She let out a breath and strode over to give him a hug. "Oh, David," she said, holding onto him, "I was so worried you might have decided to...well, you aren't, so that's a big relief."

He wrapped his arms around her and inhaled her scent. Apples and cinnamon. Good God, she smelled good enough to eat. "No, Mar. You're the number one priority in my life."

## Chapter Eight

Nick lay back in his bed at the North Pole Castle, glad to be finally home to relax. There, he could be himself once more.

Desiree waltzed into the room, dressed in a red, silky, short nightie, the kind he loved to see her wear. Her long blonde hair hung loose about her shoulders. No longer the naughty Christmas elf, she was a sexy woman, his sexy wife.

"Nicky, they're still not opening up to each other. I don't know why they're being so stubborn." She sat on the bed next to him.

"Oh, and I just got comfortable, too," he said, brushing a hand over his thick, dark chest hair. "Guess we should pay them another visit, huh?"

"Yes, I think they still need a bit of a nudge. This couple is amazing. They love each other but are both afraid to say so." She heaved a sigh. "Why do humans find it so difficult to love?"

"I just don't know." He grasped her shoulders and pulled her to him. She felt so warm and soft, and utterly feminine. "If only they all had what we have, Precious. One lifetime is not nearly enough for me to love you."

She giggled and leaned into his body, brushing her lips against his. "You know, as much as I like you as Santa, I prefer you as Nicky."

"Love Nicky right now, Precious, then we can visit the reluctant lovers."

"Mmm, your wish is my command."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mary dished up the steamed asparagus and mashed potatoes as David carved the turkey with an electric knife.

Patrice and Joe chatted with Mary's mother in the living room while their kids, Elizabeth and Jamie, played with their new toys. Santa had been particularly generous this year, or so said Patrice with a wink.

Mary had a pang of jealousy toward her sister because of their blessing of children. Mary wanted the same so much, but hadn't brought up the subject with David for years. Maybe with their new beginning, she could broach the subject once again.

Out of the blue, the doorbell rang. David and Mary looked at each other with quizzical glances.

"You expecting anyone else, David?"

"No, I was wondering if you forgot about inviting someone."

Patrice, the thinner, blonder version of Mary, stepped into the kitchen. "Hey, there's a Nick and Desiree here. They say they're friends you invited for dinner."

"Desiree?"

"Nick?"

The couple in question walked into the kitchen.

"Mary, everything smells so wonderful. Thank you so much for having us for dinner," Desiree said as she hugged Mary. "We're here to help," she whispered into Mary's ear.

"Thank you for everything." Mary felt better somehow that her new friend had arrived.

But it was Nick who caused her to take a second look. Whoa! What a hunk. Nick wasn't the jolly elf depicted on Christmas cards and kooky shaver commercials. He was more like a male calendar model. He stood just over six feet, with dark wavy hair and a neatly trimmed beard and mustache. When he smiled, his whole face lit up. He was charming and handsome, and an aura of happiness surrounded him.

He greeted David, who seemed to be slightly confused, with a hearty handshake. "Glad you could come, Nick," David said in an unsure tone.

After introducing Nick and Desiree to Patrice and the rest of the family, they all sat down to a delicious dinner.

During courses of turkey, apple and raisin stuffing, mashed potatoes, steamed asparagus and butter sauce and biscuits, the group chatted about everything under the sun, from sports scores, to the latest dress fashions, to the weather.

Once dinner was done, they all agreed to take coffee and pie in the living room by the fire. The kids were anxious to play with their toys, anyway. David led everyone into the living room while Patrice, Desiree, and Mary cleared the dishes.

"Just tell him, Mary," Desiree insisted as she brought in the empty plates to load in the dishwasher. "Tell him you love him."

"I can't. I don't know why I'm afraid..."

"Why are you afraid, Mar?" Patrice asked.

"Because I don't want to..." *Be hurt and heartbroken?*

"Mar, what? You think he doesn't love you?" Patrice laughed. "That man is so in love with you. Gosh, I could see it in his face tonight each time he looked at you."

"And he had a hard time looking at anything *but* you," Desiree added.

"Boy, if that isn't the truth." Patrice sorted the silverware into the utensil holder. "Just march out there and tell him."

"Really? You think I should?" Mary asked.

Desiree smiled as she laid a hand on Mary's shoulder. "Absolutely. Let him know he has your heart. Give him yours. But continue to take control in your relationship, like last night. Tell him your feelings right now."

Mary stood up straight and wiped her hands on a tea towel. "You're right. I have to take what I want, and I want him."

She marched into the living room where her family sat by the firelight sipping coffee. David stood by the couch table, where the pie and coffee had been set up.

"David, I need to tell you something," she said.

Everyone gazed at her with quizzical looks. David turned, and Mary never remembered him looking so handsome. Dressed in a tan sweater and dark brown

corduroy pants, he looked like a picture from a family Christmas card. She longed to run her fingers through his long brown hair.

“What’s the matter, Mar?” he asked above the crackling fire.

She stepped closer to him. “I need to...to tell you something.”

David neared her, too, as if drawn by the invisible force of their connection. He raised a hand to her face and stroked the soft skin of her cheek. “What is it?”

“Oh, David. It’s been so long. But, I have to tell you...” Tears filled her eyes. “I love you, David. Please, darling, say you love me, too.”

His genuine smile warmed her soul. He enclosed her within his embrace and breathed into her hair. “Mary, I love you more than ever.” He kissed her head, stroking her hair, and continued to whisper, “I love you. I love you. I love you...”

“David,” she whispered before tilting her head to receive his kisses. They burned her skin in pleasant sensations. Lips mingled while thrills pumped through her veins. After all these lonely years, yearning for the man she’d married years before, she once again had his heart.

“You never lost his heart,” Mary heard Desiree whisper.

“I think we should leave them to enjoy their Christmas together,” Patrice said. “Come on kids, say goodnight to grandma and...hey, where’s Desiree and Nick? I thought they were right here.”

Mary and David broke apart to glance around the room. Apparently, Nick and Desiree had left, their work being complete.

Patrice and Joe took the kids home and Mary’s mother stopped to hug her before leaving. “Have a Merry Christmas, dear.”

“Merry Christmas to you, too, Mom.”

Once again, David and Mary were alone in the big house. They climbed the stairs to their room, and began to undress.

“Wonder what happened to Nick and Desiree,” David said as he slipped off his sweater, revealing his furry, muscled chest.

“Desiree visited me last night to give me a few pointers.”

“Really? Nick visited me last night, too, to show me a few things. Although, he wasn’t like he was tonight.”

“Well, Desiree said he had both a public and a private image. I guess we saw his private one tonight.”

They climbed into bed and snuggled against each other. Mary enjoyed the feel of his naked skin gliding along her own. The simple sensation felt highly erotic and downright stimulating.

“Have I told you lately that I love you?” she asked with a small laugh.

“It must have been years since I heard it last.”

“It was only a few minutes ago.”

He gently kissed her lips. “Tell me again.”

“I love you, David.” She ran her fingers through his hair, savoring its softness.

“And I love you, my beautiful Mistress Mary.” He kissed her. “I liked you as my Mistress last night. I hope you continue to set me right in the future.”

“I’ll keep my crop and handcuffs nearby to make sure you never ignore me again.”

“I will always be your obedient love slave.”

“You’d better.”

\* \* \* \* \*

They laughed as Mary wrestled with him, flipping him onto his back and straddling his hips. She took him into her wet channel in one thrust and began moving him in and out of her body. David groaned at her assertiveness. It was a fresh change, and he liked it. Having her so dominating in their sex life was going to be quite a treat.

Watching her grind her hips into his, he lay in complete submission to her. Her breasts bouncing with each move mesmerized him, but the seductive motion of her hips working his erection grew absolutely intoxicating. And the new realization that she loved him brought him over the edge.

He climaxed so quickly, he had a second's worry she might not be ready. But then, her walls clinched around his cock, milking his seed with her own orgasm.

As he pumped into her, he tossed back his head and let out a primal yell, following with a loud exclamation of his undying love and devotion.

## Epilogue

Nine months later, Mary and David sat in a fertility specialist's waiting room. After trying for a few months, her gynecologist referred her to an endocrinologist. Basically, he had said, she wasn't ovulating.

This came as quite a disappointment to them, especially after all their hopes of having children were realized. Mary had sat down with David after Christmas and told him of her wishes. They got started that night, and all through their trip to Oahu in January. Then, the bomb hit five months later. She certainly couldn't get pregnant if she wasn't ovulating.

They had started coming to this specialist three months ago, and he immediately started Mary on a regime of fertility shots. As much as they liked the idea of trying to have a baby, the doctor suggested artificial insemination.

David wasn't sure about the idea, but Mary insisted it could be fun. When it came time for David to give a sample, Mary went with him to lend a helping hand – literally.

As they'd leave the office after her insemination, they'd giggle about the whole thing. This last time, they had joked about throwing a fertilization party. David would lean down to her abdomen and say, "You guys, hop to it in there and do some mingling!"

Now, they sat in the waiting room once again. Although this time, they weren't there for an insemination. Mary had missed her period and had bouts of nausea. A home pregnancy test came up positive, and they were ecstatic. The doctor, however, had wanted to see them again. This time, they were going to do an ultrasound. Apparently, this type of treatment had higher odds for multiple births.

"Mr. and Mrs. Bradley, you can come on in," said a nurse dressed in light blue scrubs.

They followed her through the labyrinth of halls to an exam room, where Mary took off her pants and waited.

"Think they'd mind if I do an exam first?" David asked with a smile.

"Oh, please. This is about as unromantic as you can get."

"Can't blame a guy for trying. After all, you're on that table, all ready for..."

Just then, the doctor walked in with the nurse.

"Dr. Wilson, what do you think?" David asked, making a quick recovery.

"Well, let's take a look and see what we've got going on in there."

The nurse, a brunette in her forties, flipped off the light as the doctor sat on the rolling stool.

Mary lay against the sterile-feeling, and very uncomfortable, exam table, waiting for the invasion of that ultrasound wand.

"Okay, let your knees fall open and take a deep breath. This is going to be cold."

Damn, it was. Mary gasped and held David's hand. He was such a wonderful husband, true to his word from so many months ago. His love never wavered and they were stronger than ever. Going through infertility was actually a bonding experience for them. She never loved him more.

"Well, lookie there," the doctor said, aghast at what appeared to be a lump on the ultrasound monitor.

"What?" David sounded more nervous now. Jokes aside, he was very vulnerable.

"Two heartbeats. Looks like you guys are having twins. Congratulations!"

"Twins." David said in amazement.

"Well, we wanted kids." Mary laughed as the doctor pulled out the wand.

Later, they went to a local Denny's and ordered breakfast. So what if it was the afternoon? Breakfasts were the best thing on the menu.

"Twins," David said, still in amazement.

"Sounds like it." A feminine voice said from behind Mary.

“Desiree!” Mary got up and hugged her friend. “I can’t believe it! What are you doing here?” She glanced over Desiree’s shoulder to see a tall and handsome Nick smiling at her. “Hi. Nice to see you again.”

Desiree let go of Mary and said hello to David. “Well, we heard the good news, so we had to pop by and congratulate you both. Twins. Very exciting.”

Mary sat down and Desiree slid into the seat next to her. Nick shook hands with David, then sat beside him.

“I’m still in shock.” Mary laughed as she lovingly touched her stomach.

“Tell me about it,” David quipped.

Nick nonchalantly looked over the menu. “Hey, it won’t be bad. You guys will make great parents. Why do you think we tried so hard to keep you together?”

“You mean you knew?” David asked.

“Of course. I’m St. Nick. I know all.”

Desiree laughed. “Oh, please, you do not. But this time, he did know about the twins. Only through your love would you both stick it out to get this far. We knew it would be a rough road with the special treatments. Only the strongest of marriages survive those trials.”

Mary smiled at David and reached for his hand, welcoming the comforting warmth. “I’m glad we did work through the problems to have such a wonderful outcome. I don’t know how we can ever repay you both.”

Nick waved for the waitress. “You can buy me a Grand Slam breakfast. I’m starved.”

They all burst into laughter, and proceeded to order.

When they left the restaurant and Desiree and Nick drove off in a shiny Christmas-red convertible, David turned to Mary. “They are proof that, with a bit of Christmas magic, anything is possible.”