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The Ornament  
Dana Marie Bell

*Holiday eBook Freebie*

The Ornament: Parts One, Two and Three  
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# The Ornament

## *Part One: Max and Emma*

By Dana Marie Bell

“Oh, Christmas tree, oh Christmas tree, why don’t I know the stinking words. Ya dada da, ya dada da, nobody knows the stinking words.” Behind her she could hear her partner Becky giggling. She paused in hanging the evergreen garland from the mantle over their fireplace. “Oh please. Do you know them?”

“No. That’s why I don’t sing it.”

Emma shook her head, unable to hide her happy grin. Max had hinted that he had something special he wanted to share with her and she couldn’t wait to find out what it was. “When do we close again?”

“Emma!” Becky shook her head. “Christmas Eve is still two days away.”

“Your point?”

“Didn’t you say Max was hinting at something special for then?”

“Yes.”

“So why are you so hyper now?”

“Hello! Max and surprises.” She finished hanging the garland, tweaking it slightly before stepping back with a satisfied nod. “Last time he surprised me I found myself mated to him and contemplating kitty condos.” She tilted her head, studied the garland, and tweaked it one last time. “And because of the mating the surprise isn’t going to be something like, ‘That chick over there is having my love child’, so it can’t be bad, right?”

Becky was silent.

Emma turned to stare at her friend, suddenly worried. “Right?”

Becky shrugged her head down.

“Becks!” Now Emma was worried. Becky looked torn, and guilty as hell. “He can *not* tell me that.” *Can he?*

“Oh no! No, of course not,” Becky laughed nervously. “No way.” She scurried into the back room. “Need more tinsel!”

Emma blinked. Dread settled into her stomach like a lead lump. *Oh, no.*

What *was* Max going to surprise her with?

Max stared down at the little black box and grinned. “That should do it.”

“Gah, I hate setting these things up.” Simon stood, stretching out his back before shaking himself all over.

“But it’ll be so worth it once it’s done.” Adrian handed around coffee, sipping from a steaming mug when each man had his own. “Besides, once you plug it in it’s going to look bitchin’.”

“You think the girls will like it?” Simon sat down on the step, running his hands around the mug. It was freezing out.

“They’d better.” Max picked up the plug. “Ready?”

“Ready.”

“Light ‘er up.”

Max plugged it in.

His house lit up like a gaudy bawdy house. Red, green, blue and white lights twinkled merrily. Rattan deer, their innards lit, moved their heads up and down with mechanical precision. And a blow up snow globe type... thing contained a spinning Santa and blowing paper that was supposed to be snow. He even had a glowing baby Jesus, safe in his plastic manger. “It looks. Hmm.”

“Like Rudolph threw up all over your house.”

He glared at Adrian. The man was smart enough to throw up his hands and back off.

“Thank God I picked white lights.” Simon’s head ducked into his coat as a snowball came flying at him.

“Shaddup.” Max studied his yard, frowning. “Maybe I went a *little* overboard.”

“At what point does it go from ‘overboard’ to ‘Kmart blue-light special’? Because I think we’re there.”

Max turned to Simon and growled. “Asshole.”

“Emma might get jealous.” Simon batted his lashes at Max, earning himself another snowball.

“We don’t have time to fix it now. We still have my place and Adrian’s to do.”

Max grumbled and headed for his Durango, worried how his Curana was going to react to what he’d done to their house. Emma wasn’t exactly shy about letting her opinion be known. He got in the car, following his friends over to Simon’s house.

He only hoped she’d be willing to understand what it was he was trying to say. And maybe take some of it down. *It’s the six foot tall snow globe. If I remove that, it should be fine.*

*Now to decorate Simon’s house.* He patted the bag of colored lights on the passenger seat. *White lights my ass.*

“What the fuck?” Emma got out of her PT Cruiser and stared at the house she now shared with Max. She pulled out her cell phone and called Becky. “Becks?”

“Yes?”

“Santa smoked a reefer and decorated my house.”

“What? Hold on, I’ll be there in a few minutes.”

Emma hung up the phone and stared at her home blinking garishly in the night. She’d envisioned the beautiful old craftsman house in twinkling white lights, a Christmas tree just visible behind the drapes. Perhaps a garland draping the fireplace with two stockings, gold for her, silver for Max.

What she hadn’t pictured was a glowing baby Jesus and a scary, half blown up snow globe.

A car door shut behind her. “My God. Who hit the Kmart blowout sale?”

The two women exchanged a look. “Max.”

“Oh, my God. Simon and Adrian were spending the day with him.” Becky raced back to her car. “I’ll call you!”

She waved by as her phone rang. “Hello?”

“Emma?”

“Hi, Sheri.”

“Do you know where the men are?”

“No. Why?”

“I need to kill Adrian.”

Emma bit her lip. “Did they decorate your house?”

“How’d you know?”

“Lucky guess.” Emma didn’t know if she should laugh or cry.

“I need my darkest glasses to look at my front lawn.”

“I have a baby Jesus night-light on mine. And I think the space shuttle could land safely on my driveway, it’s lit so bright.”

“Oh, dear.”

Her cell phone beeped. “Hold on, I’ve got another call.”

“I’m going to *kill* him.”

“You too, Becks?”

“Yup.”

“Sheri too.”

“Frank’s?”

“On my way.” She clicked the phone over and relayed the invitation to Sheri, offering to pick her up.

“I’m in.”

Emma got into her car. “Be there in a few.” She hung up and pulled away from the house, wondering if Lion-O’s dead body would fit in the snow globe.

“What the hell were they thinking?” Becky bit into her burger, a savage frown on her face. Emma wondered if she was picturing Simon’s ass.

“That’s just it. They couldn’t have been.” Sheri, the calmest of the three, took a sip of her double-chocolate milk shake. Sheri was legally blind. The fact that she found her mate’s house decorations an eyesore said a lot about what Adrian must have done to their home.

“So, what are we going to do about it?”

“Not a clue.”

“No idea.”

Emma bit into her own burger, thinking hard. “We could just take most of it down.”

“Yeah, but, think about it.” Sheri leaned forward, her expression morose. “How long do you think it took them to put all that up?”

Emma and Becky exchanged a horrified glance. “You’re right. We should make them take it down.”

“No, not that! Do you think any of them would have gone to all that trouble, put all that stuff up, doing three different houses in one afternoon, if they didn’t think it would please *us*? They must be exhausted.”

Becky collapsed back into the booth. “Damn. She’s right.”

Emma resisted the urge to bang her head against the Formica table. “Hell.”

“Yup.”

“We have to live with it.”

“And next year make sure we put up the decorations.”

“Amen.” The three women clinked their glasses together.

“Frank!”

“Hey, Emma, what can I do for ya?”

“I, no we, need three to-go orders.”

Three bags landed on the table. She looked up at the sweaty, grinning face of Frank. “Thought you might.”

She wasn’t here. Her car wasn’t in the garage and her purse wasn’t on the kitchen counter. Her scent wasn’t in the bedroom. “Fuck. Maybe I went too far.”

She wouldn’t really break out the grapefruit spoon. Would she?

His ears caught the sound of the garage door opening. He took a deep breath, pouring his mate a glass of wine. He stared at the tastefully decorated Christmas tree and sighed. He just hoped it would mellow her mood. If not, he was one dead kitty.

Emma stepped into the kitchen, a white bag in her hand. The scent of fresh burger and fries wafted from the bag, causing his stomach to rumble. “Hey, sweetheart.”

“Max.”

*Oh, not good.* That careful tone of voice could only mean trouble. “Wine?” He held out the glass, watching as she stepped closer to take it. “Am I in trouble?”

She sipped, putting the white bag in his hands. “I’m not going to lie to you. I thought about it.” She headed to the kitchen table and sat, pushing out a seat for him. “But, no.” She smiled wearily. “I know how much trouble you went through to do this for me. For us.” She laid her hand over his, and his heart stuttered. “But next year you’re waiting for us to do it together or there *will* be consequences.”

He laughed at her narrow-eyed glare, digging into the bag with gusto. “Yes, dear.”

She smiled, sipping her wine as he ate. They discussed their days, hers hectic, his less so. When it came time to relax, he pulled her into the great room.

“Oh, my.”

He grinned with satisfaction as she approached the tree he’d set up near the fireplace. The way the house was set up she hadn’t been able to see it from the kitchen. He’d decorated it in white and gold, the white lights twinkling softly next to the crackling fire. Two white and gold traditional stockings graced the fireplace, his name embroidered on one, hers on the other. “Oh, Lion-O. It’s perfect.” She turned on him, suspicion highlighting those pretty brown eyes of hers. “If you can do this, why did you do that?” She pointed out the front window.

“Surprise?”

Her head tilted, obviously confused. But like the cat she was, she was curious now. He settled in on the floor in front of the fire and patted the rug next to him.

“You are up to something.”

“What makes you say that?”

“Because I know you, Lion-O. You’ve got that smug male ‘I know something you don’t know’ look on your face.”

That was the joy of having his mate by his side. Even though they’d only been together two months she really did know him, better than anyone alive. He shrugged, trying to look innocent as he sipped at his wine.

“Max.”



He slipped his arm around her shoulders, delighted when she snuggled in to him. No matter how upset she was she always snuggled into him. “What?”

“Is this somehow part of my Christmas Eve surprise?”

He kissed her pert nose. “Why wait for Christmas?” Her eyes went wide as he nodded towards the tree. “There’s something special in the tree for us. See if you can find it.” He smiled indulgently as she practically ran him over, scrambling for the tree and examining it inch by inch.

“Ah-hah!” She gently pulled a golden glass ornament off the tree. Etched across the front was *Max and Emma 2009*. “Huh?”

“Look closer.”

She turned it over in her hands, her fingers stroking the hinges. “Max?”

“Open it.”

She worked the latch with shaking fingers. Inside, nestled on a bed of velvet, was a round diamond solitaire.

“Marry me.”

She looked up, her eyes dazed, tears pooling. “You already asked me, remember?”

He shook his head. “Not like this.” He got up on his haunches, sitting back on his heels. He took the ring out of the ornament, holding it up. “No fire, no wine, no twinkling lights.”

“Oh, Max.” One crystal tear slipped down her cheek.

He reached over and brushed it away. “An argument in my Durango is not the way I wanted to ask my mate to marry me.” He waved his hand, taking everything in that he’d done that day. “There will be times when I annoy you. Times when I aggravate you beyond belief. Times when I go overboard and you want to kill me.”

“And times when you touch my soul.”

He nodded. “I love you, Emma.” He slipped the ring on her finger. “Say yes.”

“Oh, Lion-O. You are *so* getting laid tonight.”

He threw his head back and laughed as she threw herself into his arms. “That is not a yes.”

“You want a yes?” Her eyes turned gold as she stared up at him through her lashes.

His sunshine-blue eyes turned gold. He licked his lips, the smile still turning up the corners. “Say it, Emma.”

She purred, rubbing her breasts against his chest. The diamond ring twinkled in the firelight. “Make me.”

“My pleasure.”

Emma gasped as Max licked a line up her neck, ending at her earlobe. She clamped her teeth together, determined to play the game to the final, gasping end.

She was going to enjoy having him wring a “yes” from her.

*Making love to this woman just keeps getting better and better.* They’d shed their clothes slowly, his Curana teasing him as the firelight played over her chest. Max nipped at Emma’s breast, chuckling softly when she whispered, “Oh, boy.” He sipped around her nipple, tasting her, teasing her, but leaving the best part for last.

God, he loved her breasts. He could spend eternity with his face buried between them.

“Are you a dog or a cat?”

He glared up at her, his nose buried in her cleavage.

“You’re snuffling.”

His head popped up. “I am not!”

“Are so!”

“Am not.” He took a deep breath. “I’m enjoying my mate’s endowments.”

“You’re drooling is what you mean.”

“I do *not* drool.”

She shrugged, her delectable breasts bouncing. “If you say so, Lion-O.” She gave a delicate yawn. “Let me know when you’re done admiring my assets.” Her eyes closed, but her mouth was curling at the edges.

*Oh, no you don’t.* Max tickled Emma, loving the way she squealed and squirmed under him. Love and laughter lit those dark eyes of hers, a sight he never grew tired of. “Still feel like sleeping?”

Before she could answer he licked roughly at one pouty nipple. “Uh...”  
“Take your time.” He sucked the bud into his mouth, strumming it with his tongue.

“No. No, I’m awake.”

She sounded breathless. *Good.* “Glad to hear it.” He switched to the other nipple, giving it the same treatment.

And then she did that thing that always managed to drive him wild. Her head tilted back and to the side, baring her throat, her arms over her head. The vulnerable submission in the gesture always managed to bring the beast out in him.

He watched as her chest bowed, offering her breasts to his mouth. He took advantage, feeding from them, his fingers delving into the wet heat of her pussy. Her hips arched, accepting his invitation as he fucked her with three fingers.

She was moaning, biting her lip, on the edge of orgasm.

He stopped, pulling his fingers from her wet core and his mouth from her breast. “Do you have something to say to me?”

Her golden eyes narrowed. “Fuck me.”

He chuckled, delighted at the demand in her tone. “Not quite, my Curana.” His fingers stroked her clit and she groaned. “Well?”

“Fuck you?”

“Soon.” He lined his cock up with her opening. Taking himself in hand he stroked the head up and down her slit, hissing at the sensation racing down his spine. “Well?”

“Fuck *us* sounds schizophrenic. Either that or ménage a trois-ish.”

He growled, sliding the head of his cock into her pussy. “No ménage a trios-ish.”

“Okay.”

He began sliding into her with a shallow series of thrusts, never completely entering her.

She whimpered. “Please?”

“Please what?”

She growled, grabbing him by the ears. “Please fuck me before I break out the grapefruit spoon!”

He threw his head back and laughed, slamming into her so hard his balls slapped loudly against her ass. “God, I love you.”

She snarled, bucking her hips. “Now, Lion-O.”

“Anything for my Curana.” He began fucking her in quick, hard jabs, no longer in the mood to play. He was much more in the mood to come.

But not before he got her to say the words. He reached down, stroking her clit in time with his thrusts, pushing her back to the edge of orgasm.

“Yes! Oh, God, yes!”

The feel of her coming around him drove him over the edge. His teeth pierced his mark on her neck, sending her even deeper into the spiral of her orgasm. He poured himself into her, her spasms wringing every last drop from him as stars burst behind his eyelids.

He collapsed on top of her, panting, exhausted, and loving the feel of her still quivering around him. She was the miracle he’d never thought he’d find.

Emma stroked her mate’s sweat-damp hair. “Yes.”

Max smiled against her neck, purring.

“By the way, don’t you think shoving a light bulb up baby Jesus’ butt and plugging it in is just a *little* sacrilegious?”

“*Emma!*”

She giggled.

*Oh yeah. Life is very good.*

# The Ornament

## *Part Two: Simon and Becky*

By Dana Marie Bell

“Holy crap. I didn’t think it would turn out like *this*.”

Simon stared at his house, glaring at the massive amounts of colored lights Max had snuck up on the roof. “And since when am I Jewish?”

“What?” Max finished boxing up the leftover lights, shoving them into the passenger seat of his Durango. Simon had no doubt those lights would wind up all over Adrian’s house.

“Isn’t that a Star of David on top of my house?”

Adrian nodded. “Yeah. Isn’t Becky Jewish?”

“Uh, no.”

Adrian shrugged. “Oh. Sorry.”

“I don’t know why you’re complaining.” Max shoved the box into the trunk of Adrian’s car, stretching his back out when he was done. “You saw what we did to my house.”

“Yeah, but that was *your* house. And at least there we got the religion right.” He stared at the light up animals decorating his lawn. Becky was going to kill him over the giraffe alone. “Maybe we should take the giraffe down.”

“Why?”

Simon turned and stared at Adrian. Didn’t the man *know* her? “Because Becky is going to shoot me in the face with a bazooka, that’s why.”

Adrian slapped him on the back, no doubt trying to make him feel better. “Becky doesn’t have a bazooka.”

Simon stared at Adrian. “You really *don’t* know her, do you? For this, she’ll go out and find one.”

“Bwacawk!”

Simon glared at Max. Max had his thumbs tucked in his arm pits and was flapping his elbows. “You did *not* just call me chicken.”

“Aw, who’s afraid of his widdle mate?”

Simon snickered. “You are.”

Max stopped, looking concerned. “True.” He shook himself. “Too late now, though.”

“Well, I don’t know about you two but I’m ready to go do my house.” Adrian rubbed his hands together. “I can’t wait to see Sheri’s face when she gets a load of the penguin Ferris wheel.”

“Let’s just hope the women don’t bury us under it.” Simon walked towards his truck, ignoring the shuffling feet behind him. “C’mon, wussies, let’s go get this over with.” *Because we may not live long enough to give the girls their real presents.*

Becky answered her cell phone before it had finished ringing. She was just turning down the street, heading towards the house she shared with Simon.

“Becks?”

*Emma! Guess she found her surprise.* It took every ounce of her willpower not to snigger. “Yes?”

“Santa smoked a reefer and decorated my house.”

Becky bit back a laugh. “What? Hold on, I’ll be there in a few minutes.”

She turned her car around and headed for Max and Emma’s house. She already had a clue what she would find. Simon had filled her in a little bit and told her how to react.

Watching him craft the special ornament for Max’s Christmas tree had been a rare treat. Simon didn’t often allow her into the furnace, but that day he’d made an exception. Those large hands of his had shaped the globe, his dark eyes intent on what he was doing. Watching him etch the glass and adhere the curlicues, surrounding the pair’s name, had been an incredible turn-on. And she’d thanked him in the best way possible, too. She tingled all over just thinking about how they’d made love that night.

She pulled up outside what used to be Emma's stately house. She could barely contain her giggles at the sight of the glowing baby Jesus and the light up snow globe. "My God. Who hit the Kmart blowout sale?"

The two women exchanged a look. "Max."

*That's my cue!* "Oh, my God. Simon and Adrian were spending the day with him." Becky raced back to her car. "I'll call you!"

Of course, she wasn't planning on calling. She figured Emma would be too busy chewing a certain cat's ass, right before said cat chewed back.

She turned down her street once more, glaring at the garish lights someone had put up along their house. *Might as well light the roof with "Santa Park Here". Sheesh.*

The closer she got to home, though, the lower her heart sank. The overly bright house looked suspiciously like... *No. Oh, no. He wouldn't.*

He had. Light up animated animals were dotted all over her lawn. *The circle of life has apparently found our power outlet. And why the fuck is there a Star of David on my roof?* She wasn't exactly the most church-going member of the community, but you'd think Simon would know what religion she was. After all, she knew exactly who was going to officiate at his funeral.

She picked up her cell phone and called Emma. "I'm going to *kill* him."

"You too, Becks?"

"Yup."

"Sheri too."

*What?* This little joke had gone a bit too far if they'd done the same to Sheri and Adrian's house.

Becky checked the clock. *Damn. Need to eat.* Simon was relentless about making sure Becky ate at appointed times, thanks to her hypoglycemia, but hell if she was going to be here waiting for him with a home cooked meal. Not after that... *travesty* on her front lawn. She wasn't even going to go into the fact that he'd set up some sort of sound system and was playing *Oy To The World* at top volume. "Frank's?"

"On my way." Emma hung up.

Becky glared at the six foot tall light up giraffe. "Oh, Garfield. You are one dead kitty."

She ignored the little voice in her head that asked how many ornaments Simon had made. He'd spent at least a couple of days in the furnace without her. Could he have...?

She wasn't about to hope for that. Not yet, anyway. It was way too early in their relationship for Simon to have made her one of *those*.

Wasn't it?

She pulled her VW Beetle into the driveway, wincing at the electric menagerie on her front lawn. Dinner had gone a long way to calming her down, but just hearing Here Comes Santa Claus sung by the Chipmunks was enough to set her off again. She did her best to ignore it as she opened the garage door, pulling the Bug into the space next to Simon's big truck. *Good. He's home. I can kill him now.* Her hands shook as she turned off the ignition.

*How many?*

She went into the house and headed straight for the great room. And then stopped dead, stunned.

Becky stared at the red and green Christmas tree, her jaw hanging open. He'd decorated it in delicate hand-made glass ornaments she just knew he'd made himself, making it that much more precious to her. Crisp white lights lit clear red and green bulbs graced with lacey gold filagree. Pale crystal drops, light red and pale green, sparkled in the twinkling lights. The entire tree was a testament to Simon's artistic senses. A glass and gold star sat atop the tree, a steady light shining through it.

His work was always so gorgeous. Her heart ached at the thought of all the work that had to have gone into each and every decoration, even as it sank over the knowledge that he probably hadn't made *them* a "special" ornament.

The man himself sat on the sofa, a smirk playing around his lips. "Welcome home, sweetheart."

"Simon."

"What?"

She stared at the big. "Were you guys drunk when you did the front lawn?"

"Nope."



“Then could you please explain what happened?” *Because “what happened” was only supposed to have happened at Emma’s.* Becky knew what Max was up to, but since when had Simon decided that three and a half foot light up elephant looked *good*? And she just couldn’t bring herself to look at the four foot tall light up giraffe in the Santa hat.

He got up and stared at the front lawn where blinking penguins danced around light up presents, dancing to a jaunty Chimpunk Christmas. “What’s wrong with it?”

“*Simon!*”

He gave her big brown eyes, pouting a little. “You don’t like it? I worked so hard on it.”

She ground her teeth together. “I love it.”

He grinned, crossing the room to pull her into his arms. “Liar.”

She blew her curly hair out of her eyes. “Well, the tree is gorgeous.” She looped her arms around his neck, offering her mouth up for a kiss.

He took her invitation, kissing her sweetly. “Well, the front lawn was the bad surprise. Want the good one?”

She gasped, putting her hand dramatically to her chest. “We’re pregnant?”

He went white, his face lit up by trepidation and hope. “We are?”

She gulped. *Wow, I didn’t realize he wants kids already.* “No.”

He slumped. “Are you trying to kill me?”

“Surprise!”

He rolled his eyes. “Do you want your present or not?”

Her eyebrows shot up. “Present?”

He leaned over her. “It’s better than chocolate.”

“There’s only one thing I can think of that’s better than chocolate, and I’m not sure you’re getting it until you clean up the front yard.” *Liar.* One look at the tree had guaranteed him pretty much anything he wanted, despite the front lawn.

His hand stroked her ass, pulling her into him. His dark eyes sparkled with gold flecks. “You sure about that?”

She glared at him even as her heart leapt. “What are you up to, Garfield?”

*Because if he’s up to what I think he’s up to...*

He let her go, crossing his arms over his chest. "I left you something on the tree. It's round and shiny and shaped like a ball. Think you can find it?"

"Ha ha."

He stared at her, one dark brow rising in challenge.

"You're serious?"

He nodded.

She turned and stared at the tree. "You made us one of the ornaments."

"Smart girl. Think you can find it?"

She rolled up the sleeves of her sweater and dived for the tree, ignoring his chuckles.

It didn't take her long to find the one golden ornament on the tree. The outside had *Simon and Becky 2009* engraved on it. Little gold hinges and a golden latch let her know the ornament was made to be opened. She dropped to her knees, cradling it like the precious gift it was, a tangible sign of his love, made by his own hands. "Oh, Simon." She smiled up at him, loving the soft look in his dark eyes.

"Open it."

She flipped the latch with shaking hands. Inside, nestled on green velvet was a white gold and diamond ring. It was a beautiful, vintage looking ring, with pave set diamonds and ivy leaves engraved on the band. "Oh."

She looked back up to find him kneeling next to her. "Better than chocolate?"

"Yes! Yes yes yes!" She threw herself into his arms, hugging him tight.

"I haven't asked yet." She could hear the laughter in his voice.

She pulled back. "Has that ever stopped you before?"

His grin heated. He leaned in and kissed his mark on her neck, the mark he'd given her without asking permission. "No."

"That's okay though." She closed her eyes, preparing herself for the feel of his teeth. "Sometimes it's good to ask."

She gasped, shuddering, as his teeth touched her skin, his body bearing hers down on the floor. *You know what? It can wait.*

And then his teeth were piercing his skin and she couldn't think at all.

She shuddered beneath him as his teeth pierced her skin. The low moaning sound she made as she came nearly had his cock jumping out of his jeans. Simon thanked God his prickly little mate hadn't immediately castrated him. Hell, she'd even brought him dinner. He could smell the burgers and fries cooling on the kitchen table.

But he could smell something else, too, and right now it smelled much more appetizing. And it was definitely something he was dying for a taste of.

He pulled away from her neck, loving the mewling sound of loss she made. Her shoes and socks were the first thing to go. Reaching for her zipper he pulled it down, quickly removing her jeans from her legs. She was already beginning to sit up, tugging on the hem of her sweater and throwing it across the room. Her bra quickly followed as he worked on her panties.

*Mmm. There it is. My favorite flavor in the world.* Simon grinned as he lowered his mouth to her pussy, taking a long wet lap at her moist heat. She flopped back down to the floor, her hips undulating against his mouth. He paused only long enough to remove his own shirt, knowing how much she loved the feel of his bare skin against her own. And who was he to complain? He loved it, too.

Simon settled between her thighs and prepared to enjoy the feast laid out before him. She was plucking at her nipples, writhing beneath him as he fucked her with his tongue.

“Off.”

She was pushing at his shoulders. “Why? I’m not done here.”

She gave him a sexy, hungry smile. “I want a taste, too.”

One of his brows rose. “I was thinking more of a sixty-eight.”

She laughed. “I don’t want to owe you one.” She licked her lips and he couldn’t help himself. He moaned, watching that pink tongue dart out again. “Bring that thing up here and let me suck on it.”

He shuddered. “Okay.”

She snickered as he stripped off his jeans in record time, but he wasn’t about to complain. Turn down a blow job from that talented mouth? Hell, no!

Simon rolled them both until Becky straddled his face. He stared up at her pussy, moaning as her hot mouth sank down on his cock. *Dinner time.*

*Oh, fuck.* Becky did her best to concentrate on the hot iron bar sliding in and out of her mouth, but Simon's mouth kept her distracted. His tongue danced around her clit and she had to move with it. She could feel her orgasm dancing around the edge of her senses. She just needed a little bit more...

Simon bucked into her mouth, reminding her of what her job was. Trying not to grin she slid her lips down his shaft, taking his musky taste onto her tongue. She hummed around him, showing him how much she loved what they were doing, and was rewarded by his broken moan.

Becky pulled back and laved the head of his cock with her tongue, tasting his salty essence. In response he shoved what felt like three fingers into her, strumming her clit with his tongue.

Becky shrieked around him, her orgasm hitting her so fast she had no time to prepare.

Simon pulled out from under her, muttering darkly. He grabbed hold of her hips and pulled, impaling her on his rock hard cock. "Fuck."

"Simon." She backed into him, squeezing her muscles as hard as she could. The added tightness did the trick. Within a few strokes Simon was coming, his guttural yell music to her ears.

With a soft sigh he released her and they collapsed to the floor. Simon's warm weight settled at her back. "God, I love you."

Becky smiled wickedly. "Simon?"

"Hmm?" His voice was fucked-out sleepy.

"You're phone's ringing."

He chuckled into her neck just as the phone began to ring.

# The Ornament

## *Part Three: Adrian and Sheri*

By Dana Marie Bell

“Oh, Christmas tree, oh Christmas tree, why don’t I know the stinking words. Ya dada da, ya dada da, nobody knows the stinking words.” Sheri bit her lip to keep from laughing as Emma belted out the wrong words to Christmas song. “Oh please. Do you know them?”

“No. That’s why I don’t sing it.” Sheri could hear Becky rummaging through the ornament box, her voice absent as she answered Emma’s question.

“When do we close again?” Emma’s enthusiasm was beginning to get to her. This would be Sheri’s first real Christmas in years, and she was planning on enjoying every minute of it with her new mate, Adrian.

“Emma!” Becky’s voice was full of laughter. “Christmas Eve is still two days away.”

“Your point?”

“Didn’t you say Max was hinting at something special for then?”

“Yes.”

“So why are you so hyper now?”

“Hello! Max and surprises. Last time he surprised me I found myself mated to him and contemplating kitty condos.” Sheri choked on a laugh. Listening to Emma and Becky talk was one of the highlights of her day. “And because of the mating the surprise isn’t going to be something like, ‘That chick over there is having my love child’, so it can’t be bad, right?”

Becky was silent.

“Right?” Emma sounded worried, but Sheri wasn’t sure why. Max would walk over broken glass barefoot if Emma asked him to. “Becks! He can *not* tell me that.”

“Oh no! No, of course not,” Becky laughed nervously. “No way.” She scurried into the back room. “Need more tinsel!”

*Hmm. I wonder what she’s up to?*

Sheri shrugged and continued to hang the lights. Under her breath she sang, “Oh Tannenbaum, oh Tannenbaum, Wie grün sind deine Blätter! Du grünst nicht nur zur Sommerzeit, Nein auch im Winter, wenn es schneit. Oh Tannenbaum, oh Tannenbaum, Wie grün sind deine Blätter!”

From behind the curtain came two laughing voices. “Show-off!”

Sheri threw her head back and laughed. God, it was good to finally have a home.

Adrian stared at his home, his lips twitching. “Think she’ll see it?”

Max and Simon stared at him like he’d lost his fucking mind. Maybe he had. Perhaps the cheery penguin Ferris wheel with the megawatt spotlight under it had been a tad much, but he wanted to make sure his legally blind mate would see everything she could of what he’d done for her.

Huge colored lights blazed from the roof. An outdoor Christmas tree sat on the front porch, it’s blinking lights and spinning stand making a unique statement. Dancing dolls in cute Christmas costumes littered the front lawn, an animatronic Santa grinning down at them all. Every now and then it would “Ho ho ho!” in a loud, booming voice, startling the birds out of the trees.

It was perfect.

Adrian couldn’t take his eyes off it. No way could Sheri miss *this*.

Sheri stepped off the bus, Jerry’s lead firmly in her hand. It wasn’t far to the front door of Adrian’s house, but it was better to be safe than sorry, especially when crossing a street. She stepped carefully down the curb, Jerry leading her serenely across until her feet were once again on the pavement.

As they walked Sheri thought she could hear the “Ho ho ho!” of an overenthusiastic Santa. Shrugging she kept going, serene in the knowledge that it couldn’t possibly be coming from *her* house.

By the time she reached her front door that serenity was broken. She slowly lifted the dark glasses from her face but snapped them back down again as the blinding glare of the floodlight hurt her sensitive eyes. She walked around the lawn, taking in the five foot

moving Santa, the seven foot tall Ferris wheel, the dancing dolls and the revolving Christmas tree.

“What the *fuck*?” Sheri pulled out her cell phone and dialed Emma. She knew Adrian had been with Emma and Becky’s mates Max and Simon. She wondered what horrors had been perpetrated on the other womens’ lawns.

“Really? A blow up snow globe?”

“Yup. And do you know what those things look like outside of a store?” Emma’s voice was glum as she drove Sheri home from Frank’s diner. Sheri had a meal for Adrian at her feet, but she wasn’t sure if she would give it to him or not. As much as she’d preached acceptance to Emma and Becky she wasn’t sure if she could take her own advice.

“Okay, you win.” Emma pulled into Sheri’s driveway, her voice filled with amused horror. “Holy moly. That’s a lot of lights.”

Sheri sighed. “I know.” She opened the car door. “I’d say be careful, since it’s getting dark out, but I don’t think that’ll be a problem.”

“No, I’m pretty sure space aliens could navigate by this light.” Emma waited until Sheri had Jerry and Adrian’s dinner before waving goodbye, pulling out onto the street and heading for her own home.

Sheri turned for the front door, hoping she was ready to forgive her mate for what he’d done to their lawn. She knew him. His heart was in the right place.

But by this time his eyeballs had to be practically burned out of his head.

“Ho ho ho!”

Sheri took a deep breath, opened the front door and stepped into her home.

“Sheri?”

“Hmm?”

“Mad at me?”

*Mad at him?* How could she be mad at him? He’d started a fire in his fireplace, had set up fresh fruit and wine, and a blanket for them to rest on. He’d even taken her shoes off, covering her with another blanket before he’d finally eaten his dinner, seeing to

her comfort before his own. In the corner a Christmas tree twinkled, delicate stars of light in the green blur of its branches.

So what if he was trying to get out of the dog house? He was doing a pretty good job of it! “Mm-mmm”

Now he was cuddled up at her back, his big strong arms wrapped around her, his wine glass dangling from his fingers as he nibbled at her ear. “Good.”

She smiled. Her big bad Marshall sounded relieved.

“Do you want to tell me what is really going on?”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

She turned, staring up into his face.

He smiled. “Can’t I do something nice for my mate?”

“Adrian. The front yard is *not* nice.”

“Our kits will love it.”

“We’re not pregnant.”

“Yet.”

She licked her lips, her heart racing. “For a man who didn’t want a mate you’re suddenly eager for kits.”

He kissed her shoulder, those chocolate eyes of his beginning to turn gold.

“You’ve persuaded me of the error of my ways.”

“You are so full of it.”

His face was serious as he lifted it from her shoulder. “Am I?”

“What are you saying?”

He smiled. “There’s something for you on the tree. It’s the only bit of gold there. Can you bring it to me, please?”

Her eyes drifted to the tree Adrian had put up in their living room. He’d decorated it in burgundy and silver. Finding something made of gold should be a piece of cake. “Okay, but I’m all toasty and comfy. It had better be worth it.”

His voice drifted over to her as she made her way to the tree. “I think it will be.”

She would have thought he’d make the ornament easy to find, all things considered. She was delighted to find that he hadn’t, challenging her to look for it by hiding it in the branches near the top, towards the back. She pulled the gold ornament



down and brought it to him. She could feel hinges on one side, and what could be a latch on the other. Delicate gold filigree was a delight to her fingers.

She settled back down into the blankets, wrapping his arms around her again. “Okay, I have to say it. What’s up Doc?”

“I should spank you for that.”

She wiggled her ass against him. “Oh, baby.”

He laughed and plucked the ornament out of her hands. He turned it so she could see the engraving. “Did you see this?”

She brought his hand close so that she could read the words. *Adrian and Sheridan 2009*. “Should I open it?”

“Actually, I think that’s my job.” He opened the latch, showing her a ring. A princess cut diamond was flanked on either side by pear shaped rubies. “Marry me, princess.”

*Perfect. God, he was so fucking perfect.* “Yes.” She watched, tears in her eyes, as he slipped the ring on her finger. “But you’re still taking at least half that stuff off the front lawn.” Especially the seven foot Ferris wheel with the penguins and, God, the spotlight under it so you couldn’t miss it. She was pretty sure the space shuttle could find their lawn.

But all of that was forgotten as her mate leaned over her, taking her down on the couch, intense heat in his golden eyes. She arched her neck eager for his mouth to fin the mark he’d claimed her with, bringing her home for all time.

Adrian bent over his snow princess, the urge to fuck her until they both passed out so strong he shook with it. But she deserved more than that tonight. Instead, he was going to make love to her until neither of them could stand it.

He eased up her sweater, the soft cashmere like fur beneath his hands. Those luscious breasts of hers popped free, barely covered by the lace of her bra. He smiled, cupping the soft globes in both hands, his thumbs gently strumming her nipples. She gasped, her eyes closing, but not before he saw the flash of red in her gaze. Fuck, he loved it when her eyes changed, the pale blue turning red hot. She arched her back to allow him to unhook her bra, an invitation he gladly accepted. The bra dropped to the

floor without a care. His eyes feasted on the pale perfection under him, his mouth salivating at the urge to taste what she so sweetly offered. He lowered his lips, sucking one of her pale, puckered nipples into his mouth, his tongue paying homage to her.

“Oh, Adrian.”

Her sigh was rough with need, but he wasn't done with her yet. Tonight was all about her. He was going to make it a night to remember, for both of them.

He was going to kill her with pleasure. He nibbled and suckled at her breast like it was gourmet chocolate, savoring every bite until she was ready to scream. Then he moved to the other breast and repeated the process.

When she tried to move her hands down to his pants he stopped them, his gaze commanding. “No. Not yet.” He palmed her breasts, staring down at them possessively. “I'm not done.”

“I am.” She wriggled under him, thrusting her hips up into him, tempting him to move on to the main event, damn it. If her panties got any damper her jeans would be soaked through!

Adrian licked right between her breasts, the rasp of his tongue sending shivers down her spine. He began a slow descent down her body, licking and nibbling at her stomach. His five o'clock shadow tickled her side, sending her into giggles.

His body was a blur to her eyes, but to her other senses he was a rich cornucopia of sensations and scents that drove her wild. His heated musk tickled her nose, his arousal evident in more than the hard ridge behind his slacks. She stroked his shoulders, the fine button down shirt sliding over his smooth skin, biting her lip in anticipation as he undid the snap of her black jeans. “Love you so much,” he whispered, sliding them down her legs. He placed a chaste kiss on top of her panties before sliding them off, too.

Now she was completely naked and he was completely clothed. She shivered in anticipation, knowing exactly what all that cloth would feel like against her sensitive skin.

He lapped at the top of her pussy, the edge of his tongue barely grazing her clit. She buried her fingers in his hair, urging him to go lower. He did, laving her pussy with

his tongue in long, smooth strokes, dipping the tip inside her occasionally until she was moving under him.

“Please, Adrian.”

With another kiss to her stomach he rose above her. She could hear his zipper being lowered and reached out, desperate to feel his hard, velvet cock in her hands. It sprung free, landing in her palms, his scent that much stronger to her senses.

She had to have a taste. Bending forward she took the head into her mouth and lapped up the pre-come, delighting in his flavor.

She took him down her throat, his purr of desire music to her ears.

Adrian couldn't help himself. He gathered that nearly white, baby soft hair into his fist and began moving his hips, fucking into her mouth with long, slow strokes. How she'd managed to turn this around on him he wasn't sure, but he wasn't about to pull out of the wet heaven of her mouth, either. He watched as his cock slid between her lips, the bliss on her face almost his undoing.

His orgasm was rising to the surface too quickly, his spine shivering as he tried to hold it off. He pulled her off of him, her mew of disappointment almost making him shove himself back into her mouth.

But he had other plans. He stood up, hoping she could see the feral grin on his face. “Bend over the arm of the sofa, princess.”

She grinned up at him and quickly complied. “Are we done playing?”

He growled as he thrust inside her. “Yup. Playtime's over.”

“Oh, goody,” she breathed, bucking back into him. “I want to come.”

“Your wish is my command, princess.” He began fucking her rapidly, too close now to take it slow. The warm clasp of her pussy muscles massaged him, the pleasure almost more than he could bear. He reached around her hips and strummed her clit, breaking her rhythm, her pussy spasming around him

“Adrian, so close.” Her eyes were closed, her face a mask of bliss. He knew exactly what to do to send her over the edge.

Without pause he bit down, marking her again, sending her into an orgasm that robbed her of breath. With a snarl he joined her, the black tide of his orgasm overcoming him as he emptied himself inside her pale body.

Breathing hard he pulled his teeth from her skin, lapping at the mark he'd left behind. She sighed, snuggling down onto the sofa, those pale red eyes of hers soft and dreamy. He settled in behind her, making sure she was securely in his arms, before drifting off to sleep, his hunger sated. For now, anyway.

*For more information on the Halle Puma series, visit [www.danamariebell.com](http://www.danamariebell.com)*