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A Biting
Christmas Special
Mary Hughes

Holiday eBook Freebie

Happy Holidays! This story is a little holiday cheer from me to you. Enjoy!

A Biting Christmas Special
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I slid into the hot fizz of the Jacuzzi, waiting for the naked man of my dreams to appear. Naturally, “Home on the Range” blasted from the bedroom instead. My cell phone. Worse yet, my mother.

“*Spucatum!*” Julian had been teaching me Latin. Not his uptight lawyer words, but the good ones. “*Asinus.*”

Tonight was my wedding night, for fuck’s sake. And after a six week engagement (translation: no sex) I was crawling the wall. Some German mothers were protective. Mine was an armored tank.

“Nixie.” The naked man of my dreams glided through the doorway with two flutes of sec champagne. Six-foot plus of lean, muscular power. Stunning blue eyes framed by sweeping coal black eyelashes. Smooth bronzed skin begging to be tasted. And below, a jutting twelve-inch gavel demanding it.

Julian Emerson. High-powered attorney, master vampire, and as of today, all mine.

“Sweetheart.” His silky, cultured voice caressed me. “Shall I fetch your phone?”

Okay, that didn’t caress. With a groan, I sank deeper into the water. If it had been anybody but Mom, I’d have said abso-fucking-lutely *not*. My most pressing question *should* have been what to do to him first. Kiss, or nibble? Lick my name over his massive pecs? Suck little hickeys down his riptide abs?

But with Mom...“I suppose. Otherwise, she’ll just call back. Hourly. We’d never get anything started.”

He raised sleek black brows. “I can do quite a bit in fifty-nine minutes.”

Whoo-boy. Fan me with a tornado. “I can imagine, knowing what you can do in three.”

When it came to sex, Julian had a supernatural advantage. A vampire’s orgasmic bite, and over a thousand years to perfect his technique. And let me tell you, his technique was pretty damn perfect. “But I’d be distracted. Bracing myself for the maternal Armageddon. I’d better answer.”

“That’s my brave Nixie.” He set the flutes on the edge of the Jacuzzi and dropped into mist.

I don’t mean he fell into a fog. He *became* a river of quicksilver that flowed out of the room. Moments later he glided back with my Juke, deer and antelope still playing. I swiveled it open. “Go.”

“*Frohe Weihnachten*, Dietlinde.” My mother insists on using the name she christened me with. Still hoping it’d morph me from punk musician to something more respectable—like a hooker.

“Merry Christmas to you, too, Mom.” My eyes flitted over Julian, leaning his big muscular frame against the door jamb. “But I’m a little busy. If that’s all...?”

“I’m calling to remind you about dinner tomorrow. Turkey and ham. Two o’clock. Don’t be late, like last time.”

“I *wasn’t* late last time.” My mother could guilt St. Nicholas...wait. “What do you mean, dinner?”

“Christmas dinner,” she said, like she was reasonable and sane.

“I’m on my honeymoon! I’m not coming to dinner at my parents.”

“You are still in town, yes?” Mom somehow managed to retain her German accent despite being second-generation American.

“Because *you* insisted we stay at Otto’s Bed and Breakfast Smorgasbord.” / wanted to jet off immediately. Somewhere warm, like Aruba or Hawaii, or even just southern Indiana. Instead we were braving the Illinois cold.

“Tomorrow is Christmas. A time for *family*.” Her tone turned stiff. “Would it kill you to spend one day with your aging parents?”

I winced. “Mom...”

"I made pumpkin pie. Cinnamon whipped cream."

Ow. The old one-two—guilt jab, temptation KO. "Mom...Julian and I had plans." To stay in bed all day, but I didn't say that out loud.

"Oh! You are watching the old Christmas specials?"

I eyed Julian. A Christmas special? Well, if I draped his arms with tinsel, put a light in his navel, and hung an ornament on his big branch...I cleared my throat. "Sort of."

"It is not Christmas without the Grinch and Charlie Brown. Do you remember watching with the family?"

She *made* me watch them. "Yes, Mother."

"You noticed I packed the DVDs for you. Good. I had to take out some old undergarments to make room. I am surprised at you, Dietlinde. Those undies were so worn you could see right through them. Practically strings. Aren't you worried about getting in an accident? What would the doctors think?"

I groaned. My thongs. And my sheer camisoles and sexy nighties. Ejected to make room for the Grinch. "Thanks, Mom."

"You're welcome." She never got sarcasm, for which I was eternally grateful. "Well, Dietlinde, I will let you get back to *It's a Wonderful Life*. Goodbye."

Julian took the phone and set it aside. He slipped into the hot tub and pulled me into his muscular arms. "How's your mother?"

I was with the naked man of my dreams. Maybe not the Wonderful Life Mom meant, but it worked for me. I slid one knee over Julian's hips, straddling him. "Let's not talk about her, okay?"

"Hmm. Shall we discuss this?" His hard shell briefcase rose to kiss my nether lips. I never tired of Julian pounding his big gavel on my sound block. Driving it, hammering it home...this would be the first time in over a month. It'd feel like brand-new.

He nuzzled my neck, all sharp teeth and hot tongue. His big hand ran down my back, hit the sweet spot at the base. Splayed over it, one finger pressing my tail bone. The erotic pressure made my whole spine sing with need.

Oh, this was going to be so good. I wiggled, settling him in my aching, hungry vestibule. He opened his mouth against my neck. Penetration in three...two...one...

"Help! Please, someone help!"

"Damn." I pushed away.

"Human female." Julian's skin plated, his eyes blazed red. His hunter's face. "And a *vampire*." He looked to me for permission.

That was nice. After all, it was only our wedding night. But if a rogue was involved, only Julian could handle it. I kissed him. "Go get 'em, tiger'."

His faceplate faded, replaced by confusion.

I sighed. Julian was wicked hXc in the sex department, but when it came to pop culture he was centuries out of date. *Mega* flashing-twelve syndrome.

"*Spiderman 2*. Go."

He dissolved into mist and went. I hoped he picked up his pants on the way.

I dressed and followed. The sound of blows led me to the end of the hallway. I imagined Julian tangling with a gaunt rogue, a beautiful woman crumpled at their feet.

But no.

Santa Claus was getting the cookies beat out of him by Mrs. Santa. Well, Mrs. Santa in London Fog and high-heels. She thrashed Santa with a giant roll of prancing-reindeer wrapping paper.

She was also bashing at Julian, swinging that gift wrap like a sledgehammer. Julian dodged a particularly nasty crotch shot while he tried to grab Santa, who I figured must be the rogue in disguise.

I ran in to help. The three of them outweighed me by a couple hundred pounds, but I'm tricky. I hit the floor and rolled. The Little Bowling Ball that Could. All three toppled, Julian teetering a second before he went down.

Unfortunately they fell on me. While I gasped for air, the lady scabbled to her feet and ran away.

"Stop her," Santa croaked. A big knife protruded from his chest. Julian's, thrust through the heart. It wouldn't kill the rogue, but it would make circulation and breathing difficult.

"I think not." Julian, ever the lawyer. Why use one word when three would do?

Santa Vamp expelled his last breath. "Le...stats."

Julian and I exchanged an uncomfortable look. We had nailed the wrong guy.

"I'm an undercover agent for the Ancient One in Virginia." Santa Vamp's voice was deep and rich when he didn't have a knife in his chest. We apologized for the knife (and ruining his disguise). Since vampires heal fast (and his costume was red anyway) he said no harm done.

I sat on the double king-sized bed, trying not to think of what I *should* have been doing on that mattress. "Doesn't the Ancient One live in Iowa?"

"There's more than one. I owe allegiance to Nicodemus."

"What are you doing in Meiers Corners?" Julian asked.

"Tracking an incredibly dangerous mistake." Santa sighed. "You've got to understand, Nicodemus is a brilliant scientist. He likes things orderly."

"Life seldom is."

"Especially human life. Nicodemus finds humans...messy. He invented a compulsion device."

That surprised me enough to forget mattresses. "To enslave people? Why? Is he trying to take over the world?"

"No, no. Not the world. Just his corner of it."

I rolled mental eyes. First my mother, then this. Even Murphy would have snapped a crayon or two. "I thought vampires could already compel humans."

"To some degree. But the hypno-resonator is irresistible." Santa paused. "Even to *vampires*."

Julian stiffened. "Younglings? Or all of us?"

"If you're five thousand years or so, you might resist it. Otherwise..." Santa grimaced. "That woman, Carol Newman, stole it."

"Snarky," I said. "Carol Newman's the name of Mrs. Santa in *The Santa Clause 2*."

Both Julian and Santa stared at me. Their IMDb was offline, I guessed. Santa continued, "She's a human minion of the Virginia Lestats."

"The *Lestats*?" Just whack me with an elf. The Lestats was a violent gang of rogue vampires in nearby Chicago. Apparently there were branches elsewhere. "Carol and the Lestats. Sounds like a fifties girl band. Why'd they steal this hypno-whatzit?"

"Hypno-resonator. They'll use it to take over the world's blood centers."

"By compelling the humans in charge?" Julian frowned. "How? Each center has a master vampire protecting it."

"They'll hypnotize the masters into destroying themselves. Once dead, the Lestats can take over at their leisure."

Julian and I shared a look. Meiers Corners's blood center was in trouble. Julian leaped to his feet, but Santa waved stop-sign-red mittens. "They have the machine. But they *don't* have the activation key."

"There's a key?" I asked, the same instant Julian said, "Where is it?"

"Nicodemus hid it inside something innocent-looking. To get it secretly to Iowa's Ancient One, where it'd be safe. But he couldn't send it directly."

"The Lestats would expect that. Intercept it." Julian went for his jacket.

"Yes. So Nicodemus mailed the key to the nearest master in the Iowa alliance. That's here. The idea was to drive it to Iowa."

I scrounged for my own outerwear. "But..?" Murphy's Law insured a "but".

"The address got smeared. The package went to City Hall instead."

I slipped into my hoodie. "So what's the problem? Go to City Hall, retrieve the package."

"One problem. The Mayor opened the package. And the innocent item was a red ball Christmas ornament."

"That's two problems." Then it hit me. "Holy Spanish Inquisition! Three problems."

"Nixie?" Julian caught my agitation, if not the Monty Python reference. "What's wrong?"

In answer, I went to the window. Yanked open the drapes.

Moonlight sparkled on the two-story municipal Christmas tree in Settler's Square—and its *seven hundred* red ball ornaments.

"Thanks for the tip. Now you die!"

The door burst open, splinters flying. Three rogues blasted in, pseudo-military types with buzz cuts and shit-kicker boots. Two high and one low. They were trained, they were organized—and they were carrying bazookas.

"Down!" Julian hit me with a flying tackle, body covering mine as a small rocket whizzed over us. The rocket shattered the window. Shards of glass tinkled, hitting sidewalk. The *whump* next to us was much louder.

I twisted my head. Santa lay motionless, a plate-sized hole in his chest. A human would have been red mist, but I still gagged.

"Nixie." Julian's breath warmed my ear. "When I say run, head for the door. I'll distract the rogues."

"Julian, you can't! You have one fighting blade. That trio's armed with *bazookas*." A new meaning to "three-hole punch".

"I have a few surprises up my sleeve." He kissed my temple. "Now, run!"

He blew into mist. Deadly whirlpools of silver swirled around the rogues. They slapped and shrieked.

I dashed for the door. I was almost there when the mist collapsed and Julian resumed form.

The rogue nearest me saw Julian. Took aim.

"No!" I lowered my head and charged.

I hit the Lestat with everything I had. It barely moved him, but it was enough to knock his aim off.

Enough for Julian to pull his next trick.

At one hundred years old, vampires could mist. At one thousand, they could shape shift.

Two hundred pounds of vampire shifted...into hundreds of fluttering small birds. Turtle doves, if I wasn't mistaken. Bird, birds, everywhere...beating against the faces of the Lestats, blinding them. I dipped out. As I pounded down the stairs, screams rang in my ears.

The instant I made the foyer I yelled, "Julian!" Birds' wings told me he was on his way. I didn't lose any time throwing open the front door.

A gun pointed directly in my face.

Damn. First my mother, then no sex, and now this. Just Riverdance ten lords a-leaping on my skull. I backed up. Carol Newman followed, hand steady on a business-like pistol. Behind her half a dozen Rottweilers growled, fangs dripping menace.

"Damn." Julian formed behind me, echoing my thoughts. "Too many dogs for mist. And she's prepared. Not birds either, not unless I want to look like a sponge when I reform."

"Retreat?" I suggested.

“The parlor?”

“Works for me.”

And because he could run five times faster, he threw me over his shoulder and sped off.

Snarling dogs raced after us, Carol urging them on. Dogs nipped Julian’s heels all the way to the parlor. He ran for the window. The dogs cut him off. He spun for the door. Carol filled the doorway, the three-hole-punch gang looming behind.

The dogs crowded us forward. I frantically scanned the room for another escape. The only opening was a brick fireplace, red stockings hanging from its mantel. It reminded me of my mother and her “Christmas Specials”. So idiotically *baka*. About to die and Charlie Brown and the Grinch were flitting through my head...and Tim Allen as Santa. “Julian! *The Santa Clause*.”

“Nixie...now is not *quite* the time to educate me on popular culture.” His slight lisp said his fangs were full-length. Ready to fight. Ready to die, protecting me.

It had better not come to that. Not before I got laid, at any rate. “While Santa’s delivering presents, he’s attacked by a Rottweiler. He escapes up the chimney. Get us to the fireplace.”

Julian veered. “If I can carry you while flying. I’ve never tried it.”

I groaned. “It doesn’t matter. The fireplace is fake. Damn it!”

I slapped the mantel.

And was nearly thrown from Julian’s shoulder when we whirled into the dark.

“Otto’s B&BS must have been a speakeasy in the twenties. The spinning fireplace was an escape hatch, in case of a raid.” Julian toted me through a pitch black tunnel, his glowing red eyes lighting the way. Rudolph meets Halloween. Freaky.

We came out through an old carriage-house garage. Julian set me down. I shivered. “I wish I had my phone. What do we do now?” My breath frosted the air.

“Find the activation key.”

Hokay. Just sort through seven hundred ornaments on a two-story tree while dodging Carol and her deadly homies. “Those Lestats heard Santa. They know where the key is. And there are more of them than us.”

“That may not be an advantage. Look.”

Kitty-corner from us was Settler’s Square. Park benches, a playground, and the Oom-pa-pa Bandshell. In the center twinkled the municipal tree.

A shivering Carol Newman and three Lestat rogues were trying to knock off ornaments with snowballs. While the six Rottweilers ran around the tree, barking and peeing.

The dogs had better aim. Apparently these Lestats were from sunnier climes. They packed the snowballs with fumbling, freezing fingers. No gloves. My mother would have lectured them to death, if they hadn’t already been dead.

They tried to hurl those lopsided chunks of snow like baseballs. Half the balls disintegrated midair. The other half splatted harmlessly against the tree.

“You!” Carol saw us. “Keep at it,” she ordered the Lestats. “I’ll take care of the girl. The dogs can deal with her tame vampire.”

Julian grabbed me.

We’d come a long way from big daddy having to protect the girly-girl. I donned my Attitude. “I ain’t nobody’s ‘girl’, Julian. I’ll fry her. You go toast the dogs.”

“Cooking analogies aside...it’s no use asking you to go for backup, I suppose?”

“Nice try. You know there’s no time.”

His jaw worked. “Then good luck.”

Julian surged forward. He met the wave of dogs with his long knife. Raked it across doggy noses. One yipped and faltered. The others leaped for his jugular.

Unfortunately, I had more immediate concerns.

Carol pulled out her pistol and shot me.

She telegraphed like Western Union. I dodged. The bullet spat into the frozen grass.

"Give up!" She fired again.

The advantages were all hers. She had the weapon, the time, and the henchrogues.

But / had surprise. I barreled straight at her, screaming like a punk singer with her hair on fire. By the time she shot again I was on top of her.

My momentum knocked her to the ground. I grabbed her wrist. Rolling, we fought for control of the gun. I banged her hand against the hard ground but she clung to that gun like cheap sandwich wrap.

My breath came in gasps. I was tiring. She was bigger than me, twice as heavy. It would be over in moments, and she'd win. I should just give up. Fighting her was like a little kid trying to thrash a bully.

Like Ralphie and Scut Farkus in *A Christmas Story*.

Great chocolate Zeus. I had a chance. One slim chance.

I rolled to my feet. Prepared for her. When she pushed to her feet I struck.

I shoved into her, grabbing her jaw. Aimed her at the nearest street sign. She stumbled, did a header into the pole.

Into the metal pole. Her tongue came out—and stuck.

She pulled back. Her eyes opened wide. Pain has a new meaning when your tongue is about to rip from your head.

But if she guessed how to get loose, I was sunk. I had to keep her off balance "*Chicken*. Yank free. Double dare you."

She glared fire, tried again to pull away. Tears sprang into her eyes.

"Triple dog dare you." I knew how, but only because I'd been Darwin Award stupid at the age of seven. The fire department and some warm water rescued me.

She tried again. The tears trickled onto her cheeks. They froze too.

Laughing in her face would have been unkind. So I turned away.

And saw Julian, battling dogs *and* Lestats. A rogue, a couple dogs, and the bazookas lay at his feet. But he was bleeding from several wounds. Too many dogs and rogues still attacked. And soft-hearted Julian was trying not to kill the dogs.

Acid fear shot through me. Though Julian fought fiercely, he was like a great stag. The yipping pack must eventually bring him down.

Twinkling colors lit the battle, a horrible contrast. The Christmas tree was heedless of the drama going on beneath it. Too bad it couldn't fight. Or...? "Julian! *Doctor Who!*"

"What?"

"Not what. *Who.*" After the honeymoon I was going to nail him to a La-Z-Boy and Clockwork Orange his eyes to a T.V. "David Tennant. The Christmas specials. A whirling tree of destruction. Ornament bombs." I ran toward the two-story municipal tree.

"Nixie... *our* tree can't fight." Julian lunged at a rogue.

"Not the tree." I veered toward the band shell. "The Doctor explodes the bombs with his *sonic* screwdriver."

He knifed the rogue. "Unless you have a 'sonic screwdriver', whatever that is—"

"Julian! Listen to me. With his *amplified sonic* screwdriver." I vaulted up the band shell stairs two at a time. Hit the podium at a flat run. Twirled a dial and flipped a switch.

Julian, thank the stars, was quick. He covered his ears.

As a punk musician, I mostly play guitar. But sometimes I sing. Punk singing is like a cat getting a full Brazilian. I can scream with the best of them, at least earplug level with my naked voice.

With a PA system, I can do actual physical damage.

And vampires—and dogs—have über-sensitive hearing. Heh-heh.

I screeched a G above middle C. The dogs whined. I clawed my way up an octave. The

dogs tucked tails and fled.

A street lamp popped. Vampires clapped hands to ears, faces scrunched in pain. I hit and held high C.

The vampires shrieked. Julian, tough through his pain, walloped one with a kick to the head. The other got a brisk knee to his soft dangly bits.

Every ornament on the municipal Christmas tree shattered.

My throat froze. Julian dropped hands from ears. Grabbed a bazooka and three-hole-punched Lestat hearts.

It was over.

I slid into the hot fizz of the Jacuzzi, waiting for the naked man of my dreams.

Home on the Range blasted my ears.

I snatched up my Juke. "Mother—"

"Did you enjoy the Christmas specials, Dietlinde?"

I paused. The Christmas specials. *The Santa Clause*, *A Christmas Story*, and *Doctor Who*. Because of them, we'd stopped the Lestats. Foiled Carol Newman.

We found the activation key in the litter of red glass. Destroyed it. A heart from the morgue made Santa good as new. He promised to find and destroy the hypno-resonator as well.

A happy ending. Because growing up, Mom made me watch the Christmas specials. "Yes," I said in all honesty. "Julian and I enjoyed them very much."

Speaking of whom... Julian glided through the door, carrying two glasses and wearing nothing but a smile. "I'm about to enjoy another."

"Good, good. I just wanted to remind you of dinner in an hour." She hung up.

"What?" I screeched at the dial tone.

"Your mother?" Julian set the glasses down.

"Home...dinner—in an hour!"

"Hmm. Then let me show you what I can do in fifty-nine minutes." Smiling, he slipped into the water with me. "Minus time for commercials, of course."

He lifted me onto his thick erection. Leaned me against the tub's lip. Pushed slowly, irresistibly, forward. My agitation shifted into excitement.

An inch. I sucked in a breath. Two inches. I shuddered. Three. His purr rumbled against me. Four. My vagina constricted. Five. Heat pooled in my belly. Six. Electric jolts radiated out. Seven. I was stuffed full. Eight. OMG, I was about to burst. *Nine*. My sight narrowed to a black-rimmed pinhole. *Ten*. Stars floated around the edges.

Julian sank fangs in my breast and thrust home.

Hard shockwaves exploded through me. Ripped me in half. Smashed me back together. Ripped and smashed again. And again.

Eventually I floated in fizzy warm water. "How...long?" My voice didn't quite work.

"Three minutes, twenty-five seconds." Julian's purr caressed me. "We can do it twelve more times."

Whoo-hah. My favorite Christmas Special.

Author Biography

Mary Hughes is a computer consultant, professional musician, and writer. At various points in her life she has taught Taekwondo, worked in the insurance industry, and studied religion. She is intensely interested in the origins of the universe. She has a wonderful husband (though happily-ever-after takes a lot of hard work) and two great kids. But she thinks that with all the advances in modern medicine, childbirth should be a lot less messy.

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