



Wrapped in her mate’s embrace Sarina Kategan allowed her eyes to drift shut as her climax peaked. Vane was with her every step of the way, as always. With a gentle growl, he kissed her. She could taste herself from earlier—a heady mix for so early in the morning. Not that she would have Christmas morning any other way.

Red, green, and gold lights twinkled from the miniature fern in the corner of the room and lit up the room in flashes of delight only seen in during the holiday season.

She’d been with her mate for long enough to know he was close to the finish line. In fact—her breath caught as his hips jerked and his shaft swelled inside her—the telltale signs of his impending climax. Sarina smiled and held tight to her mate. Little made her feel warmer or more safe than being chest to chest in Vane’s arms.

But then he surprised her on this Christmas morning. At the last moment instead of shoving deep and grunting, he pulled *out*. Hastily reaching between them, Vane grasped his cock, pumping it the last few times. Warm, wet jets shot up her stomach reaching as far as her neck as he came.

The sight of her sexually satisfied mate in the aftermath of passion did not please her as it usually did. In fact, Sarina felt positively foul.

“Again?”

Vane arched a dark eyebrow but his teasing smile said he didn’t take her attitude very seriously. Rolling away, he jumped up and grabbed a wet cloth to wipe up the heated mess on her chest. “Consider it my Christmas present from you?” he suggested. He flashed her a smile.

Normally that devilish smile could do wonders to make her laugh or relax. But not tonight.

“I considered last night’s pull out a Christmas present for you. But, again?”

For a moment he didn’t say anything, just cleaned her up. Then he kissed her, a soft,

sweet kiss that melted her heart like warm butter in a frying pan. She actually sighed when he pulled away. “I love you, *lumara*,” he said in his deep voice that never failed to make her feel happy.

Compulsively she responded in a soft voice, “And I love you, *luma*.”

He took the washcloth back to the sink, then began dressing. Today he dressed in a pair of baggy jeans that had enough wear and tear to look delectably sexy across his muscular butt. He paired the jeans with a red Christmas sweater that had a snowman family on it living inside a snow-globe with snowflakes falling around them. His sister Vera had bought it for him last Christmas and Vane swore up and down that while it was the ugliest sweater ever saw, it was also the softest. Hence, he couldn’t wait to break out his sweater this winter. Not that he’d ever admit to such a sin.

A knock sounded at the front door and Vane hollered down the stairs, “Come on in!”

That reminded Sarina that she needed to get up and moving. Today was Christmas and that meant she had a lot of work ahead of her. There was cooking, last-minute cleaning, and a few remaining decorations that needed to be hung before the family arrived later. She sighed both loving and hating the holiday. Especially now with this tension between her and Vane. He’d pulled out last night and again tonight. In fact, he’d been doing it more and more as of late. Why would he do that *unless* he didn’t want another baby?

Sarina gazed listlessly at the miniature evergreen in the corner, not really seeing the twinkling lights as her thoughts turned morose. She wanted another baby with Vane. Heck, she wanted a whole litter of his babies. But every time she tried to broach the subject, he’d find a way to dance around it. And that hurt. It really did. Why could they have a lovely, big family? What was wrong with another precious baby in their lives? He was such a wonderful father to baby Vince.

Downstairs, Vane’s brother Roman yelled back in his booming voice, “Time to go caroling, bro!”

Sarina cringed. They always went caroling around the pack on Christmas Eve. Not that any of the gang sang particularly well. More like they enjoyed sucking up all the spiked egg nog the pack members would offer. They usually did this while shouting “Joy to the world!” at the tops of their lungs. Sarina had joined in their caroling activity once—and only once. That’s all it took for her to realize she didn’t belong.

Vane beamed at her as he slipped on his heavy snow boots. “Be back in time for dinner.”

“Wait!” Sarina sat up, her stomach twisting with knots. Vane froze in the doorway. She crooked a finger at him and, slowly, he strutted towards her, almost warily. The man knew all of her moods and was wisely cautious.

“Yeah?”

“A kiss, dear husband, before you go.”

His expression transformed instantly. The kiss came full of tongues and lips and hair pulling and body grinding. She was completely warm by time he pulled away. But she still had something to say and this was important.

“We have to talk about this, Vane.”

His smile wavered but before he could say anything Rome shouted from down below. “Come on, man! Jackson, Darien, Dmetri and Brayden are waiting on us!”

“Gotta go,” Vane said. He jumped off the bed then barreled down the stairs.

Sarina dressed in her Christmas attire. She listened to Vane kissing their boy Vince. “Give daddy a big hug now,” Vane said to him. “Good boy. I’ll see you soon.”

Hah! I will not let his sweetness sway me, Sarina thought. We will talk about this new stomach painting he wants to do after sex.

Whatever happened to good ole' coming inside her like they usually did? If he was pulling out it meant only one thing. And it was the exact thing she wanted right now.

Vane didn't want to have a baby. But Sarina had a fire in her belly aching for another. Maybe a little Kategan girl running around? She already had a name thought up—Velvet.

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