

Oh Christmas' Tree, Oh Christmas' Tree

“Charli, no! What are you doing?”

“Decorating the tree, Mum. I made my own Christmas ornaments at school. See?”

Charlotte held her hand out and displayed said Christmas ornaments, her proud smile squeezing my heart in a vice-like grip. Sure, what she was showing me was cute, and I could see she'd put a lot of effort into them — glitter, pipe cleaners, and stick-on bobble eyes — but the reindeer and Santa shaped polystyrene decorations didn't match my carefully thought out tree theme. Not in the slightest. *Shit. Crap. Balls.*

“Ah ... well, maybe we can hang them on the fridge. Like a magnet,” I suggested, my big, wide eyes and Cheshire cat grin overly enthusiastic.

Charli's smile dropped. “The fridge? That's just dumb, Mum. You don't hang Christmas decorations on a fridge.” She shook her head at me, dismissing my excellent suggestion, and continued to physically assault my masterpiece.

“Wh ... wait!” I all but yelled, stepping forward and raising my hands as if to negotiate with a criminal. “You're right. The fridge was silly. How 'bout we hang them on the ... doorknobs. Yes, the doorknobs. We'll hang them on those, instead.” I waved my hand in the direction of a door like a game show model would. “That way when people go in and out of the rooms, they'll see your beautiful ornaments.” *Nailed it.*

She put her hands on her hips. “That's dumber than the fridge.”

Nailed nothing. Damn!

Cringing as she continued to violate my tree-baby, I was just about to hyperventilate when Bryce walked in with the boys. “Time was up before you took that final shot, Nate. I won. You lost.”

“It was not! The ball was in the air when the buzzer sounded,” Nate protested.

Taking in the adorableness that was Brayden in Bryce's arms, and Bryce's hand scruffing Nate's head, I smiled, but then quickly diverted my attention back to Charlotte who was moving my large sparkly bow. *Good god no! Make it stop.*

“How are my favourite girls?” Bryce asked, as he handed me Brayden and then wrapped his arms around my waist from behind.

My eight month-old bundle of joy said, “Mum mum” then touched my face with his chubby baby hand. *Well ... technically he whacked me, but tomato-tomato ... same thing.*

“Ouch, Bray. Don’t smack Mummy. That’s naughty.”

He smacked me again, so I did what any good mother would do ... I blew a raspberry into his neck and sat him down on the ground with a toy. “There you go. Play the guitar like daddy does.”

Bray happily whacked the soft toy while Bryce took a seat on the couch nearby, his arm draped along the backrest and his foot resting on the opposite knee. It was the sexy laid-back couch position that stole my breath the very first day I met him.

He patted his lap. “Come here, honey. What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” I replied, focussing my stare on Charlotte’s massacring. *Okay, that’s probably a little harsh. But ... but ... fuck it, she is massacring my TREE!* “Charli-bear, you honestly can’t see them on there. They’re too small. I think we should find another spot for them.”

“I can see them,” Nate piped in, flopping onto the couch opposite Bryce.

I glared at him. You know the look ... the one that said ‘shut the fuck up before I muzzle you’.

He furrowed his brow and mouthed the word ‘what?’

Huffing, I shook my head at him, as if to say don’t worry, then slumped down on the couch next to Bryce. He enveloped me in his arms and whispered into my ear. “It’s just a tree.”

“No, it’s not,” I whispered back, closing my eyes as the tip of his nose trailed up and down my neck.

“Let it go.”

“I can’t.”

“Yes, you can.”

“Shut up and kiss me.”

“Um ... Mum, Bryce, we’re still in the room.”

I snapped out of my Bryce-fog and looked at my son, spying his ‘grossed-out’ face. “Sorry,” I said, apologising and wiggling forward to sit upright. I was still

straining my brain as to how I could solve my Charli and the Christmas tree predicament. *Think, Alexis. Think!*

“Mum, mum, mum,” Brayden mumbled, crawling over to the tree and pulling himself up to stand on the safety gate surrounding it. He screamed and bounced on his little legs.

“He’ll be walking in no time.” Bryce’s voice held an air of pride, and it made me smile.

“Yeah. He has his daddy’s strength.”

“And his mummy’s stubbornness.”

I turned to face Bryce, finding him smirking. *Typical.*

“Jingle bells, da da daa, Jingle jangle jay,” Charlotte sang, pulling a funny face at Brayden.

He bounced some more, dancing to her tune.

“That’s not how the song goes, Charli.”

“I know, Nate. My version is better.”

“No, it’s not.”

“Is.”

“Whatever.”

Charlotte glared at her older brother then turned back around to face the tree, stretching on her tippy toes and tossing her final decoration to a spot higher up. Yeah... just tossed it! As in flung her arm and launched it to a random position on my anything but random creation. *Oh hell no. That’s it!*

“Right!” I shot out of my seat but was pulled back by strong arms, those strong arms encasing me and holding me close to an equally strong chest, one I’d trailed my tongue over many a night.

“Let. It. Go, my love.” His voice was but a warm whispered caress on my head. “You can do this. And if you do, I’ll reward you.”

My pussy woke to the word ‘reward’ and pulsed excitedly. She liked his rewards. They were good rewards.

“I don’t know, Mr Clark, that’s a lot to ask of me,” I whispered back.

He shifted below me and I knew what that meant. It meant that we would be rendezvousing in a secret location away from the children real soon. But, first things first — one last ditched effort to regain control of *my* tree.

“Charli-bear?”

She climbed over the safety gate and, smiling, looked up at her ‘remodelling’.
“Yeah?”

“So I was thinking ... I want a small Christmas tree in the reception area near my desk. And I’d like you to decorate it with only ornaments *you’ve* made. I want those ones on it,” I said, pointing toward my tree. “What do you think?”

Charlotte twisted to look at me. Her eyelids were narrow before they opened up wide and matched the large smile spreading across her beautiful little face. “My own tree? In the reception area? Where clients visit?”

Victory. It was sweet, smooth, and rolled over my body in a glorious wave.

I nodded. “Uh huh.”

“Okay,” she climbed back over the rail and went to yank her ornaments free.

“Stop! It’s okay. I’ll do it. You go grab your scrapbook and start planning your design.”

“My design?” Her face scrunched.

I nodded, my expression saturated in faux obviousness. “Um ... yeah! This is a real project, Charli. You need to take it seriously.”

“You’re right!” The cogs in her brain were already turning, and I could practically hear the clicking. “I’m gonna do it now,” she said excitedly, as she bounded up the stairs toward her room.

I sighed with relief.

“Nicely played, Mum.”

“Thanks, Nate.” I gave him a small wink, and he plugged his headphones into his iPad and put them on, closing his eyes and listening to whatever song had begun.

“I hope you know,” Bryce said, inconspicuously nibbling my earlobe, “that I’m still going to reward you.”

Tilting my head back, I gazed into his adoring eyes. “Oh, I know. And now I want an even bigger reward.”

He lowered his head and touched his lips to mine, and I all but melted into the seat. Perfection. That’s what my life with Bryce was. It was perfectly balanced and perfectly perfect.

Cheers, and merry Christmas

KM

xoxo