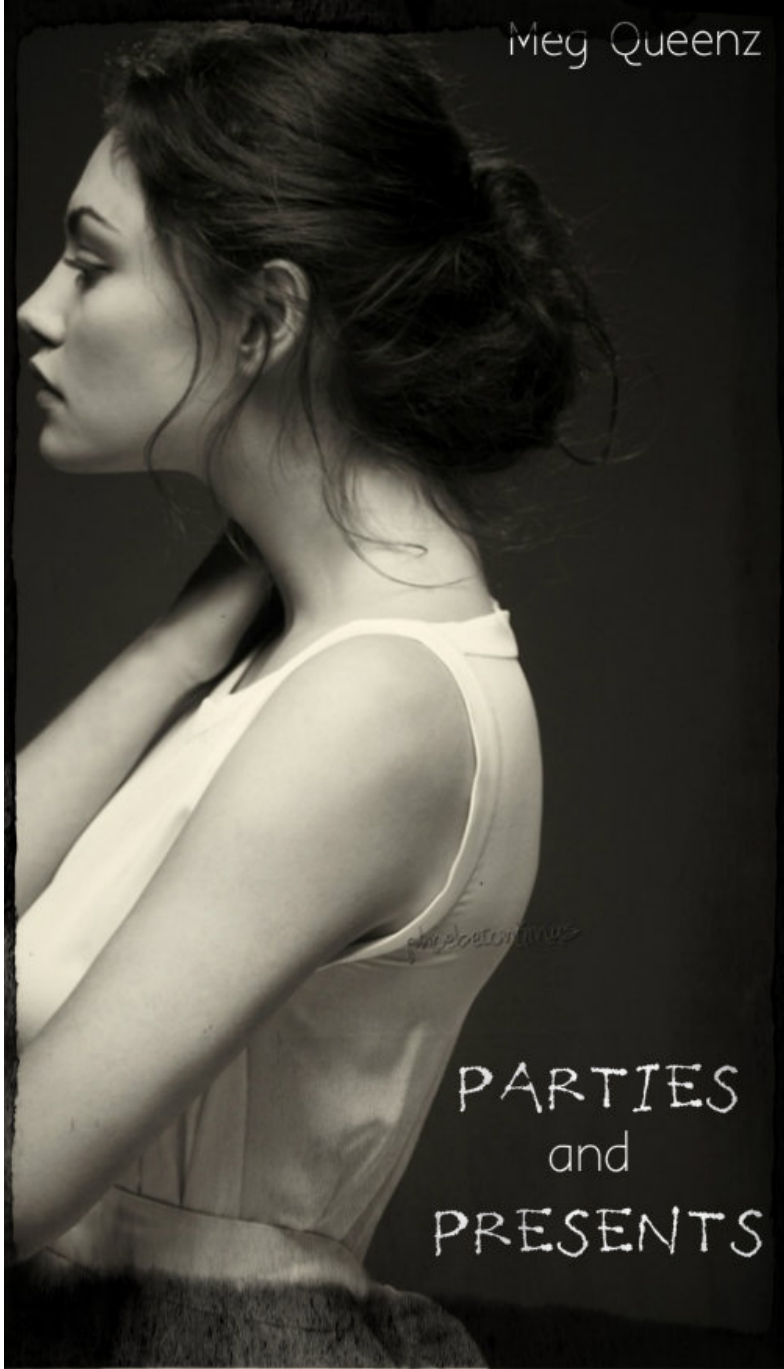


Meg Queenz



PARTIES
and
PRESENTS

Short Story: Parties and Presents

It was Christmas Eve and I had yet to get Niall a present.

I'm not sure what possessed me to procrastinate this hard, but I knew that it wasn't good in the first place. Yet I kept putting it off until now. And now I was sitting in the car with Niall on the way to Louis' birthday party and not shopping for his present.

I sat somewhat stiffly as Niall pulled up in Louis' driveway. Harry's Range Rover and Louis' Mystery Machine were already there, and I assumed Zayn and Liam were on their way, or else they would be in the same place we were.

When Niall turned off the car, he turned to me with narrowed eyes.

"What's wrong?"

"What?" I answered quickly. "What do you mean?"

"You're nervous about something, and it's not about Louis' party because you're friends with everyone here."

"I-I just realized that I didn't put a label on the Secret Santa gift."

His eyes narrowed further. "That's because you were suppose to, Ray."

"Oh, right. Well, we better get it." The last part was said with such speed that Niall sat there for a couple seconds trying to figure out what I had said as I was opening the car door.

I started walking to Louis' front door and heard a car door slam and Niall mumble, "Hormonal girls."

My eyes narrowed involuntary at that. I turned around to shoot him a small glare and he smiled apologetically at me to let me know that he had realized I had heard him.

Louis door was always open because he had a security gate, so I just waltzed in. Louis stopped me so that he could grab my hand and ended up waltzing with me as Niall laughed at us. Eleanor started to do the Electric Slide with Niall and it ended up being a dance fest as Zayn and Liam showed up and started doing the Inbetweeners Dance.

I dragged Eleanor off after that and we talked in the living room while the guys talked in the kitchen.

"I haven't gotten a present yet." I told her.

She gave me a bewildered look. "Why not?"

"I kinda just put it off." I shrugged like it was nothing, but inside I was freaking out.

She sighed. "I'll go look for something, but you owe me."

I nodded, grateful and made my way towards the kitchen.

As I passed under it, Niall grabbed me out of nowhere and held me still. I gave him a confused look until he pointed above me and grinned at the mistletoe in front of us. Smiling at his antics, I leaned in to give him a peck on the lips and rolled my eyes at his extravagant fanboying.

He was Niall, and he would always be Niall.

The party was currently in full swing when Eleanor grabbed me by my fingers and dragged me into a spare bedroom.

She grinned at me and handed me a present wrapped in the Cars movie wrapping paper. I laughed and grabbed the present from her outstretched hand.

“Is this Niall’s?” I asked, rolling the present in my hands.

Her grin didn’t lessen as she answered. “Yup.”

“You know,” I said warily eyeing her grin. “I could’ve wrapped it myself.”

She continued to grin, and my suspicion increased. “I wanted to something nice. Consider this your early Christmas present.”

“Ellie, you already gave your present to me.”

She shrugged. “Anyways, you better go put that in the car.”

Eyeing her warily, I went to go ask Niall for the car keys and left the present in the guest bedroom so he wouldn’t see it.

“What do you need them for?” he asked as he reached into his pockets.

“I’m going for a joyride with Ellie.”

He raised an eyebrow. “Sure. Don’t crash, Ray.”

Grinning at him as he produced the keys, I knew he didn’t believe me and I practically skipped off to get the present and walked to the car before giving them back to him and mingling with the people at the party. Everyone seemed to be there; JLS, Little Mix, the rest of the boys, Simon Cowell, and even the Hemsworth brothers. I had no doubt that there were going to be a lot of headlines tomorrow, but I tried not to think about that. I was here to enjoy myself.

I woke up with a headache, but it wasn’t as bad as Niall’s, which is probably because I didn’t do any alcohol drinking and my head was banging against my skull because of the noise last night. To cheer him up, I grabbed the present from under the tree in the living room and marched back to my Paris themed bedroom to put it next to his head.

“Merry Christmas,” I whispered.

“Hm?” he moaned.

“Open your eyes and you’ll see why, Ni.” I smiled at him.

One centimetre at a time, he opened his eyes and practically tore into the wrapping paper when he realized it was a present. Thankfully, he didn’t pay much attention to Eleanor’s choice of wrapping paper.

I was brought out of my wrapping paper thoughts when he bursted out in laughter. I looked at the present in his hands and almost face palmed.

Of course Eleanor would get him smiley-face boxers.

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