



A Vampire for Christmas: Enchanted by BloodMonsters Don't Do ChristmasWhen Herald Angels SingAll I Want for Christmas (Hqn)

By Laurie London, Michele Hauf, Caridad Pineiro, Alexis Morgan

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All they want for Christmas is you...

It's the time of year for twinkling lights on trees and kisses under the mistletoe. Yet the passing of another year means nothing to the stunning immortals who lurk in the shadows of the new-fallen snow.

And they don't care if you've been naughty or nice.

Let four fanged lovers open your eyes to a passion you never dared to imagine. After all, there's no place like home for the holidays—and these dazzling vampires can't wait for an invitation.

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Editorial Review

Review

A Vampire For Christmas is an overall dark, delicious and sensually dangerous read! This anthology has brought together four talented authors that know how to spin a vampire tale that will pull you into the holiday spirit while giving you a healthy dose of the darker side of romance. - Night Owl Reviews Top Pick

Laurie London, Michelle Hauf, Caridad Pineiro and Alexis Morgan hit the spot with *A Vampire for Christmas*. *These ladies know how to turn up the holiday heat and add some vampire spice. A Vampire for Christmas makes an excellent addition to your holiday reading list! - Joyfully Reviewed*

About the Author

Caridad Pineiro is the NY Times bestselling author of over twenty-six paranormal romance and romantic suspense novels and novellas. Look for THE FIFTH KINGDOM, a romantic suspense from Carina Press in July 2011 and THE LOST, the first book in the new SIN HUNTERS paranormal romance series in August 2011. Caridad has also done the foreword for OBSESSED: EROTIC ROMANCE FOR WOMEN edited by Rachel Kramer Bussel which will be available in August 2011. Her popular THE CALLING vampire series returns in 2012, but vampire lovers will enjoy A VAMPIRE FOR CHRISTMAS (October 2011) which includes Caridad's novella, WHEN HERALD ANGELS SING. For more information on Caridad, please visit caridad.com.

Laurie London is an award-winning author and writes the SWEETBLOOD SERIES for HQN Books. Deep within the forests of the Pacific Northwest, two vampire coalitions battle for supremacy--Guardian enforcers who safeguard humanity, and Darkbloods, rogues who kill like their ancient ancestors. BONDED BY BLOOD and EMBRACED BY BLOOD (available now), TEMPTED BY BLOOD (coming March 2012), and SEDUCED BY BLOOD (coming August 2012).

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"So who are you planning to kill?"

Trace Westfalen didn't glance over at the sound of his friend's voice. Instead, he shoved his phone into an inner pocket of his suit, strode to the wet bar in the corner of the conference room and poured himself a straight shot of Jack. Without waiting for his fangs to fully retract, he drained it in one swallow.

"I wish," he said, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "That would improve my mood substantially."

Dominic Serrano shut the double doors and approached the bar, his boots thudding heavily on the hardwood floor. From his leather pants, black leather jacket and the *brindmal* coiled at his hip, Trace knew he must be heading out soon. As the leader of the Seattle field team of Guardians—vampires tasked with keeping the peace among their own kind and the existence of vampires a secret from humans—he wasn't one to sit back and send others on duty out to take care of Darkblood scum. He led by action, not rhetoric. Trace really respected the guy for that.

Dom raised an eyebrow. "Council bullshit?"

"Yeah, you could say so."

Normally a fairly patient man, Trace rarely lost his temper—necessary traits for a member of the Governing Council. Only that was the problem. He hadn't been sworn in yet and the vote, scheduled for next week, had been postponed again. His family had held a seat on the Council almost from its inception centuries ago and the transfer from parent to child was usually just a formality. He gripped the edge of the counter, fighting to control his growing impatience.

"Pour me one," Dom said, holding out a glass. "Not too much, though. I'm on the clock tonight." After Trace filled it, Dom sat in one of the high-backed chairs and took a sip. "I feel for you, man, I really do. I've had my share of run-ins with them. No offense, but they often have their heads up their asses."

Trace laughed bitterly. "No offense taken."

"Want to hit the streets as a Guardian tonight, for old times' sake? Take your mind off what you're dealing with? Might do you some good to work off some of that excess energy." Dom crossed his legs and the leather creaked. "Believe me, wailing on DBs or other vampire riffraff can be very therapeutic."

"Yeah, don't I know it." After his father had passed away last year, Trace had resigned as a Guardian with the Agency, the Council's enforcement division, and moved to the Seattle area to take over his father's seat. He'd been in limbo ever since, doing mundane tasks but having no real power. Tonight's update to the Council using the field office's secure video feed basically amounted to busywork. They'd been dicking with him, dragging their feet, coming up with one excuse after another for why they couldn't take the vote. Although he knew they were slow to make changes, he was starting to get a really bad feeling about this.

"And it's very tempting, but—" Trace pointed to his Ferragamo loafers and Armani suit "—do I look like a guy who's ready to kick some Darkblood ass tonight?"

"That can be easily remedied. We've got whatever you might need. We've even got things you didn't know you needed." Dom leaned back in his chair and clasped his hands behind his head, clearly unaffected by Trace's foul mood.

He couldn't believe how calm and easygoing his friend seemed. When the two of them had worked as Guardians out of the Southeast's Perdido Bay Region, Dom's temper had been of richter scale proportions. In fact, he'd gotten kicked out of the region and sent to the Seattle field office to chill out, which was where he'd ended up meeting a woman and falling in love. Guess it was true that everything happened for a reason, because marriage and fatherhood seemed to agree with the guy.

"Boots, leathers, weapons, guns," Dom continued. "In thirty minutes, we'll have you outfitted and ready to go. What do you say?"

Looking at Dom's *brindmal*, a bullwhiplike rope entwined with silver threads designed to weaken their enemies, Trace flexed his fingers. God, he'd totally love to grab his favorite weapon, a dual-tipped scorpion knife designed to slash multiple attackers, and put it to good use tonight.

It had been a long time since he'd charcoaled a DB. Pierced the heart muscle with a blade of silver and watched the body curl in on itself and turn to ash. It was pretty satisfying knowing you'd eliminated a threat

to the vampire race's peaceful, yet secret existence alongside humans. Unfortunately, Guardians hadn't yet succeeded in eliminating the threat completely—if they ever would. The Darkblood Alliance believed they belonged at the top of the food chain, feeding from and killing humans, not comingling with them. To profit from their depravity and expand their influence, they harvested human blood and sold it on the vampire black market to fringe elements of their society. Sweet, the rarest of all blood types, was extremely addictive and went for the highest price. Trace had to admit, frying one of these bastards tonight would be very therapeutic.

As he reached for the bottle again, a vague unease skimmed along his nerve endings. He tried to take a deep breath but it felt like something was coiled around his lungs, slowly choking him. He loosened his tie but that didn't help. Glancing around the conference room, he was struck anew by the fact that the field offices were located far beneath the city streets with no exterior windows. The walls seemed to be closing in, pressing against his chest, making him wish he was anywhere but here.

Fresh air. That's what I need.

"Thanks, but I've got a long drive back to the estate." He rapped his knuckles on the back of Dom's chair as he passed. "I'll catch you later."

Now that his job here was done, he couldn't get out of the field office fast enough. Within minutes, he'd climbed into the black BMW X4 and roared out of the garage. But instead of jumping onto the freeway and beginning his drive home, he found himself heading to a part of town he hadn't visited in a long time. Despite the winter chill, he rolled down the windows and inhaled deeply.

Finally, he was able to breathe again.

Charlotte Grant had made a serious mistake by not inviting another friend along tonight, but there wasn't much she could do about that now.

She stood outside the Wonder Bar and watched as Kari hung on the arm of a guy she'd met less than an hour ago and disappeared around the corner without so much as a wave back.

"Live and learn," Charlotte muttered to herself as she dug out her car keys, automatically sticking a finger through the loop on her pepper spray. No doubt she'd let the location of the club sway her decision to go with Kari.

She'd always loved this part of the city, with its eclectic mix of shops and galleries situated on one of the hills overlooking Elliott Bay. Especially at this time of the year, when the air had a bite to it and held the promise of snow. Her breath fogged in front of her face. She imagined how nice it would be to stroll along the sidewalk with someone special as they looked at all of the holiday window displays. His hand would be warm, or maybe his arm would be around her shoulders. His laugh would be infectious. If she tried really hard, she could almost smell his cologne. Sandalwood maybe? No, an evergreen smell, she decided. Like a Christmas tree.

She sighed and shook her head to get rid of those silly thoughts. As if she'd expected to meet someone like that at the club tonight.

"Want me to call you a cab?" A bouncer the size of a refrigerator held the door open for a large group of people leaving the noisy club. "Looks like your friend ditched you."

"Yeah, she pretty much did," Charlotte agreed.

Kari wasn't known for giving a crap about anyone but herself. And Charlotte should've known better. Especially when a hot guy was involved. Although this particular guy's hotness was debatable. He was much older and had the physique of someone who spent all his time behind a computer. The only way he'd have a six-pack was if he'd added it on Photoshop.

The bouncer cleared his throat, yanking Charlotte from her thoughts.

"I'm fine, though, thanks. My car's not far away." She pointed down the street. "I can just about see it from here."

A large group of women exited the club, laughing and hanging on to each other's arms. Charlotte stepped aside to avoid getting jostled.

"Hey," the bouncer said to the group in general, "which way are you ladies going?"

That way and down there, were several of the replies. Same direction as Charlotte's car.

The bouncer held his hand out with a flourish. "I give you your escorts."

At least someone cared about her welfare tonight. Charlotte flashed him a grateful smile. "Thanks."

"No problemo."

The seven women moved like a swarm of bees down the sidewalk, constantly buzzing with mindless chatter. Every few feet, they'd stop and laugh at something else. It wasn't hard to keep up with them, just frustrating. Charlotte was tired, cranky, and kept thinking how good a long soak in her tub would feel.

"He's great, isn't he?" Kari had gushed in the ladies' room right before she told Charlotte she was going home with that guy. "I just love his sense of humor." Code for *I know the guy isn't hot but I need an excuse to sleep with him*.

"Yeah, if you like older men who don't know your eyes are above your cleavage." Charlotte knew the real reason her friend was attracted to the guy—his company's fat wallet. In sales, the client was king and quota was everything, and Kari was one of those people who'd do anything to meet hers.

Charlotte didn't care how desperate or at the end of her rope she was. She had scruples and self-respect. Even though she and Kari worked in different industries, she'd never sleep with a client. If she couldn't land a design job on her own merits, then it wasn't meant to be.

The beehive stopped again—this time to take off someone's shoes. Charlotte sighed. She'd had enough. The parking lot was on the next block and, from where she stood, she could see the red car she'd parked next to. She bypassed the group, dancing out of the way as a woman flung her arm out dramatically, and continued down the sidewalk.

Served her right for going out on a weeknight anyway. She reviewed tomorrow's busy schedule in her head. A few client meetings and she couldn't forget to check on a delivery. Mrs. Wilson would be really upset if her new dining table didn't arrive as scheduled. Charlotte had redecorated the woman's home, convincing her that the dated old table had to go. With the holidays right around the corner, Charlotte was afraid Mrs. Wilson would have kittens if the new one didn't come in soon.

As she stepped off the curb, something flashed in the corner of her eye. She glimpsed a pale blue Volkswagen Beetle parked in front of a Dumpster in the alleyway. Peering into the shadows beyond it, she saw nothing but darkness. She moved to the far edge of the sidewalk anyway and picked up her pace.

A breeze blew past her, its icy blast ruffling her hair. She shivered. Taking a bath in a tub filled with hot soapy water up to her earlobes was sounding like the best idea she'd had all day.

As she pulled her coat up around her neck, her heel caught in one of the cracks of the cobblestones. She tried to catch herself, but she lost her balance and hit the ground fast. A jolt of pain shot through her wrist.

Something sounded behind her. Laughter, maybe?

God, how embarrassing. Could this evening get any worse?

She winced at the pain as she pushed herself up. Had the women seen her? She glanced around, but the beehive had crossed the street and were on the next block over, just as oblivious as ever. Only the wind, she decided. She brushed tiny bits of gravel from the heel of her hand and wondered whether it was bad enough to warrant being iced when she got home. Her ankle, too. Damn. The next time she talked to Kari, she'd—

There was a whisper, then a shuffle of feet.

She whipped her head around and surveyed her surroundings. Nothing but an empty sidewalk lined with colorful awnings, large potted plants and—

A shadow on the ground outside the vintage clothing store she'd just passed looked a little odd. She narrowed her eyes. It definitely didn't match those cast by the plants in a nearby pot. It seemed thicker. Like...a person.

Was someone hiding behind one of the trees? Was...was someone following her? A cold lick of fear snaked down her spine, threatening to morph into panic.

She walked away as fast as she could without running, her heels clicking efficiently. It was nothing, she told herself. These buildings were filled with apartments and condos above the ground floor. Probably just a tenant. At night, spooky things were easy to imagine. Besides, if she screamed right now, a zillion people would run to her aid.

Thank God her car was near—she could see the bumper now.

When she glanced back over her shoulder to reassure herself that it was just her crazy imagination, she almost choked. Two dark figures, less than twenty feet away, were coming straight toward her. Something dangled from one guy's hand. A rope?

Dread settled over her like a wet blanket.

Ignoring the pain in her wrist, she turned and ran. She pressed the remote on her key ring. The taillights on her car blinked, the *chirp chirp* a friendly hello. She'd jump in and quickly lock her doors. Should she use the button on the door handle to lock it behind her or use the remote? Remote, she decided, as she sprinted into the parking lot.

Wait. The panic button on her car alarm. She could hit that and—

A large man stepped from the shadows between two cars and jerked at the tie around his neck.

Arms flailing, she slid to a halt on the loose gravel.

As he stormed straight at her, a roaring, rushing sound rang loudly in her ears. Oh, God, he was going to use it to tie her up. This had to be a setup.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ana Lopez:

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The reason? Because this A Vampire for Christmas: Enchanted by BloodMonsters Don't Do ChristmasWhen Herald Angels SingAll I Want for Christmas (Hqn) is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who have write the book in such wonderful way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any more or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of rewards than the other book include such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking way. So , still want to hold off having that book? If I were you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

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