



# Mistletoe

D. Reed Whittaker

## **Happy Holidays**

**This is my 2017 Christmas Story. It grew from a 700-word contest on Writing.com. I soon ran out of words, or my allocation of words – I needed another 300 words for it to end the way I wanted.**

**Lisa and Dan are new characters. In fact, I just named Dan nine words ago. It's the same old story boy meet girl, girl...**

**I hope you enjoy meeting Dan and Lisa, there may be life for them after Mistletoe. As always, your comments, suggestions, corrections are welcome.**

**Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Or, for my Resistance friends – Happy Holidays.**

## Mistletoe

“Are you going to the Christmas Party?” asked Lisa, leaning against my cubicle desk, fingers curled around its edge.

I turned from my monitor to look at her, shaking my head.

“Why not?” She narrowed one eye.

“It’s supposed to be a couple’s thing – husbands bring wives, wives bring their husbands, boyfriends, girlfriends – couples.

“So?”

“So, I don’t have anybody to bring.”

“It’s not a couples thing. Come on, you might have fun.”

“Right, a roomful of strangers, I don’t know anyone, except you and I don’t know you, not really.”

“Whose fault it that, I’m just across the hall.”

“Right, and always busy.”

She laughed. “So are you.”

“Not really, nothing else to do. You have friends stop by and chat, go to lunch with, I don’t know anyone.”

“Why don’t you? You’re good-looking enough, smart, dress well, and can carry on a decent conversation.”

I laughed. “How would you know, this may be the first time you talked to me?”

She laughed, bobbing her head. “It is, I eavesdrop. I was hoping you would come over and say hello, but you never did. Good morning and good evening is all I ever got from you.”

"It's the same for you." I pushed my chair away from the desk and swiveled to look at her. "So, why now?"

She looked down at the floor. "I have my reasons."

"And they are?"

"It's embarrassing."

I grinned. "How embarrassing?"

She shook her head. "Some other time." She pushed away from my desk. "Would you let me set you up?"

"Up, as in a date?"

She nodded. "Yes, as in date. You won't have to do anything but be at the party. You wouldn't have to pick her up, or anything."

"Does she know me?"

She grinned, nodding.

"Do I know her?"

Another grin.

"Who is she?" I asked.

"Do you have to know?"

I laughed. "Of course, I have to know. It's a sit-down dinner, with dancing afterwards. It could be awkward. Could be painful."

"Do you dance?"

I shook my head. "Badly."

"Oh, damn."

"Damn?"

She laughed, walking to my cubicle door-less doorway, then turning. "You're right, it may not work out. I'm pretty sure she'd want to dance. Too bad, she's a nice girl, you'd have fun."

I shrugged. "Thanks anyway. I'd like to meet new people, make new friends. Moving to a new city can be lonely."

"I thought it might, it was for me when I moved here. Don't say no, just think about it, okay?"

"What's there to think about? I don't know who she is, what she's like, if we have anything in common?"

"Is that important, it's only a party?"

"It's important, tell me about her."

Lisa laughed. "What do you want to know?" She held up her hand. "Wait, tell you what I'll do. You can ask 10 questions, but they have to be good questions."

"Good questions?"

She nodded. "Yes, good questions, specific questions. Questions that tell you about her. You can't ask me how tall she is, or how much she weighs. Good questions like what was her childhood like, what are her dreams, what makes her happy. But here's the kicker, whatever question you ask, you have to answer first, answer about yourself. Deal?"

I smiled. "And what happens at the end of the 10 questions?"

Big grin. "The two of you decide if you want to go to the Christmas Party."

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Lisa sent me an instant message link for my mystery girl. I let a day go by before I sent the ever inviting, "Hi."

She let a day go by before she sent, "Hello, who are you?"

I told her all about me where I grew up. What my childhood was like. What I thought of my parents. What they thought of me. What kind of girl did I like. Then the important stuff: Favorite movies, favorite food, what kind of books did I read, and how old I was. Finally, I let her ask the last question.

She asked me if I danced. We had been doing so well up till then.

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We decided, Beth and I, we could bear each other's company for a few hours. I called her Beth because she never told me her name, only a phony IM name. She told me everything else, but not her name. Beth could not be more perfect for me. She was smart, funny, well educated, read the same books, liked the same movies, the same food. She was my age, less six weeks. We had long text message conversations and asked more than the ten questions. We 'talked' about everything.

The week to the Christmas Party was both sweet, and bitter sweet. Sweet in I'd found Beth. Bitter sweet in she was more my imagination than my reality. As corny as it sounds, I was to wear a white carnation. She would carry a red rose.

She was standing next to the Christmas tree. She was beautiful, and she was who I was hoping she'd be. "Hi, Lisa, I thought it was you."

She laughed. "What gave me away?"

"You were typing when I was, and I wanted it to be you."

She gave me her rose. "You are fun. I'm glad I didn't disappoint you."

“Do you want to dance?” I asked, placing the rose on a tree branch, then extending my hand.

She took it. “I thought you didn’t dance.”

“I think with you, it will be different.”

I maneuvered us under the sprig of mistletoe hung under the mirrored ball spinning in the center of the dance floor.

“May I?” I asked, glancing up.

She followed my gaze.