

Wednesday, December 25th, 2013
Christmas Day

West Columbia

It was cold and snowy outside, but toasty warm inside.

I felt happier than I had in a long time; I loved Christmas. I turned from the window and looked over at Dave; he was sleeping soundly.

I could not have that.

For fuck's sake, Mindy!

I opened my eyes to find that I had a slim blonde girl jumping up and down on the bed shouting, "It's Christmas!" like she was Noddy Holder.

"Move it asshole!"

I looked over at the clock. Fuck!

"It may be Christmas Day, Hit Girl, but it is also *fucking* six in the *fucking* morning and Kick-Ass is *fucking* tired!" I growled.

"Come on, Dave; I've got a present for you," Mindy begged.

She was sixteen and she could kill a grown man, any one of a hundred ways and without a moment's hesitation. But when it came to Christmas, she was just like any normal *fucking* ten-year-old. I supposed that was why I loved her so much.

God, Mindy.

I threw back the duvet and sat up. Mindy was wearing nothing but an oversize T-shirt and she looked very appealing. I grabbed her around the waist and pulled her down onto the bed. She screamed and then she giggled.

"Happy Christmas, Mindy," I said a moment before I kissed her, deeply.

I loved Dave.

He put up with me being a big kid and yes, he moaned, but I knew that he loved me. That kiss was . . . well, it had sent shocks right through me, all the way down to my toes. I was really excited; Dave must have thought that I was a *fucking* ten-year-old, the way that I was behaving, but I could not help it and I did not give a shit, to be honest. It was only one day a year; what the hell could it hurt?

I placed a large box in front of him; it was wrapped in green paper with a yellow ribbon. Dave laughed when he saw it.

"Come on, Kick-Ass, open it, already!" I growled as I bounced on the bed; I could not keep still. I hoped he would like them - I had not been able to think of anything else to get him.

"Wow, that's heavy," Dave commented as he hefted the box in his hands.

Mindy was bouncing on the bed; talk about a hyperactive child!

I pulled off the ribbon and attacked the paper; Mindy was very good at wrapping things. Under the paper was a plain, but solid, white box. I opened the box carefully; knowing Mindy, it could be anything. Inside the box were two, hard black cases. I pulled the top one out and placed it on the table. Mindy looked like she had ants up her fucking backside.

I opened the case.

"Wow!" I could not say anything else, but my weapons specialist could not keep still, or silent, a moment longer.

"It's a custom Glock 17 Gen4, in nine-millimetre Parabellum. In the case are three seventeen-round magazines, a speed loader, a cleaning kit, and a manual - not that you'll need it," Mindy spat out at high speed, like a machine gun.

The pistol had a subdued green frame, matte black slide, and a subdued yellow backstrap. I checked the other case; it held an identical pistol and accessories. Mindy then passed over another, smaller box; wrapped in the same way. I opened it. It looked like a small torch, but it had a rail which allowed it to fit beneath the barrel of the Glock 17 pistol. Again, my weapons specialist, chipped in.

"It's a Glock GTL-52, combination Tactical Light and Laser Illuminator. It has both a visible laser and an infra-red laser, which can only be seen when you wear NVGs. The IR laser and light are dimmable," Mindy finished as she calmed down . . . slightly.

I was a bit shocked, but very pleased, with the pistols.

"Thanks, Mindy, they're cool," I said, then I got up and gave her a big hug and a long, long kiss.

She started to blush, furiously.

"I have my own custom pistols; now you have yours. I know you only carry one, but it gives you a spare and you never know when you might need to take two pistols out into the field," Mindy explained.

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"Your turn, gorgeous," I said.

"What?!" Mindy exclaimed, excitedly.

"You might want to put some clothes on," I suggested.

Mindy scrambled to pull on some underwear, a pair of purple shorts, and a smaller T-shirt.

"Ready!" Mindy stated, just as excitedly.

"Come on," I laughed and I dragged Mindy downstairs.

"Okay, big present, or little present, first?" I teased.

"Big!" Mindy exclaimed, jumping up and down.

"Okay," I said, then pulled Mindy into the garage. "You missed this last night, didn't you?"

I pushed Mindy towards a large object which was covered in a black tarpaulin. I pulled the tarpaulin off with a flourish, quickly and in one go.

"Oh, my God! It's. . . Oh! Fuck! *How?*" Mindy stammered, incoherently, as she stared at the object in front of her.

"The police were getting rid of it; it was no longer required for the investigation. Marcus pulled some strings and, well, here we are," I explained.

The 'object' in question, was a very purple Ducati Panigale, with the initials 'HG' on the sides. It took Mindy several minutes to get her mind into gear and to finally reach out to touch the motorcycle.

"I *can't* believe it. I never thought I'd ever see it again!" Mindy said quietly, as she ran her hands over the purple paintwork with reverent care.

I could not help laughing. I could see tears welling up in Mindy's eyes and they started to spill down her cheeks. Mindy turned around, jumped up, and wrapped her arms around me in a big and rather painful hug. She hugged me for quite a while, until her tears of joy were brought under control.

"Thank you, Dave. You don't know what this means to me," Mindy said, as she looked into my eyes.

"Yes, I *do* know what it means to you, gorgeous," I replied and I felt very happy inside.

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Mindy suddenly dropped down and she stared up at me.

"You said there was *another* present," Mindy said, pointedly.

"I did?" I teased.

"Yes, asshole, you fucking did!" Mindy growled, impatiently.

"Dining room," I said, before I was almost bowled over as Mindy shot out of the garage at high speed.

I followed the Mindy tornado and found her in the dining room where a long box sat on the table, wrapped in purple paper. Mindy looked like she might explode with all her pent-up excitement.

"You get any more excited, you'll blow a gasket, girl," I quipped.

Mindy just glared at me and then she attacked the wrapping on the box, which did *not* take long. Inside the paper was a long, glossy, black box. I think Mindy knew what was in it, as I could see that her hands were shaking. She eased the lid open and she started to squeal. Inside the box, there was a long, thin, purple bag made of silk. Mindy, very carefully, opened the top of the bag and eased out the contents. Her eyes went wide and I could see tears forming again.

Her mouth started opening and closing much like that of a goldfish.

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Mindy pulled the Katana from the bag and she held it out in front of her with two hands.

With cautious movements, she moved the Katana very slowly as she checked out every inch of the weapon before she then removed the sword from the Saya and watched the lights reflect off of the highly polished blade. The unbelievably sharp, mono steel blade was made from high carbon (T10) steel, with a 2.80 Shaku, double Hi and 1.7-centimetre Sori. The blade was finished in a straight Hamon and had been stone polished by hand. The point was formed in a long O-Kissaski. The Habaki and Seppa were of Red Copper. The blade was attached to a twenty-six-centimetre Tsuka which was wrapped in a purple cotton Tsuka-ito combined with black ray-skin. The Katana was finished off with black Fuchi, Kashira, and Tsuba. The Katana was housed in a matte black Saya with purple highlights. The Koikuchi and Kirigata were wood and the Sageo was purple silk.

Mindy gently weaved the sword through the air and she watched the light as it glinted off the highly-polished blade. After a few minutes, I asked Mindy if she and her new sword needed some time together, in private. Mindy blushed and she carefully replaced the sword in its Saya and left it on the desk.

"Who?" she asked tentatively.

"Both of us; Marcus and I," I replied.

We thought it would be the right present for her; two-thousand dollars. Mindy ran and hugged me. When she finally let go, there were tears in her eyes again.

"I don't know what to say, but thanks," Mindy stammered.

"Just seeing you with that sword is enough for me," I replied.

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Mindy immediately got on the phone to Marcus.

I checked my watch; it was not even seven in the morning yet. That meant it was before eight in New York. Not quite as bad as six in the morning. I went to get a coffee while Mindy rattled on about the Ducati and the Katana. She was still very excited. Some forty minutes later, Mindy handed me the phone without a word and skipped, yes, skipped, off to the dining room.

"Merry Christmas, Marcus," I said.

"Got you up at six, did she?" Marcus asked.

"You could have warned me," I complained.

"Where's the fun in that?" Marcus countered.

"She loved the bike and the sword; she was in tears," I said.

"She sounded happy, earlier. Glad that worked out. I hope you are both keeping safe, up there," Marcus said.

"We're fine, Marcus," I replied. "Don't you worry."

"I will always worry about you two," Marcus replied.

"We'll call you in the New Year. Have a good day," I said and cancelled the call.

Author's Note: *I hope I have described Mindy's new Katana sword accurately. Describing the sword features in English did not do them justice, so I used the Japanese terms for what I see as a very powerful weapon which deserves respect. For those who don't know about Katana Swords, I will explain some of the terms described:*

The Shaku is a traditional measurement - 2.80 = 84.80-centimetres.

The Hi is a groove at the top of the blade.

The Sori is the curvature of the blade.

The Hamon is a pattern created by heat-treating the blade.

The Kissaski is the type of tip at the end of the sword. 0 being the biggest.

The Habaki keeps the sword from falling out of the scabbard (Saya).

The Seppa are installed top and bottom of the hand guard (Tsuba).

The Tsuka is the hilt or handle.

The Tsuka-ito us a material used to wrap the handle or hilt.

The Fuchi is a hilt collar between the Tsuka and the Tsuba.

The Tsuba is a hand guard.

The Kashira is a butt cap or pommel on the end of the Tsuka.

The Saya is the wooden scabbard for the blade.

The Koikuchi is the mouth of the Saya.

The Kirigata is a knob on the side of the Saya for attaching the Sageo.

The Sageo is the cord used to tie the Saya to a belt.

If any of the above is incorrect, please let me know and I will correct the mistakes.

Updated: September 2017