

# Twelve days of Christmas

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Submitted: December 17, 2011

Updated: December 24, 2011

*Twelve days of Christmas with my characters; Nikura, Kyriean, Mikura Uchiha, Kyrie Sohma, Moira from Ouran High, Hakura, Joanne Motomichi, Cameron, Inri, Moira from Naruto and Mika. The last chapter will be the longest chapter. Enjoy and comment!*

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<b>Chapter 1 - December 14th: Nikura</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - December 15th: Kyriean</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 3 - December 16th : Mikura</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 4 - December 17th: Kyrie</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter 5 - December 18th: Moira</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Chapter 6 - December 19th: Hakura</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Chapter 7 - December 20th: Joanne Motomichi</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Chapter 8 - December 21st: Cameron</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter 9 - December 22nd: Inri</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 10 - December 23rd: Moira</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Chapter 11 - December 24th: Mika</b>	<b>24</b>

## 1 - December 14th: Nikura

*On the first day of Christmas my best friend gave to me a badger demon in the sand.*

Another snowless Christmas in Sunagakure, another sandy Christmas, another year for the villagers to run about between Sunagakure and Konohagakure in a rush to buy gifts for their friends, family and allies. Family, that was one thing the strawberry blonde haired ANBU lacked since a long time ago when her little sister, Karin, died from a lethal dose of poison during a mission to the sound village for their Kage. Her deep red eyes lifted to the Kage building that protruded in the distance against the sand blowing in a breeze.

“Gaara,” she sighed softly, shutting her eyes and leaning against a nearby wall. She disappeared down the alley way and sighed heavily, feeling her heart beat that familiar fast beat as her cheeks flushed pink. Her hand rested on her chest gently, feeling her heart beneath her pale skin. She opened her eyes, lifting her head, and stared at the sky in silence; thinking about her dear little sister. “Oh Karin, tell mom all that has happened since her death will you? Tell her that I never hated her, that I’ve done just what she asked.” A smile tugged at the corner of her lips as a single tear rolled down the side of her face.

“Nikura,” a familiar, female voice called. Nikura blinked a moment and looked for the source of the voice. “Nikura,”

There she was; a blonde with her hair in four pig tails at the back of her head and a rough looking demeanor. She was a foot taller than Nikura and older too, but Nikura was a higher rank than her in a long run.

“Over here Temari,” Nikura called softly, catching the woman’s attention.

“There you are,” Temari huffed as she walked over to Nikura’s hiding spot. “Come on, Gaara needs to go to Konohagakure,”

Nikura shrank back significantly; she knew what that meant. Temari showing up to her meant that she was requested to lead the Kazekage to safety during the four day travel. “You asked to be this rank, now come on,” Temari barked, making Nikura flinch and slowly come from her shadow clad hideaway. What made her wish she could return to it was Gaara’s form standing not far from the opening. Her bangs fell into her face to hide her tinted cheeks as her eyes downcast to the ground.

“Lord Kazekage,” she said quietly in respect towards Gaara. She received her usual response; a nod and an ‘hm’. She let out a quiet sigh, almost emitting a whine that echoed in her head as tears stung her eyes. She hated it, how she adored him so yet she was just. Another villager under his rule; yes he took care of them and took an interest in them because of Naruto Uzumaki, but it still hurt her. Temari gently nudged her forward with a bag of her things all packed.

“Now that Uchiha’ll be waiting for the two of you at the village gates,” Temari snuffed. Nikura’s eyes lifted in a glare from beneath her hair.

“That Uchiha, Temari, is named Mikura. And she prefers being called as such,” she said dangerously. Temari smirked to herself at Nikura’s automatic reaction to defend her friend.

“Whatever, she’ll be waiting for you in any case.” She dismissed, “Now off you go so you don’t make the trip even longer,”

Nikura snorted a sigh before fixing her bag over her shoulder; undignified muttering came from her as she walked past Gaara.

“Stupid, hate this village, Mikura’s so much nicer,” were the few words caught by Gaara’s ears as she passed. He stared off for a moment before following her out of the village. Nikura’s muttering stop and she sighed heavily, a sad tone hitting the corners of it. She lifted her head as they walked. “Ah, Karin, it must be so nice up there with mom isn’t it?” she asked before emitting another sigh. *What am I doing? He must think I’m completely insane and insensitive to everything.* She thought to herself with despair. This trip was NOT going to end in her favor that much she was certain of. As time passed the sun began to set and she grudgingly stopped for the night. She concerned herself with everything, but decided to start by setting up the tent that Temari had graciously packed. She failed to notice her charge walking away into the woods nearby that was the borderline between the two villages. She fought with the tent, trying to get it to stand up and stay up. She stopped when she heard the sound of wood falling on top of each other onto the ground. She whirled around and her eyes went wide; Gaara was standing in front of a large pile of wood and his clothes harbored tell tale signs that he had been the one to carry it. She swallowed hard, how did she not notice him leave?

“Wouldn’t it be better to work by fire light?” Gaara asked as a smirk tugged at his lips. Nikura made no comment as she abandoned the tent for the fire wood, setting it up and lighting it. She then returned to the tent silently and began to fight with it again. She paused when Gaara knelt beside her to help.

“I’ve got it Lord Kazekage,” she said quickly, “you rest by the fire,” she smiled. Her smile disappeared when Gaara chuckled and she frowned. “What’s so funny?” she demanded.

“You can’t do it all you know,” Gaara said quietly. Nikura said nothing for a moment as she finished the tent with Gaara’s help.

“Yes I can,” she remarked quietly as she sat back on her heels and looked up at the sky. Small flakes of snow began to fall down on them. “I can do it all, because that’s how I learned to survive with Karin.” She could feel his eyes on her and she shook her head. “Mikura and I, we’re two peas y’know. We’ve been through relatively the same scenarios in life; she lost all her family besides Sasuke and Itachi. I lost all my family except Karin until recently. We both struggle in life, but we make the best of what we have and push ourselves that much harder every day.” She smiled a little, a genuine smile that only few have ever seen her wear on her face, as she shut her eyes and enjoyed the snows small nips as it landed on her face. “How about some food,” she said suddenly, breaking her train of thought and rummaging through the bag. She set up dinner and sat by the fire while it cooked. She could feel his eyes burning holes in her body as he sat opposite her across the fire. She ignored it to the best of her ability and soon handed him his food. “Ow,” she hissed when the flames leapt higher, burning her arm. She quickly drew her arm in and blew on it to ease the pain. “Stupid fire,” she muttered as she examined her arm which held a bright red burn on its side. She shut her eyes and laughed. “Serves me right, reaching over an open flame like that,” she chided herself as she wrapped her arm with a snow soaked bandage.

They ate in silence and she threw her plate into the fire, watching the orange flames engulf it. She watched as Gaara did the same before rising. "Good night, Lord Kazekage." She said softly as he disappeared into the tent. She pulled out a blanket and wrapped it around herself as she kept by the fire to keep watch. It wasn't long before her blanket became wet and the chill set in, making her entire body shiver. She swallowed hard and tried to keep her body warm by stoking the fire, but it soon died down and extinguished. Soon her teeth began to chatter and she hid her mouth behind the blanket. She heard the tent open and looked over to see Gaara sitting in the opening.

"You're more likely to die that way," he said bluntly as he moved. Nikura, despite her pride, didn't need a second invitation as she scrambled into the warm tent with the bag. She hadn't realized it was a one person tent and there was only one sleeping bag. She swallowed hard when she caught a glimpse of Gaara wearing nearly nothing except a button up shirt and boxers. She thanked the darkness as her face flushed red. She heard Gaara say something, but didn't catch it. "Nikura," his voice called, catching her attention.

"Yes, Lord Kazekage?" she asked, looking at him and noticing he was lying in the sleeping bag with the side open.

"Instead of dying of hypothermia," he stated. Nikura swallowed hard as she let the wet blanket drop to the floor of the tent and consciously removed most of her gear. Each layer intensified the chill she felt until she was shaking from the cold in her tank top and shorts. She slowly slid into the sleeping bag with Gaara, feeling warmer when he closed it. Her cheeks burned as he pulled her close. "For an ANBU you certainly are unprepared," Nikura said nothing, but emitted a heavy sigh. "You said you lost your family, aside from Karin."

"What about it?" Nikura asked, her heart aching.

"You only had your mother, didn't you?"

Nikura fell silent.

"Yeah, it was just me, mom and Karin." Nikura answered, "But then the fourth Kazekage." She shut her eyes. "Sent my mom off on a stupid mission when Karin was only an infant, and I was about five. She came back, but not alive." She sighed softly, "Being her daughter I was alone most of my life anyway because she had housed a demon. Karin got lucky; she had no resemblance to our mother. Everyone just thought she was a friend. I kept it that way so she wouldn't have to suffer the same way I did."

"You protected her by denying she was your sister."

"Yeah, I guess so." Nikura laughed humorlessly. "Then I met Mikura one day, she came to the village to escort your father to Konohagakure for a meeting with the third Hokage. She saved my skin that day. Then at the Chunin exams we met and caught up, I'm not surprised I lost to her so quickly in the preliminary rounds. She's got a lot more to worry about than I ever will."

"So you've always had a friend," Gaara stated quietly.

"If you want to call her that, sure," Nikura remarked, "Mikura's been great to me. She can always make me laugh no matter how down I am." A smile appeared on her face again, "She chased Naruto a few times. He's afraid of her apparently."

Nikura squeaked when Gaara pulled her closer. "L-Lord Kazekage," she whispered as her face grew warm and her heart beat hard in her chest.

"How can you be so open about yourself?" Gaara asked as he nuzzled his face against her chest making Nikura's face grow even redder.

"I'm not usually," she admitted quietly, "It just happens sometimes, for some reason, I start to rattle on about myself. I don't know why, it's not that anyone really cares about what I've gone through." She laughed at herself.

"I do,"

She paused and her breathing stopped.

"W-what,"

"I care," Gaara muttered. Nikura looked at him and smiled, bringing her arms around him.

"Oh Gaara," she soothed, "I know it sounds so similar to your life." She shut her eyes, "I couldn't help you as children, and I was forced to watch from the shadows as I do even now."

Gaara's face lifted and, without meaning, their lips met. Nikura's eyes snapped open and went wide as her face burned hot, her heart beating harshly against her chest. She slowly relaxed and her eyes closed before their kiss broke. She smiled and easily snuggled up to Gaara feeling that a point had been made. Temari, her best friend, had purposely packed in such a way.

## 2 - December 15th: Kyrieian

*On the second day of Christmas the hunter gave to me two red roses.*

Snow coated everything in sight in the large city. Tree branches were sagging from the large amounts, giving away to small piles of snow beneath them where it has fallen before. Lights decorated houses, store fronts and trees around the area. A woman with waist length, ink black hair pulled back with a bright red ribbon wandered the streets carrying bags of gifts and clothes in her black gloved hands. She wore a blue coat whose hood was lined with faux fur, a green flowing skirt with red cotton-like trim around its hem and black heeled boots. A bright orange scarf was securely wrapped around her neck and a pair of white earmuffs kept her ears warm from the cool winter air. A smile was on her soft red lips as she passed by many citizens, wishing them all a Merry Christmas on her way back to her apartment building. She hummed softly to herself as snow began to pepper her hair while it lightly fell to the ground. Her excitement was hardly contained; not only was it Christmas eve, but she was going to spend it with Cameron. Despite whom they were in terms of the vicious circle, Cameron being a vampire hunter and she herself being a vampire, the two adults managed to get along nicely. She got into the building and wiped her snow covered feet on the mat on her way to the elevator. She was greeted by her apartment door; decorated with small patches of wrapping paper and a sign wishing all a Merry Christmas. She gently kicked the door with the side of her foot.

“Anthena, care to let me in,” she called. Her call was greeted by the door opening and a young girl, about six or seven, standing to the side.

“Welcome back Kyrieian,” Anthena smiled up at the woman as she entered.

“It’s good to be back where it’s warm,” Kyrieian smiled as she closed the door with her foot. Her living room decorated with lights and a tree covered in tinsel, lights and ornaments greeted her warmly as she put the bags down to pull off her boots.

“Did you get everything you were looking for?” Anthena asked as she went to nose through the bags. Kyrieian snatched them up quickly, earning a whimper from the child.

“Yes I did,” Kyrieian laughed, “and you can’t go nosing through it all either,”

Anthena made no retort as Kyrieian walked down the hall to her room. She began wrapping what was meant to be presents and hiding them away in their hiding spot in her wardrobe with the rest of the gifts. “Are you sure you’re alright with staying here while Cameron comes over?” Kyrieian asked, hearing Anthena’s footsteps stop outside her door.

“I’ll decide before he gets here,” Anthena answered as she leaned against the doorframe, “Marry-Anne came by while you were gone and told me that our Master is having a kind of get together for Christmas.”

Kyrieian smiled as she pulled out a bright red dress and tossed it at Anthena.

“Either way, here’s an early present.” She said as Anthena looked at it.

“Thank you,” the child exclaimed, running and hugging Kyriean around the waist.

“You’re welcome,” Kyriean answered softly as Anthena disappeared into her own room. The woman turned to the window, which was gathering a small pile of snow on its frame outside. It was already beginning to grow dark out, Cameron would arrive soon. Kyriean picked up her bath robe and a towel before leaving for the bathroom. She paused when she saw Anthena looking at herself in the mirror, her fiery red hair held two green ribbons. The red ribbon that had come with the dress adorned her throat, while the dress lightly fell against her. “I’m glad it fits well,”

Anthena looked over and nodded.

“It’s wonderful, thank you,”

“You’re welcome,” Kyriean laughed quietly before she disappeared into the bathroom for a shower. The hot water felt great on her cold body as she lathered her hair with a peppermint shampoo she’d bought the day before. The scent intoxicated her as she inhaled deeply before reaching for her vanilla body wash and lathered it over her body. She finished her shower and dried off, wrapping the towel around her hair and tying the sash of her bathrobe. She returned to her room and paused a moment, backing up. A hip length, golden blonde haired woman stood staring at her tree. Kyriean ignored her and returned to her room, changing into a pine green dress she’s bought for herself that day, tying the sash tightly behind her back. She released her hair from the towel and began to softly ruffle it, squeezing the water from it with the towel. Grabbing her brush she began to run it through her knotted hair as she walked out into the living room. “Merry Christmas Marry-Anne,” she greeted the woman kindly, despite her distaste for her.

“Merry Christmas Kyriean,” Marry-Anne answered blandly. She wore a figure hugging green and red dress; her hair had been pulled up into a bun by two similar ribbons. “I assume that hunter is coming tonight,” she said with distaste.

“That hunter, Marry-Anne, happens to be.”

“Your boyfriend, I know,” Marry-Anne snorted and rolled her eyes, “you’re none of my concern so whatever Anthena wishes to let you do I’ll leave her to it.”

Kyriean shook her head as she twisted her hair and clipped it to the back of her head with two silver clips, leaving small strands to line her face.

“What would you like, Marry-Anne,” Kyriean asked as she began to set up for that night.

“I’m only waiting for Anthena,” Marry-Anne remarked as her red eyes watched Kyriean set presents beneath the tree.

“So she’s going tonight then,”

“Yes,”

“You two will be here tomorrow right?”

“Of course, Anthena will return her early in the morning and I’ll come since you invited me. Sadly our master has instilled some manners into us in terms of invitations.”

“Oh how kind of you to willingly show,” Kyrieian said sarcastically as she put a few gifts in a bag. “Here, these are for your master,” she held it out to Marry-Anne, whom took it.

“Kyrieian, please be careful while I’m gone,” Anthena begged as she took Marry-Anne’s side.

“I’m always careful Anthena,” Kyrieian laughed, “Have fun,”

“Will do,” Anthena smiled. She and Marry-Anne suddenly disappeared from in front of Kyrieian. Moments later there was a knock on her door. She opened it and was greeted by Cameron’s honey brown eyes.

“Merry Christmas,” he greeted.

“Merry Christmas,” Kyrieian greeted back as he kissed her cheek and entered, keeping his back away from her.

“I couldn’t exactly wrap them, but here’s your gift,” Cameron smiled as he held out two red roses for Kyrieian.

“That’s alright,” Kyrieian smiled as she took them gingerly, “they’re better unwrapped,” she laughed as she placed them in a vase with water. Two red roses, bright as cherries.



### 3 - December 16th : Mikura

*On the third day of Christmas my sensei gave to me three b-class missions*

A pink haired kunoichi wandered the snow covered village. Konohagakure in winter time, such an eye pleasing sight, and it's around Christmas time which means all low rank shinobi get time away from training and missions. The fifteen-year-old girl's feet made the snow crunch with each step she took while she wandered away from the Uchiha compound feeling bored with nothing to do. Since the Hokage gave all Chunin rank and below a holiday break from training and missions the girl's had nothing to do with her time. She tried helping at the hospital, but was instantly turned away when the blonde Hokage caught her running about. Training was impossible since all Jonin ranked shinobi made it a point to make sure all lower ranks didn't train in the slightest and enjoyed their free time. It wasn't quite Christmas yet, but it was fast approaching and villagers were bustling about to buy presents for their loved ones.

"Good afternoon Mikura," a boy's voice called to her, making her turn to see a brown haired Chunin.

"Afternoon Kiba," Mikura greeted her fellow shinobi. "Afternoon Akamaru," she smiled at the small white puppy that Kiba had zipped up in his jacket.

"Christmas shopping," Kiba asked.

"No, I've already done that," Mikura shook her head.

"Another year at Hinata's,"

Mikura sighed softly.

"Another Christmas at the Hyuuga compound, yes," she nodded.

"Hinata's excited about it,"

"She always is,"

"She's a little worried though,"

Mikura looked at him quickly.

"Worried, about what?" she asked.

"She says you've been acting weird the last few years."

Mikura frowned at his answer, "She says you haven't been as excited as you used to,"

Mikura smiled a little, touched by her friends concern.

“You can tell her I’m fine,” she answered. Her eyes caught a glimpse of movement behind Kiba and saw her sensei waving her over. “I should go it seems Zakura-sensei wants me,” Kiba nodded as she walked away towards her black haired sensei. “You wanted me Zakura-sensei?” Zakura nodded and gently placed her hand on Mikura’s shoulder, pushing her down the street towards the Hyuuga compound. Mikura frowned when they entered and the eldest Hyuuga sister, Taikudara, led them to a small room. “What’s going on?” Mikura asked.

“You, Mikura, have missions,” Taikudara informed the girl.

“But we’re not allowed missions, this isn’t funny,” Mikura whined. Zakura placed three b-class mission scrolls on the small table in front of Mikura.

“I managed to convince Lady Hokage to let you have three b-class missions,” Zakura said to her.

“You’ve been moping around the village for too long Mikura,” Taikudara said strongly.

“Lady Tsunade agreed that it’s better to get you away from the village for a few days so you’re not bothering everyone,” Zakura sighed.

“So, I actually have three b-class missions?” Mikura asked, still unsure whether or not this was a trick.

“Open the scrolls yourself if you want,” Zakura offered. Mikura wasted no time in tearing each scroll open and reading the mission inside. A grin broke out on her face. Three b-class missions.

## 4 - December 17th: Kyrie

*On the fourth day of Christmas my true love gave to me four toy mice.*

The bell rang and every student rushed from the room except for one. A chin length, black haired teenager still sat in her seat. Her cheek was resting in her crossed arms on her desk; her eyes were closed signifying she was fast asleep. Four teenagers stood in the door way, watching her.

“She fell asleep in class again,” the waist length, blonde haired teen stated as she stared at her friend.

“She’s been awful tired lately, her waves are off,” the hip length, braided, black haired teen said quietly with a soft sigh.

“Hatori-san thinks that she may be sick,” the shoulder length, brown haired girl informed the other two.

“Tohru, shouldn’t we wake her?” the short, black haired male teen sighed heavily.

“James is right, someone should wake her,” the blonde remarked.

“Why don’t you do it Uo-chan?” Tohru asked.

“No thanks,” Uo-chan replied, “How about Hana-chan?”

“I say James does it,” Hana-chan answered. All three girls looked over at James at the same time and the gothic male sighed heavily.

“I’m always the one to wake her,” he said quietly as he entered the room.

“We could always get Kyo to do it and watch them fight,” Uo-chan grinned.

“Let’s not, if Kyrie is sick it won’t end well,” Tohru sighed. James gently nudged Kyrie’s arm with his knuckle.

“Kyrie, wake up class is over,” he called. Kyrie groaned quietly and opened her eyes. Her pupils appeared as cat-like slits in her yellow eyes before she realized who it was.

“Did I... Fall asleep in class again?” she asked. James nodded and she sighed.

“We should take you to Hatori-san again,” Tohru said as Kyrie stood and grabbed her bag.

“I don’t need to see Hatori again; I keep telling you I’m fine.” Kyrie hissed as she took a step. Her knees buckled and she fell to the floor, her world spinning. James watched as Tohru came over and helped Kyrie to her feet. “Besides, we special Sohmas always get this way in the winter.” Tohru led Kyrie from the class.

“Hana-chan, Uo-chan, we’ll see you guys tomorrow for Christmas Eve,” Tohru said.

“Got it,” Uo-chan said as she waved. “Tomorrow then, get better Kyrie,”

Both girls left and Kyrie rolled her eyes.

“You’ll take me to Hatori whether I want you to or not, so at least let James carry me,” she said. Tohru complied when she was sure the coast was clear and let go of Kyrie. James caught her as she fell back and instantly smoke appeared. When it cleared Kyrie sat as an orange cat in his arms, her clothing lay on the floor. Tohru picked it up and carried it outside. The trio ended up outside the Sohma main house where a blonde child sat playing out in the snow.

“Ah, Tohru-chan, James-san!” he greeted them, “Is Kyrie here to see Hatori?”

“Unwillingly, but yes she is Momiji.” James answered the child. Momiji nodded and led them inside to Hatori’s house. Once inside James placed Kyrie down and covered her with a blanket, watching as she turned back and pulled the blanket closed around her body. She sat still while Hatori ran tests on her.

“She’ll be fine; she just has a bit of a cold.” Hatori informed them.

“Told you,” Kyrie muttered as she changed back into her uniform. The trio left and made their way back to Shigure’s house. James and Kyrie went up to their usual place in Kyrie’s room, closing the door.

“Kyrie, I got something for you.” James said as Kyrie disappeared into her closet to change from her uniform. “I know it’s early, but Uo and Hana don’t know your secret.”

Kyrie emerged from her closet wearing a long sleeved PJ top and PJ pants with snowflakes on them. She saw the wrapped present on her bed beside James and tilted her head when it moved. James watched in amusement as she slowly crept up to it and poked it, watching intently as it vibrated around a bit. She tore the wrapping paper from it and the box fell to the ground. There were four toy mice inside, all of them were electronic and began running around the floor. Kyrie grabbed each one and looked up at James with a slight glare.

“That’s cruel,” she stated. James shrugged.

“It will give you something to do no?” He smirked at her.

“Four toy mice,” Kyrie shook her head, “Four toy mice.”

## 5 - December 18th: Moira

*On the fifth day of Christmas my true love gave to me five artist pencils.*

Christmas at Ouran Academy with the Ouran High Host club again. Music room three had been elegantly decorated with changing lights, papers snowflakes and tinsel. One large tree sat in the corner, decorated with more lights, tinsel and ornaments the hosts had brought in themselves for the occasion. Beneath it were gifts from both hosts and guests meant for one another. A black hair teenager sat in the other corner by the window alone, sketching quietly in her sketchbook and looking out the window simultaneously while the hosts did their job at entertaining their guests. Her blue eyes surveyed the room and landed on the small brown haired host; Haruhi Fujioka, her best friend. She was entertaining a guest and laughing, but her eyes kept straying over to the girl to make sure she was alright. The girl's eyes traveled away from Haruhi to the only twins in the room; Hikaru and Kaoru. They were entertaining several guests with their "taboo brotherly love" act. She noticed Hikaru looking at her out of the corner of his eye, his cheeks slightly flushed. She looked back at her sketchbook and continued to sketch. A clap made her tense up as she hurried to finish what she was working on.

"Alright everyone," the melodic voice of the host king, Tamaki Suoh, caught everyone's attention, "it's time to exchange gifts for the secret Santa,"

The girl sank down in the chair slightly, loathing this time as she continued to sketch. "Moira, that includes you,"

"Give me a few more minutes," she said quietly as she bent over her sketchbook.

"Tamaki sempai, she's been working on her gift ever since we drew names," Haruhi defended for Moira, "and if she's asking for more time it's still not done,"

Moira looked up at Haruhi and gave a quirked smile that said everything.

"We drew names two weeks ago," Tamaki complained.

"Fine," Moira sighed, "I'll just leave out something important then,"

"Moira," Haruhi looked at her friend.

"Tamaki let's just waiting until later when it's closer to closing," Hikaru said, "Whoever she drew is obviously important enough that she's working so hard on that drawing."

Haruhi and Kaoru both suppressed a snicker, knowing full well who Moira had drawn for the secret Santa.

"Very well," Tamaki sighed heavily, obviously disappointed, as he began to pout. They returned to entertaining their guests and Moira sighed with heavy relief.

“By the way, Moira,” Haruhi said before she returned to her guests, placing a bag on the table before her, “I thought you’d probably want to paint it a bit, so I got these from the art room.”

Moira rummaged through the bag and found acrylic paints; gold, red, green, silver, all Christmas colors.

“Thank you Haruhi,” Moira smiled. Haruhi nodded and returned to her guests, leaving Moira to finish her picture. Setting her pencil down; she poured water into the glass jar and picked up a fine paint brush. She twisted the lid off each color and placed them in a line beside her, beginning with the gold. Slowly her drawing came to life and she dug out her pencil crayons from her school bag, coloring in areas that couldn’t be painted. Finally she was finished and she let it dry, turning her eyes to the window that led to the snow covered grounds outside. She continuously checked carefully if the paint was dry. When Tamaki stood to announce it was almost time to close it was dry.

“All right time for the gift exchange,” he announced. The guests chattered amongst themselves excitedly as Moira closed the book and tied a ribbon around it. She took a deep breath as she stood, holding the book close to her chest while her heart began to beat quickly in her chest. Tamaki called out names and each person gave their gift to their designated person. She heard Hikaru’s name and looked up when a wrapped item was held in her vision. Hikaru stood before her, his cheeks slightly pink. She gingerly took it and thanked him, her own cheeks pink. She didn’t even wait for Tamaki to call her name; she thrust the book into Hikaru’s hands and returned to her corner again. Hikaru blinked after her and looked at the sketchbook she’d refused to let anyone, but Hakura, even so much as touch the last two weeks.

“Time to open the presents,” the small blonde host, Honey, exclaimed happily. Everyone opened their gifts. Hikaru pulled the ribbon and opened the book, his eyes scanning Moira’s neat hand writing that adorned the first page. They went wide and he turned the page, each page had a beautifully drawn picture of him. One he recalled her asking him to sit still in a position after school, making him late for the host club. Moira swallowed as she unwrapped the gift Hikaru had given her and her eyes grew wide. Five very expensive and very good artist pencils sat in a metallic case painted gold. She remembered pointing it out to Haruhi one day when the host club had been out in the city. She smiled as her cheeks stained pink and her heart raced; five artist pencils.

## 6 - December 19th: Hakura

*On the sixth day of Christmas my agent gave to me six new songs.*

A teen with red hair walked down the snow covered streets of Domino City with her long winter coat clasped in her hand up to her nose against the cold wind. Her shoes clicked as she walked, occasionally threatening to slide out from beneath her when she found a sheet of ice beneath the freshly fallen snow. Keeping her balance she looked around with a heavy sigh, her blue eyes scoping out every dark alley way she came across. A bag bumped off her hip as she picked up the pace towards her apartment building, the chill setting in beneath her coat. She shrieked when her right foot caught a piece of ice and sent her sliding to her back side. She groaned as she sat there in a snow bank.

"I miss Egypt," she sighed to herself in irritation. This was the fifth time that day that she'd fallen because she slipped on ice. A chuckle drew her attention away from her predicament as the silver haired singer walked over.

"Having some trouble?" He asked with a smirk, earning a glare.

"Shut up Kyofu, I have better things to do than listen to you reprimand me," she snapped as she went to stand, only slipping back down to her initial position. She cursed under her breath when Kyofu chuckled at her again. "Stupid snow, I miss the sand," she muttered under her breath.

"Hakura," a familiar voice called, making her look over. Her face lit up when she recognized her agent's son and her friends.

"Kaz, you guys!" She called as she waved. Kyofu turned and walked away as they approached, Kazuku laughed while the others snickered.

"Having trouble again, Princess?" Kazuku asked with a smile as he offered her his hand. Hakura took it and shivered as he helped her up out of the bank.

"Very much so," Hakura sighed as she wiped the remaining snow off herself.

"Gee Hakura, I think we need to get you special shoes just for the winter," Joey joked.

"Shut up Joey," Hakura grimaced, "it's not funny at all. I'm cold and I'm wet for the fifth time today."

Kazuku laughed quietly, shaking his head.

"We'll meet up with you guys at Burger Palace," he said to the others.

"Alright then," Yugi smiled as the group walked off.

"Mom wants to talk to you," Kazuku informed Hakura as he gently took hold of her arm, leading her

towards the agency building, "I figured you'd want some dry clothes too," he held up a bag Hakura didn't notice before. She smiled in relief that she didn't have to stay in her wet clothes.

"Thanks Kaz, you take such good care of me," she laughed quietly as she let her head rest on her friend's shoulder.

"Only thing I can do for you," Kazuku smiled. Hakura regarded him as they continued to walk, she didn't really notice until now, but her relationship with Kazuku was so much like that of a brother and sister it was uncanny. They arrived at the agency building with minimal slips and Kazuku sent Hakura instantly to the washroom to change. She came back out wearing a long sleeve shirt that was stripped and dark jeans with holes ripped into the material. Her other winter coat was draped over her arm as she carried the bag that now held her wet clothes.

"Let's go then, before Mrs. Motomichi has a conniption fit." Hakura laughed as she made her way through the crowd with Kazuku behind her. They made it up to Joanne's now Christmas decorated door and Kazuku walked in.

"I brought Hakura for you, mom," he informed the blonde woman behind the desk. Joanne looked up and smiled.

"Hakura, good to see you made it alright," she greeted her charge happily as she stood and gave her a hug.

"Sure, after I rescued her from another snow bank monster," Kazuku teased.

Joanne laughed along with Hakura as the teen's face turned red.

"You wanted me," Hakura asked as the woman released her.

"Yes, I know it's the Christmas Holiday's for you singers, but I found some songs I want you to practice." Joanne said as she held out the plastic folder. Hakura took it and nodded. "I didn't think you'd oppose to doing some caroling with Kaz,"

Hakura smiled and shook her head.

"Not at all," she answered happily. Kazuku smiled and they left, heading to Burger Palace. Hakura opened the folder when they sat down with their friends and looked inside. "Six Christmas songs for me to learn," she stated with a small smile. "Can't wait until Christmas Eve," she laughed.



## 7 - December 20th: Joanne Motomichi

*On the seventh day of Christmas my boss gave to me seven more warnings.*

Ah Christmas, one of the busiest days in the agency for all agents whether their singers have time off or not. This year has been even busier for Joanne Motomichi having Hakura, former member of the Wilted Roses, as her charge. Canceled concerts due to shootings, threats and trying to keep Hakura under control have left the blonde woman near tears. The stress, even at this wonderful time, has begun to get to her and her lack of sleep showed it. Even with her son, Kazuku, keeping an eye on Hakura for her it still left her worried about the singer. The leader of that gang was never known for his kindness or mercy. The only thing Joanne had to be thankful for was Hakura's inability to feel pain and the teenager's ability to heal almost instantaneously after being injured due to her goddess heritage. Her green eyes regarded her overflowing trash can. How she wished it was overflowing with demands from her boss that she needs to find a singer, now it overflows weekly with letters from the Wilted Roses; threats and warnings. A heavy sigh emitted from her lips as she turned in her chair towards the window leading out into the snow covered city. At least she can keep the girl busy; those Christmas songs should keep her indoors for a few days with Kazuku. A knock on her door took her attention from the calming scene outside her window as it hinges creaked.

"Yes," she greeted the figure in the door way. The woman frowned, "Kyofu, what brings you to my office? Don't you have things to do?"

Kyofu smirked and pulled out seven envelopes from his coat.

"Oh I do, Joanne," he answered her as he walked across the room to her desk, "but your boss asked I bring these to you."

Joanne regarded the envelopes and her face pales greatly, snatching the papers from his hand.

"Thank you, now go," she snapped, her eyes wild with worry and fear as she regarded the envelopes again. That same handwriting from 'anonymous' in the same blood red ink that sent shivers down Joanne's spine. She swallowed hard as she watched Kyofu leave, hearing the door close. She quickly tore into each envelope and read it over quickly. The same warning beneath the threats. All seven notes in the same red ink that adorned the envelopes on her desk.

'Tell Egyptian "Princess" that she better watch her back on the streets,' above the Wilted Roses' insignia before it gave away to a hasty writing in a black pen that had once been illegible to Joanne, 'Please, tell her to be careful. That boss is intending on killing her first chance he gets, please do this for us. There are some who care for her.'

Joanne's shallow breathing rasped as it returned to normal. She crumpled up each note into its own ball with its envelope before adding to the overflow in her trash can. She had to do something, even if it meant keeping Hakura indoors at all times and canceling all concerts. It was drastic, but possibly necessary to keep the singer safe. "Oh Hakura," the woman sighed heavily, "why did you even start with that group? So much trouble now, so much trouble."

## 8 - December 21st: Cameron

*On the eighth day of Christmas my master gave to me eight more lessons*

“This is such a pain,” Cameron complained as he walked down the halls of the underground vampire hunter academy. His footsteps echoed off the stone walls that were lined with torches, the only source of light in the entire place. This place had been his home since he could remember, his master like a father to him having no memory of his real parents. The reason he was back in this place was because he’d been summoned by his master and he had no other choice but to go. He should be on the surface in the snow on his way to Kyrie’s; he had to keep up his damn façade that annoyed him to no end. He finally reached his master’s study and knocked on the heavy wooden door adorned with black metal hinges, door handle and knocker. It opened, the hinges creaking in protest, revealing a candle lit room filled with shelves upon shelves of books. Books on magic, both black and white, their prey the vampires, their history and other books like such all anciently leather bound with golden designs in the old language and new language. A large oaken desk sat in the middle of the circular room adorned with a book stand, papers and candles dripping with melted wax. Behind this desk was a large wooden chair intricately carved, in this chair was an old man with shoulder-length silver hair and a short silver beard wearing black scholar’s robes. His withered face filled with creases and lines gave away his age as Cameron drew closer to him. He noticed his mentor’s eyes were shut and he was softly snoring. A heavy sigh found its way from Cameron’s lungs as he realized the old man was fast asleep. He cleared his throat, but saw it didn’t even make the man stir. Cameron groaned inwardly at his master’s habit of sleeping in such times as he carefully made his way around the desk. “Master,” the young man called strongly, waking the older man.

“Hm, what?” he responded with a jolt as his eyes flew open and he looked around. “Ah, Cameron, good to see you my boy; did you need something?”

Cameron ground his teeth together in annoyance.

“You were the one who summoned me,” he hissed.

“Ah, yes, yes,” the old man recalled before clearing his throat, “I’ve noticed you’re becoming impatient with the task set before you.”

“And how can I not?” Cameron demanded with a small smirk, “I’m dating a vampire, master, as I was asked to do to gain her trust now that she knows what she is. When will I do my job that I’ve trained since childhood to accomplish?”

“In good time my student,” his master said wistfully, “in the mean time I suggest you take these scrolls,” he said gruffly as he held them out, “and study their lessons. By the time you’re finished learning and applying these eight lessons it will be time to do your job you have trained for.”

Cameron nearly groaned but took the eight scrolls none the less and bowed his head slightly in respect.

“Yes sir,” the young man remarked wearily. So much waiting has been done as it was, two months of waiting since she was recalled what happened to her.

“But remember, Cameron, that young girl is doing her job as well. We have a pact with guardians that we must keep.”

Cameron hissed under his breath at the reminder.

“I don’t need reminding of such,” he growled, “I know very well that damned child is doing her job, but she is doing so poor that she can’t even keep that blood breath from seeing me,” he smirked sadistically.

“Just remember your boundaries,” the old man sighed quietly before waving his hand towards the door signifying Cameron’s dismissal. The man huffed and turned, leaving quickly. He tore open each scroll and read their lessons.

‘Patience’

‘Serenity’

‘Peace’

‘The ability to work within ones limits’

The list went on, each one infuriating Cameron more and more each time he read them. He stuffed them away in his coat as he returned to the surface, stalking down the street to his apartment. Eight more lessons he had to learn and apply in however long he has until that child, Anthena, slips up in her job more than she already has and he can do his job; kill Kyrieian.

## 9 - December 22nd: Inri

*On the ninth day of Christmas my true love gave to me nine new pelts*

Winter in feudal Japan, such a wonderful sight, especially in the Northern Mountains where Inri sat with her pack beneath the gentle snow fall preparing for the long winter months when the ground will be frozen; food had to be collected, warmed pelts and blankets were to be made to keep the pack warm. Inri's breath came out in a cloud of mist as she exhaled deeply, wiping her arm across her forehead leaving behind a trail of blood from the meat she was preparing. She sat back on her feet and looked up at the sky silently, her thoughts drifting away to the Western Mountain pack.

"Lady Inri," a voice called, breaking her away from her thoughts.

"What is it Leo," she replied, turning towards the male pack member.

"There's a pack from the Western Mountains coming this way, they're led by a whirlwind." He informed her. Inri's ears perked up at the mention of the whirlwind and she stood quickly, leaving the meat for the others for the time being. She followed Leo away from the others to greet their guests, the blood on her forehead and arms forgotten. The pack emerged from the forest with their black haired leader in the lead carrying a wrapped package under his arm. Inri smiled softly as she walked to meet them.

"Welcome friends," she greeted warmly when she met up with them, "what brings you here?"

"We brought food," the pack chorused in unison before their leader could even open his mouth. Inri's eyes shone with gratitude.

"Thank you," she turned to Leo, "show them where it goes Leo,"

Leo nodded before he narrowed his eyes at the Western leader. He turned and led the small pack towards the cave, leaving Inri and the leader alone. "Koga, your tribe didn't have to,"

"They chose to on their own," Koga said gruffly, his eyes downcast to the white ground.

"Why don't you come and warm up, it's fairly cold out here," Inri offered, gesturing towards the way the others had gone.

"Are you alright? Your arms," Koga noticed the blood on her arms and Inri blinked.

"Oh right," she laughed, "I was preparing meat to be stored away." She crouched down and gathered snow in the hands, using it to wash away the blood as best she could. The package hit the snow and her ears twitched at the sound of the fabric hitting the snow by her feet. She looked over curiously. "What's this?"

"It's for you,"

Inri's eyes cast up towards Koga, seeing a slight blush on his cheeks. "Kagome said that it's a good thing to give others a gift."

Inri laughed as she picked up the package when she stood.

"Kagome is a strange human," she said quietly, her eyes down casting as she held the package out. Her fingers softly undid the knot that held it together, her eyes watching as she unfolded the corners to reveal pelts. She blinked as her cheeks grew warm; they were Northern pelts that were worn in the colder weather. Some were all one with longer bottoms, others were two pieces. All in all Inri counted nine new pelts for the winter season. "Thank you," she said in a voice that barely rose about a murmur. She looked up at Koga and drew closer to him, her lips gently touching his cheek in gratitude for the gift.

## 10 - December 23rd: Moira

*On the tenth day of Christmas I gave to my master ten more prisoners*

The sound village was bare of snow for the season a woman with ink black hair and white bangs noted to herself as she wandered its streets. Her copper eyes gleamed dangerously in the setting sun as she surveyed the area, she'd finished her mission given to her, but her love for her master drove her to stay longer in the village than she needed to. Her mind vaguely registered that she would most likely get into trouble for taking so long, but her intent would quickly solve that. She quickly hid in an alley way at the sound of footsteps, peering out she saw several people all wearing the same crest; the leaf village crest. The woman grinned to herself, oh how stupid these people were boldly leaving their head protectors with their foreign sign out in the open the way they did; didn't they know that someone could be lurking anywhere to kill them? Something in her brain clicked and all her discretion and sanity left her body as she stepped from her hiding place. Her footsteps caught the attention of the leaf shinobi and they all turned towards her.

"Hey, isn't that Moira?" one of the ninja asked his comrades.

"Moira, as in the rain kunoichi who went missing a long time ago," a kunoichi asked in surprise. The first speaker turned towards her.

"Is your name Moira?" He asked her. The woman's lips curled into a sadistic smirk.

"My name," she muttered, her voice rough and husky as her copper eyes stared upon them, "is indeed Moira," she confirmed, "but you won't be able to return and tell others of my continued existence,"

"What," the kunoichi snapped, causing Moira to grin.

"My master will be so pleased that I captured you all," she laughed to herself in amusement, "I may even be rewarded for my hard work today,"

Without giving the group of leaf shinobi a chance to react Moira had disappeared from her spot before them, a thin cloud appeared when she left her spot. The shinobi looked around wildly for her.

"We can't let her get away," another ninja shouted to his comrades.

"No worries," Moira's muffled voice came as she reappeared before them. The cause of her distorted voice being a cloth that was secured over her mouth and nose, "you won't let me get away, you'll be coming with me,"

The shinobi all calmed, dropping their kunai and making Moira grin widely. Her concoction worked, it made these shinobi obedient to her every command. "Now follow me my good shinobi, my master is waiting," she smirked as she walked away with each one behind her. She led them to her master's hideout within a short amount of time. Moira turned and counted them all before continuing on. "Ten," she reminded herself as she pulled off the cloth and stuffed it back into her kunai pouch, a grin plastered

on her face. She locked the ten leaf shinobi up in the jail like cells and left the room, humming happily to herself as she made her way to her master's chamber to inform him on her achievement. She pushed open the great red doors with their snake handles and entered the shadowed room. "Master," she greeted the tall shadow seated before her as she fell to one knee, bowing her head.

"You're late Moira," the shadow hissed in a snake like manor.

"I know that master, but I brought you a gift," she looked up at him, her copper eyes gleaming with pride. The shadow stood and walked into the light; it was male with long ink black hair, white skin and yellow eyes.

"What did you bring Moira?" he asked, his eyes narrowed at her. Moira swallowed hard, remembering her punishment if he didn't approve of her gift.

"While I was in the village on the mission you set for me I came across a group of ten leaf shinobi, master Orochimaru," Moira informed him confidently, hiding all ounce of fear from her voice and face.

"Leaf shinobi," Orochimaru sounded intrigued by her information. Moira waiting patiently while his thought over what he could possibly gain from these shinobi. He placed his hand on Moira's shoulder and she suppressed the urge to flinch back in fear. "Very good Moira," he praised her in his cold voice. Moira looked up at him and smirked.

"My only wish and objective is to please you, master," she said softly as she shut her eyes. Orochimaru chuckled quietly before leaving the room towards the cells.

## 11 - December 24th: Mika

*On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me eleven eggs*

Snow peppered the ground in the leaf village, causing children to run outside and play. Snowball fights and building snowmen to train against caused much laughter. Not far from their playing stood the Uchiha compound that seemed long since abandoned, behind the cleanest, most well kept house in the compound there was a circular break in the snow. A slithering sound came from beneath the snow as a green drake slithered outside, looking for someone. His eyes searched the area, his ears catching the slithering sound.

"Mika," he called out to the one he searched for. The slithering drew near to him before a blue drake's head popped from the white crystals.

"Yes Torashu," Mika replied as she pulled the rest of her body from the snow.

"You disappeared, I got worried," Torashu explained, earning a laugh from Mika.

"You worry too much," she mused with a small smile, "I'm fine, I like it beneath the snow where it's coldest." She said in explanation to her being beneath the snows surface. Being an ice drake Mika enjoyed the cold temperatures very much and beneath the snow, closest to the frozen ground, is where it's coldest in an area like where the leaf village was situated. Although lately Mika's been trying to find colder areas than what she would find in the land of snow, which was rather uncommon for her even as an ice drake. She always just shrugged it off and kept it to herself as she regarded her mate's worried expression. "Torashu, I'm not a fire element the snow doesn't hurt me," she laughed as she softly nuzzled him. Torashu smiled a little beneath his skull mask, but still seemed unconvinced. Mika sighed heavily, "Torashu you can't keep worrying like this. I'm an ice drake; the cold is what I'm meant for."

Torashu nodded.

"I know Mika," he shook his head.

"Now why I chose a fire drake I'll never understand, but I'm happy with my decision now quite it before I make you," Mika said, having realized it wasn't her want for the cold that bothered him, but their pair of an ice drake with a fire drake. It made things rather difficult for the both of them; Mika being unable to stand the heat of Torashu's body in drake form for too long and Torashu unable to stand the cold of Mika's body either form.

"Why don't we go inside?" Torashu suggested. Mika nodded, having had enough of being outside for a few hours. She followed her mate inside and up stairs to the room that Mikura had left for them. The bed was neatly made and was mostly left untouched by the duo, both of them preferring their natural form over a transformed human form. In the corner sat a nest that they had made, some parts of it were more built up than others to accommodate the two of them and their need for the different temperatures. Torashu smiled as he nuzzled Mika. "I'll go get us some food," he said softly before leaving the room.



Mika made her way into the nest and made herself comfortable; a comfort that would last as long as the drake would have liked. A pain radiated throughout her entire body and she quivered, shifting to get comfortable again only to have the pain grow in intensity. She frowned and shifted again, the pain still growing in intensity, more so when she moved. Mika soon realized the cause of her pain, she was laying eggs. The thought shocked her as she shifted into a more comfortable position. It wasn't long before they were all laid and she turned to count them; eleven eggs. Some were blue, some were red, some had a snowflake, and others had flames or an enflamed snowflake. Mika smiled as she nudged each one softly. "Mika," Torashu's voice came and she looked over to see him carrying food in her arms.

"Torashu," Mika smiled more, "look,"

Torashu's eyes traveled to the large amount of eggs that sat inside their nest and the food fell to the floor. Mika shrank back, worried about his blank expression.

"How many," he asked quietly.

"Eleven," Mika informed him. Torashu made his way over and softly nuzzled Mika.

"Look at that," he smiled and Mika smiled again, happy that he was happy about it. He nestled in with her and the eggs carefully before lying down. Mika followed his example and let her head rest at the base of the nest before Torashu's. They shared a small kiss before Mika fell fast asleep to recover from her endeavor.