

Night and Day Christmas

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Submitted: December 16, 2005

Updated: December 16, 2005

When all the State Alchemists have to contribute something to the military's Christmas party, what will Ed do? And can he help the newest recruit use her talents for good?

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Chapter 1 - Colorful Flames

2

1 - Colorful Flames

Author's Note: I can't take all the credit for this story. First of all, I was planning to write a holiday story for One Piece, but I've been writing so much OP stuff lately that I wanted to try some more FMA work. So when I finally came up with the concept, I had to ask my chemistry teacher for some of the details so my story could be authentic. So I owe a big thanks to her. Thank you, Sensei! Now, I bring you a holiday-themed FMA fanfic.

“Contributions to the Christmas party?”

Edward Elric was standing in Colonel Roy Mustang's office in front of his superior's desk. The colonel was gazing out the window with a bored expression. He sighed and shifted his gaze so he was staring up at the sky. “That's only what the Fuhrer told me,” he explained. “All State Alchemists must contribute something to the military Christmas party this year using their alchemic talents.” He sighed again.

Ed cocked an eyebrow and scratched his head. “What does that have anything to do with Christmas?” He brought his hand away from his head and eyed the colonel. “And what are you going to do for this party?”

Mustang chuckled. “It's a secret.”

Ed crossed his arms and huffed impatiently. He tapped his foot a few times, waiting for the colonel to cave in. When he did not, Ed scowled and left the room, slamming the door behind him.

Alphonse Elric, Ed's younger brother, was waiting for him in the hallway. He walked behind his brother when Ed started trudging down the hall. He shook his head and said, “Brother, you look angrier than usual. What's going on?”

“It's that jerk Mustang!” Ed shouted loud enough for those on the other side of the building to hear. “We State Alchemists have to contribute something to this year's military Christmas party. I KNOW he has some dirty plan up his sleeve!” He began stomping. “His contribution will probably be to pull some prank on me! Probably to melt my arm and leg down and remake the metal as bullets!”

“Well,” Al began, “that would definitely be a display of his alchemic talents.” Ed turned to his younger brother and glared at him. “No, seriously! What is alchemy? Analyzing the parts of a substance, breaking it down, and rebuilding it as something else! It would make sense and follows the rules of an alchemic transmutation!” He tried to make his voice as cheery as possible.

Ed slumped over. “I feel so rejected...” he pouted, limping away. “Betrayed by my own brother...”

Al slowly shook his head. “Drama Queen.” He decided to hang out in the hallway instead of follow his

sibling. Knowing Ed, he would walk back to Mustang's office and tell Al to persuade Mustang to spill his little secret.

Al made the right choice. Shezka came walking down the hall, dressed in her military office uniform, with a pile of books in her hands. She stopped when she saw the suit of armor. "Oh! Alphonse! Nice to see you!" She tried to wave but instead dropped all her books. "GAH!! NOOOO!!! MY PRECIOUS BOOKS!!!"

"Heh," Al laughed shortly, "let me help you with those." He assisted the bookworm in stacking some of the books into neat piles and then picking them up into his palms. "I'll help you carry them. Where are you headed to?"

"Just Lieutenant Colonel Hughes's office," Shezka replied, taking a few books in her grip. "He wants me to replace some more files before the holidays get started. We'll all be off from work on the twenty-fourth, so everyone wants a lot of work done before our week-long vacation." She smiled. "Thanks for getting the books."

"No problem. Are you coming to the Christmas party?"

"If I get the time, I will. I might be stuck pulling some all-nighters."

"I wish you luck in completing your work."

"Thanks!"

Shezka opened the door to Hughes's office and set the books down at her desk. Al placed his books next to the previously set ones and turned towards Hughes's desk when he heard him laugh.

"And then she said, 'Daddy! Will you get me this for Christmas?' And she showed me a picture she drew of a rocking horse! It was so adorable! I have the picture she drew. I'll run down and show you if you want!"

"HUGHES!!!" Al and Shezka heard Mustang shout over the phone. "WOULD YOU STOP USING THE EMERGENCY MILITARY LINES TO BRAG ABOUT YOUR FREAKIN' DAUGHTER????!!!"

Hughes frowned. "You know," he began calmly, "I bet you wouldn't be so jealous if you had your own wife and kid. You should...Hey! He hung up on me!" Hughes slammed down the phone. "The nerve of that guy! He's so annoying sometimes!" He put his hands on his hips and saw his visitors. "Oh! Shezka! Al! I wasn't expecting you." He walked over to them. "Shezka, I thought you were still filling out records at the library."

"These are the ones I finished, Sir!" Shezka pointed to the stack of books. Al stared.

"All this...?! In one day?!" He flailed his arms. Shezka just nodded.

At that moment, Ed came trudging into the office with his back still slumped over. He did not look up when he spoke. "Hughes, I need some cheerful talk. Brag about your daughter to me, would you? I

need something cute...”

“Want to see the rocking horse she drew??” Hughes asked with a giddy expression. “I have a picture of her in her Christmas dress! She looks great in red, don't you think??” He showed the picture to Ed, who looked at it for a brief moment and then dropped his head. Hughes sighed and put the photo back in his pocket. “Mustang?”

“It's him and those stupid contributions all State Alchemists have to contribute to the Christmas part this year,” Ed explained, feeling somewhat better as he got his issue off his chest. “First of all, he's being really sneaky about his, and second, I have no idea what I'm going to contribute!”

“If I were a State Alchemist,” Hughes began, pointing to himself, “I'd transmute a bunch of gifts for my daughter!”

“That's not surprising...”

“I HAVE THE ANSWER FOR YOU, EDWARD ELRIC!!!”

The door to Hughes's office lay shattered across the floor, and everyone in the office jumped at the noise. Major Alex Louis Armstrong stood in the doorway with his alchemic transmutation circles around his wrists. Ed twitched and looked up at the Major. “What would that be?” he squeaked.

Armstrong calmed down a little and said, “Why not transmute a star for us to put at the top of the Christmas tree? You could use several different metals to make it radiant!” He grinned. “Make one that all of Central could see no matter where you are!”

“That's a great idea!” Al agreed, nodding. “Brother, you should do that! It might be fun! Your contribution could be the center of all the excitement!”

“That IS a great idea,” Ed complimented, smiling at the Major. “Thanks, Armstrong! I appreciate it!” He shook his hand. “Oh, by the way, do you know what you're contributing?”

“I knew from the very moment I received the announcement,” Armstrong replied dramatically. He took a ball of what looked like clay from his pocket and threw it into the air. His knuckles glowed a bright yellow as he pounded on the ball. Everyone had to duck, and when they looked at what he created, their jaws dropped. “I AM TO MAKE THE GINGERBREAD COOKIES THIS YEAR!!!”

And so it was. There was a very burnt piece of clay plastered to the wall in the shape of a gingerbread man.

“Of course, I'll use dough, not clay.”

The group stared at the little man on the wall and could only look back in shock at Armstrong. He sure was creepy at times.

“Sounds, uh, great...” Ed managed to whisper. “Now...if you'll excuse me...I think the Colonel is calling me! Yup! That's Mustang's smug comments I'm hearing! I better get going!” He charged out of the room

at top speed.

"I'll go for...um...moral support...or something," Al added, and he quickly ran out into the hallway to follow his brother. Shezka and Hughes stared at the burnt man on the wall for a little while longer and then looked back at the Major.

"Want to see a picture of my daughter in her Christmas outfit?"

Shezka fainted.

"Transmuting a star for the top of the tree?" Mustang asked, interested in Ed's suggestion. "Not a bad idea." He folded his hands on his desk. "Of course, we could easily BUY a star..."

"That's...what...I'm...doing..." Ed growled. "If you have an issue with it, that's your problem." He crossed his arms angrily at his chest. "Besides, I don't see you coming up with any bright ideas for yourself."

"But you didn't come up with this idea on your own either."

"THAT'S HARDLY THE POINT!!!"

Mustang sighed dramatically and shook his head. "Calm down, Edward," he muttered. "I honestly have no time to worry about a stupid Christmas celebration. I have a bigger problem on my hands." He stood up and walked to the young alchemist. "The passing entrant from this year's State Alchemist Exam was transferred to Central today, and she was put under my jurisdiction."

Ed gritted his teeth. "A girl, huh?" he asked distastefully. "I sure hope she's not some teeny-bopper in a miniskirt. You and the rest of your moron soldiers will go crazy." He gave a short growl.

Mustang smirked. "You can see for yourself. She's standing behind you."

Ed jerked his head towards the door to see a pretty blonde standing before him. She had a tall, slender figure hidden underneath long, flowing, white robes of satin. Her shiny blond hair was tied back into two pigtailed low on her head. Her brown eyes flashed against her pale skin. Her mouth was slumped into an unattractive frown.

"Colonel," she greeted, her expression unchanging. "I have my personal files completed. All I need is your signature. Then please pass them on to the Fuhrer." She slapped the papers on the desk and turned to walk back out the door. Before she left the room, she added, "And please don't procrastinate. If you do, I'll tell the higher-ups that you're irresponsible with your soldiers." With those cold words, she left the room.

The words sent a shiver up Ed's spine. "She's so cold...and scary..."

"That's the problem," Mustang sighed. "But it's not just her attitude. There's something more to this. She has never smiled, not in the entire time she's been here with the military since she took the written

exam. And to add to that, she claims to have never smiled or laughed in four years.” He frowned deeply. “I worry. We can't have depressed soldiers in our military.”

“I don't blame her for that.”

“Why?”

“Why would anyone smile in your office?”

Ed walked out of the room with the end of his hair on fire.

Later that day, Ed and Al decided to walk out to the park to enjoy the falling snow (and to stop Ed's hair from burning up). Ed was bundled up in several layers of clothes while Al gathered snowflakes all over his body. It was a little embarrassing when he had to shake them off like a dog.

Eventually, the two boys came along something unexpected. The new State Alchemist from Mustang's office was sitting on a bench looking at the children play in the snow. Ed's hair finally stopped flaming, and he sat in the empty spot next to her. Al sat under a tree to keep from gathering any more snowflakes.

Ed observed the new alchemist to discover that she was exactly how Mustang described her. Even watching the young children play was not bringing the slightest hint of a smile to her face. Her head turned to glance at Ed for a moment only to resume its usual position.

“So what's your title?” Ed finally asked. “I'm Edward Elric, the Fullmetal Alchemist.” He offered his hand, but the young girl did not take it.

“I'm the Night and Day Alchemist,” she replied simply, her gaze not moving. Ed cocked an eyebrow and brought his hand back to his side. Despite how unemotional and scary she was, she was definitely a pretty girl. “I all ready knew your name,” she finally said. “The Colonel mentioned you while he was explaining other alchemists and soldiers under his jurisdiction. I hear you're very famous.”

Ed grinned. “I AM famous!” he agreed, nodding. He then pointed to the suit of armor. “That's my little brother Alphonse.”

“Hello,” Al greeted politely, “it's nice to meet you.”

The Night and Day Alchemist turned and nodded at the younger sibling as a form of greeting. She observed him for a second and finally said, “That's a hollow suit, isn't it?”

“WHAT????!!!” Ed and Al exploded together. “HOW DID YOU KNOW????!!!”

The Night and Day Alchemist gently shook her head. “It's only obvious,” she explained. “It would take a complete moron not to notice the echo you make when you walk. And as for you, Mr. Fullmetal,” She turned back to the older sibling. “your arm and leg are automail, aren't they?” She decided she was

right when she saw the look of shock on Ed's face. "I knew it. Sinners."

The brothers calmed down. They had heard that one before.

"But you look like you have your own share of sins," Ed replied quietly, looking down at the snow. "How come you haven't smiled or laughed in the past four years?"

Before anyone could say anything else, a pulsing scream shot through the air. The three alchemists stood and ran in the direction of the cry on the other side of the park. Soon, they found a small child stuck under a pile of snow, the top of his head bleeding slightly.

"It was a mistake!" one of the boys cried. "We were only having a snowball fight, but then I accidentally hit him so he fell backwards! He hit his head on the tree, and all the snow and ice piled on top of him!"

"We can't dig him out!" another one sobbed.

Just when Ed was about to smack his palms together, another bright glow emerged. The Night and Day Alchemist had created a flame between her hands and was holding it near the pile. The snow and ice soon melted, and the boy rose to his feet. The alchemist then tore off one of the sleeves of her robe and tied it around his head to stop the bleeding.

"You go home right now," she instructed. "This is a temporary fix. Get home as quickly as possible and seek some real medical attention." She shot her head up towards the group of children. "You should go with him to make sure he's okay on his way home."

"Thank you!" the injured child cried, tears welling up in his eyes. "I'll go home to my mommy right now! She's learning to be a nurse anyway!" With that, he began running for the sidewalk, followed by the group of children.

"That was amazing!" Al exclaimed. "How were you able to create fire like that and keep it burning? Is that part of your alchemy?" He stopped. "But what does that have to do with the time of day?"

The Night and Day Alchemist snorted and began walking back to her bench. The boys followed her, desperate for some answers. When she saw that they were following her, she decided to head back to her room in the dormitories for some rest and a change of clothes.

"Brother, she's so suspicious," Al whimpered slightly. "What do we do?"

Ed shrugged. "I don't know, but I think I know how she performs that alchemy of hers. The sun gives off light that reflects on the moon, right? What if she uses the light and heat as part of her transmutation? That could be how she was able to create a flame and keep it burning, unlike Mustang, who can only make bombs."

"It's possible," Al agreed. "I want to know more about her. She seems like a very interesting person."

"If you want to know more, I can help."

The boys turned to see Riza Hawkeye standing behind them in her winter coat. "Oh, hey, Lieutenant," Ed said casually. "What were you saying?" He put his hands in his pockets and prepared himself for a story.

Hawkeye delivered. "I see all the files that Mustang has, due to his sloppiness. I think you boys have the right to know about The Night and Day Alchemist." She sighed. "It turns out that she lost her parents when she was young, too. Her mother abandoned her a few weeks after birth, and her father was an alcoholic. During the time that he died, his daughter was still learning to use and control her talent for alchemy. One day, the two of them got into a fight, and she became so angry that she set the house on fire by mistake. If you look closely, you can see two small alchemic rings on her palms, one for the moon and one for the sun. The sun was shining directly on the symbol when she performed the transmutation, so she ended up burning her father alive. That was four years ago."

Ed swallowed thickly. "And her mother?"

"She was found a river a week later. Apparently, she had committed suicide by drowning herself. Her daughter blames it on herself that she's all alone."

The only question Ed could ask after hearing all that was, "How come no one has mentioned her name?" He was curious since she had only introduced herself as a State Alchemist. Everyone else referred to her as the same way.

Hawkeye frowned and said, "She has no name. She destroyed her birth certificate a few days after the fire. There is no known record of her ever living." She paused. "She refused to keep the name her parents had given her since they are now gone."

Ed shuffled in his spot for a while and then smiled weakly at the Lieutenant. "Thanks, Hawkeye," he said honestly. "That helps a lot."

"I'm glad."

Hawkeye waved good-bye to the boys and walked off towards a café for some coffee. Al placed his hand on his brother's shoulder. "I guess she's more like us than we thought," he murmured sadly. Ed remained silent for a little while until he concocted an idea. He grinned brightly and said:

"I know what she can contribute to the Christmas party!"

"HOW THE HECK DID YOU FIND OUT ALL ABOUT ME???!?"

The Night and Day Alchemist grabbed Ed by the collar of his coat and hoisted him up near her face. She was so angry her face was turning a deep pink, borderline red. Ed stared at her calmly and said, "I'm just like you."

The Night and Day Alchemist cringed and released Ed's clothes. She rubbed her temples and snapped, "Oh yeah? How?" Tears were starting to well up at the corners of her eyes. Ed noticed this and got

straight to the point.

“Al and I lost our parents, too. Our father abandoned us, and our mother died of a disease.” He looked at her with less of a threatening glare and more of a comforting expression. “We tried to transmute our mother back to life, and that was how our bodies got the way they are.” He stopped. “But...you didn't attempt to bring either of them back to life, did you?”

The Night and Day Alchemist shook her head. “I don't want either of them to ever come back,” she muttered, crossing her arms defensively. After a moment, her muscles relaxed, and she looked at her fellow alchemist in the eye. “Your mother must have been wonderful for you to go to such great lengths.”

“She WAS amazing,” Ed whispered, remembering anything he could about his lost parent. Preventing himself from getting too emotional, he rubbed his eyes and took the girl's hand. “But I really came to ask you if you have any idea what you're going to contribute to the Christmas party. If you don't, I have an idea!”

“I wasn't planning on going.”

“You should.”

“Why? I don't have anything to give.”

“I think you do.” Ed grinned. “I get why you have this specific title as a State Alchemist. You use the light and heat from the sun in your transmutation, right? And your nighttime work must have to do with the light reflected off the moon and its gravitational pull, right?” He was practically jumping up and down in his spot. The female alchemist nodded.

“But how can that contribute to a Christmas party?” She only wanted to know where Ed was going with all he was saying. His observations were correct, but his explanations were cryptic and without a conclusion.

Ed's grin widened. “You can create colors!”

The Night and Day Alchemist gasped.

The military's Christmas party took place on Christmas Eve. Every single soldier in the military was invited, and all the State Alchemists were ready to present their contributions to the party to the Fuhrer. Armstrong presented his gingerbread cookies with great pride, striking a pose as he explained how they had anything to do with alchemy. The Fuhrer laughed.

“So simple and yet so brilliant!” he exclaimed. “What a creative idea, Major!” He picked up one of the very burnt cookies and sampled a taste. He twitched for a second and offered the rest to his secretary, who kindly refused.

Ed and Al managed to work their way through the huge crowd and meet up with their friends. Hughes was busy presenting his daughter in her Christmas outfit, which the brothers had to admit was very adorable. Elicia giggled when her father picked her up and snuggled against her.

“Oh, Elicia!” he cheered. “You’ve been such a good little girl this year! I know Santa is going to bring you a ton of presents!” He showed off the huge pile of wrapped gifts he alone had prepared, which took up two whole tables. They did not include the gifts Gracia was going to give.

“Uh, yeah,” Mustang said flatly. “That’s real nice...Hughes.” He brushed some of the hair from his eyes and caught sight of Ed and Al. He called the boys over, and they obeyed his command for once. “Nice to see you two,” he said, taking a sip of saké. “That’s a really impressive star you made for the tree, Ed.”

Ed smiled brightly. “Thanks, Colonel,” he replied in a not-so-bitter tone, highly unusually. “So, Colonel, you still have to tell me what you contributed to this little party. It must have been something really big and fancy.”

“I lit the candles.”

“THAT’S SO BORING!!!” Ed whirled around to see all the candles lit on every table. “THAT was your huge secret?? You’re such a lazy bum!” He glared at Mustang and gritted his teeth. “Do you mean to say that you teased me about not having an idea while all you did was light some stupid candles?!”

“Yeah,”

Ed was about to pull a Scar-style transmutation on the Colonel, but Al grabbed him at his collar before he could. Ed squirmed around in his brother’s tough grip before he heard the Fuhrer say something into the microphone on a small stage.

“Friends, family, fellow soldiers, and State Alchemists,” he began, “I would like to thank you all for coming to the military’s annual Christmas party! Now, I would like all of you to hold your attention to the stage, where we have a terrific contribution from our newest State Alchemist: The Night and Day Alchemist! Please give her a nice round of applause!”

The cheers began as the young girl stepped on the stage. She thanked the Fuhrer for his introduction and said, “Before I begin, I would like to thank the State Alchemist who suggested this idea to me: Edward Elric, the Fullmetal Alchemist. Please give him a hand.” The crowd clapped for the boy and eventually put its attention back to the stage. “I also want to thank Colonel Roy Mustang for supplying the chemicals I needed for this presentation: copper and lithium, and for creating the light and heat I needed as well.”

Oh, Ed thought, so that’s the REAL reason why Mustang lit all the candles. Ha! I get it now!

The Night and Day Alchemist gathered the needed chemicals for her first transmutation and pointed her palms up towards the sky. A few seconds later, a giant green explosion lit up the night. She had created fireworks.

Al tapped his older brother on the shoulder as the female alchemist continued her act. "Brother, how did you know to suggest something so perfect for her?"

Ed smiled proudly. "It was easy. When valence electrons of an atom go into their excited state, they gain lots of energy from the light and heat exciting them. When they go back to the ground state, they release energy, often in the form of colors. She was able to create the fire in the park simply by compressing the atoms in the air and using the light from the sun to keep the atoms constantly absorbing and releasing energy. When this happens, copper gives off a green light, and lithium gives off a red light. By compressing the atoms in the air, adding the chemicals, and mixing the heat from the candles, she's able to create fireworks with Christmas colors!"

Up on stage, The Night and Day Alchemist marveled at the show she was creating. She cried:

"HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!!!" with a big smile across her face.

THE END