



Volume 5

Special Issue 2.5

Winter 2010

By Holly Evans, with the assistance of Miranda Baur

Part I: Marley's, ehm, HAMILL'S Ghost

Dr. Thomas A. Marley Hamill was dead to begin with; dead as a doornail, and there was no denying that. There was much mystery surrounding his death. All that's known was that there had been an accident at a Renaissance Fair that Dr. Hamill had been attending. Dr. Lawrence Kuhar, PH.D. Scrooge-har, was Hamill's sole executor and partner. The two ran Kirby Hall at Wilkes University. Hamill died on the eve of Christmas four years ago, and our story begins on the fourth anniversary of his death.

On this eve Dr. Kuhar is seen grading students' final papers, marking them up in red. "Bah! Humbug!" he said from his desk. "These kids are such a disappointment. But then again, all students are." Dr. Kuhar was a professor who never graded higher than a 1.9, and never granted any extensions on final papers.

A few quiet knocks came from his heavy wooden door.

"What do you want?" he snarled. "I'm busy!"

It was Deb, his assistant. "Dr. Kuhar, there is a student here to see you. It's Holly Evans," said Deb.

"Send her in, if you must," shouted Dr. Kuhar. "Sit down," he said to the student.

"Hello, Dr. Kuhar. I hope you are having a wonderful Christmas eve," said Holly, hopefully.

He just rolled his eyes. "What do you need?" he asked.

"Well, I have been helping the needy an awful lot during this holiday season. So much so that I have gotten a little behind on my school work, and I was just wondering if I could just have a couple of extra days to hand in my final paper that is due today."

He looked at her for a few seconds, which made this a very awkward moment, awkward enough that she blurted out: "Well, Dr. Stanley-Grachit gave me a few extra days to hand in my work for him, so I was hoping you could do the same."

Dr. Kuhar got up and proceeded to sit in the seat right next to her. "So you would like me to give you an extension on a paper that was announced a good three days ago?" he said.

"Yes?" she said.

"Hahaha! You know if you weren't so good at being an incompetent student, you could be a comedian," Kuhar said, almost choking on his laughter. "The answer is absolutely.....NO! Now get out!"

She left his office, with tears fill in her eyes as another person entered. It was Dr. Kuhar's nephew, Matt Kovalchik.

"Hey, Uncle Larry, Merry Christmas!"

"Merry Christmas indeed," Dr. Kuhar said, with anger in his voice. "What are you doing here?"

"Well, Uncle, I wanted to invite you to have Christmas dinner with my wife and myself. Miranda and I would both love to see you at our table," Koval said, with a smile on his face as he hung a Christmas wreath on the coat rack.

"Bah! Humbug! I want to spend this wretched holiday alone," Dr. Kuhar said. He sneered at the wreath.

"Uncle, will you please reconsider?"

"I said no, and that's final. Now leave."

For good measure, Dr. Kuhar stalked over to the coat rack, ripped the wreath off of it, and threw it out of the door.

"Well, there will be a seat open for you, if you change your mind," Koval said before leaving the office.

"Stanley-Grachit!" Dr. Kuhar screamed from his office. Dr. Chad Stanley-Grachit worked for Dr. Kuhar, constantly taking on any extra work and staying long hours into the night.

Dr. Stanley-Grachit rushed from his office that was just around the corner.

"Yes, Dr. Kuhar?" Dr. Stanley asked politely.

"I have been hearing that you have been allowing students to hand in their final papers late. Is this true?" Dr. Kuhar said, making eye contact.

"Well, it is the season for giving, and all of the students had acceptable excuses for not handing in their work on time," he said.

"You are never to grant any extensions, no matter what!" Dr. Kuhar screamed. "Yes, sir," Dr. Stanley said quietly. He turned to leave.

"One more issue before you go," Dr. Kuhar added. "Stop turning the heat up. Do you think I'm made of money?"

"Yes, sir, I do have a question for you, though. I was wondering, since tomorrow is Christmas....do you think I could have the day off?"

Dr. Kuhar gave Dr. Stanley-Grachit a disgusted look. "Christmas...what a sorry excuse for picking a man's pocket every December the 25th. I suppose you can have the day off, but without pay. You had better be extra early the day after."

Dr. Stanley-Grachit welled up with such joy and excitement that he almost hugged Dr. Kuhar.

LATER...

Dr. Kūhar was the last in the building, as usual. He only left for a moment to purchase a cup of coffee from the Turkey Hill down the street, only to return to the campus on that fateful Christmas Eve.

On the way back to the office, he saw a merry group of carolers made-up of a few freshmen English majors. He proceeded to grab his *Heath Anthology of American Literature* and throw it at the group from his car while greeting them with a "Bah! Humbug!"

He finally arrived at his dark, dim, and lonely office where he had spent so many miserable nights. He stepped up to the door and began to unlock it.

Just then, he noticed that his clunky metal door knob seemed to transform into the face of his deceased partner, Dr. Thomas A. Marley Hamill.

"BOO!" the knocker shouted, which made Dr. Kūhar fall backwards. He reluctantly looked back at the door expecting to see the face of his partner, but there was nothing. "Man, I've gotta lay off the Pyncheon."

He entered his completely dark office, only turning on a flashlight to guide the way.

Kūhar slipped into the footed pajamas he kept on the coat rack set down with a student's English paper that he would no doubt grade harshly.

"Ah. Crushing dreams, that's what I do."

All of a sudden the flashlight blew out, and the room was pitch black.

Then, all of the lights turned on in the room.

"What is going on?" Dr. Kūhar said, frightened that there was an intruder in the building.

"Lawrence Kūhar," a mysterious, yet familiar voice bellowed.

"What? Who's there?" Dr. Kūhar asked, hoping he wouldn't get an answer back.

"Lawrence Kūhar. You don't remember me? In life I was your partner Thomas A. Marley Hamill."

With that said, a ghoulish figure, in very sensible glasses, appeared in front of Dr. Kūhar. The ghost was plagued with chains and had a medieval ace in his head.

"Tom?" said Dr. Kūhar. "You're supposed to be dead."

"I have come back to show you the errors of your ways," the ghost said.

"Why are you dressed in chains?" questioned Dr. Kūhar.

"The Renaissance fair. I tested a catapult. The next thing I know, I land head first into a medieval weaponry shop," said Dr. Hamill's specter.

"These chains represent more than my death, Larry. They represent my life and all of my unkindness. I am here to make sure the same thing doesn't happen to you."

"Renaissance fairs aren't really my thing, brother. It's not who I am," Dr. Kūhar said.

"Silence!" yelled the ghost.

"This has nothing to do with any fair. Tonight you will be visited by three spirits. These apparitions will show you all of your misdoings. They are the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come. Tonight, Larry, is the night that will decide the rest of your life and eternity. Remember to show good will toward all, and don't end up like me."

The ghost vanished from the room.

"Piss, Spirits. What a bunch of nonsense. I need sleep to take away these horrible visions," Dr. Kūhar said, scoffing the spirit.

Soon sleep found Dr. Kūhar, but it would soon lose him.

Part II: The Ghost of Christmas Past

It was midnight in Dr. Kūhar's office. His head rested upon his most recent draft of his article for the *Inkwell Quarterly* when he was awoken by the sound of someone (or something) rearranging his bookshelf.

Dr. Kūhar opened his eyes quickly, startled by the child-like figure's presence.

"Dude, you have GOT to rearrange this. Your bookshelf's a mess!" It was Dr. Marcia Farrell, the youngest member of the English Department, but she was see-through and kind of floating.

"What are you doing here? Stop touching my stuff," shouted Dr. Kūhar.

"Oh, Old Dog. I'm the Ghost of Christmas Past! We need to go over a few things, your lack of organization, notwithstanding."

In the blink of an eye, Dr. Kūhar found himself back in college. He scoped the classroom and recognized it was his first Composition class. Young Dr. Kūhar sat towards the back, too shy and timid to speak up, but fascinated by the material of the class.

"Awh, you used to be so cute! What happened?"

"Farrell, shut it."

Dr. Kūhar watched himself silently reading and scribbling between the lines of text while other students flicked paper balls and passed notes. Such passion. Such naivety.

Dr. Kūhar turned to face Dr. Farrell when he discovered another setting. It was Christmas and his sister, Vicky (who looked a lot like workstudy Vicky Hevener), had begged their father to let Dr. Kūhar spend the holiday with them. Vicky made anywhere feel like home. He saw himself smile by the fire place and sip on coffee while Vicky told him stories.

"I don't understand why you're taking me to these places. I have grading to do!"

"It didn't look like you were grading when I showed up at your office. In fact, I think you were drooling. Somebody needs to take a chill pill, and it's not me. Your papers will be there when you get back."

"Yeah, you should talk. When you chop wood, you clear out the forest."

Dr. Farrell rolled her eyes. "Whatever. Besides, I'm enjoying this thoroughly! I never imagined you as a nice person; it's a real eye-opener. Let's keep going!"

Dr. Farrell and Dr. Kuhar walked out of the front door and entered a holiday party thrown by Dr. Davis and Dr. Kelly. The two young faculty members were toasting everyone and sharing delightful tales of nineteenth-century Christmas traditions while Dr. Davis' famous cupcakes were passed around. Dr. Davis gave a brief speech to invite everyone to eat, saying, "Good evening, everyone. On behalf of Dr. Kelly and I, we welcome you to our annual Christmas party and wish you and yours a Happy Holiday."

Dr. Kelly placed his arm around the young Dr. Kuhar and promised him a job in his haberdashery after his internship.

"I should have taken that job."

"Well, I'm not so sure about that one. If you did, then you wouldn't have met Dr. Starner."

"Don't you dare bring her into this --" Dr. Kuhar stood in between himself and the one colleague whose classroom presence he admired. The two were fighting over how Dr. Kuhar had spent too much time trying to find ways to make his students fail. He saw the stress in her face. The vein in her forehead. The tears in her eyes.

Dr. Kuhar was broken.

"Farrell! Take me back! Please take me back!"

"One more. Old Dog. Hang in there. If you're good, I'll bake cookies."

The two sat in Dr. Starner's living room with her husband while the grandchildren watched cartoons. The Starners had just been notified of the passing of Dr. Hamill. Dr. Starner mourned for his death, but she could not get over the thought of Dr. Kuhar alone as he continued the reign of terror.

"She really cared about me."

"Yeah, too bad you screwed up. On that note, let's get you back to those papers. That should be plenty to chew on!"

"No! Not yet! Besides, you promised cookies!" Dr. Kuhar tried to reach out.

"It's not going to do anything. She can't feel you. And, I'm a ghost, Boss man. These hands can't very well hold a measuring cup. Remind my living self. Come on."

Kuhar closed his eyes and upon opening them, sat in his desk chair in his office. Alone.

Part III: The Ghost of Christmas Present

The campus clock struck one. Dr. Kuhar, frightened by the noise, woke up, thankful to be safe in his office. Five minutes soon passed. Then ten. Then twenty. Nothing happened. Dr. Kuhar now believed that he had been dreaming and proceeded to lay his head onto the desk.

"Larry," a voice beckoned.

Dr. Kuhar jumped. Where did this noise come from? He was looking around the room.

"Larry," the voice called, again.

"Who is that? Who's there?" Kuhar asked.

A light started to shine through from under his bedroom door. He opened the door to find a jolly young man, with a throne full of tasty treats fit for a king, except this king wasn't wearing a crown, but adorned with a Chargers beanie. This semi-king was Justin Jones, and he was sitting in Dr. Kuhar's hallway, amidst piles of holiday foods, wearing a bathrobe.

"Come in, and know me better, Man! I am the Jones of Christmas Present," Jones said.

"This is way too much for me to handle. And, what's with calling me 'Larry?'" said Dr. Kuhar. "What do you want with me, Jones?"

"I'm a ghost, Man. This is how me and my 2009 brothers roll. I am only here to show you your present life," Jones said, while chewing on a chicken wing.

"It's I and my 2009 brothers."

"Whatever. Let's go. Just touch my robe."

And, like that, they were off.

They soared through the skies, watching the warmth coming from all of the homes in Wilkes-Barre and Kingston.

Jones finally stopped. A house that was just on the verge of being livable. The house was filled with people sharing embraces.

"How could someone be so happy while being so poor?" Dr. Kuhar asked, skeptical. "Who does this run-down shanty belong to?"

"You know him very well, Larry. You see him every day," said Jones.

Just then the door opened to admit a snow-covered man. It was Dr. Stanley-Grachit, and he received a hug from every individual in the tiny home.

Walking just a few steps behind him was a tiny woman, wearing a large heavy boot on her left foot, and managing her balance on a wooden crutch.

"Who is the young woman with the gimp?" Dr. Kuhar asked.

"Why, that is Dr. Stanley- Crachit's daughter, Little Dr. Anthony," answered Justin. "She fell down the stairs and receives little medical attention."

"Why don't they just take her to a doctor?" Dr. Kihar asked.

"How can they? You pay Dr. Stanley- Crachit so little that they could barely eat and keep a roof over their heads."

"A college professor, with barely enough money to live? Geez, talk about a rough economy," Dr. Kihar said to Jones. "You do know that, I don't make these decisions, right?"

"Course. But, you never load him for all of those extra credits."

Looking wisely at Little Dr. Anthony, Dr. Kihar asked tentatively, "Will she be okay?"

"She needs a mandatory and very expensive operation. The future ain't my business, but I can tell you that next year, I see an empty seat where Little Dr. Anthony now sits," Jones informed Dr. Kihar.

The two continued to watch the family feast on what little they had as they laughed, sang, and drank.

"Before we finish our lovely dinner I want to propose a toast to Dr. Kihar, the Founder of the Feast, who has been a saint by giving me Christmas day off," Dr. Stanley- Crachit exclaimed.

"Founder of the Feast?!" Dr. Stanley- Crachit's wife, Sonja Nelsey- Crachit replied. "You have worked for him for how many years, and he gives you one day off. I would be more impressed by a raise. Founder of the Feast, indeed!"

"Dear, I know things have been tough, but we must be thankful for what we have, and it's because of him that we have it," Dr. Stanley- Crachit said, protecting Dr. Kihar.

Sonja was about to argue some more, but Little Dr. Anthony raised her glass and yelled, "To Dr. Kihar!" and everyone followed.

"Let's go, Larry. We have one more stop to make," Jones said as he pulled the professor from the glass pane.

Again, they were flying through the sky, viewing Christmas from above. They stopped at a house that looked semi-familiar to Dr. Kihar.

"Is this the home of my nephew?" Dr. Kihar asked.

Jones nodded.

They were all sitting down to a wonderful feast, one that was more elegant than the Stanley- Crachit's dinner.

Dr. Kihar's nephew stood up from the table and proclaimed a toast.

"To my uncle Kihar. If he won't enjoy this wonderful dinner with us, then we will enjoy it without him. Wherever he is, I hope he is having as fine a Christmas as we are," toasted Koval.

Dr. Kihar watched everyone enjoy their meals and laugh. He even joined in on some of their games, unbeknownst to the guests, of course.

"It's time to go, Larry," said Jones.

"No phooey. I want to stay and have fun, brother," Dr. Kihar told him.

"Sorry," said Jones, and they were both back at the dull, dim, and dark office.

Dr. Kihar looked around and realized that for the first time in a long time he had fun and didn't want to be by himself in this huge and cold mansion. He felt sad and a fool for never accepting an invite by his nephew and for being so hard on Dr. Stanley- Crachit.

"I have one more thing to show you, Larry," Jones said, while opening up his robe. Under this white covering slouched two children, by the name of Tony and Thomas, they were both frail with blond hair and blue eyes. "Those creatures, Dr. Larry Kihar, are also known as Ignorance and Want," Jones informed Dr. Kihar as the two children clawed and growled.

"These beings are the problem within the world, and with them there can be no good will toward men. Remember this, Dr. Kihar. Remember this," Jones warned.

Jones changed from a mere young man to a decrepit elder, and soon turned to dust that was swept up by the wind. Dr. Kihar fell to his knees, ashamed of what he had become and ashamed of the way he had treated people.

Part IV: The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

As Dr. Kihar stayed kneeling on the floor, an ominous figure cloaked in a black robe approached him. As Dr. Kihar stared, the figure's hood pulled back just enough for him to slightly recognize the features of what seemed to be a stoic-looking Mr. Jack Grier.

"Are you the ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?" Dr. Kihar asked the figure.

The figure said nothing, but Dr. Kihar voluntarily followed him.

The first stop they made was at the stock exchange, placed in the middle of the square. A group of men are laughing and praising the heavens. Dr. Kihar went in for a closer listen.

"Did you hear about that professor at Wilkes?" one man asked.

"Yeah, I heard he finally croaked. Eh, good riddance," the friend replied.

"I heard he has a few very collectable books in his office and a nice desk that could fetch a pretty penny," said the other man.

Dr. Kuhar was astounded to find neither sympathy nor sorrow upon the death of a faculty member at Wilkes and wondered if he ought to ask Dr. Kelly about this. Before Dr. Kuhar could even muster out a word, the spirit took him to his office at Kirby Hall. Here, he found that all of his things were being removed.

"All of this junk can go in the garbage. All except that desk," Deb said.

"Now we can turn this room into a faculty jacuzzi lounge!" she said with excitement.

"How could she sell my most valuable possessions just for a hot tub?" Dr. Kuhar said. "I can't watch her take my things and sell them on Ebay. Oh, where do we go next, Spirit? Please show me some human kindness in the world!"

Dr. Kuhar no longer found himself in Kirby Hall. Instead, he was in the run-down, yet humble home of Dr. Stanley-Crachit.

He saw the family preparing for a pitiful Christmas dinner. Everyone was there except for Dr. Stanley-Crachit and Little Dr. Anthony.

The door swung open, and there was Dr. Stanley-Crachit.

Dr. Kuhar watched closely to see if Little Dr. Anthony was trailing behind him, but he saw no one.

"How was it, dear?" Mrs. Halsey-Crachit asked.

"It was as best as could be expected," Dr. Stanley-Crachit said. "Those flowers that we placed last week are still very beautiful and full of color. Little Dr. Anthony would love it."

They paused, remembering.

Then, he said, "Boy, that goose sure does look good," changing the subject. "Everyone is here so we should probably start."

Everyone in the Stanley-Crachit home scurried to their seats, and once everybody had been seated Dr. Stanley-Crachit raised his glass.

"Today we make a toast to a man who has passed away today, but without whom none of this could be possible," he said. "May he rest in peace and keep our Little Dr. Anthony company."

The family reluctantly drank to this toast, only for the well being of Dr. Stanley-Crachit.

"This can't be true. She couldn't have died! She had so much life," Dr. Kuhar said, almost in tears. "I want to see no more, Spirit, please." Dr. Kuhar clenched his eyes tightly hoping to just wake up, but when he opened them he saw rows of concrete in front of him.

He saw the Spirit moving up a tall and dark hill, and he followed.

At the top of this hill lay one tombstone. There were no roses. Just weeds. Dr. Kuhar knelt before it.

"Spirit, tell me who lays beneath this stone," Kuhar pleaded. "I must know."

The Spirit stood behind the moss covered rock and removed his hood completely. Mr. Grier looked upon Dr. Kuhar with no remorse. He took a sickle from behind his back and slashed the shrubs away from the tomb.

"Here Leth Lawrence Kuhar R.I.P." This was all that the slab read.

Dr. Kuhar let out a loud shriek.

"Please, Jack! I have seen the error of my ways! I will change! I will respect my fellow people and help all students in need! I will no longer live as I was, and I will be charitable to everyone!" Dr. Kuhar pleaded.

The ground beneath him opened up, and he could see smoke and fire at the bottom. Dr. Kuhar fell down the more than six foot drop, until he hit the bottom.

Dr. Kuhar opened his eyes, not to see fire and brimstone, but a bright morning, with birds chirping. He ran to a window and saw Matt Kogoy and David Cook, out delivering newspapers while wearing page-boy outfits from the nineteenth-century.

"What day is it today, my good boy?" Dr. Kuhar yelled to Matt, after throwing open his office window.

"Oh, Man. It's Christmas Day, Dr. Kuhar," Matt answered him back.

"Great! I haven't missed it!" Dr. Kuhar said, overly ecstatic.

"Missed what?" asked Dave.

"Purchasing the special feast from Price Chopper!" he said.

Matt saluted. "Oh, Man. You mean the one that's a big as me? Yes, it's still there."

"Oh excellent! Wait, boys! I'll be right back." With that, Dr. Kuhar hurried into Deb's office and grabbed the two boxes of smidgens that she had left for him. Returning, he tossed the candy to the boys, saying, "Here you go, my boys! And, Merry Christmas!"

"Merry Christmas!" they said.

Dr. Kuhar got dressed as fast as he could and ran to Price Chopper, then steadily hurried to the house of Dr. Chad Stanley-Crachit. While making his travels, he bumped into Holly Evans, the student he had scolded for having a late paper.

"Hi, Miss Evans, Merry Christmas," Dr. Kuhar said.

"Merry Christmas, Dr. Kuhar. I guess I'll be seeing you again next semester, since without that paper, I failed your course," she said, sadly.

"Well, how about this: You give me your paper by the end of the week, and I'll accept it and even add on some bonus points for my being so unbearable."

"Thanks, Dr. Kuhar, and Merry Christmas."

"Merry Christmas, Miss Evans," he returned the greeting.

He continued down the street and finally arrived at the Stanley-Crachit home. Upon approaching the door, he wiped the wide smile from his face and knocked on the door. Dr. Stanley-Crachit answered and said, "Merry Christmas" before even realizing who it was.

"Merry Christmas, indeed, Dr. Stanley-Crachit," Dr. Kihar said, sporting his usual frown. "You have a lot of nerve taking Christmas Day off."

Before Dr. Stanley-Crachit had a chance to stand up for himself, Dr. Kihar shouted, "When you know very well you should be on break 'til the end of January!"

"I know, Dr. Kihar, but you see.....What?" he asked, surprised by what he had just heard. "Dr. Kihar what are you saying?"

"I am saying that I have been a selfish old fool and that I want you to take some much needed time off, and with that time off comes back pay for all those extra hours of work," explained Dr. Kihar. "I have also brought a tremendous turkey for you and your lovely family to enjoy since I know that young daughter of yours is a vegetarian. I seem to be missing one more important item... yes, of course, I will personally see to it that your daughter here receives only the best medical attention so that she is 100% healthy."

Dr. Stanley-Crachit almost fainted from all of the exciting news.

"I-I don't know what to say, or how to even thank you," Dr. Stanley-Crachit said.

"You know how you can thank me? You can thank me by have a wonderful Christmas," Dr. Kihar exclaimed.

"Will you at least have dinner with us?" Dr. Stanley-Crachit asked.

"I would love to, but I have someone very special who has been expecting me for a long time. Merry Christmas, Stanley-Crachit, and a very Merry Christmas to you, Little Dr. Anthony," Dr. Kihar said before walking out the door.

Dr. Kihar skipped through the streets like a school boy. He was even playing with the children along the way. When he arrived at his nephew's house, he rushed onto the porch and hastily knocked on the door. Koval opened the door in amazement.

"Is that invite still good?" Dr. Kihar asked.

"Of course it is! Come in, come in. We were just about to sit down to dinner," said Koval with a huge smile on his face.

Everyone sat down and enjoyed a lovely meal. They sang, drank, and laughed together. Dr. Kihar had finally found what he was missing all of his life: Christmas spirit and love towards fellow people.

From that day forward, Dr. Kihar was loved among all Wilkes students. He kept love and kindness in his heart and never forgot that fateful Christmas Eve. To Little Dr. Anthony, who did not die, he became a second-father. And in her words: "Merry Christmas and Paper Extensions, Everyone!"

Happy Holidays to everyone in the English department.



Christmas Traditions

By Viktoria Wojciechowski

'Tis the season to be jolly! From joyous seasonal traditions to the tradition of not doing anything at all, we each have our own special holiday customs. Some of these holiday activities are bountiful, like the "tons of homemade pierogis" that Kelly Clisham enjoys on Christmas Eve.

Dr. Farrell used to go to mass on Christmas Eve at Mercyhurst College with her family, but now goes to mass at St. Boniface. She also watches *The Snow Queen* and/or *Jack Frost* to celebrate the Winter Solstice.

The Hamills have an interesting holiday tradition: they walk across the river from Kingston to pick up their Christmas tree.

Most memories made during the holiday season are warm. Yet when certain people in the community were asked about their yearly customs, I wondered if they lived on a mountaintop and had a heart that was two sizes too small.

When I questioned one student about her Christmas traditions, I was told a tale of her father begrudgingly getting a single wreath by means of decorating. No tree. No stockings. Just a wreath, because "I guess we probably should do *something* to decorate for Christmas."

I quickly moved on to the next prospective interviewee, my roommate Brittany Herritt, but the response to my question was merely a chilling growl and a handful of cornflakes thrown in my general direction.

Melissa Thorne described how "The grinch within" her father and within herself overrules her mom "so there are no winter holiday traditions in our house and I quite like it that way."

A man named Gomez carries on another unique tradition: his holiday activity is to "avoid getting kicked out of my home." When many of us are caroling and hanging ornaments and leaving carrots out for reindeer, a good amount of holiday-haters are skulking about in the meantime, just waiting to rip a paper snowflake or pull the beard off of a department store Santa Claus.

Whether you will be decorating your house, or being a Scrooge, I wish you Happy Holidays. And if I missed anything, please fill in the greeting for whatever you choose to be joyous about this holiday season.

