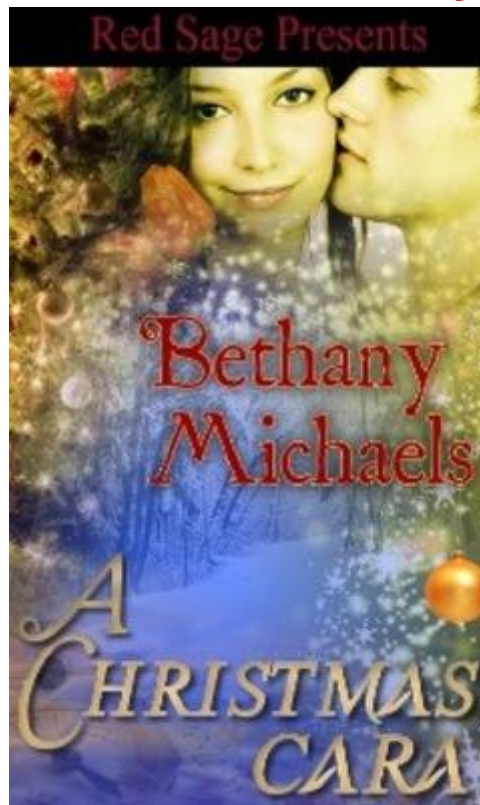


A Christmas Cara - Bethany Michaels



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Workaholic Cara Travers thinks love is for fools and Christmas is nothing but a lost day of work. But when three ghostly visitors take Cara on journeys through her passions past, present, and future, Cara experiences all the sensual joys she has sacrificed to ambition. Will the erotic odyssey be enough to make Cara see the errors of her ways and give love a second chance? TO MY READER: Christmas is a time when we often take stock of where we are and what we've done during the year. It's a time for reconnecting with old friends, celebrating with family and for acknowledging that miracles really can happen. Some of us just need a little more help than others to believe. I hope you enjoy my sensual modern twist on a Christmas classic. ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Bethany Michaels grew up in a small Indiana farm town where her love of reading and writing took root. She recently relocated to Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband and four small children where she loves the parks and scenery but still misses the winter snow...sometimes. Excerpt: Cara frowned. Enough was enough. "Ok, let's say, for a moment, you really are haunting my PC. What do you want?" "I want to tell you to get your head out of your ass." "What?" "Oh, come on. If you don't wake up, you're going to end up like me." The specter

sighed. "While I walked the earth, I never once looked beyond my office, beyond the next quarter. Beyond the next promotion. I shut people out. I never took time for friendship, for love, for passion. And now I'm doomed to wander eternity completely alone." That didn't actually sound so bad to Cara, since most people tended to grate on her nerves, anyway. But she decided it was probably best not to provoke a ghost-- especially the ghost of her old boss. "I don't understand." "Big surprise." The ghost glared at Cara. "Look behind me. What do you see?" Cara squinted at the screen. Out of the fog behind the ghostly figure stretched a long line of rusty chain. It was covered in barnacles and greenish mold. "A chain?" "Still as observant as ever. One link for every time I shut my heart to my fellow man. Every time I turned down a date, missed an opportunity for friendship, each time I shut passion out of my life instead of embracing it." The ghost narrowed her eyes and seemed to stare a hole right through Cara's soul. "A chain of missed opportunities. Of a closed heart, a wasted life. And no one to help me carry it." Marley's image swelled. "Your chain is even longer." Her chain? Cara didn't have a chain! She almost looked behind her to make sure. But this really was going too far. "So what, I'm supposed to hit the nearest singles bar and start picking up guys? Join the country club? Sign-up for online dating? Yeah, right." She scooted to the edge of the couch, hand out. She had to shut the laptop's lid and go to bed before the ghost of her third grade teacher popped out next. Next time, she'd check the expiration date on those dinners. Then the machine shrieked, the radiating noise making Cara slam her hands over her ears. Its racket was almost as bad as those blasted carolers who always darkened her doorway on Christmas Day. When the wailing stopped, Cara cautiously uncovered her ears. "Are we done?" she asked. "Not yet. You will be visited this night by three ghosts," Marley said. Her image started to waver and grow faint. "Uh, yeah. Could I get a raincheck on that?" "Always such a smart-ass. Expect the first ghost tonight when the bell strikes one," the specter said. "Don't piss them off. And for the love of Greenspan,"

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