

*Summary: Janeway gets some surprise news. This story was a response to the September 2003 Kissmekate group fiction challenge.*

*Disclaimers: The following story depicts a sexual and emotional relationship between two women, Captain Janeway and Seven of Nine. If this offends you, don't read it.*

## SEVEN'S GIFT

*by Lara Zielinsky*

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*Sometime after "Imperfection"...*

Captain Kathryn Janeway hopped off the biobed to follow the Doctor, Voyager's Emergency Medical Hologram whom she had promoted to Chief Medical Officer on his merits and growing sentience so many years ago. She rounded the corner of his office pulling on her red-shouldered tunic over her sleeveless gray tank-style undershirt. She asked, "So what's the verdict? What new, rare condition have I contracted from yet another unknown world?"

She was snarky and she knew it but she had been running tired ever since returning from an away mission to Barellys 3, and she really hated that. Since having taken a new bedmate in the last several months she had wanted nothing more than to take her lover to bed every night but instead found herself dozing off before her partner's nightly arrival, and awakening late almost constantly for her shift, and even catnapping in the Ready Room frequently.

Her eating habits too had gone from uneven to downright picky. Today she had caught herself ordering a mid-morning snack from her Ready Room replicator of ice cream and pickles. At first she'd thought she'd forgotten to order the deli sandwich to go along with the pickle, but then the mere thought of her favorite chicken salad had nearly upset her stomach. So she'd eaten the pickles and the ice cream, and surprised herself yet again when she found dipping the one in the other a perfect mix of sour and sweet.

And her mind was wandering at the worst possible times. She found herself ravenously horny right now. She certainly hoped the Doctor, who hadn't yet managed to choose a name for himself, was not going to order her to stay in sickbay for observation. She had not seen her lover in four days since beaming down to Barellys 3, and back again after her negotiations had been complete.

The Doctor fed the vial of the captain's blood into the computer. Now she paced while he sat down at the desk console and tapped a few keys, initiating the tests. An eyebrow went up. She stopped pacing. "What is it?" She sighed. "Damn. I'm contagious, aren't I?" *Just great. Sorry, Seven, I can't see you right now because I have Barellan flu.* At least she hoped it was that minor.

A smile appeared on the Doctor's face. "Well you've certainly brought something aboard with you."

Kathryn sat down in the visitor's chair on the opposite side of the desk. "Is my condition treatable?"

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"Easily. However, I'm still puzzled." He studied Janeway with a measuring look. "According to your file you've been post-menopausal for nearly two years."

"Yes. Of course." Janeway sighed. "Don't tell me I'm somehow going to go through that again - I barely avoided ripping Chakotay's head off. I believe he should thank God for your therapy medications." It was during the period they'd made the deal with the Borg about 8472. Too focused on dealing with that threat, she'd not realized until it was nearly over, that she'd come close to killing Chakotay for a mere difference of opinion. She'd been on a teeter-totter of emotional swings for weeks, and only the Doctor checking her over after an altercation with the newly severed Seven in the brig had revealed the onset of menopause.

It had hurt for a while. She had lost the opportunity to eventually give Mark children but in a way, when Mark had written months later that he'd married someone else she'd been relieved she wouldn't have to tell him – or her mother. They'd just missed their chance. She'd learned to live with that... as well as a million other things she'd miss out on because life had thrown her into the Delta quadrant.

"Well, I don't think you'll want to rip the Commander's head off for this."

"What?"

"Well, I assume after all that he's the father?"

Janeway felt the color drain from her face. "Father?"

"I didn't know you and the Commander had become --"

She cut him off. "We haven't."

The eyebrow went back up. "You haven't?" He stared at the data then at Janeway. "Then I'd like to know who you've been sleeping with."

"No one," she insisted, keeping her secret. *After all, how can two women...* "How can I be pregnant?"

"Don't you recall grade school biology, Captain?"

"Of course I do," she grumbled. "I'm *telling* you that I have not had sexual relations with any man in almost seven years." *Oh God, Seven! How am I going to explain this?*

The Doctor seemed as taken aback by the captain's bluntness as she was in revealing it.

"Perhaps," he began slowly. "I should have another look at things."

"Perhaps you should." Kathryn preceded him back to the biobed. *God, I can't be pregnant.* Laying back, she exhaled as the diagnostic console closed over her torso.

The sickbay doors swished open, admitting Seven of Nine who looked around instantly and crossed quickly to the Doctor's side. "When I asked the computer for your location," she said. "It reported you were here. You are never voluntarily in sickbay. What is wrong?"

Though Seven had addressed herself to Janeway, the Doctor greeted her. "Ah, Seven. Good afternoon."

Kathryn avoided Seven's gaze as the young woman approached the biobed. She had no idea how she was going to explain her condition to her young lover, which no one else knew about. Seven surely would think that Janeway had been unfaithful. They had been apart for four days after all, and the young woman had been so upset that Janeway was going alone anyway.

She'd chosen to do so though because the leader of the Barellans had stared too long at Seven, and Janeway, while she had to conduct the business, had not wanted Seven subjected to a drooling male alien.

"Is the captain all right?" Seven asked again.

"She's fine for the moment. I was just planning to run a more detailed scan," The Doctor

informed Seven.

"May I assist?"

"Seven, really I --" Kathryn protested.

"You are worried about this," Seven determined after studying Janeway's face. "I will stay to reassure you." Grasping Kathryn's hand Seven asked the Doctor, "What will we be examining?"

Blind to Janeway's discomfort and obviously not particularly thinking it a secret, the Doctor blithely replied, "Her baby."

Janeway closed her eyes to avoid Seven's inevitable questions. However she was surprised into opening them again when Seven calmly responded with a question of her own, "Have you detected something wrong?"

"I just said there's nothing wrong with the captain."

"I was referring to the baby. I know she is pregnant."

"Seven?" Janeway's puzzlement deepened.

"Yes, Captain?" There was something in Seven's features, despite the formal address, that reminded Janeway of the young woman's looks in the afterglows of their lovemaking.

"I didn't know I was pregnant."

"Do you not recall discussing our having a family?"

Janeway had to ignore the Doctor's dropped jaw. The man looked as though someone had hit him with a chunk of bulkhead. She needed to focus on Seven's question. The blonde was beginning to look as though she regretted something she had done. "Did you have something to do with this, Annika?" Using her young lover's birth name, Janeway hoped, would convey that she was going to deal with this from the perspective of their intimate relationship and not as captain to crewmember.

Seven nodded her head. Janeway felt the young woman's hand shift uneasily in hers. "When we both thought I would die when my cortical node failed, you would not accept any of my possessions... I... You would not let me go..."

Janeway recalled the intimate conversation with great pain. Seven had given up, resigned to her death. The young woman had been giving away her few personal possessions to everyone aboard 'preparing,' she said, "for the end." Adamantly Janeway had refused to discuss getting anything but through this.

*"I love you, Seven. I will not let this just take you away from me. Not now." They lay in her bed in the captain's quarters, having retreated there to resolve the conflict privately when Seven had brought Janeway to tears in Astrometrics.*

Seven had initiated the lovemaking that time, something the blonde had never done before and Janeway had been carried away on intimate fingers of bliss for hours... until the call came in from The Doctor.

Shocked by the intimate revelations the Doctor turned back to stare at his readouts. He supplied what Seven couldn't say. "You mixed your genetic material and implanted the blastocyst." He looked disapproving. "Practicing medicine without a license."

Seven looked downcast then lifted her left hand toward Janeway's stomach. "I'm sorry. If you wish for me to terminate --"

Janeway seized her lover's hand. "No!" When Seven froze as though a deer in headlights, the older woman considered her next words very carefully. Seven had wanted to leave her something, to ease her pain in the event of Seven's death - which the young woman had viewed as certainty. That Seven had not died did not make the gift unwanted. *In fact...*

"I... guess I'm going to have a baby," she said finally. "Our baby," she emphasized to Seven.

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'And I think it's time to tell the rest of the crew how much I love you.'

"Would you like to see your gift, Captain?" The Doctor pointed to a monitor a few feet away. Floating in her viscous world, Janeway and Seven's baby, a girl, showed off her four-week old figure.

"She is going to be as beautiful as you," Kathryn whispered.

"It is my wish to have her resemble you," Seven responded, awe clear in her voice. Despite her awareness of the biomechanics of what she had done, she was now presented with her gift, in the flesh, and she was humbled by it.

"You didn't program that, did you?" Kathryn asked.

"No. I was not planning," Seven said.

"Good. Because I'd rather she be perfect. And I'm far from that."

"I did not program anything, Kathryn. She is a pure mix of our DNA. I did not have time..."

"Oh, Seven, I know. Trust me. She'll have ten fingers, ten toes, and that's more than enough perfection for me. Besides now we have to name her."

"She is your gift. You should..."

"No," Janeway said. "Together."

"I have no idea."

"Well you'd better come up with a few," the Doctor said, reading a developmental chart the computer had projected. "Because, Seven, you gave her a slightly accelerated growth. Baby Janeway-Hansen will be here in less than twenty weeks." He looked to Janeway. "That explains the cravings."

"Cravings?" Seven's brow furrowed lightly.

Janeway blushed. "It's partly what actually brought me here in the first place. I ate something really weird this morning."

"Which was?"

"Ice cream with peanut butter."

Seven nodded. "The extra proteins and calcium are important."

"And pickles," Janeway added. Seven made a disgusted face. "I thought it was rather good actually."

### *A little later...*

Chakotay found Janeway in her Ready Room and studied the contents of a bowl of food the captain was consuming. It looked like ice cream, but *what are those dark green chunks?*

"Peanut butter pickle." She smiled as his inquisitive look prompted her to answer. "Want some?"

*Oh.* "Um. No. Thanks."

She watched him settle to a chair. "So what can I do for you, Commander?"

"Seven says there's a perfect planet for shore leave about 15 light years from our present course."

"A *perfect* planet?"

"Her exact words." Chakotay had wondered at that.

Kathryn smiled. "How can we possibly pass up perfection? Tell Tom to alter course."

"All right."

"Oh, Commander?" Kathryn's voice stopped him at the door.

"Yes, Captain?"

"Please inform the crew that their first activity will be to attend a ceremony on the surface."

"Captain?"

"Seven will give you the coordinates."

"What ceremony?"

Kathryn's smile widened. "My wedding."

Chakotay blinked and started so suddenly that he pitched forward and fell out onto the bridge through the open doorway.

Checking on him Kathryn came to the Ready Room door. "Are you all right?"

He rolled over and pushed himself back to his feet. "Yes, I'm fine. Who are you marrying?" he added more quietly aware of their public location.

Kathryn answered in full voice with a smile. "Seven of Nine."

"What? Why?"

"Shouldn't I marry the father of my child?" Kathryn asked, stepping toward him and crossing her fingers together over her stomach. It was slightly distended. He eyed her skeptically.

Janeway stepped up to the upper deck of the bridge to meet Seven standing at her usual console behind the command well. The two women kissed deeply. Seven lifted her head, casting Chakotay an arched expression.

He blinked. "How?"

"I am efficient," Seven declared.

Commander Chakotay's eyes rolled back in his head and he fainted, crashing to the deck with a reverberating thud.

**THE END**