

Summary: I hope that, if the opportunity came up, I would be smart enough not to get knocked up by a creepy alien couple with fertility issues."

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Story Notes:

No spoilers. Set in the 2nd season. Umm, since this is an mpreg group, I probably don't have to warn about that, huh? May be a bit... horror-ish.

## 1. [Chapter 1](#) by Z\_\_

Chapter 1 by Z\_\_

"I can't believe you let him do this!" Dr. Rodney McKay snapped at Teyla while pointing a finger at a worn down temple.

"Ronon and I were not here to stop him, Rodney. It was Col. Sheppard's choice to participate in the ritual." Teyla was trying her best to placate McKay, but she was quickly losing her patience. "The Narians promise that the ritual is safe."

Rodney groaned. "This is why we shouldn't split up." He had been on a painfully dull tour on the other side of the city. Had he been with Sheppard he was certain he wouldn't have believed the Narians and he sure as hell wouldn't have let Sheppard get roped into some alien ritual that the rest of them couldn't watch.

"According to Kerras," Teyla gestured at a skinny, meek looking Narian standing nearby. "Col. Sheppard volunteered to take the place of a young woman who did not wish to take part in the ritual. The Narian couple performing the ritual were most pleased to have a willing participant."

"The Colonel is just such a gentleman, isn't he?" Rodney gave Teyla a withering look. "Was she pretty?"

Kerras answered for her. "She was... attractive. Yes. Does that make a difference?"

Rodney snorted and mumbled under his breath. "Typical."

Ronon looked up at the temple as the doors opened. "Hey. I think it's over."

Rodney watched as Sheppard immersed, looking a bit flushed, but, apparently, no worse for wear.

Kerras hurried over to the two Narians who flanked Sheppard. "Mirra, Thomes. The ritual went well?"

"Oh yes," Thomes gushed. "Quite well. Your Lt. Col. John Sheppard did wonderfully."

Sheppard leaned against a corner of a building. Rodney guessed he was trying to school his feature to look casual because Sheppard looked anything but. He took a step closer to John.

"You okay?"

Sheppard flashed him a smile. "Yup. I'm fine."

"You sure?"

"Rodney, I'm..." Sheppard froze, visibly paling. Gulping, he held up one finger before Rodney could even open his mouth. Then he leaned over and vomited into a conveniently placed potted shrub.

After a few seconds he straightened back up, wiping his mouth with the back of a shaking hand. "Fine."

Rodney blinked. "Oh gross. How can you call that fine?"

"It is quite normal." Kerras assured, while Mirra and Thomes beamed at each other. "A very good sign that the ritual went well."

"Normal?" Rodney sputtered a few times. "We should get you back to Atlantis so Beckett can have a look at you."

Thomes shook his head and took a step closer to Sheppard. "I am sorry. But the Vessel may not leave."

Ronon looked mildly worried. "Vessel?"

"Yes." Mirra wrapped her arm around Thomes and smiled fondly. "Lt. Col. John Sheppard is carrying our child."

Sheppard leaned over and vomited again.

Rodney watched for a moment, too stunned to do anything. Then he swung around, glaring at Teyla, who's normal composure was crumbling before his eyes. "Get. Beckett. Now." He glanced at Ronon. "Go!"

Teyla sent Sheppard, who was still hunched over, one last look before tugging on Ronon's arm. He nodded and turned away, but a few steps later and called over his shoulder. "Uh... Congratulations." Then he and Teyla set out for the gate at a brisk jog.

Rodney shook his head before moving over to John. He laid a hand on John's back. "Come on. I think you've done enough damage to that plant." He looked sharply up at the Narians, still all wearing identical smiles. "Do you have somewhere where he can... I don't know... lie down or something?"

Mirra nodded. "Of course. Our Vessels receive excellent accommodations."

Rodney wrapped his arm around Sheppard's waist. "You'll warn me if you're gonna, you know..." He waived his free hand around.

John leaned against Rodney and smirked. "You'll be the first to know."

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They were lead to a nice sized hut, with lovely drapery and a soft looking bed.

Rodney eased John down onto the bed and then snapped at Mirra when she got too close. "I think you've done enough."

"Lt. Col. John Sheppard has agreed to participate in the Ingravitation Ritual. We did not force

him into anything." Mirra glanced fondly at John. "He is partaking in a great role. The Vessel is a truly admired function."

"If it's so great why aren't you doing it? Or him?" Rodney pointed a finger at Thomes.

Thomes shook his head and chuckled. "The Genetic Contributors can not be the Vessel. That would be... We would never do that to our young." John made a gagging noise and Thomes quickly passed Rodney a bowl. "I assume you wish to care for the Vessel. If not Kerras will be most pleased to..." Rodney snatched the bowl and turned to kneel next to John. "It is understandable that you would be very protective of him."

Mirra leaned against Thomes and he put his arm around her as they watched John heave. "Isn't it beautiful?"

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John lay curled on his side watching as Rodney paced back and forth in the small room. "Knock it off, McKay. You're making me nauseous."

Rodney paused. "I thought that was going away." He glanced towards the door to the room. Mirra and Thomes had left them alone a while ago. "They said it would go away..."

"It was. Until you started imitating a ping pong ball." John curled tighter around himself.

"Sorry." Rodney sighed and gestured emphatically towards the door. "I just... Where the hell's Beckett? We sent Ronon and Teyla to get him almost half an hour ago."

John shrugged and then made a strangled sound.

"Again?" Rodney grabbed the bowl the Narians had graciously given them and got it under John in time to catch whatever was left in his stomach. "You are *\*so\** never being left alone on a planet again."

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When Carson finally showed up Rodney was ready to blow a fuse. "Where have you been? Pregnant *\*man\** over here. I know all things medical are a bit shaky, but you can't tell me that this is *\*normal\**."

"I'm sure there's been some misunderstanding." Carson laid a calming hand on Rodney's shoulder. "Men just don't have the medically necessary organs to have a child."

"Oh no. No misunderstanding." Thomes said as he and Mirra followed Carson into the hut, along with Teyla and Ronon. "Lt. Col. John Sheppard is most definitely carrying our child."

Carson looked at Thomes and Mirra, then at Rodney, then at John, still curled on the bed, then back at Thomes and Mirra. "You do know he's male, don't you? It's not possible. There's no where for a baby to go."

"Let me go fetch Henic. He knows the most about the Creator." Thomes disappeared out the door and returned a few moments later with an older man. "This is Henic."

"I hear you doubt the abilities of the Creator to Ingravida a male Vessel." Henic frowned. "For as long as any can remember the Creator has been the only way for us to produce progeny. Weather it comes from a male or female Vessel has made no difference."

"You're gonna have to be a little clearer than that I'm afraid." Carson looked helplessly at Henic, while John shifted uneasily. "You can do that after I'm done examining him." He glance around at the crowded hut. "All of you. Out. Including you Rodney." He shoed the scientist through the door. Rodney rested his forehead against the door after Carson closed it in his face. "This isn't good. This so isn't good." \*\*\*\*\* "As far as I can understand a supportive pouch is formed inside the abdominal cavity." Carson stood next to the bed and looked at the team seated around it. "It's quite fascinating really. A whole reproductive culture relying on the willingness of surrogates." "Doctor?" Teyla interrupted Carson before he could continue. "Is Col. Sheppard in any danger from this?" Carson shook his head. "Henic insisted that they've never had problems with any Vessels. I suppose this is like," He searched for the right word. "Like having a tumor, really. I'd prefer to have you in Atlantis, but these folks have been insisting that you stay here and I can't seem to change their minds. As long as the fetus doesn't press against any organs too severely we should be fine." Carson smiled reassuringly at John. "Plus, it seems to be a remarkably short gestation period."

"How can you be okay with this?" Rodney stood and started to pace. "They just shoved a... a parasite in him and you're suggesting that we let it grow?"

"McKay." John narrowed his eyes. "Look. I know I didn't really know what I was getting into, but this is their kid. We can't just..." He waved his hand over his stomach.

Teyla nodded. "I have to agree with Col. Sheppard. If it were my child I could only hope that someone would be as generous."

"And hey," John smiled. "This isn't going to take long. Think of it as a vacation."

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Less than two weeks. That's how long it would take to grow a baby inside of a man. Rodney had opted to stay because who knew what else Sheppard might do if he wasn't around, while Teyla and Ronon decided to go back to Atlantis. Carson would be going back and forth. Taking samples and then analyzing them back on Atlantis.

John and Rodney got settled in their new, temporary accommodations.

"See?" John asked, stretching out on the bed. It wasn't so bad now that the nausea had eased off. "Just like a vacation." He waggled his eyebrows at Rodney.

Rodney was checking the battery on his laptop. "Right. This'll be great. Until you loose your girlish figure, and can't move, and how are they going to get it out anyway?"

"Same way they got it in?" John sat up and shrugged. "A really bright light."

"With our luck there'll be blood and pain and permanent deformation." He dropped down next to John. "Cause our live suck."

"Come on, Rodney." John wrapped his arm around the scientists shoulder. "Look on the bright side. Carson said there was still a few days before I start getting fat."

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By the third day Sheppard started showing. Just a barely noticeable rounding of an otherwise flat stomach, but it was there. Obvious, tangible proof that something was growing inside his body. Carson was increasingly impressed with the whole ordeal. He constantly wanted to examine John, prod his belly and take measurements, question him about how it felt.

"Mentally?" John arched an eyebrow.

"I was thinking physically," Carson glanced up from the information he was entering into his laptop. "But if you want to talk about how you're feeling I think that would be an excellent..."

"That's okay, Doc." John rubbed the back of his neck. "I dunno. Stretched?"

"I wouldn't know, Son. It's not my body." Carson said sympathetically.

"Different, I guess." He shrugged. Carson placed his laptop aside and sat next to him. He patted John's knee.

"It's perfectly understandable that you're nervous. No man's been through what you're going through. It's bloody unnerving if you ask me." Carson made a face.

"Thanks Carson. You're about as good at pep talks as McKay." John stood, stretching. "I'm going for a run. See you at dinner."

Carson thought about stopping him, but ultimately decided against it. He looked back at his laptop. If the current growth rate was any indication Sheppard's running days were numbered.

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Two days later John had to borrow one of Rodney's shirts because all of his were too tight around the middle.

The day after that Rodney found him hunched over trying to breath through a stitch in his side from attempting a lap around the village.

"You're an idiot." Rodney said. Then he wrapped his arm around John's waist and helped him back to their hut.

That night Carson told them that it would be a good idea if John limited his exercise to the confines of the hut.

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"It's your fault I'm stuck in here." John grouched. He was bored, and tired, and everything ached, and laying on this bed sucked, and what the hell was wrong with this pillow? He threw it across the room, narrowly missing Rodney.

"My fault?" Rodney grabbed the pillow and gestured wildly with it. "Oh of course, Colonel, I completely forgot that I \*forced\* you to over exert yourself, and get knocked up by aliens, and to travel to this planet. Okay, well, yes. The last one. But not the other two." He stormed over to John and tossed the pillow at him. "So you don't get to blame me for this."

"Sorry." John sunk into the pillow, annoyance fading to be replace by pity. He snuffled and turned away from Rodney, trying to find a comfortable spot. He looked, for all the galaxy, like a lost little boy, in way over his head.

"Oh for God's sake!" Rodney flung his hand up. "Carson said he was pretty sure you weren't going to go all hormonal."

"I'm not." John's reply was muffled by the pillow he had buried his face into. "This is just really hard. You can't understand."

"I understand enough to know that you don't complain in really hard situations."

"You'd be complaining..."

"Yeah, well..." Rodney huffed and fluttered his hands. "You're not me." He plopped down near the end of the bed and pulled John's right foot into his lap and started rubbing. "I hope that, if the opportunity came up, I would be smart enough not to get knocked up by a creepy alien couple with fertility issues."

John snorted, and then moaned. He flexed his foot. "God. What're you doing?"

"Foot rub." Rodney dug his thumb into the arch. "Your ankles are swollen." He moved his hands up and down John's leg before returning to the foot again.

"I didn't think..." John gulped and sighed. "I didn't think you were that observant."

Rodney moved onto the other foot. "I'm not completely inept you know. Do you want me to do your back?"

"Really?" John narrowed his eyes as he wondered when Rodney had developed telepathy.

Rodney nodded. "Mm-hmm." He got up to help John into a sitting position. "I lived with a pregnant girl during college and this was the only thing that would calm her down." Rodney grabbed a chair and placed it backwards in front of John. He draped a pillow over the back. "Lean on that."

"I didn't know you had a kid..."

"I didn't get her pregnant. I just let her live with me." Rodney folded his arms.

"That's kinda kinky, McKay." John pursed his lips.

"You want this or not? Cause I have no problem leaving you here to suffer." It was a total bluff and they both knew it. John leaned over the back of the chair and when Rodney didn't move he cast a pout in his direction.

"Fine." Rodney climbed behind John and started kneading.

"So, you gonna... oh, right there... tell me about... yes... her?" John closed his eyes and rested his head on his folded arms. He was beginning to feel like warm Jell-o.

Rodney moved down John's spine and stretched long fingers over his lower back. "She was smart. Not as smart as me, of course. But smart enough. Blond. Cut her hair shorter, chin length, during the summer. We were lab partners and she was... wow." He sighed wistfully.

John hunched his shoulders. "Come on Rodney. Get to the good part."

"Right." Rodney continued. "She went with this... jock. Played all kinds of sports. A complete idiot. Knocked her up, told her he'd take care of her, and then just left. Abandoned her. Said he couldn't handle a kid. She decided to tell me all this over a very delicate chemistry project. Sobbing hysterically. Not paying any attention what so ever." Even though John couldn't see him he was pretty sure Rodney was rolling his eyes. "So I blurted out that she could stay with me since I had a spare room. Just to get her to stop crying."

"Backfired?" John wrinkled his nose.

Rodney huffed. "It was like I was her personal servant or something. Baby this, get me that, all the time. And the mood swings." He shuddered. Rodney moved his hands up to John's tight neck muscles. "But, you know, in between all that... it seemed like it might be, uh, nice. I was thinking about taking a job at the university and she could get a teaching job once the kid started going to school. Nice house, white picket fence."

John nodded the best he could. It did sound nice. Simple. Easy. Well, easier than fighting space vampires.

"Two weeks before she was due that loser came back. Last I heard they got married and moved to Florida or something." Rodney sniffed. "Good thing, huh?"

John agreed. He leaned back, resting on Rodney's chest. "Very good thing." His eyes started to droop. "Thanks."

"Yes, well, glad I could help." He squeezed John's shoulder. "I've got an easier way for you to sleep tonight, now that you're..." He gestured at John's large mid section. "Lie on your side." With one hand holding John to his chest, Rodney adjusted pillows with the other. He got John into position and then slipped a pillow between his legs. He placed another against the small of his back.

Rodney sat on the edge of the bed and brushed a stray piece of hair off of John's forehead. John smiled lazily. Rodney continued to run his fingers through John's hair until John fell asleep.

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John awoke to a strange sensation. Like someone was drawing pictures on his belly. No, not pictures. John smiled. "It's not going to understand equations, Rodney." The sensation stopped. John cracked his eyes open to see Rodney kneeling at the edge of the bed, frozen. "And just because you're not moving doesn't mean I don't see you."

"I know that." Rodney set his hand back on John's stomach. Then he cocked his head, giving John a look. "And how do you know? People play music. Talk. " He started tracing out another formula. "It can't hurt."

"I suppose it can't." He watched Rodney's fingers glide over the taut flesh. "What one is it?"

"Drakes Equation." Rodney grinned. "The probability of intelligent civilizations within a galaxy. I thought it was appropriate."

"Very."

Rodney finished and started on another. "Did you ever want to have kids?"

"Not like this." John scrunched his face up. "But, sure. Back on Earth. Not here."

Rodney nodded. "I always felt like I should pass on my brilliance." He thought about it for a moment. "It's too bad the kid isn't going to look like you."

John reached out and grabbed Rodney's hand. "It's not my kid, Rodney."

"I know... It just," He flexed his hand in John's grip. "It's not really fair, you know? You're doing all the hard work and you're not getting anything out of it. You're no better than a test tube."

"Gee thanks, McKay. That makes me feel a lot better about this." He tugged Rodney closer until he sat on the edge of the bed so John could lay his head on Rodney's thigh and Rodney could

run his fingers through his hair. "Mirra and Thomes seem really nice. They're not making me feel used." John heard Rodney snort. "Much."

Rodney looked at his watch. "Carson should be here soon."

"Where does he disappear to after he sees us?" John struggled to sit up. Rodney grabbed him under his arms and gently pulled him up.

"He loves talking to the Narians about this whole thing." Rodney walked over to a bowl of fruit on the table. He picked a piece for himself and then tossed one to John. "He always goes up and pokes around that temple."

John took a bite of fruit. "Maybe he'll find something interesting up there."

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John was huge. Nearly eleven days in and he couldn't get up from a seated position without help. Mirra and Thomes were very pleased at how he was progressing. Carson was happy too. Making notes and postulating about when the big even would happen. John hoped soon rather than later.

John was reclining on the bed, feet propped up, when he called Rodney over. "Feel this."

"What?" Rodney looked up from some schematics Carson had brought from Atlantis.

"It's moving." John had his hand on his belly, shirt rucked up. "I can feel it moving." "What does it feel like?" Rodney walked over to the bed.

"Like something moving." John grabbed Rodney's hand and placed in on his stomach and then covered it with his own hand. "Feel."

Rodney had never really understood why everyone always wanted to touch a pregnant woman's stomach. It seemed like a gross invasion of private space and, frankly, sort of creepy. But this was... "This is so cool." He beamed at John.

And John beamed back.

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"I think." John panted. "I think we might need Carson." Then he whimpered. It was a horrible noise that Rodney never wanted to hear again if he could help it.

"He should be..." Rodney glanced at the door and then back at John. The pain had been getting increasingly worse since John had felt a twinge earlier that afternoon. "I'm gonna go get him. Stay right here." John shot him a withering look before he clenched his teeth again. Rodney ran out to the sounds of John's pained keening.

Carson was up at the temple again, watching the preparation for ceremonial birthing. He wandered into a previously closed of section. A hallway. According to Thomes John would be brought down this hall to the main chamber.

Torches lit the hallway dimly. The walls were painted with a myriad of scenes. Carson was just admiring some of the first ones as Mirra walked up to him.

"Aren't they beautiful?" She asked, eyes glittering in the firelight. "And soon we will have a glowing little addition to our village. You have no idea how much we appreciate Lt. Col. John



Sheppard's sacrifice for us."

"Oh I agree that it's been a tough few days for our Colonel, but he's more than happy to help out when ever he can." Carson chuckled. "And I'm sure he'll want to visit the wee bugger once it's out."

"Visit?" Mirra tilted her head to the side.

"Well, if it's all right with you, of course." Carson faltered for a second. "I would hope that we would all be good friends after this."

Mirra furrowed her eyebrows. "I thought you understood about the ceremony." She gestured to the paintings on the wall.

It was then that Carson finally took a good look at the paintings. They portrayed the steps of the ritual.

The last one made his blood run cold.

Rodney burst into the temple. "Carson!" He shouted, panting. "Carson!"

Carson tore his eyes away from the wall and raced towards the sounds of Rodney's voice. "Rodney? What's wrong?"

"Sheppard... he's... pain..." Rodney swallowed and tried to form a full sentence. Carson pulled Rodney close to him as Mirra entered the room.

"Rodney. Listen." He glanced over at Mirra.

"I think it's time."

Carson shook his head. "No, not time. They're not ready yet."

"What? Cars-"

"Have you ever seen Alien?" Carson held both of Rodney's shoulders so he was forced to look the doctor in the eyes.

"We don't have time to talk about movies." Rodney tried to shake him off, but Carson just kept shooting wary glances at Mirra. "What's wrong with you?"

"I am going to go get Thomes." Mirra dashed out of the room.

"Rodney. Listen to me. You've seen the movie, right?" At Rodney's nod Carson continued in a rushed hurried tone. "You know the scene where they're all at the table eating and then..." Carson wiggled his fingers in front of his chest. Another nod. "That's how this pregnancy ends."

Rodney looked confused for a moment, and then his mouth slackened, pure horror filling his eyes. "Oh God. John."

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As they raced towards the hut Rodney spotted Teyla and Ronon. He motioned to Carson to keep going.

"What are you two doing here?" Rodney looked back at the temple. He saw Mirra and Thomes

coming towards them.

"We thought that we should be here for the birth." Teyla cocked her head suspiciously. "Is it almost time?"

"Yeah, except we've run into some, uh, complications." Rodney gestured at the two Narians. "Look, I don't have time to explain, just... keep them out of there for awhile." He pointed in the direction of the hut and then rushed off.

"That was weird." Ronon shrugged and then held out a hand to stop Thomes from getting any closer.

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Rodney burst through the door to the hut to see Carson hunched over John's moaning figure. "What're you going to do?"

"I have to get it out of him Rodney. Who knows what type of damage it's doing." Carson was pulling things out of his pack.

"Here? You can't do this here. We can go back to Atlantis." Rodney pleaded.

"Now Rodney. Or we're going to lose him." Carson's head jerked up as the door opened. Rodney spun around to see Teyla and Ronon taking in the scene before them.

"You need a knife?" Ronon started to pull one out, but Teyla stopped him.

"What is going on in here?" She demanded.

"What happened to Mirra and Thomes?" Rodney gestured wildly at the door. "I gave you people explicit instruction. Don't let them in. Was that too many words?"

"They went to get help." Ronon shrugged. "Figured it was okay to come in."

"Look." Carson stood and started giving orders. "We have to get this," He pointed at John's belly. "thing out of Col. Sheppard. Now. Teyla I want you to help me. Rodney and Ronon can guard the door. I don't really think the Narians are going to be too happy about this."

"I want to help." Rodney stepped in front of Teyla.

"I don't bloody care who helps. Just get over here." Carson went back to work, speaking softly to John.

Teyla gave Rodney a nod. Ronon stepped out of the room.

"Right, so... What do I do?" Rodney fidgeted. He stepped closer to the bed and wrapped John's hand in his own.

"Hold him down, Lad. This is gonna hurt." Carson face told of grim determination, his eyes the only thing that betrayed just how frightened he was. "Teyla, love, come over here next to me. Just do exactly as I say."

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There was blood. A lot of blood. And there was screaming. Screams that would wake Rodney for weeks afterwards. And that \*thing\*... Rodney didn't even know how to describe it; didn't even

want to look as Carson pulled it from John's body. He could have sworn he saw claws before Teyla had bundled it up and taken it outside where she had managed, through her amazing Teyla-ness, to placate the Narians.

They had gotten John through the gate without further incident and Carson had patched him up. Fixed the jagged slice across John's stomach so that, once the hair grew back, it would hardly be noticeable.

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Two weeks later John was released from the infirmary.

"Hey." John leaned over the balcony railing next to Rodney and gazed into the ocean.

"Are you even supposed to be up yet?" Rodney cast a critical eye at John. He was pale, but smiling.

"As long as I go straight to my room and rest." He gave his best innocent face. "Carson says I'm doing really well, considering."

"Carson's just happy that thing didn't eat any of your internal organs." Rodney inched closed to John so that their shoulders were touching. "And last time I checked the East Balcony wasn't your room."

"Ah. But I had to find you. It would have been a lot easier if you had been in my room. "I wouldn't have had to strain myself looking for you." John started to walk away.

Rodney followed. "You could have used your radio."

John faux smacked his forehead. "Duh. Of course. You're always right." He draped an arm around Rodney's shoulder.

Rodney pulled away. "I don't like being right all the time. I was right about that." He pointed at John's stomach. "There was blood and pain and permanent deformation. Everything always goes wrong."

"Hey." John pulled Rodney close. "I know a few things that haven't gone wrong yet." He grinned, showing lots of teeth. "And as soon as I don't feel like I've been hit by a Wraith Cruiser, I'm gonna prove you wrong many, many times."

THE END ^\_^

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