

The Tale of Princess Janet and Sir Carter

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I got this idea while working out...

Featured fandoms: Stargate: SG1

Featured pairings: Sam/Janet

A.S.S Story codes: ff

Story rating: PG-13

Cassandra Soon-to-be-Fraiser looked up from the large SGC infirmary bed.

"Doctor Fraiser?" she said.

Janet smiled at her. "Call me Janet," she said. "Or mom, if you like."

"Janet," Cassandra said. She still looked lost and afraid. "Could you tell me a story? My mother used to tell me stories when I couldn't sleep."

"All right," Janet said. "I guess I can do that."

She pulled up a chair next to the bed. There was nothing urgent for her to do, and the sweet little girl was one of her patients. Spending time making her feel better was not just the right thing to do, it was her job.

"What kind of story?" she asked.

"One with a princess," Cassandra said. "Who gets rescued."

So that kind of story exists on other planets as well, Janet thought. That's rather interesting. Although I guess their culture originated from here. If they have the same gods, it's not so strange if they have the same stories too.

"Once upon a time," Janet said, because that is how stories start. "Once upon a time, there was a nice and happy little country. It had a wise and benevolent king, and a clever and pretty princess."

"What was the princess' name?" Cassandra asked.

"Janet," Janet said without thinking. "Her name was princess Janet. She was very pretty, although not very tall, and she spent a lot of her time helping and healing people. She was very well liked by the people."

Cassandra swallowed this without comment.

"To do her healing," Janet said, "the princess needed herbs and roots and other stuff that grew in the fields and the forests. And since it was very important that she got just the right kind of herbs and roots and stuff, she always went and picked them herself. Also, it gave her a chance to get out of the castle where she lived, to get a bit of fresh air and some exercise. Exercise is important."

"Didn't she have any friends to come with her?" Cassandra asked.

"Not really," Janet said. "See, that's the thing about being a princess. They're a little bit different from other people, a little bit distant. So it's hard for them to have friends. Which is why princess Janet went into the woods all by herself."

"Wasn't that dangerous?"

"Most of the time, no. As I said, it was a nice and happy little country, and the princess was so well liked that nobody would dream of harming her. But one day, a dragon came flying across the mountains."

"What's a dragon?"

Apparently there were limits to the story similarities.

"A dragon is like a huge, huge lizard," Janet said. "It's as long as a village is wide. It has wings that can cover entire fields, and it can breathe fire. Which would be quite bad enough, but to make it worse the dragon that came to the happy little country was a queen dragon. They're just as big and nasty as other dragons, but much smarter and they change shape and look like people."

Cassandra lay in the bed, listening, with the blankets pulled up just under her chin.

"This dragon was called Hathor," Janet continued, "and as she flew across the happy little country she spotted the princess below her. As it turned out, the dragon was like the people of the happy little country in at least one respect. She immediately took a liking to princess Janet. But unlike them she was evil, so rather than just be happy that the princess was around, she wanted her all to herself. Like a gigantic bird of prey, the dragon Hathor swooped down from the sky and carried the princess off in her steel-hard claws."

"I bet the people didn't like that," Cassandra said.

"No indeed," Janet said. "Nor did the king. He was worried sick. He sent out his guards and hunters to find the princess, but in his heart he knew that the dragon would be hiding her in a spot so far away that none could find it, and even if they could find it none could stand against the dragon's might."

A small hand snuck out from under the blanket and took hold of Janet's larger one.

"What did the dragon do with the princess?" Cassandra asked.

"That was a question that was very much on the mind of the princess herself," Janet said. "What would the dragon do with her? Perhaps she would devour her. Perhaps sell her back to the king for all the country's gold. Perhaps something else. She guessed many things, one worse than the other. But none of her guesses turned out to be right."

Janet moved closer to the bed, and leaned an arm against it. After a few moments, Cassandra rested her head on Janet's arm.

"'We will be wed,' the dragon said once they'd landed in the remote cave where she had made her home, and she had taken on her human form. 'We will be wed, I will kill the king, and then I will be the rightful queen of the country.' The princess didn't like the sound of that at all, but there wasn't much she could do about it. She tried to argue with the dragon and say that she'd get more enjoyment out of her if she just ate her up. The dragon didn't agree, and said that while she certainly planned to get quite a bit of enjoyment out of the princess none of it involved *that* kind of eating."

"What did she mean by that?" Cassandra asked.

Janet inwardly cursed herself. She'd got caught up in her own story and not really thought about her audience.

"She meant that she wanted to do with the princess those things that grownups do when they're married," Janet tried.

"And sometimes also when they're not," her conscience forced her to add. "Quite a lot, actually."

"Oh," Cassandra said. "Didn't the princess want to do that?"

"Nobody likes to do it with someone they don't like a whole lot," Janet said. "And the princess didn't like the dragon at all."

"Poor princess," Cassandra said.

"Indeed things looked dire for her," Janet said. "But back at the royal castle, a knight in shining armor riding a pure white horse had just ridden up and knocked on the gates. The guards looked out and, seeing the knight, called down and asked who was there."

For a moment, Janet thought she heard a sound from the main part of the infirmary. She fell silent and listened, but heard nothing. So it had probably just been the air filtration system, or something like that.

"The knight took off her helmet. Her blonde hair shone in the afternoon sun as she smiled up at the guards. I am sir Carter of Essgeewan, she said. I have come here from the far-off land of Essgeesee on my fabulous steed Stargate, and my quest is to slay the dragon that threatens your happy little country and free your beloved princess. The guards marveled."

Janet fell silent again and frowned. This time she was sure there had been a sound, one that had sounded quite a bit like a laugh being stifled.

"The king was ecstatic," she continued the story. "If you succeed, you shall have half the kingdom and my daughter's hand in marriage, he said. Sir Carter shook her beautiful head. I will accept no payment, she said. My only reward is your happiness and the knowledge that I did the right thing. And with those words she spun her horse around and set off after the dragon Hathor."

"Is sir Carter a hero?" Cassandra asked.

Janet stroked the girl's hair.

"She sure is," she said. "For days she rode through forests, across fields and over mountains, looking for the dragon. It wasn't very hard to find her, for if it is one thing that enormous flying fire-breathing lizards aren't, it's inconspicuous. So fairly soon she was riding up the mountain where the dragon had its cave. Without fear or hesitation, sir Carter drew her trusty sword Empeefive and charged the foul creature."

"Wasn't she scared?" Cassandra asked.

"I'm sure she was," Janet said. "But she's a hero, and heroes do what they have to do even when they're scared. That's why they're heroes."

"Oh."

"The dragon Hathor roared and sprayed fire, but it bounced off sir Carter's shining armor. The sword Empeefive struck sparks from steel-hard claws and bit into scaly hide. The fabulous steed Stargate danced around with sir Carter on its back, avoiding the dragon's swipes while staying close enough for its rider to strike back. Long and hard the battle raged, but in the end the dragon's body fell lifeless to the ground and sir Carter stood victorious."

A small approving sound came from the almost sleeping girl in the bed.

"The princess came out of the dragon's cave," Janet said. "The knight was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. You have saved me, she said. I owe you my life. The knight's smile, helmet held under arm, rivaled the sun. I choose never to collect that debt, she said. Come, let me take you back to your home and the king. The princess bowed a little to the knight. I'll come with you, she said, back to the castle or to the ends of the Earth."

Slow, even breaths came from the bed. Janet smiled affectionately, albeit a mite sadly, down at the orphaned girl.

"The princess wanted to say more," she continued. "She wanted to say that if she could give the knight what the dragon had wanted to take, her heart would burst with delight. She wanted to say that she wanted to travel with the knight, to offer her skills in healing alongside the knight's skills of war. But she said none of this, for she was afraid that the bold knight would ever so politely turn her down. So they rode back to the castle, the princess behind the knight on the fabulous steed Stargate. And that was the end of that."

Carefully, Janet extracted her arm from under Cassandra's head and put a pillow in its stead. She turned the lights off, and with a last look at the sleeping girl headed for her office.

Large mug of coffee in hand, Janet sank heavily into the chair behind her desk. It had been a stupid idea to make up that story for Cassandra. It had helped the girl sleep all right, but probably any old story would've done that. With this one, she'd unnecessarily stirred up her own emotions, almost certainly making sure that *she* wouldn't sleep tonight.

With a sigh, she turned her attention to the stack of medical files she needed to sort through before she could go home. Through fatigue and sadness, it looked like it was a foot higher than it had been when she left her office for her infirmary rounds.

She frowned. The stack *was* a full foot higher than she'd left it. What the...? She sat up straight and started to reach out for the top folder in the stack.

Suddenly, without warning, a bolt of energy struck the pile of paper, instantly filling the room with flying shredded burning paper, smoke and Janet's scream.

"Princess Janet!" a voice said from the door. "I have slain the dread dragon Bureaucracy and saved you from its foul grasp!"

Gingerly, Janet lifted her head and looked towards the door. In it, Captain Samantha Carter was standing. She was wearing a green field uniform, complete with helmet and flak jacket. In her hands she held a Jaffa staff weapon, still aimed at Janet's desk. While Janet stared in disbelief, Carter leaned the staff against the wall and swiftly walked up to Janet. She easily picked the smaller woman up and held her with an arm under her knees and another under her back. Half out of a desire not to fall down and half out of a desire to touch, Janet put an arm around Carter's neck.

"You're safe now, sweet princess," Carter said. "The dragon is dead."

"My files!" Janet said. "I need those..."

She turned to point at the shredded and smoldering papers. The *blank* shredded and smoldering papers.

"From the printer room," Carter said. "The real ones are on the top of the filing cabinet."

"You heard," Janet said. "You heard me tell the story."

"White horses and shining armor are in short supply down here," Carter said. "The helmet and flak jacket was as close as I could manage."

Fear-mixed elation was bubbling up inside Janet.

"No knightly armor ever looked better, sir Carter," she said.

"Nor any princess more beautiful," Carter replied.

"I have no kingdom to offer you," Janet said, feeling positively giddy. "And I doubt you'd want half of the infirmary anyway. But you sure can have the princess."

She reached up and pulled down the face she'd wanted to kiss almost from the first time she'd seen it, caught the eager mouth with her own. Objectively, the kiss would probably have been better if she hadn't been on the verge of either crying or laughing out loud. Subjectively, it was the best in the entire history of the world.

"What would a knight be without her wizard?" Carter said. "I'd be more than happy to have you travel at my side, princess Janet."

"So take me to your camp, sir Carter," Janet said. "For we have much to... *discuss* before the night is over."

And so they lived happily ever after.

Or at least until season seven.