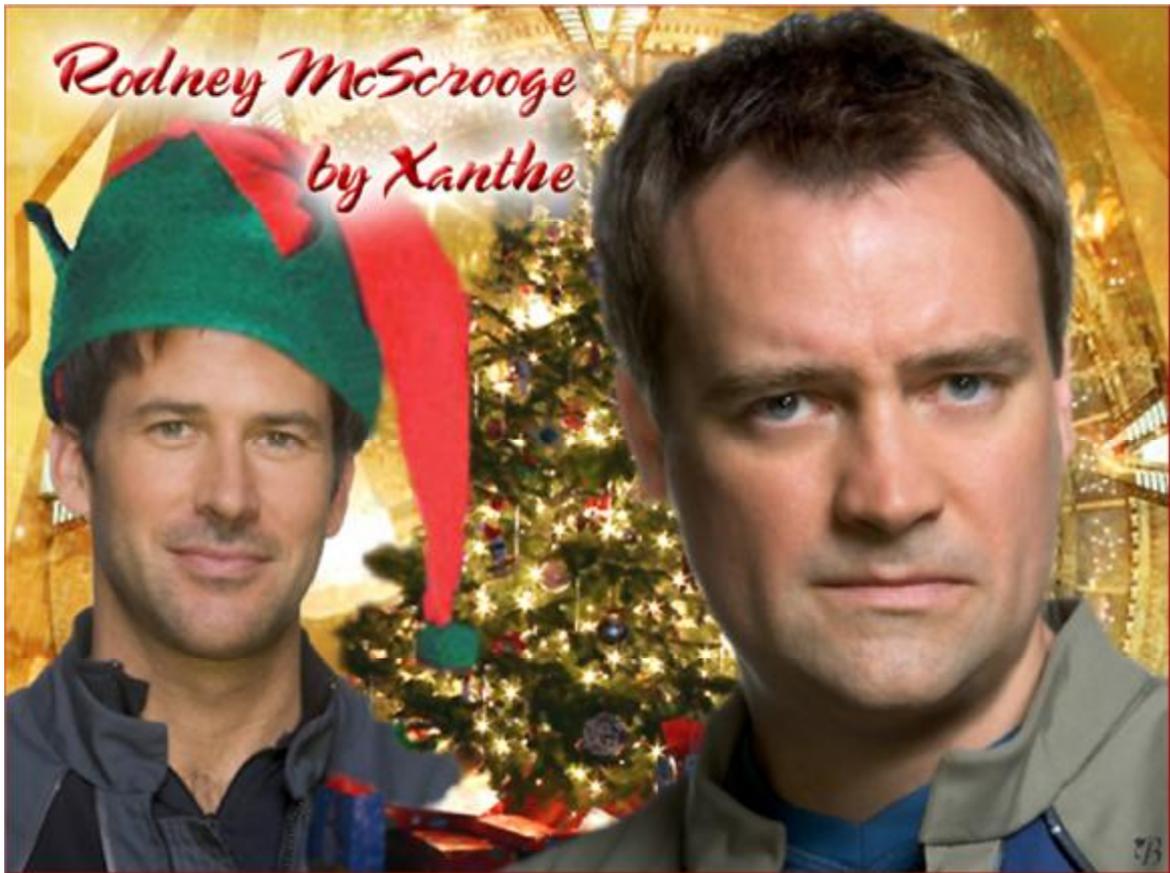


Rodney McScrooge by Xanthe



Story archived: <http://www.xanthe.org/rodney-mcscrooge/>

Story Notes:

Thanks: To Bluespirit for the wonderful (as usual!) title graphic and for the great beta :-). Any mistakes are my own.

This story is now available as part of an anthology of my stories published in zine form under the title Breaking the Rules from: **agentwithstyle**

This fic is for Bluespirit with the biggest hugs in the world.

Chapter 1 by Xanthe

"No!" Rodney said firmly. "No, no, no."

"Why not?" Elizabeth asked, with a mildly surprised smile

"Oh god – where do I start?" Rodney rolled his eyes and then found Elizabeth and John both gazing at him quizzically. "You're not seriously...? I mean, isn't it obvious?" Rodney waved his hand around expansively and almost hit Radek as he passed him by on his way out of the lab door. "All right, firstly – hello! - we live on Atlantis, which doesn't have the same seasons as Earth, doesn't even have the same length of day – or year – so if we were to actually deal with that issue by creating our own calendar, instead of sticking to Earth's redundant almanac which is something I've suggested on many an occasion, then this would in fact be the 12th of Leonardo or something and not December 25th."

"Leonardo?" Elizabeth raised an eyebrow.

"The man was a genius – even leaving aside all the art stuff which I have zero interest in, he was a talented inventor and had a brilliant mind. Did you know he drew a model of a helicopter in the 16th century and completely figured out the circulatory system of the human body centuries before anyone else? We could do a lot worse than naming one of the months in our new calendar after Leonardo Da Vinci," Rodney said defensively, aware that he'd given this way too much thought.

"Okay. Has objections to calendar," John said, nodding slowly as if taking mental notes. "Any other reason why you don't want to come to the Christmas lunch?"

"Several, but I have no idea why you should be interested in them. It makes absolutely no difference if I'm there or not," Rodney snapped, turning back to his work.

"Everyone is going to be there, Rodney," Elizabeth told him. "It's Christmas."

"And we'd feel kind of bad if you weren't there," John added. "You know, sitting in here all on your own while we're down the hallway having a good time. That kind of thing isn't really allowed at Christmas. It makes people feel uncomfortable."

"Oh I see – so I have to come and eat lunch with you and wear a stupid hat regardless of my very strong objections to the whole ordeal, simply in order to make you feel better," Rodney protested.

"Well, it *is* Christmas," John said cheerily. "That's usually what happens at Christmas. Someone has to suffer, Rodney and there's no reason why it shouldn't be you."

"I'm not coming," Rodney replied firmly.

"Come on, Rodney," Elizabeth cajoled. "There must be more to this than your objections to the calendar."

"There is," Rodney snorted. "For a start, this whole festival is a lie. Did you know, for example, that our current image of Santa Claus was created in the 1930's as a marketing tool for Coca Cola?"

"That has nothing to do with you not coming to our Christmas lunch," John told him. "We wouldn't dress you up as Santa or make you do anything as completely offensive as give someone a present or anything like that." He rolled his eyes at Elizabeth.

"I'd like to see you try," Rodney riposted. "And then there's the fact that the whole festival is about the return of the sun – leaving aside all the mumbo jumbo that various religions have heaped on it so they could jump on the bandwagon over the years – this is simply a midwinter festival designed to give everyone a party during the bleakest time of the year. Hello – did you guys take a look out of the window this morning? It's not remotely cold outside! It's not even winter!"

"So what?" John frowned. "My folks used to live in LA but that didn't mean they couldn't have Christmas because it wasn't cold outside."

"I'm just saying – this is a new galaxy – why don't we invent some new festivals?" Rodney said. "I would be in favour of an Isaac Newton Day for example."

"Oh that sounds like fun," John grinned. "We could all throw apples at each other to celebrate the discovery of gravity, and then bake a big apple pie with them."

"I can see there is absolutely no point in talking to you about this," Rodney sniffed, snapping his laptop shut.

"Hang on, Rodney," Elizabeth said soothingly. "Look, even if you don't agree with Christmas on principle for some reason that I haven't quite got to the bottom of yet, you surely believe in lunch?"

Rodney stiffened, aware that she was attacking him where he was weakest. "Well of course. As concepts go, lunch is an extremely good one," he wavered. "I have nothing against lunch."

"Well then. Why don't you ignore the fact that it's Christmas Day, and just view it as lunch," Elizabeth said sweetly, taking hold of his arm and nodding to John to do the same. "You wouldn't have to stay for long. Just long enough to eat."

"Will someone be dressed as Santa Claus?" Rodney asked suspiciously. "I hate that."

"Maybe," John said, taking his other arm and guiding him towards the door.

"And will people be wearing stupid hats? And..." Rodney shuddered. "Will there be carol singing?"

"It won't kill you, Rodney," John chided as they walked him along the hallway towards the mess hall. "Everyone else will be there. It'll look weird if you're not."

They reached the mess hall and Rodney peered cautiously inside.

"Oh god," he moaned. "It's as bad as I thought it would be." The place was packed to the rafters and everyone looked far too happy. People were relaxing and drinking and wearing brightly-coloured hats of various descriptions and there were banners and streamers and a complete overload of tinsel. By the door was an enormous tree that didn't look remotely like any kind of pine tree but was presumably the closest to one that the Athosians could find, and around that were sackloads of presents of assorted shapes and sizes. Standing by the tree was a laughing man who bore a suspicious resemblance to Colonel Caldwell, and, distressingly, he was clad in a red costume with a big white beard, and there seemed to be a lot of 'ho ho ho-ing' going on. Rodney shuddered.

"No," he said again, feeling the panic rise in the pit of his stomach. "Definitely not."

"Lunch, Rodney," Elizabeth reminded him urgently. "That's why you're here. Food. Really, really nice food. Lots of it."

"Rodney – over here!" Radek waved at him and beckoned him over to a table full of his team of scientists, all of them being unscientifically jolly. It was more than Rodney could bear.

"Lunch," he muttered. "Food. Okay, Elizabeth." He gave her a faintly malicious smile, then wrenched himself out of Colonel Sheppard's grasp and walked purposefully over to Radek's table. He ignored the assorted bellows of "Merry Christmas!" and the ringing squeal of a toy trumpet in his left ear, grabbed Radek's plate full of food and his cutlery, and then turned on his heel and left.

"If anyone wants me, I'll be in my lab – working," he growled to all and sundry as he exited the mess hall. A ribald jeer went up, accompanied by the shout of "Rodney McScrooge!" which echoed in his ears as he stalked off down the hallway back to his lab.

Peace. Finally. Thank god. Rodney put his plate down on the lab table and took several deep breaths. Rodney McScrooge indeed! "When did it become obligatory for anyone to have to like Christmas?" he muttered to himself as he sat down and took a forkful of food. It tasted like turkey; Colonel Caldwell had returned from a big supply run a week or so previously which explained all the Christmas paraphernalia that was currently cluttering up the mess hall. Rodney suppressed another shudder.

"Rodney McScrooge. Hah!" he scowled, scooping up several forkfuls in quick succession and stuffing them into his mouth. He finished the food in 40 seconds flat and then gazed glumly around the empty lab. Down the hallway he could still hear the shouts of merriment. Inside the lab there was some feeble blue tinsel stuck around the doorway and all over various laptops – Radek had insisted and no matter how often Rodney ripped it away from his own laptop, somehow it always mysteriously reappeared. There was even a sprig of plastic

mistletoe hanging over one of the workstations. Rodney had been paranoid that he might sit there by accident all the previous week – he was sure they were all waiting for an excuse to pounce on him and humiliate him. They'd taken to leaving his laptop open underneath it and sending him off to look at things when he was deeply engrossed in his work, hoping he wouldn't notice and they'd get a chance to trap him there. Rodney was very impressed with himself that he'd managed to avoid getting caught thus far but it certainly hadn't be relaxing – he'd had to be on his guard the entire time. "And they wonder why I hate this time of year," he growled to himself in the empty lab. It seemed to him that this whole festival was crammed full of traps for the unwary and he absolutely refused to get sucked into it.

Rodney pushed his plate away and turned back to his laptop but somehow it was difficult to concentrate when all he could hear were happy sounds from down the hallway. 'Rodney McScrooge!' ...the shout still echoed in his ears.

"Well if they'd had the kinds of Christmas Past that I'd had, maybe they wouldn't be so in love with this whole damn stupid time of year either," Rodney muttered to himself, gazing into space and feeling 10 years old again.

~*~

Jeannie was chatting to someone on the phone. "Yeah. I know! Yeah. I know! Yeah..." The conversation didn't seem to consist of any other words. Rodney sat cross-legged on the floor, reading the instructions on the chemistry set that his Aunt had sent him for Christmas.

"How old does she think I am?" he complained to nobody in particular.

"Duh! Ten," Jeannie pointed out, waving at the box which said 'For ages 10 – 12' on it. "Yeah...I know," she continued into the phone, perfectly able to patronise Rodney and talk to her friend at one and the same time. Rodney glowered at the chemistry set.

"I was doing stuff like this when I was four," he muttered. Jeannie rolled her eyes at him.

"Because he's such a little prodigy. Mr Genius. Where are your friends, Rodney? Aw, poor Rodney – did nobody want to be your friend? Maybe it's because you're such a frigging freak. No – sorry, Marybeth, I was talking to freakbrother here."

Rodney glared at his sister and the chemistry set at one and the same time. Jeannie finished on the phone and put it down.

"Do you think they'll stop soon?" Rodney asked her. The kitchen door was partially open and through it wafted the sounds of his parents having world war three. It had been going on for about four hours so far and there seemed to be no sign of it abating.

"In time for lunch you mean? No way." Jeannie listened in to the loud, rambling, ranting, almost incoherent argument and then nodded in that irritatingly knowing way she had. "No. They'll be at it all day," she told him. "It IS Christmas after all."

Rodney nodded glumly. Most of the time his parents were able to ignore each other – in fact most of the time they were rarely in the house at the same time, so Christmas placed inevitable and unavoidable strains on their already tense relationship. Rodney wasn't sure which he preferred – their huffy silences when they communicated via him, sending him between the two of them to deliver messages they couldn't bear to deliver in person, and for which he was then inexplicably held to blame, or the raging war of words that was currently going on in the kitchen.

"At least they're talking," Jeannie grinned, getting up and grabbing her coat.

"Where are you going?" Rodney asked, alarmed at the idea of being left alone with his parents.

"To Marybeth's." Jeannie gave him a smug smile.

"What about me?" he wailed plaintively.

"Well if you **had** any friends you could go and have lunch with them, but you're little Mr Nofriends so here..." Jeannie threw him a packet of cookies. "You'll have to make do with these instead." She shot him another savage grin, grabbed her bag and ran out of the door. Rodney made a face at her retreating back. He glanced at the chemistry set and then at the kitchen door. He could either venture into the kitchen and see if there was any vague possibility of lunch and risk getting caught in the crossfire, or he could go back to his bedroom and see if the chemistry set had anything in it that might help him blow up the house. From the kitchen there came the sound of plates smashing. All things considered...with a sigh Rodney grabbed the cookies in one hand and the chemistry set in the other and retired to his bedroom.

~*~

A loud peal of laughter from the mess hall shook Rodney out of his reverie. He tried to return to his work, but the ghosts of Christmas Present had other ideas and a chorus of raucous singing from the direction of the mess hall made concentration impossible. Rodney sighed. It seemed perfectly reasonable to him to hate Christmas. He never had been able to navigate its complicated emotional terrain and now he had somehow managed to alienate the entire base just by not wanting to have lunch with them. "Still little Mr Nofriends," he muttered to himself, wondering why the hell that should still bother him after all these years. The irritating thing was that he'd **liked** Atlantis until this godawful festival had reared its ugly head. He even considered some of the personnel to be friends, and that was pretty much a first for him. And one of them...one of them, if he was honest, he wanted to be more than just a friend.

Rodney slammed his laptop shut savagely. No point thinking about **that**. There was absolutely no chance that any Christmas Future would feature a naked John Sheppard, lying in his bed with that ridiculous hair of his all mussed up as a result of several hours of vigorous sexual activity. "Oh god." Rodney buried his face in his hands. "Gotta get a grip," he muttered to himself. "After all, let's be realistic, all future Christmases are going to be pretty

much like this one," he chided himself. "You, in here, on your own – them all having a good time in the mess hall and calling you names." It was better not hoping for or expecting anything else.

He took a deep breath, opened his laptop again, and tried to concentrate on his work.

"Hey," a voice interrupted him half an hour or so later and Rodney looked up to see John standing in the tinsel-framed doorway. He had a stupid smile on his face, was ever so slightly tipsy – and he was wearing an elf hat.

"Oh god," Rodney sighed.

"I know." John nodded solemnly and took a slightly unsteady step into the room. "I wanted to be Santa but they voted against me so Caldwell got that gig. I got to be an elf instead."

"Probably the ears," Rodney commented.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah with the ear jokes. Like I haven't heard a dozen of 'em already today," John said, waving his hand around.

"They are very pointy," Rodney said.

"Whatever. Look – I brought you something." John weaved his way over to where Rodney was sitting and dumped a bulging, sticky napkin in his lap. "Dessert!" John said proudly. Rodney opened it cautiously. Inside, various unidentifiable wedges of food were competing with each other for ooze-space.

"We had a kind of multi-nationality thing going on," John explained. "That there is Carson's contribution." He pointed to a brown, sticky cake-y thing. "It's some British thing imaginatively called Christmas pudding apparently. Those Brits shouldn't be allowed to name things."

"I know what it is. I've had it before," Rodney muttered.

"And that's something German...stolen or something," John said.

"Stollen," Rodney corrected him.

"That's it! And that...I can't remember what that was," John frowned, pointing at some other unidentifiable food mass. "Aren't you gonna eat it?" He looked a little crestfallen. "I brought it here for you!"

"These things all look as if they might have citrus in them," Rodney said, peering at the food suspiciously. "I don't want to take the risk. Christmas is bad enough as it is without spending it in the infirmary in an allergy-induced coma with Carson sticking needles in my arm."

"No - it's okay. I checked." John grinned at him. "Carson said he deliberately made sure his

pudding thing didn't have citrus in it because of you."

"Really?" Rodney felt slightly touched.

"Yeah." John grinned at him. He sat down in a chair and put his feet up on the table. "So what's the real story with you and Christmas, Rodney?" he asked. "None of that shit you gave Elizabeth about dates and calendars and alternative festivals."

Rodney poked a finger into the Christmas pudding and slipped some into his mouth. It was delicious – rich and warm and spicy; maybe some aspects of Christmas weren't that bad, he thought to himself.

"Rodney?" John murmured insistently. Rodney glanced up sharply into a pair of inquiring hazel eyes; John was clearly tipsy, but equally clearly not nearly as drunk as he was pretending to be.

"Christmas sucks, that's all," Rodney sighed. "I always hated it. My parents used to spend the entire day yelling at each other and Jeannie used to jump ship and leave me alone with them. If we were lucky we'd get through the day without someone breaking something – usually over someone else's head - but that was rare."

"That does sound sucky," John said, nodding sympathetically. Rodney gazed at him, a lump rising in his throat as he realized he'd never talked to anyone about this before.

"Of course it was a long time ago and it's not like it upsets me or anything. It's just...I get jumpy when people start doing all that 'ho ho ho' stuff. I keep ducking, wondering when the plates are going to get thrown around," Rodney admitted. John nodded, those hazel eyes of his fixed firmly on Rodney, listening intently. Nobody usually listened to him like this.

"I'm sorry, Rodney," John said, and it was clear by his tone that he meant it. "No wonder you hate this time of year so much."

"Better not to have any expectations – that way there's no disappointment," Rodney muttered, flushing slightly. John nodded sympathetically, and Rodney suddenly realized that John was sitting at *the* workstation, the one directly under the mistletoe. He had a crazy, idiotic urge to get up, reach out, grab John's face, pull him towards him and devour his lips with a kiss. Afterwards he could make a joke of it, say it was because of the mistletoe, remind John how the scientists had been trying to catch Rodney out all week and instead he'd caught John out. Then suddenly, to his total horror, he realized he *was* getting up, and he *was* reaching out, and his hands were caressing the sides of John's face, lightly fingering those elfish ears, and he was leaning in and John was just sitting there, totally bemused, and Rodney couldn't stop himself. He closed in, and his lips touched John's, and then he was kissing him. John seemed to have stopped breathing and his lips were warm and soft under Rodney's and Rodney wanted to drown in them but then reality flooded back in and Rodney felt a rush of total agony at having been so incredibly stupid. He drew back and pointed at the mistletoe, his heart thudding in his chest, and he was about to make his joking excuse...when suddenly John grabbed him by the arm, pulled him bodily onto his lap,

and covered his mouth forcefully with his own.

Rodney was so startled it took him a few seconds to realize he was being well and truly kissed by John Sheppard and a few seconds longer for him to start kissing John Sheppard back. Two strong arms slid around his waist, keeping him seated on John's lap, and then he felt his mouth being worked open and suddenly he was tasting brandy and all kinds of Christmas spices. John's lips were warm and welcoming and John's tongue was in his mouth and his tongue was in John's mouth, exploring, and one of John's hands had somehow slid down the back of his pants and was stroking his ass and at some point he'd wrapped both of his arms around John's shoulders and still they were kissing, and kissing, and kissing...

When at last they broke for air, Rodney gazed down at John in shocked surprise.

"I...that is...what...I mean...mistletoe," he said feebly at last, pointing up.

"Yeah, right," John chuckled, his eyes still fixed, wolfishly, on Rodney's lips, as if he wanted to eat them. "There is no way you're backing out of this now, Rodney McKay. Now c'mere." He pulled Rodney's face down to meet his and kissed him again, just as insistently, and Rodney moaned and opened up, melting into John's warm, expert embrace. He felt lost; there was just him and John, sitting in this chair under the mistletoe, kissing like they were the only people in the entire universe and everything else had ceased to exist. At some point, a long time later, a dazed Rodney found himself lying panting in John's arms, gazing adoringly into John's hazel eyes which glinted mischievously back at him.

"Finally!" John said, his hands idly stroking the bare patch of skin where Rodney's shirt had ridden up, leaving a portion of exposed flesh. "You have no idea how long I've waited for you to do that."

"You could have done it first!" Rodney protested.

"You'd have freaked out and run a mile. Nope, I just had to keep on flirting and waiting," John grinned. "I knew if I stuck it out for long enough you'd finally do it."

"I hope it was worth the wait," Rodney replied, feeling slightly giddy, unsure whether any of this was actually happening to him. John grinned at him, and traced the fingers of one hand over Rodney's lips.

"Oh yeah," he said, in a deeply satisfied tone. "It was. Now...I am going to single-handedly change your view of Christmas forever."

"Hmmm. Really?" Rodney said sceptically. "And how exactly are you going to do that?"

"From now on, whenever you think of Christmas you're going to associate it with the best mind-blowing sex you ever had because in a minute I'm going to take you back to my room and make love to you over and over again for hours on end until you beg me to stop," John told him with a lascivious grin.

"And what makes you think I'd ever want you to stop?" Rodney replied, with a grin of his own. John laughed out loud.

"Does that sound like a better kind of Christmas?" he asked, nuzzling Rodney's neck with his lips. Rodney sighed, and surrendered himself completely to John's warm embrace.

"It does sound promising. You'll have to lose the hat though. I'm not making love to an elf."

John swiped the hat away with one hand and Rodney grinned and ran his fingers through John's permanently mussed-up dark hair and John slid those talented hands of his further up under Rodney's shirt and traced insistent patterns on Rodney's skin with his fingertips and at some point they managed to disengage for long enough to decamp back to John's room. Luckily everyone was still safely ensconced in the mess hall because John couldn't keep his hands off Rodney as they walked through the empty hallways and he kept stopping every few steps to push Rodney against the wall and kiss him some more, until finally they fell into John's room. John promptly pushed Rodney onto the bed and then jumped on top of him, straddling him and looking down on him, his eyes dark with arousal.

"Now, let's see what Santa brought me shall we?" John grinned, and Rodney felt like he was a present being unwrapped as John began to undress him with smooth, skilful hands. He slid his fingers under Rodney's shirt and peeled it away, then slipped his hands down to Rodney's pants and undid those and stripped them off him along with his boxers. He even removed Rodney's boots and socks with caressing, utterly carnal fingers that made Rodney's cock go into spasms of urgent need. When he had finally unwrapped Rodney back to nakedness John paused, and smiled down on him in obvious pleasure, clearly delighted with his gift as he examined it intently with his eyes, his gaze raking up and down Rodney's naked body.

"I knew I'd been a good boy," John murmured, as his gaze settled on Rodney's extremely impressive erection.

"Oh please," Rodney complained, exasperated by the cheesiness of it, but then John wrapped his hand around his cock and it was all he could do to retain coherent thought. John worked his cock with his hand for a few seconds, all the time grinning that delighted grin. He stopped just when Rodney was about to come, making Rodney groan in frustration, but John just winked at him and removed his own clothes at the speed of light and then lay down naked beside Rodney, taking him in his arms. Rodney surrendered himself to the sheer sexual thrill of feeling his own naked skin pressing against John's naked skin, and feeling John's fingers caress his entire body, ghosting little patterns of pleasure wherever they went. John's body was lean and muscled and his cock was hard and insistent, nudging Rodney's thigh and Rodney moaned, desperately wanting it inside him. John played with him for awhile, kissing and teasing and stroking, and then he worked his way further down and wrapped his mouth around Rodney's rock hard cock making Rodney mewl blissfully, and some time not long after that Rodney felt himself coming between those talented lips. Then somehow he was lying on his front, and John was finger fucking him, slowly, gently, sensuously, before sliding that beautiful hard cock of his deep inside Rodney's ass. His body covered Rodney's, and his hand reached for Rodney's hand and held it as they both lay

there, interlocked, moving slowly, lazily, as if in a dream. John's thrusts were leisurely, and Rodney's entire body felt warm and loved and filled, and then John was coming inside him and Rodney was crying out in hazy, ecstatic pleasure. And a little while later Rodney was on his back and John's cock was sliding against his and they were kissing again, kissing as if they wanted to kiss forever, and Rodney thought that might very well be the truth. Then he was coming again, and next thing he knew he was on his side and John was inside him once more, sliding in and out, making his entire body buzz with sheer erotic joy. Somehow, even though Rodney was sure it wasn't biologically possible, he was hard again and John was stroking his pulsing shaft in time to his rhythmic thrusts and they were both coming yet again.

Then finally they came to rest and just lay there, in a sated tangle of limbs, face to face, naked bodies pressed close, and every now and then one or other of them would steal another little kiss, too tired to do anything other than snuggle and nestle and Rodney thought how all the Christmases future promised to be so much happier than Christmases past.

"So," John murmured, as the clock ticked towards midnight. "What d'you think of Christmas now?"

"I think..." Rodney wrapped his arms around his lover with a deep, contented sigh, and they exchanged another long, warm, spicy Christmas kiss. "I think that it may, just possibly, be my favourite day of the year," Rodney replied.

The End

Spicy Xmassy feedback much appreciated

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