

happiness lies in

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Summary

Tom let out a gasp akin to a toddler being asked to keep a secret then immediately running to tell someone else of his new found knowledge. "Since when?" he asked, releasing that he was about to lose big on several lines of his infamous ship wide betting pool.

Notes

Spoiler for Coda. Pre-ep scene from talent night. Title is from Secret by Madonna. Written for the celebration prompt on my [getyourwordsout](#) [build a bingo](#). Thanks to Tamara for doing beta for me.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Neelix looked around the crew who came to talent night, he took in all of their reactions to the newest event to be added to Voyager's extensive social calendar. "Have the final votes been tallied?" he asked the small panel of crew members who had volunteered to count the votes for the three finalists of Voyager's inaugural talent night.

"They have," came the unified replied as Neelix took a folded up pieced of paper from their table, making his way back to the stage. "Can the performers please return to the stage," he said while unfolding the paper to see how many votes each entrant had received.

Harry, Tuvok and Kathryn left their tables to return to the stage for the final vote.

"I'll do this quickly," Neelix said, suddenly feeling that he had to rush proceedings to give out the prizes, so that the crew could enjoy the rest of the evening without any further interruptions. "In third place is Harry Kim with his clarinet solo, he will receive five days of replicator rations. In second place is Mister Tuvok with his recitation of Vulcan poetry, he will receive ten days of replicator rations. And in first place is Captain Janeway with her portrayal of the dying swan, she will receive fifteen days replicator rations."

"That won't last more than a day," Chakotay shouted from the table he was sharing with Tom and B'Elanna, knowing that he could save some of his rations for something other than Kathryn's coffee supply.

Kathryn couldn't help but laugh at Chakotay's comments, sobering when Tuvok glanced at her with his *tell them now* look, it was unmistakable and one that she had seen before, when she needed to wait for the right time.

Kathryn approached Neelix, whispering a request before he handed her the microphone. "All right, well, talent night is obviously a hit but it isn't fair that I win the first one, so let's all applaud Mr Kim and Mr Tuvok for their efforts tonight."

"What about your prize?" Harry asked, suddenly feeling a bravery he rarely exhibited on duty hoping that she'd consider sharing some of the replicator rations she won.

"I'll need those for my coffee," Kathryn replied, smiling at his impulsive request, she lightly placed a hand on Harry's shoulder, "but thanks for asking."

Tuvok moved to stand beside Kathryn, she could feel his anxiety coming off in waves at having to perform in front of a crowded room, while also keeping her biggest secret from the crew. "Chakotay, get up here," she said, feeling bold enough to make the announcement they'd both been putting off for several weeks.

“You know I don’t perform in public,” he stated, making his way to the stage area to appease his wife. He noticed the look that Tuvok was still aiming at her, realising that the personal relationship they’d spent over a year hiding was about to become shipwide knowledge.

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Tuvok moved in front of Kathryn and Chakotay, still uncomfortable to be in the spotlight. “May I ask for your attention,” he requested, looking at the happy couple, he added, “I believe that the Captain and Commander have an announcement to make.”

B’Elanna clapped her hands, muttering “finally” at Tuvok’s words. Tom shot an inquisitive glance towards her.

“Finally? What’s finally B’Elanna?”

“You’re about to find out.”

Kathryn and Chakotay had discretely slipped their wedding rings back on while Tuvok gained the attention of the assembled crew. “Tuvok is right,” Chakotay started, “Kathryn and I do have something to tell you all.”

“Get on with it,” Tom insisted.

“We got married,” Kathryn said a little too quickly, hoping that the words didn’t land with everyone in the room.

Tom let out a gasp akin to a toddler being asked to keep a secret then immediately running to tell someone else of his new found knowledge. “Since when?” he asked, releasing that he was about to lose big on several lines of his infamous ship wide betting pool.

B’Elanna chuckled as Tom mentally did the maths for their revelation then asked, the inevitable question that nobody else seemed to want to ask them. “How long?”

“Almost two months,” Chakotay answered, “We have been together for a lot longer.”

“It’s actually been around eighteen months,” Kathryn answered this time. “We chose to keep this quiet from all of you because we are both very private and we weren’t sure if things were going to work out between us.”

Chakotay whispered in Kathryn’s ear before addressing Tom directly. “What are those betting pools of yours paying out, Tom?”

Tom’s face turned bright red at the question, he thought that they’d forgotten about his infamous betting pools. “There is several. The marriage one is five months worth of replicator rations and a specific stardate is an extra three months. Secret relationship is at over at years worth.” He paused for a moment before speaking again. “I did have a column for children but I decided to cancel that one after Seska’s deceptions and also for what happened with the Transwarp Barrier experiment because it felt disrespectful to both of you to keep it as an option.”

“Especially as it looked like you never once strayed from your friendship,” B’Elanna added.

Kathryn and Chakotay slightly smiled at each other, silently impressed with the helmsman's unexpected consideration for something that was still a contentious issue between them. One that would have to be resolved, even if meant reaching an impasse.

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When nobody spoke up, Tuvok began, “Myself and Miss Torres will take the proceeds for those betting pools, thank you Mr Paris,” a hint of humour in his tone that very few people could easily pick up on.

“Wait, how would you know?” Harry asked, oblivious to the fact that just two people on the ship knew about the secret relationship and never let on to anyone they had known about it.

“They’re our friends and they trusted us with their relationship, Harry, we were there when they got married on the holodeck,” B’Elanna said putting him out of his misery at being left out of something that was a big deal to everyone on board.

“When was this?” Tom asked, “which program?”

“Shortly after we recovered from the effects of the macrovirus, we decided to be impulsive and use the Paxau Resort on the holodeck,” Kathryn replied.

“Prove it!” Harry insisted trying to think of something that could be difficult for them to answer. “What is inscribed on their wedding rings?”

“Heart of a warrior,” Tuvok and B’Elanna said in unison.

Kathryn took over to put an end to the show. “All right, we’ll stay for a while and try to speak to you all if we can. We actually didn’t intend to turn talent night into a celebration but thank you for being so understanding.”

As the last of the crew excited the holodeck, Kathryn, Chakotay and Ayala remained behind to discuss an upcoming shuttle mission.

“Have you had a honeymoon?” Ayala asked, hoping he wasn’t overstepping any boundaries.

Chakotay lightly tugged his ear. “Not yet, things keep coming up.”

“Captain, I’d like you take my place on the mission. There’s a planet nearby that you could set down on for a few days.”

Kathryn hugged Ayala, “Thank you, it means a lot,” she said pulling away from the embrace.

Once they were alone, Chakotay breathed a sigh of relief. “How are you feeling?” he asked.

“Relieved. I’d wanted to tell them about us for a while but the timing was never right.”

“Me too,” he replied as they walked out of the holodeck arm in arm.

End Notes

First posted to Dreamwidth on 23.7.24

I’m getting a small buffer of new fics built up and ready to post for the BILWY(IL...) series which includes the marriage proposal, wedding and improvised honeymoon mentions in this fic.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!