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Copyright: Many of these characters do not belong to me, and we know which ones do not. I, however, own the plot and other certain characters.

Violence: There is violence in this story.

Subtext: Any subtext becomes main text here.

Summary: The sequel to [To Take What is Mine](#). The Conqueror continues her campaign to the Macedon Kingdom, and she already knows the odds are in her favor. Yet without warning, the Romans invade the Thrace Providence and take aim for the Conqueror's hometown. The Conqueror though bitterly holds back from saving Amphipolis. However Queen Gabrielle and Queen Cyane join together at the Siege of Amphipolis and try to stop the Romans before they overtake Thrace.

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Started: June 6, 2008

Series 9: **Destiny of Mine** – Story #3

To Fight for What is Mine

by Red Hope

Prologue

Sanna took her daughter's hand and climbed the steps to the healer's hut. She warmly smiled at the young healer behind the main desk. "Hello," she greeted.

The healer first glanced down at the young girl then peered back up at the mother. "You must be Naia's mother."

Sanna glanced down at her daughter, Naia, then back at the healer. "Yes, I am."

The healer was on her feet and came over to the mother and daughter. "I'm the apprentice healer... Cliona."

"I've heard a bit about you," Sanna mentioned.

"I can't imagine who from." Cliona grinned down at Naia. "How are you, Naia?"

"I'm good." Naia had a smile, but she became serious. "Can mom and I..."

The apprentice healer quickly understood what Naia wanted and why they'd come to the hut. "I think so... just let me go check first."

"Thank you." Sanna took in Cliona's nod. Once the healer was gone, she quietly told her daughter, "We can't stay long, honey."

"I know." Naia was nervous so she slightly frowned.

Cliona quickly reappeared from down the hallway. "Follow me, please." She guided the two visitors down the lit hallway and went to the door that was slightly ajar. She pushed the creaky door open wider and the distinct herbal scents wafted out.

Sanna and Naia followed in after the healer, who held the door open for them.

"I'll be waiting out front," Cliona mentioned to the mother. She then silently left them in the room and shut the door behind her.

Naia stood in front of her mother. She was tense, yet her mother's warm hands on her shoulder eased her.

Sanna nibbled her lower lip. She studied the reclined form on the pallet that softly glowed in the sun's afternoon rays, which poured through the open window. She squeezed her daughter's shoulders, bowed her head, and murmured, "Go ahead."

Naia stepped out of her mother's hands then neared the pallet. She came to the head of it and clenched her fisted hands tighter. She first studied the figure's rising and falling chest then her gaze wandered up to the soft facial features. Her breath caught when metallic blue eyes revealed themselves.

"Hello, Naia."

Naia calmed down simply because of the hidden tenderness in those eyes. She tasted how monotone the voice was, but it didn't bother her. "Hi, Seven. How do you feel today?"

"I am operating at minimal levels."

Naia blinked then gently smiled. "That's good, right?"

Seven didn't instantly respond, but she finally answered, "It is acceptable, and I am improving."

Naia's smile grew at the good news. "When can you leave the hut?"

The automaton quietly sighed and honestly replied, "I am unsure. I have not been given authorization to leave."

"Can you move around at all?"

Seven of Nine decided a more logical response would be to demonstrate. She was on her back already so she merely sat up then swung her legs off the pallet. She didn't dare try to stand up and move around yet. Just from being upright she was lightheaded, but it was better than earlier this morning.

Naia took a small step back to give the automaton room. She now had a better view of all Seven's

bruises and cuts. She had a confused look and remarked, "Cliona said you can heal faster than the rest of us." She tilted her head and argued, "If so then why do you still have bruises and marks?"

The automaton glanced at some of the bruises in question. She then focused back on the young Amazon. "I have internal tissues that requires immediate regeneration, first."

Naia blinked again at the formal answer.

Seven sensed she may have made her answer too complex. She tried to recall how she use to speak when she was Anke. She rephrased, "I am injured inside and those wounds have to heal before my bruises and cuts can heal."

Naia slightly blushed because she felt silly for not understanding earlier. "I'm sorry, Seven." She gave an impish smile. "I'm just glad you lived. Everybody thought you were dead."

The automaton arched her metallic, right eyebrow and coolly stated, "Their assumptions were inaccurate."

"I'm glad they were... inaccurate," the girl replied.

Seven of Nine now slightly tilted her head, and she sensed a new emotion in her that she hadn't felt in a long time. She felt the urge to smile, but she refused it.

Sanna made herself more known by moving over to the pair. "Hi, Seven. I'm Naia's mother... Sanna."

The automaton studied the older woman, and she could pick out the similarities between mother and daughter. "My designation is Seven of Nine."

"Yes, I know." Sanna had a gentle smile at the formalities the outsider showed. She became more serious. "Thank you for saving my daughter."

Seven recalled the proper response to any thank you. "You are welcome." She lowered her ice blue eyes to the young girl. "You must not play around the gorge again. It is very periculous."

"Yes, Seven." Naia now slipped her hands behind her back and bowed her head.

Sanna gingerly touched her daughter's midback. "Naia has learned her lesson."

Naia bobbed her head in agreement.

Sanna returned her attention to the automaton. "We'll let you get some rest. Thank you again... I wont ever be able to repay you."

"A guerdon is not required." Seven considered what else to say and added, "Thank you was plenty."

The mother smiled then silently signaled for Naia to go ahead.

Naia followed along side her mother, but she stopped once she recalled something.

Sanna seemed to remember too so she let her daughter go back to Seven.

The young Amazon rushed back to the automaton and quickly spoke. "I made you something, Seven." She fidgeted a little but she lifted her right hand, which was fisted.

Seven of Nine detected that the girl was nervous, but she accommodated by meeting her hand with Naia's.

Naia dropped the small object into the automaton's much larger hand. "I made it myself."

Seven studied it and this time her tiny smile wasn't resisted. She politely remarked, "It is beautiful. Thank you, Naia."

Naia flushed some, didn't say a word, and hurried off to her mother.

Sanna let her daughter leave first then she softly called, "Goodnight, Seven." She left and gently close the door.

The automaton waited until the door closed. She examined the leather bracelet in her palm. She had an eye for detail, and she found the workmanship good.

The bracelet was simple in nature. It was made of three leather strands and two of which were black and the middle one was red. Then the strands were braided and attached to a silver, rectangular piece that was clearly hammered. The sterling silver icon was etched with the one word: Faith.

Seven of Nine ran her thumb across the word. She felt the black letters etched into the sterling, and it seemed to touch her back. She noted how the bracelet was designed to be worn so she slipped it onto her right wrist. Next she pulled the dangling leather strings and tightened it until it was just right. Finally, she studied the bracelet that fit her perfectly. She had it so that the word would face her. She liked how the leathers' coloring matched her outfit that Commander Kaylee supplied her with awhile ago. But right now, it didn't match her plain, white shift that she bore.

Seven of Nine pushed back on the pallet and laid down on her back. She stared up at the thatch ceiling, and her mind filled with countless thoughts. Apart of her was thankful to be alive again, and yet she wouldn't have minded joining her family on the other side. It was strange to think that the alterations the gods did had killed her humanity, yet it also saved her life the day she sunk in the murky river.

The gods had been prepared for the exact threat that Seven encountered in the river. What if an automaton was close to death? And what could be done to spare or extend the automaton's life in dying circumstances? It would seem the gods had found a way to resolve such a problem, which were organic cells. They were organisms that no human eye could see, but they were alive and real, and they could only survive within a host body. They often traveled by way of the host's blood stream, but could easily move through any part of the body. The gods designed and breed them to carry out a single purpose – to protect and restore the host body when the host body showed symptoms of termination. As a result, the gods believe these cells would save an automaton if their life was threatened.

And these organic cells were what saved Seven's life. Once Seven's heart started to slow to a dangerous speed, the organic cells were activated and raced through her body to properly deal with the situation. In the case of Seven drowning, the cell's hastily shut down her essential body functions and placed her into a hibernation state. She remained that way until she was removed from the river only then did the organic cells reactivate her body slowly.

Seven of Nine now was alive again and so was Anke of Cirra. She recalled many of her memories prior to her transformation, yet she still had a few gray areas. She pondered many of her human memories and compared them to her automaton side. In many ways, she felt like two people and the two lives were separate. She wasn't sure who she was anymore. The deeper she thought about it, the more her emotions bubbled up, and she would clamp them down because she didn't know what else to do. Her fall back was to always rely on the simplicity of being an automaton.

Well, for now all Seven of Nine could do was wait for her body to fully recover. She knew she had time ahead of her. And perhaps these Amazons could still offer her a place. She sensed that many were

changing their opinions about her because she saved Naia. The skepticism was still there though. However Seven recalled her father's lessons about blacksmithing and how just like metal, life too can be bent to one's will. Seven realized she just had to have... faith, exactly.

To be continued.