Cuckoo In The Nest

by unaspectre

Summary

The Goa'uld are gone, the world is at peace and the history of the SGC is known by every schoolchild. Or is it? A once trusted friend is now the enemy while those left fight to stay alive and search for way to be free again.

Notes

Thanks to Stonedtoad for betaing.
I will warn you now, one of the main cast is evil and I make no apologies for it.
It is based slightly on the episode 2001 and set in what would be Season 8 of SG1.
Everything will be explained in time but until then I hope you enjoy.
Chapter 1

The sun was shining brightly as Jeannie stepped off the transport with the rest of the people attending the seminar. She was actually excited about today, it had been a while since she’d been excited about anything after Caleb’s death and then her mother’s not long after, but this had her attention.

“Good morning,” a voice made everyone turn to where a woman was standing; she had long dark hair and wore a lab coat over her smart suit, “I’m Dr Mary Gregory and I’m in charge of the seminar today. You were each given a welcome pack before you entered the transport, and in it you will find your group number. As you can see,” she pointed to several signs, “There are placards here with the different group numbers, can you please all go there and your group leaders will take you to the first event of today. And one of the most important – breakfast.”

An amused laugh and small cheer went up amongst the group before they all checked their cards and headed to their designated group. Jeannie was surprised to see she was with a much smaller group than the others, only four of them while the rest had approximately seven or more.

She watched as the groups started to wander away and soon only the four of them were standing there. The other three were people she’d never met before and Jeannie was quite a shy person so stood in silence waiting.

“Well,” Gregory moved to stand with them, “Our final group. You may be wondering why there are only four of you. The truth is you four are the most promising scientists this year. Your seminar is going to be slightly different from the others, because we want you and this is a sales pitch,” she laughed, “Please follow me.”

A little stunned, Jeannie followed on behind the two men and other woman into the University complex.

“Good morning, Miss McKay.”

Jeannie spun towards the door of the office she’d been asked to wait in and stared in astonishment at the woman standing there.

“Dr Carter?” she gasped, feeling totally awestruck as the woman who had led them into this peaceful age stood before her, “Oh my God...I mean it’s a pleasure to meet you,” she laughed, “It’s an honour to meet you, Dr Carter.”

“Sam,” she corrected, “Please, call me Sam. I feel like I’m an old woman every time I’m called Dr Carter.”

Jeannie nodded, still completely overwhelmed.

“Please,” Sam motioned her to sit down, “I bet you’re wondering why you’re here and not with the others.”

Jennie nodded, “Just a little.”

Sam smiled warmly at her again, “When I was browsing through the lists of graduates, I was struck by the similarity of your name to another scientist I briefly worked with recently.”
“My brother,” Jeannie sighed, annoyance seeping into her voice.

Sam laughed, “Yes. It’s been some time since he worked with us, and it was only because I noticed the name did I look at your work. You are brilliant, Miss McKay.”

“Jeannie, please,” she smiled.

Sam nodded, “Of course, anyway because of the name I became interested and I read over several of your papers. Leading me to the conclusion, I want you to work with us.”

Jeannie let out an astonished half-laugh, “Seriously?”

Sam nodded, “Jeannie, ever since we became allied with the Andurians we have had a huge leap in our technology and need for people to study it, to work on making sure we reach our potential. Now, I know there have been incidents involving people who say they’re trying to free us from alien oppression but I was a member of the SGC, I was out there when the Goa’uld were trying to annihilate this world and I know that the Andurians are our friends.”

“I know,” Jeannie whispered, “Those...terrorists killed my fiancé when they took several people hostage during the inauguration.”

Sam reached out and squeezed the younger woman’s hand, “I am so sorry. I knew several of the people lost then as well,” she pulled back and smiled again, “Jeannie, I don’t expect an answer from you straight away. I know this is such a huge decision so I want you to enjoy your day. Look around the complex and see the wonders that the Andurians have given us.”

“When do you want me to...”

“Whenever you’re ready,” Sam assured her, “Though the moment you have an answer for me, please,” she handed Jeannie a business card, “This is my direct line here and cell number.”

“Damn,” he breathed, standing still in the corner and waiting until the two women left the office.

He waited for a ten count before walking forward slowly, being careful not to disturb anything in the office. He waited until Carter came back into her office and slipped out the open door into the halls. As quickly as he could under the shield, he walked until he was outside the complex away from anything that could distort communications. Finally he managed to get somewhere safe.

“This is Sheppard,” he called, “We’ve got problems.”

“When don’t we?” the sarcastic reply came back, “Be a little more specific.”

“Jack,” John sighed, “I was in Carter’s office looking for the files when she brought in a new recruit.”

“And?” Jack O’Neill asked, “That’s not unusual, she’s always recruiting.”

“It’s the name that caught me,” John replied, “Jeannie McKay.”

“Crap,” Jack snapped, “She’s trying to find him, use his sister and bring Rodney out from hiding.”

There was silence for several minutes before John asked the question he had wanted to ask since he started this conversation, “Do I grab her?”
Silence continued on the other end of the radio.

“Can you do it?” Jack demanded.

John scrubbed a hand across his face, “I think so but she’s no love for us. From what I heard her fiancé was killed during their staged hostage taking.”

“John,” the soft accented voice of Sha’rere Jackson took over, “If you have the opportunity, do it and take her to site five. Siler will meet you there.”

“Yes, Ma’am,” he said, switching off the radio and sighing, “Grab the girl and get her out of one of the most secure installations in the world. No problem.”

Jeannie took a seat on the bench under one of the trees in the gardens; she was astonished that she was being offered a job that she never would have imagined. It was typical her brother had got her this job offer. She frowned, wondering where he was and she hated that she gave a damn. He hadn’t been there when Caleb was murdered; he wasn’t there at their mother’s funeral and Jeannie just wanted to know what could be so important that he hadn’t come to be with her.

“I hope you’re thinking good thoughts,” Sam noted, coming over to join her.

“Dr Car...Sam,” Jeannie smiled, “Just musing over what you told me this morning. Do you mind if I ask you something?”

Sam sat on the bench beside her, “Of course not.”

“When was the last time you saw my brother?” Jeannie asked.

“Several months ago,” Sam sighed sadly, “One day he just didn’t show up in the lab and when I had someone to go over to his apartment to make sure he was alright, it was cleaned out.”

Jeannie shook her head, “I can’t believe that.”

“Why?” Sam demanded, managing to soften her voice.

“Cause he had no clue how to tidy up,” Jeannie replied, smiling as Sam laughed.

Sam stood up, “I have to go prepare for my talk this afternoon. I hope you’ll be there.”

“I’m looking forward to it,” Jeannie told her sincerely, “After hearing Tridon’s talk before lunch, I can’t wait for yours.”

“Well, any questions you have we can talk after,” Sam told her, “Excuse me, I have to go.”

Jeannie nodded and watched the woman walk away, smiling as she made her decision for her future. She stood up and brushed crumbs off her skirt before starting towards the lecture hall to hear Dr Carter’s talk. Jeannie didn’t get a chance to scream as a hand clamped over her mouth and she was dragged behind the nearest building.

She saw a man with dark messy hair and blue-green eyes for a second before she felt a pinch on her arm, the world spun and she fell into unconsciousness.
Jeannie forced her eyes open; she swallowed several times trying to soothe her rough dry throat as she focussed on her new surroundings. The man who had abducted her stood leaning against the wall, a glass of what appeared to be water in his hand.

Seeing she was awake, he stepped forward, “Here,” he handed her the glass, “The stuff I gave you will have made you thirsty.”

Jeannie glanced warily at the glass, her eyes flicking back up to her abductor.

“There’s nothing in it,” he promised her, “Want me to drink some first?”

Jeannie nodded, shifting slightly as she realised she was covered by a blanket. She watched closely as the man took a gulp of water before she accepted the glass and slowly sipped the cool water, relieved as it soothed her throat.

“Who are you?” she whispered, setting the glass down once she’d finished.

He smiled at her, a mischievous grin that made him look very handsome and charming but Jeannie wasn’t going to be charmed.

“I’m John,” he told her, “Anything else would be dumb, in case something happens and you end up back in Carter’s clutches.”

Jeannie glared at him, “You’re one of those...people.”

“People?” John asked; amusement in his voice.

Jeannie glared at him, “You’re trying to destroy the peace the whole world enjoys. You’re trying to throw the world into chaos again.”

“We’re trying to free everyone from aliens who are going to destroy every one of us,” John told her harshly, “If you think Carter is the saviour of us all then you’re about to get a rude awakening.”

“What do you want with me?” Jeannie snapped, she managed to pull herself to her feet and edged away from the man.

John folded his arms, “Personally, I don’t. But my superiors feel you might be able to help.”

“I would never help murderers,” Jeannie snarled at him.

“Look,” John said, nodding to two men who arrived from along the corridor beside them, “You’re coming with us, you can scream and yell as much as you want but I’ll sedate you if you do. All we want is for you to listen to what we have to say, Miss McKay.”

“Well I guess I have no choice,” Jeannie snapped, making John hide his smile at how similar she sounded to her brother, “Which way?”

John sighed in relief as they finally reached the base. As useful as they were, the tunnels sent a shiver down his spine as he wandered through them. He’d been told that they had been given to O’Neill by the Tok’ra before they’d been wiped out, O’Neill would get a strange look anytime someone asked and ignore the question.

At his side, Jeannie McKay walked warily while Siler and Evans walked behind them in case she tried to escape.
“Well, Miss McKay,” the sarcastic voice made John sigh in relief, “Welcome.”

“Who the hell are you?” Jeannie snapped, folding her arms across her chest; the tilt of her head made her look as arrogant as her brother used to appear.

“My name is Colonel Jack O’Neill,” he introduced himself; “I was the leader of SG1.”

Jeannie let out a harsh laugh, “How gullible do you think I am? I know the story of the Stargate, I know it all backwards – every school child in the world knows it.”

“And every one of them has been lied to,” Jack replied, calmer than John expected.

Jeannie stared at him, “What?”

“Let me show you around, Miss McKay,” Jack motioned her forward, deeper into the base.

Jeannie took a step forward before hesitating, “Aren’t you worried about showing me your secret base?”

A small amused smile touched his lips, “Don’t worry about it. We’re moving soon, come on.”

Jeannie noticed her guards changed as she walked through the strange crystalline tunnels, John disappeared and Jeannie felt a little annoyed that he had left her alone. She watched people mill around, from what she could see they were working on devices but she was kept far back enough so that she couldn’t make out what exactly they were.

“Not that I don’t trust you,” Jack told her, noting the way she was looking around, “But I don’t.”

Jeannie closed her eyes, “What is the point of this, Colonel?”

Her deliberate use of his title and sharp tone only made Jack smile, “I thought you might want to say hi to someone.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes but followed him, stopping as she saw a man sitting working at a computer, a strawberry-blonde woman sitting at his side arguing with him.

“Meredith,” she breathed in astonishment, turning to the man at her side who was mouthing the name in surprise, “What happened to him? Why is he in a wheelchair?”

“Let’s go ask him.”

“Rodney...”

“Cadman, I am not stopping working on this,” he snapped at the woman at his side.

Laura Cadman’s eyes narrowed and she stood up; grabbing the handles of his wheelchair and pulling him back away from the computer.

“Hey!!!”

Laura leaned into his ear, “You are going to eat and then you are going to get some sleep, otherwise I’m going to see Janet and Carson and rat you out.”
“I doubt I’ll sleep,” He folded his arms and pouted, “But it’s not like I can get away from you.”

Laura rested her hand on his arm, “You’ll sleep. Sha’re has told me about a few techniques she uses on Daniel.”

“I doubt it’ll work on me,” he told her, “Things aren’t like that between us.”

Laura smacked his shoulder, “Get your mind out the gutter, Rodney. It’s like a massage and it should work.” He looked up at her, giving her a quick look that made her blush slightly but she just caught the handles of his wheelchair again, “Don’t get your hopes up.”

“McKay,” Jack O’Neill’s voice stopped the conversation going any further, “Got a visitor for you.”

Rodney tried to turn the chair; swearing in frustration when it stuck and sighed, allowing Laura to turn him. Seeing his baby sister standing staring at him made him want to run away but of course he couldn’t.

“What the hell is she doing here?” Rodney demanded to Jack, “You promised me you’d keep her out of this.”

“Mer, what happened?” Jeannie breathed, moving to him.

Rodney continued to glare at Jack, “What the hell is she doing here?” he repeated.

“Carter found her,” Jack told him, “I had Sheppard bring her in.”

Rodney nodded with a sigh, “Alright,” he looked at his sister finally, “Hi.”

Jeannie stared at him completely confused, “Meredith?”

He caught her hand and pulled her down to him, hugging her tightly as she clung to him. Jack touched Laura’s shoulder and moved her away from the siblings.

“How is he?” Jack asked.

Laura sighed, “It’s that time of the week; he’s been awake almost fifty hours now. Sha’re taught me a few techniques she uses to get Daniel to sleep even for a few hours. I’m going to try that once I get him to lie down which is what I was doing when you arrived.”

Jack nodded, “I’ll take her to talk to the people who know everything. Let him sleep for, what’s the usual?”

“Three hours if I’m lucky,” Laura replied.

“Okay,” Jack turned back to the McKay’s, “Miss McKay, there’s a few people I want you to meet. McKay, Cadman’s going to take you to get some rest. Do it or I’ll get Beckett to sedate your ass for the next three days.”

Rodney scowled but he released his hold on Jeannie, “I’ll see you in a few hours,” he promised.

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“Where is she?”

Sam slammed her hand on the desk, making the Andurian standing there jump. Anger flared in her blue eyes and she stalked over to the door and slammed it.
“She was our best chance of finding McKay,” Sam reminded him, “Artu, you were supposed to be keeping an eye on here. What the hell happened?”

“Please forgive me,” Artu dipped his head, “One of the others we brought here started asking questions. You ordered us to be polite to them, to make them feel welcome.”

She dropped her head in her hands, “Fine. Leave.”

He dipped his head in a bow before he turned and left her alone. Sam leaned back in her chair and sighed, a human trait she had which annoyed her. After a few minutes, she stood and walked to the wall behind her desk. Raising her hand, she activated the controls and waited until the door had formed completely before she entered the complex below the University building. The hum of the corridor made her relax and she smiled, taking a sharp turn into a darker corridor that no one used unless specifically ordered to.

Sam smiled as she arrived at the cell; she opened the door and walked in. She walked over to the table and slipped onto it, crossing her legs as she leaned back slightly.

“Your friends are beginning to get very annoying,” Sam said, watching her prisoner sit and stare at her, “Could you give me something, a smile or anything.”

At the silence, Sam slipped off the table and she walked closer to the man chained to the wall. She drew her hand across his bare chest before grabbing his face, “Teal’c, tell me where they are.”

The former Jaffa glared at her, refusing to speak just like he had for the past few years. Sam leaned down to his ear.

“All I want is a little bit of information, Teal’c,” she breathed in his ear, “And things will become much, much more comfortable for you.”

Teal’c didn’t move, barely wincing as she slid the dagger across his chest.

“I will find them,” Sam told him, “And when I do, you’ll have a front row seat at their execution.”

He looked up at her for a moment, undisguised hatred in his eyes before he dropped them once more.

“I’ll see you later,” Sam told him, heading out of the cell. Stopping outside she stood and watched the monitor for a few minutes, laughing as he strained against the shackles holding him to the cell.

Sam returned to her office, she alerted the others that there may be a leak within the humans. She’d been ecstatic when she realised that McKay had a sister and on reading the woman’s work that she had a perfectly valid reason to bring her to the university. It irritated her; Rodney had been the seemingly perfect choice for the project, smart, egocentric and obviously interested in her. So Sam had not worried too much about the information he had access to because she was sure she had him wrapped around her little finger. She argued with him, pushed him and occasionally gave him little signs that she might just feel something for him, a little praise, a hug and every so often a kiss on the cheek when he made a huge breakthrough.

Then he did something exceedingly stupid – he started noticing things outside his lab. Sam leaned back; she brought up Rodney McKay’s file and browsed it for what had to be the hundredth time. He had noticed some scientists missing and started looking into things, then he had discovered the
installation beneath the university and Sam knew that she had no choice but to invite him to become a permanent resident.

Three months later, someone got him out and Sam was forced to conclude that her security might not have been as good as she thought it was. Rodney McKay held part of the key to finding great power that would ensure that the Andurians were unstoppable, the other part was held by Daniel. Sam had had both of them in her grasp only to lose them and she knew that she had to find them soon, before they worked out what secrets their minds held. And she would, no matter who she had to kill to do so.
John saw Sha’re standing in the corner of the observation room, watching the doctors as they tried to stop the signal the implant in Daniel’s spine was sending and then remove the offending device. Sensing his arrival, she looked up and gave him a small smile. John nodded back and joined her at the window, hoping his presence would comfort her slightly. John adored Sha’re, she had been the one to persuade him to join when he hadn’t wanted to—even after Meg’s death and everything he’d seen, John had been ready to turn his back on the world and just let them take over. Jack had tried to recruit him to the rebellion but John had told him to go to hell then Sha’re had sent everyone out of the room and she simply told him her story.

“How’s it going?” John asked, watching Carson and Janet move around the bed.

“It seems to be going well,” Sha’re replied, “Janet is confident that she may be able to stop the signal and then hopefully remove the implant. Did you bring Rodney’s sister?”

John nodded; not even perturbed by her change of subject, “O’Neill took her to see him. She’s not too happy to meet us.”

Sha’re laughed slightly, “Hopefully Rodney will change her mind. Did you also bring the information?”

“Yes, ma’am,” he replied, “I’ll pass it to Peter before I go get some rest.”

As he headed out Sha’re called to him, making him turn back.

“Ensure that you actually rest, John,” she told him sternly, “Wandering the halls is not resting.”

John gave her a sloppy salute before leaving her to her silent vigil.

“This isn’t going to work,” Rodney snapped, wincing as Laura smacked his shoulder.

“Close your eyes,” Laura breathed in his ear, “And shut the hell up.”

He sighed but did as he was told, feeling her slide up behind him and rest her hands on his shoulders. He let out a soft groan as Laura gently massaged the muscles in his neck with her thumbs, continuing down his back. Laura kept whispering into his ear, nothing of any consequence but her voice was soothing and without realising it, he slipped into a restful sleep.

Laura lay spooned up behind Rodney as he slept, continuing to gently stroke his arm. Knowing if she stopped he would wake up before he’d rested enough. She hated it, hated that this man was tortured like this, hated that she was forced to keep seeing the consequences of the mistakes she’d made. She had thought she was doing the right thing, thought that working with the Andurians was the right thing but she had been wrong. The only thing that made her feel slightly better was that she managed to rescue Rodney and she stayed with him while they found a way to undo what Carter had done to him.

Part of it was because of her guilty conscience, she’d stood by for months before she got him out, the other was because of her own growing feelings for the man beside her. That was the most confusing thing, she had met Rodney before he’d started questioning Carter and he was the most egotistical, irritating pain in the ass she had ever had the misfortune to meet. She’d been assigned to help him
move things one day and had spent the entire three hours thinking up ways of killing him and hiding the body. Which made the fact she was doing everything she could these days to keep him alive all the more ironic.

Rodney turned in his slumber and Laura found herself looking at his face, relaxed for the first time in days. She continued to gently stroke his arm but brought her other hand up to touch his face. She knew getting involved with him was something she wasn’t ready for yet but as long as she could do this, she had time.

Jeannie stared at Jack; a hard, penetrating gaze that he actually started feeling uncomfortable under. To distract himself, Jack took a long drink of coffee.

“So,” she finally said, “Are you going to tell me something? Or am I just sitting here until I get old?”

Jack laughed, “I was waiting until you seemed ready for the truth. You weren’t too receptive earlier.”

“I just want to know what is going on,” Jeannie whispered, “And what happened to my brother, what did you people do to him?”

“You still think we’re the bad guys?” Jack laughed harshly, no mirth in his voice, “Your brother was rescued by us.”

“Rescued from whom?”

“The blessed saint Samantha Carter,” Jack’s face twisted in disgust.

“But...she’s responsible for the world being at peace,” Jeannie replied.

Jack laughed again, “Actually, no she’s not. This entire world is occupied by an alien invasion and everyone just let them waltz right in.”

“That’s nonsense,” Jeannie cried, “The Andurians helped us stop the Goa’uld from destroying us all. They offered us technology and a better way of life.”

“They sound so good, don’t they? The ones who came to save us,” Jack shook his head, “Well Miss McKay, they came here to screw us. And your hero, Samantha Carter, is a traitor who sold us all out.”

“That’s...that can’t be...” Jeannie trailed off, “Everyone knows how she and SG1 negotiated the Andurians help, after they saved the leaders life.”

Jack shook his head, “The real leader of SG1 on that mission recommended that we lock out the coordinates to their planet and never go anywhere near them again. Carter went against orders and while on another mission went back there. I was relieved of command and she took over. Next thing the world is overrun by those bastards with me at the top of their hit list.”

“Why?”

“Because, Miss McKay,” Jack kept his voice even, “I’m the one who is going to kick their asses off this planet. They didn’t manage to destroy all the Tok’ra; they sent me things that I’m using to help everyone in this base.”

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Daniel forced his eyes open, smiling as he saw his wife sitting waiting for him. He reached out and caught her hand, making her turn to look down at him.

“Good morning, my love,” Sha’re smiled, leaning down and gently kissing him.

“Did it work?” Daniel croaked, smiling his thanks as Sha’re placed a straw to his lips so he could sip some cold water.

Sha’re nodded, “Janet managed to stop the signal,” a relieved smile covered her face, “And they removed the implant. She says you will start to feel the difference almost instantly.”

Daniel dropped his head back with a sigh of relief, “Good. Can they fix Rodney too?”

Sha’re nodded, “Janet will try after the next move. But you should not be worrying about anyone else, my Dan’iel. You need some more rest and then you need to start working on being able to walk again.”

Daniel pulled her down to him, “It’s not walking I want to work on.”

Sha’re laughed and kissed him, “That is something I want you to work on also.”

Daniel held her, relieved she was smiling. After everything, she deserved to smile more than anyone.

Daniel groaned as he struggled towards consciousness, confused as he felt someone hold his hand and stroke his face. He forced his eyes open to see the amazing sight looking down at him.

“Dan’iel,” she breathed happily, “You are awake,” she turned to someone he couldn’t see, “He is awake.”

Bright light was shone in his eyes and he winced, answering each question Janet asked absently as he stared at his wife, “Sha’re?”

His wife looked down at him with a shy smile as he reached out, just wanting to touch her; just wanting reassurance that this time it was real. He heard the others talking but his focus was on the woman sitting at his side gazing back at him.

“You look stunned,” Sha’re whispered to him, “I know what you went through, Dan’iel and I am so sorry but Teal’c fired his zat-nicktel instead of his staff weapon.”

“And you’re here?”

“I am here.”

“Forever right?”

“Forever.”

Daniel sat up and caught her lips with his, pulling her into a deep kiss and back onto the bed with him, smiling more than he had in years as she giggled.

Daniel lay on his side in the early morning light watching his wife sleep.
“Stop it,” she told him, opening her eyes and looking up at him.

Daniel shook his head, “Nope.”

Sha’re laughed, snuggling close to him as she listened to the sounds of the Abydonian morning starting. Once Daniel had been deemed fit by Janet, they had returned to Abydos to spend a few months together alone. It was coming to the end of their vacation and Daniel was looking forward to going back to Earth and seeing his friends but he had loved being here with Sha’re with absolutely nothing to do except spend time with his family and help his wife get over everything.

“We should move and get some breakfast,” Sha’re murmured sleepily.

Daniel pulled her closer, “Or we could skip it.”

Sha’re giggled, it was something she did so often these days and Daniel loved making her laugh.

“Dan’iel,” Kasuf’s voice floated into their home, “You have visitors.”

Sha’re groaned slightly before smiling as Daniel kissed her before he jumped up; “Just a minute.”

He grabbed his robe and watched his wife as she slowly dressed, she shooed him out so he could find out who was there while she finished getting ready.

Daniel walked out of the tent, stopping in surprise to find his team standing there. All looked grim while Jack held a small bundle in his arms.

“Jack?”

“Danny,” Jack said softly, “Where’s Sha’re?”

Ice filled Daniel as he took another glance at Jack carrying something wrapped a regulation blanket, “She’s getting dressed. Hold on and I’ll see if she’s ready.”

He walked slowly back into his home, finding Sha’re fixing her hair. She glanced up at him and gave him a smile, she returned to brushing her hair for a second before the look on his face filtered into her consciousness.

“Dan’iel?” she whispered fearfully, “What is happening? Who is here?”

“Sha’re,” he moved to her, “Jack is here, he needs to talk to you. Can he come in?”

She nodded, fear filling her eyes as Daniel moved to call in his friend. Instantly she knew why Jack had come as she saw him carrying the bundle and felt Daniel’s arms wrap around her.

“I’m sorry, Sha’re,” Jack whispered, stepping forward, “We were too late. The servant Ammonet sent left him in a small temple but she was killed leaving him alone. I’m so sorry.”

Tears filled her eyes and Sha’re sat down heavily, “I want to hold him.”

“Sha’re...” Daniel started.

“I want to hold my son,” she stated again firmly and Daniel nodded to his friend.

Jack gently placed the bundle he had carried and never released since he’d found him into Sha’re’s
waiting arms. With shaking hands Sha’re removed the covers so that she could see her son. She stroked his face, sobbing as Daniel held her close.

“Awake at last.”
Rodney looked over to where Laura was standing in the corner, “How long?”

“Five hours,” she told him, a smile split her face, “I just spoke with Sheppard, they managed to remove the implant from Daniel.”

Shock filled his eyes, “What?”
Laura sat on the bed at his side and took his hand, “After our next move, they’re going to remove yours.”

Rodney started to laugh, relief filling him before he remembered what had happened and he sobered quickly.

“Where’s my sister?” he asked, pulling himself up and snagging his wheelchair over. He moved himself over; he’d had a lot of practice over the past few months.

Laura didn’t move to help him because he hated needing help, “Colonel O’Neill has her with some of the scientists. We can meet them for lunch?”

Rodney nodded.

Jeannie had spent the past few hours talking with scientists who had told her how they escaped from Carter. She didn’t want to believe any of this, didn’t want to believe that she was so gullible but with each story it became more and more probable to her.

She could see Jack in the background, watching her as she spoke with several people. She focussed on one of the scientists speaking, jumping a little as a plate was put in front of her.

“The food isn’t actually that bad,” Jack told her as he took a seat at her side, “You might want to eat before Rodney gets here. You probably won’t have an appetite after.”

Jeannie ate very little; her stomach was churning from everything she had been told already.

“Hey,” a woman said making Jeannie look up and sigh relieved to see her brother arriving.

“Mer,” Jeannie whispered, grabbing his hand when he was close enough.

“Hey, Jeannie,” Rodney breathed, pulling her into a tight embrace, “Sorry about getting you involved in all this.”

Jeannie hugged him back tightly before moving back to her seat, “Just tell me what happened?”

“Dr Carter.”

Sam let out an annoyed breath but managed to smooth her face into a look of interest as the man who
had called her caught up.

“Yes, Dr Kavanaugh?” she asked with the hint of a smile.

“You wanted to be alerted when we found something,” he reminded her, “Well, we may have something.”

Sam favoured him with a beaming smile, “I have an appointment just now but I will join you in your lab in about an hour.”

Kavanaugh nodded, “That’ll give us time to get everything in order for you.”

Sam watched him leave, a small snarl curling her lip in disgust at the human scientist. With renewed purpose she started towards her office once more. When she entered she locked the door before entering her code into the computer and waited.

“Samantha,” the Andurian Council Member greeted her, “Your report.”

“We’re getting close to discovering the Ancients legacy on Earth, Ithin,” she told him, “Unfortunately O’Neill is still recruiting people and causing problems.”

“Did the staged attack not turn people against him?” Ithin demanded.

Sam sighed, “Even still they’re managing to get people to join them. It may be time for something bigger. I wanted to make sure that I have permission to do what is necessary.”

Ithin nodded, “You are the commander of the Earth forces, Samantha. Remove them in whatever manner you feel is required. Just remember that we need the technology left on Earth by the Ancients. We must find the lost city so we can remove every other obstacle.”

Sam nodded, “Of course. I have been informed by one of the scientists that they may have found something. This could be over sooner than we expected.”

Ithin nodded, “Do not get over confident, Samantha. That is how you lost your other information sources.”

Sam felt her cheeks flame as the screen turned to black, rage filling her but she managed to get a hold of her emotions. She had to remain calm if she was to get what she needed; besides there were others who would take her display of any emotions as a sign of weakness and try to remove her from her rightful place.

Grabbing her computer padd once more, Sam marched out of her office and towards the labs.

“Here on P4R T11,” Kavanaugh pointed out, “SG4 found writing that...”

He trailed off as Sam held up her hand, “Have you found a location?”

“No, Ma’am,” he replied, “But we have a lot of possibilities.”

Sam gritted her teeth, “Doctor, you told me you had something concrete. Now, I want actual answers not possibilities. You assured me that you were as efficient as Dr McKay in these situations, now is your time to prove that to me.”

Before Kavanaugh could say anything else, she turned and left the room.
Jeannie sat on the bed in the small room she’d been shown to, completely overwhelmed. She knew there were guards outside her room to ensure that she stayed in here but she had no idea where she could possibly go.

“Come in,” she sighed when someone knocked on the door.

“Hey,” John said as he appeared in the open doorway, “Thought I’d come see how you were. So, how are you?”

Jeannie started to laugh, “Well that’s a really dumb thing to ask. Tell me,” her arms folded across her chest and her voice hardened, “Do they teach that or is that a natural talent?”

John grinned, “You guys are very alike.”

Jeannie sighed and slid to sit against the wall pulling her knees up to her chest, “So, how did you get involved in all this?”

John’s mask of jovial indifference slipped for a second and Jeannie caught a glimpse of the weary, heartbroken man behind it.

“You don’t have to tell me,” Jeanie said quickly when she saw his pain.

“Well, you’ll be hearing a lot of stuff now you’re here so I may as well get this out now,” John took a seat next to her, “I was Air Force and I was picked along with my fiancé, Meg to work at the Campus. She was ecstatic; we’d heard all about the SGC and what they’d done, Meg believed in Carter and the peace the Andurians promised. I was happy flying wherever they sent me.”

“So what changed?” Jeannie asked.

“Meg discovered what Carter was doing to Dr Jackson,” John’s eyes hardened, “She managed to get a message to O’Neill but Carter caught her,” he paused for several moments, “Meg was killed in a supposed terrorist raid.”

“And that’s when you joined up,” Jeannie said understanding.

John let out a harsh laugh, “No, that was when I decided to turn my back on everything. I refused to help even when O’Neill came out of hiding to talk to me. Something he doesn’t do very often.”

Jeannie leaned forward slightly, completely wrapped up in his story, “What changed your mind?”

“Sha’re Jackson,” John said softly, “Compared to everything she’s been through I felt like a coward for giving up while she was still fighting. I was a recruit before she even finished speaking.”

“What did Dr Carter do to her?” Jeannie asked, afraid of the answer but needed to know.

John shook his head, “She’s the best person to ask. Look, get some sleep and I’ll talk to you tomorrow.”

As he started to leave Jeannie let out a sigh.

“John.”

He turned back to her, “Yeah?”
“I don’t want this,” she whispered, “I want to go back to the way it was before.”

“You’re not alone,” John sighed before he left shutting the door behind him.

Jack sat going over the reports from the team of scientists that were part of his resistance, he had never thought he’d end up doing this. There were still days he woke up and hoped that it was all a bizarre nightmare but it wasn’t. Carter, his trusted 2IC, his friend had betrayed them in more ways than he could count.

“You should get some sleep.”

Jack looked up as his friend hobbled over to him, “Crutches, already? You just had surgery this morning.”

“I heal quickly,” Daniel shrugged, settling into the seat next to Jack, “Besides Sha’re made sure I would be able to walk once we got that thing out of me.”

Jack smiled slightly his attention returning to the reports sitting in front of him.

“Missing Hammond?” Daniel asked astutely.

“Missing everything about the old days,” Jack told him, “I still wonder if there was some way I could have seen this coming and stopped it.”

“Jack,” Daniel rested his hand on his friend’s shoulder, “None of us would have seen this.”

“You would,” Jack reminded him, “Why do you think she found a way to keep you away from Earth for those last few months.”

Daniel dropped his head but remained silent. The two friends sat like that for several minutes, neither speaking but comforting each other with their presence.

“Jack,” Daniel finally spoke again, “You know how I said things were fuzzy when...before you guys got me out?”

“Yes?” suspicion filled Jack’s voice.

“It’s not fuzzy anymore,” Daniel told him.

Horror filled the older man but he remained silent as he knew it was the best way for Daniel to tell him what had happened.

“Carter’s looking for something,” Daniel told him, they never referred to her as Sam anymore – Sam had been their friend, she wasn’t.

“Like what?”

“Something connected to the Ancients,” Daniel told him, “It’s still unclear but I’ve a feeling that she wanted to make sure that I wouldn’t remember if I got out of there. It’s more than likely Rodney holds more clues.”

Jack frowned, “Fraiser and Beckett will get that thing out of him. Work on what you got till then.”

“I will,” Daniel promised.
“Why are you still up?” a sharp voice made them both turn guiltily as Sha’re marched towards them.

“I just needed to talk to Jack,” Daniel told her, his blue eyes innocent.

Sha’re shook her head and took a seat beside him, “Janet said you need to rest more, Dan’iel. Please do as she says.”

“Okay,” Daniel smiled up at his wife; he grabbed his crutches again and pulled himself to his feet, “Night, Jack,”

“Night, kids,” Jack smiled at the couple, watching as Sha’re continued to berate her wayward husband while they walked slowly through the corridors of the base.

Once alone again, Jack returned to his reports but now he had something to focus on. They’d never had any idea what the Andurians wanted on Earth but this could be it.

Now all they needed was Daniel and Rodney to remember.
“Good morning, Dr Weir,” Sam greeted the woman as she entered her office.

“Dr Carter,” Elizabeth smiled back and took a seat.

“How is Simon?” Sam asked, as she poured the other woman some tea, “I was told he is recovering well.”

Elizabeth nodded, “The doctors say it could have been much worse. Simon will recover but they’re not sure if he will be the same as he was.”

Sam gave her a sympathetic smile, “At least you are both alive, Elizabeth. It could have been so much worse.”

Elizabeth nodded sadly, “I still find it astonishing that I only sprained my wrist.”

Sam turned away for a second trying to hide her smug smile. She covered it by pulling open the bottom drawer in her desk and retrieving a file.

“What can I do for you this early in the morning?” Sam asked with a smile, “I was sure you were due to head for the Negotiations today.”

“I am,” Elizabeth replied before giving her a hopeful smile, “I was wondering if I could persuade you to join me for a few days. As you made first contact with the Asgard, it is only reasonable that you would hold some sway with them.”

Knowing only too well that the Asgard would no longer recognise her as human, Sam shook her head, “I’m afraid I’m extremely busy just now. I’ve got so much work to do.”

“It was just a hope,” Elizabeth smiled, she stood up and smoothed her skirt, “I will be back in a few days with my report.”

“Do us proud, Dr Weir,” Sam said as the other woman started out of the office.

Elizabeth nodded and left.

Sam waited until she was alone once more before she pulled up the file on Weir; she was regarded as the best diplomat on Earth, which is why Sam had wanted her. Unfortunately, Weir’s boyfriend had started snooping around after being contacted by O’Neill. Sam had set up the ‘little’ accident to ensure he stayed silent. Which he would, considering he had almost had his brains splattered across the pavement outside the apartment he and Elizabeth shared.

They had to have this treaty with the Asgard, now that they no longer had to focus solely on fighting the Replicators and bluffing the Goa’uld they could devote their resources to whatever else troubled them. Sam knew they had to let the Asgard think that the humans were in charge of Earth with the Andurians as benevolent guardians, helping a younger race as it stepped out into the Universe.

It seemed like such a long time ago before she had realised who she truly was; when she had been Captain Samantha Carter, astrophysicist and sap. She had been the perfect officer to her commander - Jack O’Neill, she’d became friends with the renegade Jaffa – Teal’c and had been like a sibling to
Dr Daniel Jackson then came the moment that changed her life.

Jolinar of Malkshur, the Tok’ra who invaded her body released Sam’s true nature. Sam found it highly amusing that the Tok’ra had entered her body in the hopes of salvation and instead had doomed herself. Sam used the fact that she now had the symbiote inside her to manipulate her teammates as well as extract information concerning the Tok’ra that she would use to her advantage.

That hadn’t always worked out the way she wanted though.

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Daniel lay watching his wife sleep at his side. Normally he would have been up long ago, working on the things they had rescued from the SGC and stolen from under Carter’s nose but this morning he wanted to stay here with his wife. Sha’re shifted slightly in her slumber pushing the sheets off her in the warmth of base, as she moved the pyjama top she wore slipped up slightly revealing her tanned stomach to Daniel along with the scar she bore. Daniel reached out and gently stroked his fingers along it, Sha’re always hid it from him whenever she was awake so it was only at times like this he saw the reminder of that day Carter had destroyed their happiness once more.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re murmured as she woke up, she pushed his hand away and turned so that she was cuddled against him, “Don’t.”

“I’m just looking at your beautiful stomach,” Daniel teased as he gently tickled her.

Sha’re sighed, squirming slightly as her husband trailed his fingers across her ribs, “Stop it.”

Daniel laughed softly as Sha’re turned and checked the clock, surprised at how late it was.

“You needed to sleep,” Daniel reminded her, “You didn’t rest while I was in surgery.”

“I couldn’t,” Sha’re breathed; she moved to look down on him, “If it had gone wrong, I would have lost you.”

“Sha...” Daniel trailed off as a memory hit him and he gasped in the sudden knowledge, “I know what she’s looking for.”

Sha’re stared at him in confusion, “Husband?”

Daniel was on his feet pacing, something Sha’re found astonishing considering he had been unable to walk at all two days before.

He grabbed his radio, “Jack, get everyone together. I know what she wants.”

“Sheppard is out on patrol,” Jack answered, “Rodney is in the middle of something I don’t understand. How about an hour?”

Daniel glanced over to where Sha’re was sitting and smiled, “An hour is fine.”

He put down the radio and sat back down on the bed beside his wife, Sha’re slipped her arms around his neck.

“An hour?” she asked archly.

Daniel laughed but didn’t reply and just pulled her so she was beneath him. Daniel smiled down at her for a few seconds before he kissed her seriously.
“Where the hell are we going, Cadman?” Rodney demanded as she pushed him through the corridors of the base, “I was busy.”

“Dr Jackson called a meeting,” Laura told him, “Sounds important.”

“It better be,” Rodney grumbled, “I still have to think up something to make Jeannie safe.”

Laura sighed, she’d been having this similar conversation with Rodney for about three hours, “Rodney, she can’t leave. Carter will have every resource she has looking out for your sister and she’ll get her. Jeannie has no choice but to remain here with us.”

Rodney sighed, knowing she was right but he didn’t get a chance to say anything else as Laura wheeled him into the meeting.

“Morning,” Jack greeted them as he sat alone, “Daniel and Sheppard will be here in a few minutes.”

“Sir,” Laura nodded, old habits died extremely hard.

“Good morning,” John appeared, dropping into the seat beside Rodney, “How’re you this morning, wheels?”

“Wheels?” Rodney rolled his eyes at the other man, “That’s the best you can come up with?”

John shrugged, “I’ve been out for several hours dodging patrols. What do you want from me?”

“Peace,” Rodney retorted.

“Daniel,” Jack spoke up, happy to see his friend before the bickering between the scientist and his second-in-command got any worse, “What’s going on? You sounded kinda worked up earlier.”

“I called Janet and Carson to join us,” Daniel told him, “As well as Radek Zelenka. They’re all just getting everything ready for the move.”

“Daniel,” Jack spoke up, happy to see his friend before the bickering between the scientist and his second-in-command got any worse, “What’s going on? You sounded kinda worked up earlier.”

“I called Janet and Carson to join us,” Daniel told him, “As well as Radek Zelenka. They’re all just getting everything ready for the move.”

“How come you’re walking normally?” Rodney demanded; annoyed that less than twenty-four hours after having the implant removed Daniel appeared as though there was nothing wrong with him.

Daniel shrugged, “I think she wanted us to be able to be fine once it was removed if she needed us to move.”

“That and Sha’re used the healing gauntlet we stole,” Janet stated as she entered the room with Carson.

Daniel looked startled at that but recovered quickly, “Since we have to start the move soon, I’ll be brief.”

Jack let out a snort of amusement, quickly changing it to a cough at his friend’s dark glare.

“From the moment I woke up after having the implant removed,” Daniel explained, “I’ve been having brief flashes of memory concerning what Carter wanted from me while I was incarcerated.”

Laura glanced at Jack who looked back at her, both amazed at how calmly he talked about it.

“This morning when Sha’re and I were talking, I remembered everything. Carter’s looking for the
Lost City of Atlantis.”

Stunned silence filled the room.

“What?” Jack asked for everyone.

“Remember the repository of knowledge that was downloaded into your brain?” Daniel asked his friend.

“Vaguely,” Jack replied.

“Well that race, the Ancients, built the city of Atlantis,” Daniel continued, “Then they came to Earth for some reason. She needed me to find the Stargate address and she needed Rodney to design the power source to be used to get there.”

“I thought Carter could do that herself?” Laura asked before anyone else could.

Daniel shrugged, “I don’t know. But I think I can find that address.”

“Daniel,” Janet said softly, “Are you saying what I think you’re saying?”

He nodded, “If I can get the address and Rodney can work out the power requirements…”

“We’ve got a base that she has no way of getting to,” Jack nodded as he mused it over, “The only problems I can see are getting us to the Stargate, bypassing the computer and getting everyone through it.”

“Is that all?” Janet laughed.

Jack laughed softly, “When are you going to remove McKay’s implant?”

“Once we’re in the new base,” Carson replied, “We’ve asked Sha’re to be there to use the healing device again.”

Jack nodded once more, “Alright, we start the evacuation in two hours. We’ll reconvene after Rodney’s implant has been removed.”

“You ready?”

John was surprised that Jack asked him the question but gave the only reply he could, “As I always am.”

“Cadman has requested to come along for this,” Jack told him, “And I’m going to allow it.”

John frowned confused, “What about Rodney?”

“Sha’re’s offered to stay with him and his sister,” Jack told him, “Cadman’s one of the best we’ve got and let’s face it, John, we don’t have as many as we could.”

The younger man sighed; they didn’t have many people and had to utilize everyone for moves like this.

“We’ll get going,” John said, “See you tonight.”
“Be careful, John,” Jack called after him, receiving a cocky grin and jaunty wave.

Jack chuckled to himself for a moment. That was why he liked John Sheppard however after his moment of levity Jack had to return to the more serious aspects of his day.

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“What’s happening?” Jeannie asked as she was ushered along the corridor by the man who had been guarding her.

“Move,” was all he said.

Jeannie didn’t get a chance to ask any more as she saw her brother in front of her, she rushed forward to him, “Mer, what’s happening?”

“We’re moving bases,” Rodney explained, “We have to every so often; Carter has a lot of people looking for us.”

“Do you know where we’re going?” Jeannie asked as she glanced around to see they were alone, “Cause I don’t.”

Rodney laughed softly, “We’ve got a guide to take us coming.”

“Not your friend?” Jeannie probed. Their reunion the night before had basically only been him telling her about Carter, and how it was important it was that she trusted them, but nothing else.

“Cadman was a marine,” he explained, “She’s got other stuff to do. Sha’re’s going to come with us.”

Jeannie chewed her lip for a second, “Sha’re, she’s the one who persuaded John to join, right?”

Rodney nodded; he smiled slightly as he saw the young woman they were waiting for appear with her husband at her side. The couple spoke quickly to one another before they kissed and Daniel gave Sha’re a zat and a transmitter.

“Rodney,” Sha’re greeted him warmly before turning to his sister, “And you must be Jeannie.”

Jeannie nodded at the woman, “Hi.”

Sha’re folded her arms across her chest, “We’ll be leaving soon. I need you to do everything I say, Jeannie. If I believe you are trying to run away from us,” she paused, trying not to look at Rodney, “I have orders to incapacitate you.”

Jeannie was a little shocked at how easily the threat slipped from the other woman’s lips.

“She understands, Sha’re,” Rodney spoke up.

Sha’re nodded and they fell into silence.

“I hate this,” John murmured, as he and Laura stood watching the guards go by.

Laura nodded, “I can see why. So what are we doing here?”

“There’s a weapons bunker over there,” John motioned to the other side of the compound, “We’re going to blow it up and then hopefully it’ll be enough to send all Carter’s guards over this way so
that we don’t get caught moving.”
Laura let out a long breath, “I never saw this side before. Usually I’m rushing about the base.”
John smiled slightly, “Welcome to my world.”
Laura gave him a smirk before becoming focussed on the business at hand, “Whenever you give the order, sir.”
John didn’t bother reminding her that technically they were no longer part of any military because it was pointless. They kept it up simply because it was comforting for them all to have a command structure.
“Let’s go,” John told her, “Make sure if we get separated to make your way to whatever safe haven you can.”
Laura nodded; they clasped hands for a second in unspoken camaraderie before they separated. Hoping they would see one another again in their new base.

Sha’re gripped the weapon she held trying not to show how worried she was to the siblings she was guarding. Every time they moved, the base was filled with worry as they hoped to transfer all their equipment and work as well as every member of their people to their new home. This was the first move she’d done this since they’d rescued Daniel that she had been separated from her husband. Her stomach churned in worry as she knew he was on the front line of the move.
“Hey,” Rodney said, gently touching her arm, “He’ll be okay.”
“I cannot help but worry,” Sha’re gave a sad shrug, “Do not tell me you are not worrying also.”
Rodney waved away her words, “Cadman can take care of herself.”
“I did not mention Laura,” Sha’re smiled, receiving a frown from him as Jeannie hid a smirk.
“Sha’re,” her radio sprang to life making the three of them jump.
“Yes, Jack?”
“Get ready,” Jack ordered, “We’re about to open the tunnel.”
Sha’re gripped the handles of Rodney’s wheelchair, moving Jeannie to stand in front of her so that they were as close as possible. She nodded at Rodney who flipped open the small flap that hid the control panel.
“Three,” Jack’s voice counted down, “Two, One.”
On cue, Rodney activated the small force field around the three of them, as the new tunnel was created their small group was caught in the wave. Jeannie gave a cry of shock when her feet were lifted off the ground and felt Sha’re grip her tighter as they hurtled along.
“It’s almost over,” Sha’re murmured to the other woman, “But prepare for the landing.”
“What?” Jeannie asked just before they stopped suddenly, she gave another cry as someone grabbed her around her waist.
Dazed, Jeannie looked across to see her brother laughing with the man she recognised as one of the doctors while Sha’re was being held by Jack. Jeannie pulled back and nodded gratefully at the man who caught her.

“Thank you,” she nodded to him, “Ah...”

“Siler,” he introduced himself, “Not a bad landing for your first trip.”

“Run,” John snapped at Laura as the explosion rocked the ground below them.

The Andurian forces started towards them before the ground had stilled and they started after the John and Laura instantly.

“We’re going to have split,” Laura told him, the Andurians were now being joined by the humans that worked for them, either by intimidation or ignorance to what they really were.

John grimaced, it wasn’t that he didn’t trust Laura but he hated feeling like he was abandoning an important member of the resistance as well as a friend.

“I’ll see you there,” John told her.

Laura nodded, neither saying the possibility that either or both of them might not make it. When John took off in the opposite direction to Laura he heard shouts and weapons fire behind him, as he went skidding round he heard Laura cry out and winced but he knew he couldn’t go back for her. There was no way he could get to her, especially since he had what seemed to be half the population of New York coming after him.

John frowned as he the thought that he’d spent too much time in the company of Rodney McKay, a thought he knew was completely stupid considering he was running for his life. Hoping to whatever deity there possibly was, John started for the closest safe haven he could.
Jeannie looked around the new base and frowned, “It’s exactly the same as the old one.”

“That’s why we like it,” Jack O’Neill’s voice came from behind her making her jump, “This place is made from special crystals the Tok’ra gave me. The technology we use can’t be detected by Carter and her band of zombies, we move around every few months so that there’s less chance of them finding us.”

Jeannie turned to him and decided to get a few answers, “I overheard something about a distraction. What happens to those caught doing that?”

Jack dropped his eyes slightly, “We do whatever we can but a lot of the time we can’t help them.”

“I don’t understand how this happened,” Jeanie whispered, “One minute my life was normal and then I got what I thought was an incredible invitation and opportunity. And then you show me this and I know...I can’t...”

“What?” Jack cut her off.

Jeannie drew herself up, “I want to help.”

Jack rested his hand on her shoulder, “Well, we have plenty we need done. Come on and get something to eat. Then you can join the gang in getting to work.”

Daniel entered the new base and gratefully handed over the zat to the guard on duty, Jack had them all well trained.

“Did we lose anyone, Tom?” he asked.

Tom shrugged, “Not sure yet. We’ve still got at least an hour before the final check in and lock down.”
Daniel grimaced, he hated the wait but at least this time he hadn’t spent the entire move unable to do anything.

“Your wife is in the mess,” Tom told him, “They arrived in perfect time.”

Daniel smiled without thought, “Thanks.”

Tom gave him a sloppy salute before turning back to his own work while Daniel headed in to see who was there so far.

“Daniel!!!”

He turned as his wife rushed over to him and smiled in relief as he wrapped her in his arms, “Hi.”

“Are you alright?” Sha’re asked, concern filling her dark brown eyes.

Daniel stepped back from her and held out his arms for inspection, “I’m all in one piece, see.”

Sha’re smiled and stepped into him again, “I’ll have to make a closer inspection later.”

Daniel laughed at her suggestive smile and kissed her, “That gives me something to look forward to.”

Sha’re hugged him tightly for a second before she took his hand and led him to where Jack was waiting for them.

“Hey,” Jack greeted him as he sipped his coffee, “Any problems?”

“None,” Daniel grabbed a seat beside Sha’re, nodding hello to Rodney and Jeannie as he grabbed a mug of coffee himself, “Who are we still waiting for?”
“Sheppard, Cadman and Lindy,” Jack listed; “But Sheppard has a habit of getting here at the last minute.”

“Typical,” Rodney murmured, “How long have they got till lock down?”

“About an hour,” Sha’re answered him.

“What is this lock down you keep talking about?” Jeannie asked.

“After a move,” Jack explained, “The base is sealed so that no one can get in or out for three days. It means there’s less chance we’ll be found during the transition.”

“So if they don’t get back in time?” Jeannie asked her face paling.

“They have to find shelter until we come out of lock down,” Sha’re answered for Jack, knowing how much he hated it.

“What if they’re caught?” Jeannie couldn’t let this go, “Won’t Carter get the new location from them?”

“They don’t know where we are,” Jack replied, “It’s one of our security protocols.”

“But how is that possible?” Jeannie frowned.

“McKay,” Jack motioned him to explain.

Rodney sighed, “The only person who knows where we are just now is O’Neill, he programmes the crystals that make the base and the tunnels.”

“Then how does everyone get here?”
“Pre-programmed shuttles,” Daniel answered, “The Tok’ra rarely used them but they’re how we get around. We have them in specific places for each move; every member of the resistance has had their DNA profile entered into the systems. When we get to a shuttle to return to base you place your hand on the scanner before you enter your password, it’s also a voice scanner and it brings you here.”

Jeannie sighed, her nose wrinkling as she mused, “What if they’re caught?”

“Each shuttle is designed with recognition software so that every person within range has to be in the DNA registry,” Jack took over, “Your brother programmed it so that it can sense the stress of the person’s voice. Also everyone has to do this before they even enter the shuttle.”

“Wow,” Jeannie whispered, “So, all we can do is wait.”

Sha’re nodded, “Yes.”

John checked his watch; he had less than ten minutes to get to the base before lock down. He’d barely escaped from the Andurians; it was a good thing they had never got used to looking in trash cans. He had to get back to the base because he had no clue where he could go for the next three days. John scrubbed his hand through his unruly hair and headed to the closest transport spot, he hoped that Laura had managed to get away and was already on the base.

John could practically hear the seconds ticking by as he tried to run and yet not draw attention to himself. John held the black stone in his hand that was needed to activate the transporter into the tunnels so he could hit the button the moment he was in position.

“Come on,” he murmured to himself, willing time to slow down so he could speed up, three minutes till lock down.

John pressed the button the moment he was in position and winced at the bright light that assaulted him as he was pulled into the tunnels. At least here he’d be safe for the three days if he didn’t make it in time.

John let out a cry of relief as he saw the transport in front of him; he ran forward and slammed his hand on the scanner, “John Sheppard, Insanity.”
The door opened and John dropped into the first seat, leaning back as the door closed and the shuttle started for the new base.

“Cutting it a little fine,” Jack greeted him when he staggered out of the shuttle, “Aren’t you?”

“Did Laura make it back?” John ignored the sarcastic greeting.

Jack frowned, “I was hoping you two were still together.”

John closed his eyes and let out a sigh, “Damn. We had to split, I think she was hit but I couldn’t get back the way she went.”

“Check in with Janet.” Jack ordered, “Then get some rest. We’ll debrief in the morning.”

John nodded and sadly walked through the corridors of the base to find one of the empty rooms, he never bothered with a permanent one like some of the others. His clothes and what few personal items he had were stored in a locker (or the Tok’ra version of a locker) because as long as he could get some place to sleep every so often he didn’t need one.

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Jeannie sat by her brother’s bed as the doctor’s prepared to remove the implant from him not sure what to say. He’d been silent since he’d been told Laura hadn’t returned knowing it was possible she’d been either captured or killed and Jeannie was worried.

“Rodney,” Carson appeared, he gently place a hand on Jeannie’s shoulder for a second as he looked down at his patient; “We’ll be doing this in a few minutes. Are you ready?”

“Yeah,” came the quiet reply.

“Mer,” Jeannie started but Carson stopped her speaking.

“Laura is perfectly capable of looking after herself,” the doctor reminded Rodney, “And if you don’t
get this done she will kick your ass.”

Rodney took a deep breath and nodded, “Let’s get this done.”

Carson smiled, “Okay.”

“Rodney is more of a fighter than you think,” Sha’re stated as she joined Jeannie in the waiting room, “He will be fine.”

“I hope so,” Jeannie whispered, “The past few days have just been overwhelming, Sha’re. I just want a few moments where I don’t...” she trailed off; “Sorry. You probably think I’m being really selfish.”

“No,” Sha’re reached out and took her hand, “We are all allowed to feel like that. Every one of us feels like that a lot.”

“Thank you,” Jeannie smiled at her.

Sha’re squeezed her hand once more, “I have to go. Dan’iel needs to eat and if I do not make him, he will forget.”

“You’re very lucky to have him,” Jeannie told her, making Sha’re smile, “I guess you already know that.”

“I will return later,” Sha’re promised before she disappeared.

Sha’re walked smartly through the corridors of the base, heading to the small room Daniel used as an office. She knew Jack had ensured he had his own space; many of the others within Daniel’s field did not like the way Daniel could dismiss their work without thought. Sha’re knew Daniel never meant to upset anyone, when he knew he was right he just drove ahead without thought. She stood in the doorway for a few moments watching him work, thinking back to the carefree days on Abydos when they had no idea what was waiting for them in the future. Her hand automatically
strayed to her stomach as she thought of the two children she’d lost, both taken by the hand of a woman her husband had thought of as a friend.

“She’re?”

She was jolted out of her thoughts as her husband called her name, “It is time to eat, Dan’iel.”

“Really?” he checked his watch, “Oh,” she laughed slightly as he shook himself before joining her, “Let’s go.”

They walked slowly along the corridors both lost deep in thought.

Daniel watched Sha’re as she sat alone watching the sun set, the death of her child had thrown her into a deep depression. After the funeral Daniel had left Sha’re with Kasuf for a while and walked with Jack, Sam and Teal’c back to the Gate where he’d requested some more leave to give Sha’re time to grieve. Hammond had been more than supportive and told Daniel to take as long as was needed. Unfortunately no matter how much he tried to comfort her she pulled away from him but that didn’t stop him from trying.

Daniel walked to his wife’s side and slid down the wall to sit at her side. She glanced round at him before returning to her sad contemplation. Daniel reached out and rested his arm around her shoulders, drawing her to him.

“I’m sorry,” Sha’re whispered, “Dan’iel, I just...I don’t...”

“Shh,” Daniel soothed, gently kissing her hair, “I know and I wish I could find some way to help you.”

Sha’re cuddled him tighter, “You are.”

“Come on,” Daniel stood up and pulled her to her feet, “You need to get some sleep.”

Sha’re stopped him, “Will you do something for me, Dan’iel?”
“Anything?”

“I do not want to replace the baby I lost,” she whispered, “But I want to start a family with you.”

Daniel kissed her, “Okay.”

“Good,” Sha’re sighed in relief, “Because I am with child.”

Daniel slipped out of bed trying not to disturb his wife; she’d not been able to sleep during the night, unable to get comfortable on her back or either side now that sleeping on her stomach was no longer an option. It was about four months since Jack had brought the baby to them and although Daniel had no intention of getting her pregnant, Abydos didn’t exactly have birth control. When they’d found out Sha’re had been stunned, even though she had wanted this and Daniel worried this couldn’t be the best thing for her but she exuded joy so Daniel decided to just take it as the blessing it should be. He glanced over to their bed as Sha’re murmured in her sleep but she didn’t wake up.

Daniel exited their home and went over to join Kasuf at the fire; “Morning, Good Father.”

“Dan’iel,” Kasuf greeted him, “Is Sha’re still in bed?”

“She couldn’t sleep last night,” Daniel explained, “I think she’s a little uncomfortable just now. It’ll probably get worse.”

Kasuf laughed, “You will have to prepare yourself. When her mother carried both Sha’re and Skaara I was not allowed to forget how uncomfortable she was and how it was completely my fault.”

Daniel laughed with his father-in-law, “I’m looking forward to it. You know we’ll be returning to Earth soon. I really want Janet to make sure everything is alright with the baby and to make sure Sha’re is healthy too.”

“Of course,” Kasuf nodded, his next statement was interrupted by sudden wind blasting sand at
Daniel felt fear fill him as the Abydonians all thought the same thing, a Goa’uld had returned to enslave them but Daniel noticed something unusual about the ship. Firstly it was a Tel-tac and not a mother ship, also it seemed to be jerking as though whoever was in control was in a hurry.

“Dan’iel?” Sha’re called, appearing at his side and pressing a gun into his hand as the militia appeared at their sides.

“Hold on,” Daniel ordered, “I don’t think this is a threat.”

“Why?” Sha’re whispered.

Daniel turned to her, “Just a feeling. Stay with your father just now.”

Sha’re frowned at him, “Why?”

“Because,” he said, simply resting his hand on her swollen stomach.

Sha’re nodded and quickly kissed his cheek before going over to join her father in relative safety.

Daniel gripped the gun tighter as the hatch to the ship opened, confusion filling him as Jacob Carter staggered out supported by Jack.

“What the hell?” Daniel breathed in confusion meeting the two men halfway.

Jack’s eyes were filled with confusion and sadness, “We’ve got a problem.”

******************************************************************************

Jeannie jumped as someone touched her shoulder waking her, “John?”
“You didn’t look very comfortable sleeping like that,” he smiled down at her, “Janet just told me they’ve finished and once Sha’re’s done her bit, he’ll be fine.”

Jeannie sighed in relief, a sob caught in her throat as the worry and confusion that she had been feeling over the past few days overwhelmed her. John, never really comfortable in this role, rested his arm around her shoulder and hugged her close as she cried.

John continued to hug Jeannie, awkwardly patting her on the shoulder as he hoped to comfort her. When Sha’re appeared in the doorway, she rolled her eyes at the pleading look John sent her way.

“I am about to use the healing wand on Rodney,” Sha’re stated making Jeannie jump again, a slight blush covering her cheeks at her loss of control, “I believed you would be interested in seeing it.”

“Sure,” Jeannie nodded, pulling away from John and wiping her eyes, “That sounds fascinating.”

“Then come,” Sha’re gently drew Jeannie to her, “You will like this.”

Rodney was still unconscious; lying on his stomach with a small section of his back exposed showing where Janet and Carson had cut him open.

Jeannie watched as Sha’re licked her lips before placing the strange device on her hand, it was a strange cylindrical jewelled hand piece with a gold strap across the top that held it onto Sha’re’s hand. Jeannie could see the dislike in Sha’re’s eyes at using this device but the woman took a deep breath and held it across Rodney’s back. Jeannie watched in astonishment at the orange glow that emanated from the device before her eyes were drawn to her brother’s back again which was almost completely healed.

Jeannie looked back up at Sha’re and saw the exhaustion filling the deep brown eyes as a grimace formed on her face.

Sha’re gasped as she stopped using the healing device, Carson caught her before she fell and took her to one of the beds to rest for a few minutes.
“Is she okay?” Jeannie asked Janet who was examining Rodney.

Janet nodded, “She just needs to rest for a few minutes, it takes a lot of energy to do that.”

“How does she...I mean...how...I...” Jeannie trailed off embarrassed as she saw sadness fill Janet’s eyes, “Sorry, I didn’t mean to pry.”

“No,” Janet rested her hand on Jeannie’s shoulder, “I forgot you just got here and don’t know everyone’s history. You’ve heard about the Goa’uld?”

“Of course,” Jeannie gave a half laugh, “Who hasn’t?”

“Sha’re was host to one of them for several years,” Janet explained sadly, “It’s not my place to give you all the details; however that’s why she has the ability to use the Goa’uld tools.”

“Oh,” Jeannie murmured, “I can understand why John was compelled to join up when she spoke to him.”

Janet nodded softly before sighing, “Unfortunately that’s only half the story,” she turned to Jeannie, “I want you to go get some sleep too. I’ll call you when Rodney is awake.”

Laura Cadman swore as she realised the lock down had already occurred. She was stuck for three days and she had no idea where she could hide out safely. Her arm ached from where the bullet had grazed her but other than that she was in one piece. Whether she stayed in one over the next three days was still to be determined.

“Okay, okay, okay,” Laura murmured to herself, “Where do I go?”

Not for the first time since she’d discovered the Andurians true nature had Laura wished she could go back in time and choose some other path for her life. She’d had a lot of friends back then but now, the only way she’d been able to get Rodney out of that prison with no repercussions from Carter to her family was a faked suicide. Everyone thought she was dead and unless she found a way to hide, she probably would be within the next few days.
A call from nearby made Laura start running again, if she didn’t find somewhere safe soon then she knew she had no hope. As she turned she saw a flyer on the window of a nearby car. That was it. The Colony of Love and Peace was a group of people who turned their back on technology and lived off the land. She could hide there, especially as one of the girls she’d went to school with had joined them a few months before Laura joined the resistance.

It wasn’t that far to the Colony’s lands, so Laura started out in the hopes she’d make it by nightfall.

She didn’t notice the man who started to follow her as she started her journey.
Chapter 5

The three days lockdown were almost over.

As usual everyone got antsy not being able to leave the base and find out what was happening in the world. Rodney had recovered as fast as Daniel from his surgery, and had spent the last day pacing the lab terrorising whoever came near him. Daniel spent half of each day with Jack and John discussing their next move, and the other half working on figuring out whatever Carter had wanted with him.

Sha’re spent the three days helping Janet and Carson with the patients they had while Jeannie worked on what little Jack trusted her with.

It was the longest three days imaginable.

Sha’re sat in the small room they kept the equipment that controlled the shuttles, once the lockdown finished they would be sent to the last pick-up spots for three hours only. If whoever was missing didn’t get there in time, then they had no way back to the base unless they met one of the others. That had never happened.

But Sha’re had hope that Laura would break that rule. She knew the other woman was tenacious from the day they met; her absolute determination to redeem herself after standing by when Rodney was being tortured made Laura the one Sha’re was sure would return to them.

“Hey.”

Sha’re looked up and smiled as her husband walked in, “I did not expect to see you before tonight. You looked engrossed when I came by earlier.”

“Sorry,” he turned her seat so he could lean over her, “I didn’t realise you were there till you left.”

Sha’re shrugged, “I did not wish to disturb you. What you know may save us all.”

“No point saving us if I ignore the person who makes life worth it,” Daniel moved closer and gently kissed her.

“You are full of flowery words, my husband,” Sha’re laughed before shrugging, “But I like them.”

“That’s good to know,” Daniel grinned, kissing her again, “I have to get going, this was just a quick break,” he kissed her once more, “See you for dinner.”

With that he left and Sha’re sighed slightly to herself, no matter how bad things got she was lucky because he was with her.

It was almost so different.

Sha’re jumped as shuttle three activated. She quickly checked whose password had been used, letting out a cry of relief. She jumped up and ran through the corridors to the room Jack used as an office.
“She made it,” Sha’re cried as she burst in making Jack and John jump round.

“What?” John was on his feet instantly.

“Laura is in shuttle three and will be here in a few moments,” Sha’re grinned, “I have to tell Rodney. You have to meet her.”

“We’ll just get him to meet us there,” Jack told her, he motioned John to head to the landing bay as he called for Daniel and Rodney to go there as well, “Come on, Sha’re. Let’s hope she’s still our girl.”

Sha’re winced as she thought that Laura could become suddenly their enemy sent a shiver down Sha’re’s spine but she didn’t get a chance to as John hurried her along.

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Sam tapped her finger against the desk.

It always amused her to watch the ‘students’ running around the campus, it was one of the reasons she used the cover of a university so she could watch the humans scurry around like ants basking in her wonderful presence.

“Yes?” she answered her phone when it rang.

“We are ready for you,” the toneless voice of Grif, the Andurian head of Security told her.

Sam smiled to herself, “I’ll be right there.”

Fixing herself, Sam shut down her computer and headed out the office. Walking through the corridors she was greeted by everyone who walked past her, some of them openly beamed hoping she’d remember them, others shy to meet the world famous Samantha Carter. Sam nodded but didn’t stop to talk to anyone, even those who she normally would.

Entering the lower levels, Sam continued past Teal’c’s cell with regret – she hadn’t had much time to play with her toy recently, finally reaching a much larger holding area where three Andurian guards stood outside waiting for her.

“Samantha,” Grif greeted her, “The prisoners are waiting for you.”

Sam entered the room and looked at the group who were chained to the wall. They all glared at her making Sam smile amused.

“Where did you find them?” she asked Grif.

“They were holed up in an apartment near the energy station,” he told her, “They had plans to disrupt it.”

Sam turned to the three men and woman in front of her, “Why would you want to do such a thing?”

“Bitch,” the leader spat at her; grunting as Grif slammed the butt of a rifle into his face.

“Now that’s not a very nice thing to say,” Sam practically purred, “What’s your name?”

As he remained silent, Sam turned to Grif for him to answer.

“Andrew Murphy,” Grif told her.
“Andrew,” Sam stepped closer, her hand sliding along his face before catching his chin and forced him to look at her, “I’m going to get all the information I want from you. You can make it easy on yourself and your friends by just answering my questions or I will make you watch as I slowly torture each of them. What will it be?”

Andrew glared at her, “Go to hell.”

Sam let him go and reached out her hand, her gaze never wavering from the man before her as the knife was placed into her hand.

“That, Andrew,” Sam said as she walked to the woman chained next to him, “Was the wrong answer.”

The woman whimpered in fear as Sam drew the cool metal of the blade along her cheek then along her exposed neck. The woman screamed as Sam sliced her ear off in one quick motion, catching it easily and moved to Andrew again.

“I can cut her up into little pieces and she will be awake throughout every part of it,” Sam told him, her voice filled with ice. She took a step into Andrew holding the piece of flesh close to him, “Tell me everything I want or you will watch as all of your friends are raped, humiliated and diced into little pieces.”

Seeing the defeat fill the man’s eyes, Sam turned to Grif and tossed him the ear, “I want a full report as soon as you’ve finished.”

With complete satisfaction, Sam headed back to her office.

Sam looked up less than an hour later when Grif entered her office, “Well?”

“He wasn’t part of O’Neill’s group,” Grif handed her a report, “But he did get information on the energy station from someone claiming to have been a member of the SGC.”

Sam frowned, “That has to be one of O’Neill’s lackeys. There’s no one left other than him and his little band of idiots.”

Grif nodded, “He must be using others.”

Sam frowned, “Go through their entire base of operations. I want to know every little piece of dirt on the floor, I want to know everything.”

“What about the prisoners?” Grif asked.

Sam waved her hand dismissively, “Kill them.”

“Of course,” he replied before leaving her alone.

Sam opened the report and browsed through it, looking for anything that would lead her to the man who was the last obstacle in the Andurians taking over the planet. Once she had a hold of him, she would happily plunge a knife into Jack O’Neill’s chest.

*****************************************************************************

Laura Cadman stepped slowly out of the transport, hands in plain sight as she walked towards them. Daniel rested his hand on Rodney’s arm keeping him back as Jack and John each held a gun but had
it resting at their leg.

“I have something for you guys,” she grinned, “You’re going to love.”

“You know the drill,” Jack stated.

“I do,” she nodded, “But before I get locked up I have something for you. It’s a message from the leader of where I stayed over the past few days.”

Jack frowned, he knew he should hand her over to Janet and Carson to make sure she hadn’t been compromised but curiosity got the better of him.

“Where were you over the last three days?” Jack asked, holding off the guards for the moment.


“The happy clappy bunch?” Rodney asked with disgust.

Laura smiled, “They’re not as happy clappy as you would think,” she slowly reached into her pocket and handed Jack a DVD, “I’ve got a message from them.”

“Did you tell them where you were coming?” John asked as Jack turned the disc over in his hands.

“No,” Laura replied, “I just said I was part of a group who wanted rid of Carter and the Zombies. There’s quite a few out there. One of them was an old friend of mine who knew I was supposed to be dead. That’s when they let me in on the secret.”

“Cadman, you have to go with this lot to Frasier,” Jack told her, “We’ll watch this and see you in an hour for your debriefing.”

“Yes, sir,” Laura nodded; she gave Rodney a quick smile as she passed him while Sha’re turned to Jack.

“Do you think she has been compromised?”

“Don’t know,” Jack murmured, “But I want to see what’s on this before I make a decision.”

Jack looked around; smiling slightly as he saw Rodney, John, Daniel and Sha’re all claiming seats in the small room so they could see what was on the disc. Jack placed the disc in the player and turned to take a seat finding there wasn’t one.

“Come on,” he cried annoyed.

Sha’re laughed and stood, giving her seat to him and settling on her husband’s lap. They all watched the blue screen as it jumped to a man’s face.

“Ferretti,” Daniel and Jack breathed in unison.

The man grinned at them through the TV, “I’m guessing it’s you who’s in charge of Laura’s little group. She hasn’t told us anything other than she is working with a resistance group - you inspire loyalty, Jack. Anyway the point of this was to say hi and to set up a meeting with you. I gave Laura instructions on how to contact me with a rendezvous so until then – see ya.”

The screen froze and Jack turned to the others, “Well?”
“You guys know who he is then,” John noted.

“Louis Ferretti,” Daniel stated, “He was on the team that came on the first mission to Abydos. We thought he was dead, killed by Carter in one of the first ‘terrorist’ raids.”

“Could this be a trick?” Sha’re asked, her cheek resting against Daniel’s hair.

“Possibly,” Jack conceded.

“We can’t assume that though,” Daniel added, “If this is really Ferretti and if what Laura told us is true then we may have some more help.”

“More mouths to feed though,” John noted.

Jack shrugged as Sha’re frowned, “I say we do it anyway. Anybody disagree?”

The others looked around the room but no one said anything so Jack nodded.

“Okay, let’s set this up.”

Laura waited until Janet finished before asking, “Well?”

“I’m finding no trace of anything Carter has used before,” Janet noted, her efficiency hiding the pain she felt having to talk about her once friend like that, “The wound on your shoulder was cleaned by someone who knew what they were doing.”

“Their doctor is young but she’s not bad,” Laura told her, “Did everyone else get through okay?”

Janet nodded, “You were the only one we almost lost.”

“What about Rodney?” Laura moved onto what she really needed to know, “Everything went smoothly?”

Janet laughed slightly and squeezed the other woman’s shoulder, “You saw him walking around when you got back. He’s fine and between them, he and Daniel may have the solution.”

Laura let out a long relieved sigh, “That’s great news.”

Janet turned to put away her instruments when her radio chirped, “Yes?”

“Is Cadman clean?” Jack asked.

“As far as I can tell,” Janet replied, “Everything checks out.”

“Tell her we need her in the conference room,” Jack ordered before the radio clicked off.

Laura looked at her, one eyebrow raised in interest, “What?”

“Conference room,” Janet told her, “They’re waiting for you.”

Laura bounced off the bed and grabbed her jacket before disappearing into the corridor.

Laura grinned as she saw Rodney walking towards her; she sped up and grabbed him in a tight hug.
“Oh it’s wonderful to see you walking,” she sighed in his ear, “I was worried.”

Rodney shrugged, “I’m fine. Janet thinks that the implant is designed to ensure the moment it’s switched off full sensation returns.”

“And you’ve slept?” Laura asked as they started walking.

Rodney shrugged, “Of course. Carson threatened me with sedatives if I didn’t. Are you...I mean what...”

“How about I just explain it once at the briefing,” Laura smiled at him, she stopped them walking and gently kissed his cheek, “Thanks for worrying about me.”

With that said they entered the conference room where Jack, John, Daniel and Sha’rè were sitting waiting for her. Rodney took his seat as Laura stood.

“How about I just explain it once at the briefing,” Laura smiled at him, she stopped them walking and gently kissed his cheek, “Thanks for worrying about me.”

With that said they entered the conference room where Jack, John, Daniel and Sha’rè were sitting waiting for her. Rodney took his seat as Laura stood.

“Okay,” she started, “Here’s what happened...”

*****************************************************************************

Louis Ferretti had been one of the first men to step through the Stargate and one of three to return home from that first mission. He’d happily taken his place in the SGC when they started exploring, becoming the leader of SG2 when his friend died. Now though he was believed dead and was doing all he could to protect others as well as gather what he could so that when the time came he could help kick the zombies off their planet.

He walked slowly along the street, his hands in his pockets so he could grip his gun in case of trouble. He’d decided to come himself to this meeting Laura Cadman had set for them, he couldn’t send someone in his place anyway as if it was Jack and he knew it had to be then he wouldn’t meet him.

Reaching the alleyway he was supposed to go to, Ferretti began to have a sinking feeling. There was no one there, except a small cross drawn on the ground. Curious he stepped towards it, grabbing his gun as light surrounded him before rings transported him.

The instant the light disappeared Louis saw several people aiming at him.

“Put them down,” a familiar welcome voice made him smile as someone he had never expected to see walked forward.

Unable to help himself, Ferretti gave a smart salute, “Colonel.”

Jack grinned, “Major, you know you’re supposed to be dead.”

“Sorry if you’re disappointed,” Ferretti shrugged before turning serious, “I knew when Cadman talked about the guy who led her group that it was you. So, are we standing here all day?”

Jack motioned him forward, “Come on. There are a few others that want to say hi.”

“Tok’ra tunnels,” Ferretti noted as they walked towards the shuttle.

Jack nodded, “Gift from Jacob. Get in and take a seat. John, stay here with your team. Keep an eye on what’s happening top-side.”
Ferretti saw the man designated John nod before he started calling out orders to the others which were cut off as the door to the small shuttle closed. He watch as his friend manipulated the controls and grabbed the bar in front of him as they went flying through the tunnels towards wherever their base was.

Daniel stood waiting for the shuttle, Sha’re at his side. They were both excited to see their old friend, especially after they thought he was dead. As it drew up Daniel unconsciously moved Sha’re slightly behind him, just in case, but as Jack exited first with a grin on his face Daniel relaxed and stepped forward to greet his friend.

“Daniel?” Ferretti cried, he grabbed the younger man in a tight embrace, “I thought she had you.”

“They got me out almost two years ago,” Daniel replied sadness creeping into his voice; “We lost Teal’c though.”

“Damn,” Ferretti sighed before gripping Daniel’s shoulders tightly, “I’m sorry about Sha’re.”

“What about me?” Sha’re stepped forward, smiling at the look of astonishment on the other man’s face before she gave a cry of shock as he grabbed her in a tight hug.

“I thought you...we heard,” Ferretti stared at the young woman as he set her back down.

“That’s the way it’s meant to be,” Jack replied, “We worked damn hard so that was what people thought.”

Ferretti nodded, “No problem.”

With a smile at the couple, Ferretti walked with the three of them to Jack’s office now the serious work began.

*********************************************

“How long have you been there?”

Jeannie smiled over at her brother, “A few minutes. What are you working on?”

He sighed, “I’m trying to remember what I was working on while...” he paused for a second to phrase it better, “At the campus.”

He saw Jeannie grimace but continued on, “It was a power source that should be powerful enough so that the Stargate can dial outside this galaxy.”

“Why do that though?” Jeannie asked, pulling over a stool she sat tapping on the side of it.

“Daniel believes that he can find a Stargate address,” Rodney explained, “And if he does, we could have a safe place to go.”

“Leave Earth?” Jeannie whispered, confusion in her eyes, “Can we do that?”

Rodney shrugged, “It’s not like we have much keeping us here. Besides we need somewhere we don’t have to move every few months and as much as I hate to admit it, Daniel is right about this.”

“About...”
“A place we can make sure we survive the Zombies,” Rodney told her, “They’re slowly killing us as a species and I may not like other people but I am not going to be part of the last generation of humans.”

Jeannie laughed suddenly making her brother frown at her.

“What?” Rodney demanded.

“You,” she giggled, trying to calm herself, “Actually advocating the need for kids. It’s so out of character.”

“Funny,” Rodney rolled his eyes at her, “If you’re going to sit there then you can help. See what you can do with the stuff on that laptop. But don’t change anything.”

Jeannie nodded and as he turned his back she mockingly saluted, “Yes, sir.”

They had sat in silence for what Jeannie thought had to be at least an hour when some man came running in.

“Rodney,” the man called, “Get to the TV room. Something major is happening at the campus.”

Rodney grabbed her arm and pulled her along with him to a room that was quickly filling with people.

“Turn it up,” Jack ordered as he entered the room with the others from the meeting.

“Just minutes ago,” the reporter on screen started, “An explosion shook the Andurian Educational Complex, it’s being reported that there are many casualties but there has been no confirmation on the number. Also, we’ve received news that Dr Samantha Carter was injured in the explosions trying to save several of the students. Although we have no information on her condition the Andurian representatives have released a short statement that has come from Dr Carter. It reveals that this man...” a picture of Jack appeared on the screen as several murmurs filled the room before being hushed quickly, “Colonel Jack O’Neill formerly of the SGC is the prime suspect in the bombing. Dr Carter’s statement concludes with the fact that this man was once a friend and asks that the public help find him so they can get him the help he needs.”

“Turn it off,” Daniel snapped.

Someone did as ordered as everyone turned to where Jack was standing, anger filling his eyes.

“Daniel, Rodney,” he said, his voice cold and calm, “Find the information we need.”
Daniel stared at his friend in confusion, “Jack, what’s wrong? Why are you and Jacob here in a ship? Where’s Sam? Where’s Teal’c?”

“Daniel,” Jack waved his hands to stop his friend asking questions, he was about to continue when he noticed Sha’re and Kasuf standing and his eyes were drawn to the very obvious bump, “What the hell? You’re pregnant?”

Sha’re moved to her husband’s side, “How did you guess?” pure innocence filled her voice.

Daniel grinned at her while Jack rolled his eyes.

“How did you guess?” Jack asked.

“Don’t you let anyone know?” Jack asked.

“We were heading back to Earth next week,” Daniel reminded him, “We decided it would be easier. Look,” Daniel moved back to the original subject, “What’s going on? What problem?”

Jack sighed, “Is there somewhere we can talk without the audience?”

Annoyed at the continuation of questions being answered by questions, Daniel motioned Jack and Jacob to follow him and Sha’re to their home.

Once inside Daniel helped Sha’re sit before he turned to where their ‘guests’ had taken a seat as well.

“What’s going on?” Daniel demanded.

Jack took a deep breath, sharing a sad look with Jacob, “It’s Carter.”

“Hey.”

Daniel turned to find Jack hiking up the sand dune to join him, “Hey.”

“Sha’re said you come here to think,” Jack explained, “I left Jacob in her capable hands, he’s pretty gutted by what just happened.”

“I don’t believe it;” Daniel snapped suddenly, “Sam would never do this. It has to be some sort of alien control, Gould parasite or something.”

“It’s not,” Jack told him, “She’s not being controlled, she’s working with them of her own free will and now...” he trailed off, “Daniel, Jacob was almost killed and the only reason I’m here to warn you is because he came to see me first.”

Daniel shook his head, “Sam is my friend, I know her. We’ve spent hours together and I trust her with my life.”

“Daniel.”

“Jack.”

Jack sighed, “You two are expected back next week. As far as anyone knows, I’m somewhere fishing
after resigning from the SGC in disgust at our new treaty with the Andurians. Jacob and I will be back on Earth by then to help but you need to talk to her and find out as much as you can.”

“I can’t put Sha’re in danger,” Daniel told his friend.

“You won’t,” Jack promised, “The SGC is still up and running for the moment. All you have to do is go back to Earth, say you want to see Carter. You have Sha’re stay with Teal’c.”

“Teal’c?”

“He’s keeping quiet until you get home,” Jack explained, “We couldn’t have you two walking into the unknown.”

Daniel nodded, “Okay, I’ll talk with Sha’re about it and see if she agrees.”

Jack watched as his friend walked back towards the city, closing his eyes and allowing the sun to warm his face. This wasn’t supposed to happen.

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Daniel gripped his wife’s hand as they walked down the ramp, Sha’re had been extremely vocal in the fact she was coming with him to Earth. She trusted Jack would keep them safe and needed to do something to help Jacob, her heart ached for the older man.

“Welcome home, Dr Jackson,” Hammond greeted them stiffly.

“General,” Daniel replied.

Hammond stepped forward and smiled at the couple, “Mrs Jackson and soon to be baby Jackson, it is good to see you both again.”

“Where’s everyone?” Daniel asked with complete innocence as they started walking along the corridors.

“Teal’c is training with some of the other teams, Major Carter is in Washington with the Andurian delegation,” Hammond explained, before frowning as he remembered the couple hadn’t been here for almost a year, “We met them three months ago, I’ve pleased to be able to tell you that the Gould are gone.”

“Gone?” Sha’re’s eyes were wide in astonishment, “All of them?”

Daniel was amazed how good an actress his wife was but managed to look as surprised as her.

“What happened?” Daniel asked.

They listened as Hammond explained how SG1 had met the Andurians and the alliance against their common enemy was formed continuing on to Jack’s retirement and Sam’s move to be the official liaison to those who had saved the world from the Goa’uld menace.

Daniel could hear the undertone of the General’s voice, how he was speaking as though he’d learned it from a script.

“Major...” the General paused, “Actually it’s Dr Carter now, asked that as soon as it was possible you join her in Washington to help go through the treaty after the work you did on the Protected Planets Treaty.”
Daniel nodded, “Sha’re shouldn’t fly just now though. Would it be possible for her to stay here with Teal’c to help her?”

“I am not a child, Dan’iel” Sha’re added, just so it looked as though she wasn’t happy with the situation.

“I know,” Daniel turned and started murmuring about how she shouldn’t fly whilst so heavily pregnant.

“That will not be necessary,” a new voice stated as they reached the infirmary.

Daniel and Sha’re stared at the man that walked towards them, he was tall and thin with pale skin with short slicked back pure white hair. He wore an olive green jumpsuit of the SGC and Daniel noticed the stiffening of the General’s back.

“Dr Jackson,” Hammond turned to Daniel, “This is Grif, he is Andurian and is observing the facility.”

“What did you mean about not flying?” Daniel demanded.

“We have short ranged transport available,” Grif replied, his voice never wavering from the bland monotone, “Your wife will be perfectly safe.”

Before they could protest he touched Daniel’s shoulder and pushed the button on the small watch-like device he held in his hand. Light surrounded them and Hammond grimaced as all three disappeared.

“Jack,” he called over the radio, “The plan just changed.”

Daniel stared around in astonishment as they were suddenly in an office, “What the hell?”

Sha’re gripped his arm tightly in shock, they were surrounded by several men all similar in looks to Grif.

“Hello, Daniel,” Sam said as she walked towards him, she was wearing a black skirt and jacket over a dark red top, “Welcome to the Andurian Education Facility. These are our newest allies, the Andurians.”

Anger filled Daniel’s eyes but he managed to keep his voice steady, “What is going on, Sam? We were practically abducted from the SGC.”

Sam smiled, “Actually, you were abducted from the SGC. Just to make sure we don’t have any confusion here. And Sha’re, I certainly didn’t expect you to be knocked up again. You work fast, Daniel,” Sam smirked at their horrified looks, “Trying to replace the baby she had with Apophis.”

“How dare you,” Sha’re snapped, her eyes burning.

Sam laughed, “Have you compared them? I’m sure deep in the corners of your mind you compare them every time Daniel touches you.”

“That’s enough,” Daniel told her, “What is going on with you? Sam...”

“Grif,” Sam ordered suddenly, “Take him.”
“Hey,” Daniel snapped as several of the Andurians grabbed him and pulled him away from his wife.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re cried as two of the others grabbed her and held her as they dragged Daniel away, “Stop this.”

Sam watched Daniel as he was pulled out of the room before she turned to the other woman who was staring at her.

“Why are you doing this?” Sha’re whispered.

Sam reached out her hand and a large dagger was placed in it, Sha’re gasped and tried to move back but she was held firmly.

“You know,” Sam slowly drew the cold blade across Sha’re’s cheek, “Things would have been so much easier if you had just died that day with Ammonet. I could have kept him distracted with that long enough and he would give me the information I need without what I will have to go through now.”

As Sam moved the dagger down to Sha’re’s swollen stomach, the young woman gasped, “Please.”

“Your baby,” Sam mocked, “Sha’re, I’m afraid that I’m going to have to kill this one as well.”

“What?”

Sam laughed as she saw the look of absolute horror on Sha’re’s face, “It’s very easy to simply suffocate a baby as he lies there, staring up with complete trust.”

“Monster,” Sha’re screamed as she struggled against the guards holding her as Sam just smiled.

“I’m exceedingly busy,” Sam told her, “We’ll have to finish this chat later.”

Sha’re stared as Sam turned to leave before she spun round and plunged the blade into her. Sha’re screamed as white hot pain sliced though her and the child who had been gently turning inside her writhed for a moment before stilling.

“No,” Sha’re cried, sliding to the floor as Sam pulled the dagger out of her.

“You should have died last year,” Sam told her coldly, “I still have use for you now but the brat is of no use at all,” she turned to the guard, “Get her to the infirmary and have the doctor report to me when they’ve finished patching her up.”

Sam looked up as someone knocked on the door to her office. She quickly saved what she was working on and changed it to a screen showing the programmes the Educational Facility would be offering.

“Come in,” she called, frowning confused as a man she didn’t know walked in, “Can I help you?”

“I’m Dr Carson Beckett,” he introduced himself; “I was told you wanted to know the status of the young woman brought in with a stab wound.”

“Sha’re,” Sam nodded, looking as concerned as she could, “Is she alright?”

Carson dropped his head slightly, “I’m sorry to have to tell you this,” he said, his voice soft.
highlighting the thickness of his Scottish accent, “There were complications. I was called in to help but despite doing everything we could...she died a few minutes ago.”

Sam dropped her head, letting out a sigh of annoyance.

“I’m so sorry for your loss,” Carson told her, misunderstanding her sigh.

Sam stood up, “I want to see the...her.”

“Of course,” Carson motioned her out, he walked with her along the corridors in silence until they reached the infirmary in the campus, “In there,” he led her to a small room, “Take as long as you need.”

Sam nodded her thanks before walking in and shutting the door behind her. On the bed lay the Abydonian woman, not yet cold but looking as though she was simply asleep.

“This time you died,” Sam sighed, “Do you have any idea how inconvenient this is? Daniel will be useless, if you were alive I could at least use you to get him to work on everything but no, now I have to do things the hard way.”

Sam left not noticing Carson re-enter the room holding a stolen Andurian short-range transporter, he moved the limp form of Sha’re so he was sitting behind her and wrapping his arms around her activated the transporter carrying them to safety.

Sha’re forced her eyes open, blinking in surprise as Jack stood above her.

“Dan’iel?” she croaked, forcing it past her dry throat.

“I’m sorry,” Jack whispered, resting his hand on her head, “Carter grabbed him and we don’t know where he is. We managed to make you appear as though you were dead so she can’t use you against him,” he turned and looked at someone who was out of her view, “Janet?”

Sha’re closed her eyes again for a moment before realisation struck her and she slowly moved her hand to her stomach.

“Sha’re,” Janet Fraiser appeared above her catching her hand, “You have several stitches I don’t want you to disturb.”

“My baby?” Sha’re’s voice was filled with desperation as tears flooded her brown eyes.

Janet rested her hand on Sha’re’s forehead, “I’m so sorry, Sha’re. The doctor couldn’t save him.”

Sha’re closed her eyes and curled as much as she could into a ball, rocking herself as pain filled her. Arms wrapped around her and Sha’re found Jack was holding her tightly, rocking her as she sobbed for her child.

“You have to rest, sweetheart,” Jack murmured, “You need to get your strength back so that when we get Daniel back...” he trailed off wishing he could help her more.

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Daniel sat in his cell staring at the wall thinking of his wife. He wasn’t sure how long he’d been here, how long it had been since someone he had always thought of as a close friend almost a surrogate sister had destroyed his life.
He remembered the smug smile on her face as she strutted into the cell he’d been thrown into that first day.

“Where’s Sha’re?” he demanded harshly, glaring down at her.

“Oh, Daniel,” Sam shook her head mockingly; “I have some very bad news for you.”

Daniel froze, “Where is she?”

“Right now,” Sam pursed her lips in thought, “The morgue.”

Daniel closed his eyes, he dropped his head into his hands as he recalled the glee in her voice as she told him about his wife’s death. He had once thought Apophis was the only person he could hate but now Sa...Carter was at the top of the list.

Daniel tried to grab the water that was sitting just out of reach where it had been placed deliberately, he stretched towards it and swore as he fell. The device that had been shoved into his spine made it impossible for him to move his legs or walk unless she deactivated it which she only did every few weeks. If she was extremely annoyed at how little progress he was making she would set it so that the signal would keep him awake for days at a time. He would end up exhausted and delusional until she stopped the signal. Carter enjoyed reminding him that she was being nice, switching it off as if she left it running then every two weeks he would experience those hellish few days.

“Danny.”

Daniel looked up in confusion, he had actually slept last night so this couldn’t be the delusions but then again he could have imagined sleeping. Astonishment filled him as the door opened and Jack appeared.

“Hi there,” his friend greeted him.

“Jack?” Daniel whispered, pushing himself up as far as he could.

Jack grinned as he motioned to someone outside; Daniel was astonished as Teal’c came in.

“It is clear for now,” the former First Prime noted.

“Come on, Daniel,” Jack ordered, reaching to help his friend off the floor.

“I can’t,” Daniel told him, “I’m paralysed from the waist down.”

“Bitch,” fell from Jack’s lips before he swapped places with Teal’c.

The larger man crouched down and pulled Daniel over his shoulder in a fireman’s lift, “Are you comfortable, Daniel Jackson?”

“Oh yeah,” sarcasm slipped from his lips without thought, “This works.”

“You’re off the floor and we’re able to move,” Jack reminded him, smiling that at least his friend was still himself, “Don’t knock it.”

Jack checked the hallway and motioned to Teal’c to come, Daniel ended up feeling slightly motion sick as he watched the floor moving as his friend ran with him over his shoulder as though he were
nothing more than jacket. A high-pitched squeal made Jack swear.

“I hoped we’d have a little more time,” Jack murmured, “Alright, T we have to get outside the jamming field now.”

Teal’c started towards the elevators as several guards started coming towards them. Daniel was amazed that Teal’c was able to run faster carrying him.

Jack fired as he entered the elevator and hit the button the lower levels, “T, come on.”

Teal’c frowned as he saw how close they were and knew that it was not going to be possible for them all to escape. He swung round manoeuvring Daniel so that Jack was suddenly holding onto him before he ran towards the guards.

“Dammit,” Jack murmured as the doors closed and the car started its journey downwards.

“Jack?” Daniel asked, gripping his friend as he knew letting go would mean falling to the ground.

“Hold on, Danny,” Jack told him, “Almost there.”

Daniel stared at the watch Jack was holding in confusion but obeyed his friend’s order to place his hand on the face. Bright light surrounded them and Daniel gasped as they were suddenly in a field. Jack tossed the watch to one side and brought out what looked like a simple stone, smooth and with a strange symbol on it Daniel didn’t recognise.

Jack touched the symbol and rings appeared around them taking them to safety.

“Sit,” Janet ordered Sha’re as she paced, “You need to calm down.”

“I cannot,” Sha’re breathed, “What if this goes wrong? What if they are caught? What if...”

“Enough,” Janet cut her off, “You have to trust in Jack and Teal’c. John will contact us the moment they’re at the shuttle.”

Sha’re sighed, “It has been two years, Janet. We have no idea what she has done to him in all that time. If it was not for the information John gave us...”

Janet wrapped the younger woman in her arms and hugged her tightly, “Sha’re,” she soothed, wishing she could find the words to assure the younger woman but Sha’re pulled away looking distressed.

“I am so sorry, Janet,” Sha’re whispered, “I am not the only one who has been hurt by her.”

Janet squeezed Sha’re’s hand, “But we’re at least able to fix this.”

As Janet moved away from her, Sha’re sighed annoyed that she had upset her friend, “Janet?”

“It’s alright, Sha’re,” Janet waved away her friend’s attempt to apologise again, “We know Cassie is safe, that’s all I need.”

“Janet, Sha’re,” John Sheppard’s voice interrupted them; “They’re here. We’ll be in the base soon.”

“We’ll be waiting,” Janet replied, smiling at the relief on Sha’re’s face at the news before getting
“Why?”

“He will more than likely think you’re dead,” Janet reminded her, “I don’t see Carter not telling him.”

“You believe I will be a distraction,” Sha’re noted.

Janet nodded and squeezed the younger woman’s shoulder again as they waited.

Daniel wasn’t precisely sure what was going on but he knew he was safe. They were in what looked like Tok’ra tunnels suddenly and he heard Jack start to talk to someone but all Daniel could do was close his eyes and let out a long sigh of relief as he tried to keep his emotions in check until he was completely alone.

“Danny?”

He opened his eyes to see Jack looking down on him concerned, “Hey,” was all Daniel could manage.

“This is John Sheppard.” Jack introduced him to the man standing waiting, Daniel knew he’d once been military by the way he stood, but he wondered how he got away with his hair like that, “We’ll be in the base soon.”

Daniel nodded, “How?”

Jack smirked and with John’s help they pulled Daniel up to see the shuttle, a smooth cylindrical bullet looking ship.

“Nice,” Daniel murmured, hating that he was being carried around but he knew there was no other way.

It wasn’t huge inside the shuttle but Daniel found that it had enough room for the three of them and possibly a few more. He gripped the bar in front of him as he felt it start to speed through the tunnels.

“Where are we going?” Daniel called.

“Base,” Jack replied, “It’s quite far from the Zombies base.”

“How far is far?” Daniel wondered.

Jack grinned at him, “Just now, France.”

Sha’re forced herself to stay back as the shuttle arrived. She watched as Janet and Carson moved with a gurney the instant the door opened and caught her breath as she had her first glimpse of her husband in two years. He looked pale and drawn, his hair was as long as it had been when they’d first met and stubble marred his thin features. As he was moved to a bed for Janet and Carson to check him, John walked to Sha’re’s side and rested his hand on her shoulder in comfort. Sha’re smiled slightly at the man, he’d only been with them a few weeks but had become one of them so
easily and Sha’re had adopted him as a brother along with Jack, Carson and Teal’c.

“Where is Teal’c?” Sha’re asked softly, not wanting to speak too loudly in case Daniel heard her.

John dropped his head, “He stayed behind so they could get away.”

Sha’re closed her eyes in anguish and remembered Teal’c’s words to her before they left for the rescue attempt.

“O’Neill and Daniel Jackson are needed to save the rest of the Tauri,” he told her, “If need be, I will give my life to protect them.”

Daniel allowed Janet to do whatever tests she needed to do without a word of complaint, just grateful to be somewhere he could close his eyes and not worry if they would be coming to get him soon. He smiled slightly as Janet placed her hand on his forehead recognising the slight frown on her face.

“Tell me,” he sighed.

“The implant in your back,” she said with obvious annoyance, “I don’t want to tamper with it until I know more. We could accidentally do something to make the paralysis permanent.”

“I know,” Daniel replied, he wiped a hand across his eyes as he tried not to let his mind wander to where it was already going but failed.

“Daniel?” Janet asked softly, sensing it wasn’t her news that had upset him.

“Sorry,” he whispered, “I just haven’t been able to grieve properly since Carter told me what she did to...to...” as he trailed off he didn’t see Janet motion someone over to the bed.

“Dan’iel.”

He froze at the soft voice, wondering if he really had lost it and was now hearing voices.

“Look at me,” the gentle voice continued as a hand touched his cheek to turn him to look at the vision standing at his side.

“Sha’re?” he stared at her, his hand automatically reached out to stroke her cheek.

She took a hold of his hand and held it against her skin for several moments as they silently communicated with their eyes.

“I don’t understand,” he breathed, “She told me you were dead.”

“Sorry about that,” Jack’s voice made them look up to him, “We didn’t expect them to grab you from the SGC, Carson was already in place to get you out but when Carter...when she...”

“When she killed the baby,” Sha’re whispered, squeezing Daniel’s hand tighter.

“Carson,” he motioned to the man standing with Janet, “He took the decision to tell her that Sha’re was dead before he got her to us.”

“Thank you,” Daniel whispered, he reached up and pulled his wife down to him, holding her tightly as they both cried in relief at being together once more.
Jack, Janet, Carson and John all moved away from the couple, even though they had lost one of their own they wanted to celebrate their first real victory.
“Ferretti,” Sha’re caught up with the man as he walked through the base.

“Hey, Beautiful,” he smiled at her, “I was just coming to see you. I’m heading back to the Colony but I’ll be back soon to organise this move to Atlantis.”

“Dan’iel told me,” she replied, “He feels that both he and Rodney will be ready in a matter of days.”

“I hope so,” Ferretti replied, “It’s getting more and more dangerous for those who oppose or don’t even openly support the Andurians.”

“It is not just that. We need a safe haven if the human race has any chance to live,” Sha’re reminded him, “This lost city, if we can get there, then we have hope for a future. This may prove a place where people can start having children again so that we can survive.”

Ferretti nodded and quickly hugged her, “Keep them in line and I’ll see you soon.”

Sha’re gently kissed his cheek watching as he headed away from her.


He sighed as two gentle hands started to massage his neck, “You seem stressed, husband.”

Daniel caught his wife’s hand and pulled her round into his lap, resting his head against her shoulder, “I can’t find it, I just can’t get the final symbol and if I don’t then all this planning is for nothing because we’ll be stuck here.”

“Look at me,” Sha’re ordered, lifting his chin up so that their eyes met, “You are brilliant, Dan’iel and you will find the symbol but only if you allow yourself some time to relax.”

“But I can’t relax,” Daniel reminded her, “After that stunt Carter pulled with the explosion at the campus we have to find this or...” he was cut off as his wife kissed him. His arms wound round her pulling her close, Sha’re glanced over to the doorway and smiled as she saw it was covered.

“Dan’iel,” she moaned in his ear, encouraging him to do more.

He lifted her off him and Sha’re found herself laid back on Daniel’s desk with her husband pressed onto her.

Sha’re left her husband’s office half an hour later a self-satisfied smile on her face.

Rodney slouched as he stared at the screen; he needed to find the power requirements that would get them to another galaxy but so far he had nothing. Not that it would matter if Daniel didn’t get the address together. Rodney stared as the readings changed and he looked around the room to see who was there.

“Jeannie,” he yelled, making her jump awake.

“What? I’m up?” Jeannie’s head jerked up from where she was laying on top of the computer.
Rodney motioned her over, “Look at this.”

Jeannie pushed her seat so that she rolled across the floor to her brother’s side, “What is it?”

She glanced at the screen and smiled, “Oh.”

“I’m not imagining it,” Rodney grinned, “We know what we need.”

Jeannie laughed as her brother grabbed her in a tight enthusiastic hug, relief filling both of them that this hurdle had been overcome.

“Now I just need to build something than can create this amount of energy,” Rodney sighed, bringing the celebration to an end.

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Sam fixed the fake sling back on her arm before she called to allow whoever was waiting in to see her.

“Yes, Seth?”

“Dr Carter,” the sharp featured man nodded to her, Sam could almost picture him with ears and whiskers of a rat, “I’ve been trying to see you for days.”

“I was busy and then in an explosion,” Sam reminded him sharply, “The doctors do not agree with me working even now. What have you found?”

“Laura Cadman,” he stated.

“Cadman?” Sam asked, “That’s impossible. She was found dead by Grif and his team six months ago.”

He handed her the pictures he had managed to take watching as she frowned, “Where were these taken?”

“Near the grounds of a group who call themselves the Colony of Peace and Love,” Seth told her.

Sam tapped her fingernail as she thought, “The standard fee will be placed into your account by tonight. Now leave.”

Seth shrugged and left the office but Sam barely noticed. She had thought Cadman was completely under her control, even after she had found McKay in the lower parts of the facility. Cadman’s family lived in one of the Andurian built communities, her older sister teaching in the small school and the moment Sam noted how easy it would be for any of them to have an accident, the younger woman became very compliant.

Sam had been extremely annoyed when she had found the young woman had killed herself, it meant having to recruit and train others. It was less than a week later that Rodney was rescued.

Sam quickly checked the computer for details on this colony, finding very little other than their registration as a farming community. Nothing about them made her even slightly suspicious; then again Cadman may have just used them as a hiding place, it was enough of an excuse to search the grounds.
“Grif,” Sam called over the radio, “Come to my office now, I have a mission for your team.”

Looking down at the pictures, Sam smiled coldly. She may have found another part of the resistance and she had a feeling that if this group were part of the resistance then they held secrets that would help her smash the humans who dared fight against them.

She looked up as Grif knocked then entered the office, as always his face was blank and expressionless which was something Sam still had trouble maintaining after spending so much time around emotional humans.

“You have a mission for us?” he asked.

Sam turned her screen round for him to see – she still used human technology so that they continued to trust in her when they entered her office, “This group may be harbouring a fugitive. I want them questioned, and if they resist at all then destroy them, and bring the survivors back here for questioning.”

Grif nodded, his expression never changing but Sam knew he enjoyed this part of his job.

“I was finally able to work out the address,” Daniel announced at the end of a long, and Jack decided, very unnecessary speech, “We know where we’re going.”

“Excellent, Daniel,” Jack told him, stopping his friend from saying any more, “McKay?”

Rodney stood as Daniel took a seat beside Sha’re, his wife slipping her hand into his as they waited for Rodney to start. John, Janet and Carson were also sitting at the small table.

“The good news is I know the power requirements,” Rodney told them, “And if we use the Gate still in Cheyenne Mountain then I...Jeannie and I have designed a virus that will completely erase our destination.”

“What’s the bad news?” John asked.

Rodney grimaced, “We don’t know how we can get enough power to dial the address.”

“That’s a problem,” Carson noted, without the slightest hint of sarcasm.

“Ya think,” Jack muttered; they sat in silence for several minutes before he spoke again, “Any ideas at all?”

“There’s always that thing you made when you had the Ancients knowledge downloaded into your brain,” Daniel pointed out.

“One, don’t remember how to make it,” Jack replied, “And two, it was ‘accidentally’ destroyed before I left the SGC.”

“What about you?” John turned to Daniel, “You were looking at all the Andurians stuff on finding this place – was there anything in there?”

Daniel shrugged, “I can’t remember, John, you have to understand how much I looked through during those two years and it’s only because I somehow couldn’t be hypnotised that I managed not to give them too much information.”

“It just means you’re not susceptible to suggestion, Daniel” Janet told him, “But then again it could
have been you fighting against it, there might be a way to get you to remember.”

Daniel frowned, “How?”

Everyone at the table all heard the discomfort in his voice at the thought of losing control.

“She’s sitting beside you,” Janet laughed.

“Sha’re?” Daniel asked in amazement.

Janet nodded, “I’m guessing you won’t fight Sha’re guiding your mind to find the information that may help.”

“It’s worth a try,” John said as Jack nodded in agreement.

“Fine,” Daniel grimaced, “We’ll try it but I’m not guaranteeing anything.”

“We will try,” Sha’re laughed at her husband’s worry.

“Colonel,” Siler appeared suddenly, “Major Ferretti is calling for help. The Andurians are attacking the colony.”

“Daniel,” Jack ran along with his friend, “I want you leading the evacuation but do not go up there. Stay underground and co-ordinate from there.”

“I get it,” Daniel told his friend, they reached the shuttle where Sha’re was waiting with the ring controller and a zat.

“Be careful,” was all she said before letting him into the shuttle, Daniel paused for a second to kiss her and then he was gone.

“Ferretti told us he has about a hundred people,” Sha’re reminded Jack as they watched the shuttle leave, John and Janet had left first to start the evacuation.

“That means we’ll need rooms and food for everyone,” Jack wasn’t averse to getting these people here and to safety but it was going to strain their limited resources.

“I think I can do that,” Sha’re mused, “To begin with though it will be better if we keep them together until we can work out family units.”

“Or anyone who could cause trouble,” Jack finished her thought, “Do it.”

Sha’re gave him a quick nod before she disappeared and Jack let out a long sigh, this wasn’t supposed to happen.

“Lou,” Janet called to him as he ushered people into the attic of the main building.

“We’re holding them off,” he called, “But only just.”

“How many more are there to come?” she asked as she sent the next group down to where Daniel was waiting.
“About twenty,” Ferretti replied, “Then we have those fighting. They won’t be able to come till the last second.”

Janet nodded and continued herding people through, frowning as she saw Ferretti disappear, “Where are you going?”

“We stole a few things,” he called back; “We can’t let them have them.”

Janet swore under her breath as he left but she knew she couldn’t go after him, “Daniel, next group is on their way.”

“How many more?” Daniel’s voice sounded over her radio.

“Hopefully not too many,” Janet told him, “Hopefully.”

John looked surprised at Ferretti as he handed him a strange crystalline cylinder and several bags that rattled as they moved.

“Things we’ve managed to get from the Zombies,” Ferretti told him, “These are the ones I think are most valuable.”

John took as much as he could, ducking as a loud explosion sounded overhead. Ferretti ushered him towards the main building carrying several more strange items.

“They’ve breached the perimeter,” someone yelled as gunfire sounded nearby.

“Ferretti,” John yelled as the other man paused, “We have to go.”

“I can’t leave them,” Ferretti snapped.

John swore and pulled him into the main building where they put all the bags and strange items they were carrying into the centre of the transport rings, he moved Janet into it as well.

“If we’re not back in two minutes,” John told her, “Go and get out of here.”

She nodded and gripped the zat she held tighter watching as John and Ferretti sped out of the door to help the final few members of the colony.

The two men took up position just outside the doors to the main building, covering the four men as they retreated while the Andurians moved closer. John saw the slim figure of Laura Cadman dart across the ground and joined the retreating men.

“Cover your ears,” she told them as she pushed the button and the buildings closest to the advancing Andurians exploded. The dust and rubble scattered across the compound giving them cover enough to get inside the building.

Janet motioned them to hurry and the moment they were all huddled in the centre of the rings she hit the button as Laura pushed the control herself to finish destroying the compound.

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“What do you mean?” Sam snapped, “How have they all escaped? How are you so useless that you
have lost yet another threat to us?"

Grif stood silently in her office as she paced in front of him.

“Your incompetence lost us an entire group of people who could very possibly lead us to O’Neill,” she continued, she stopped in front of him, “What do you have to defend yourself with?”

Grif remained silent.

“I’ve already spoken with the council,” Sam told him, “They recommend you return to Anduria for reassignment, something better suited to your skills.”

“I’ll prepare to leave at once,” he turned to leave but cried out and fell to the ground as Sam shot him from behind.

“Reassignment complete,” she murmured. “Tolik,” she called over the radio, “Clean up the rubbish from my office, you’re now head of security.”

With a look of disgust Sam decided to take some time to relax. She opened the drawer to her desk and pulled out a box which held what she called her tools for relaxing. Nodding to Grif’s replacement as he arrived outside her door, Sam activated the door behind her desk and headed down into the recesses of the campus where her prisoner sat.

Teal’c barely acknowledged her presence as she entered the cell; he glanced at her briefly before returning his gaze to the wall.

“I hope the noise a few days ago didn’t disturb you,” Sam said, placing the box on the table, “Only there was a little explosion inside the campus that unfortunately killed about twenty of the students. I believe the count has risen with those injured dying later.”

Teal’c’s dark eyes filled with disgust as he focussed on her.

“It was a rather impressive explosion,” Sam continued as though she were discussing the weather, “And somehow the media think it’s all due to one Jack O’Neill.”

“He would never do such a thing,” Teal’c finally spoke.

“I was beginning to think you weren’t ever going to talk to me,” Sam noted, “Anyway, everyone is now looking for our dear friend as you see I was hurt in the explosion.”

“When you set it?” the harsh question made Sam laugh.

“I see you picked up many of his traits,” Sam said, “Now, I am going to give you another chance to tell me where they are. Because if I find them without your help I will kill them.”

“You will kill them either way,” Teal’c reminded her.

“True,” Sam slid out several sharp metal implements, “But it could be slow and painful or quick and virtually painless.”

Teal’c shook his head, “I will not betray them so do what you are going to do.”

Sam glared at him and picked up what would be described as a screwdriver, she pressed a button and the metal started to glow. Very slowly Sam moved it closer to Teal’c’s chest, the skin starting to burn.
and blister before it was touched. Teal’c gritted his teeth against the pain determined not to give her the satisfaction of crying out in pain.

Sam didn’t mind, just the torture was calming enough.

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Daniel turned as his wife entered the conference room and smiled as she walked over to be held by him. He wrapped his arms around her slim form as she cuddled against his chest.

“Hard day?” Daniel asked, as his fingers slid through her thick locks.

“So many people,” she sighed, not moving from his comforting embrace, “It took such a long time to get them settled.”

Daniel pulled back from her for a second and tilted her face up, seeing the exhaustion in there he very gently kissed her.

“Knock it off,” Jack made them turn as he came in the door, “This is a room for having meetings.”

“We’re having one,” Daniel retorted, “And it’s private.”

Jack rolled his eyes at his friend and grabbed his seat at the end of the table, “Frasier will be here in a few minutes to do this thing. So I’d break up your meeting now.”

“You already did,” Sha’re told him as she took her usual seat, waiting until her husband had sat at her side before she slipped her hand into his.

It was only a few moments when Janet arrived with a pad of paper and a pencil which she sat in front of Daniel before she pulled a seat so that she could sit in front of him.

“Okay, Daniel,” Janet said, “I’m going to try using a relaxation technique to get you into a hypnotic state. Once you’re relaxed enough then Sha’re will take over.”

Daniel nodded and closed his eyes as ordered.

Sha’re moved from her seat to stand behind Janet and watch, listening to the way she spoke as she relaxed Daniel. After a while Janet stood and moved to one side allowing Sha’re to take her seat.

“Can you hear me, my Dan’iel?” Sha’re asked, a little unsure herself about this.

“Yes,” Daniel’s voice was soft, reminding her of when he spoke in his sleep.

“I want you to think back to when you were shown the texts on the Lost City,” Sha’re told him, seeing his stiffen she quickly reassured, “I am here and you are perfectly safe, my husband. If you feel anything but comfortable just open your eyes and you will see me with you.”

Daniel relaxed again at her reassurances and Janet nodded to her.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re continued, “I want you to think back to the texts shown to you concerning the energy requirements for the Stargate to reach Atlantis.”

“That sounds a bit complicated,” Jack murmured to Janet.

“Daniel works with words,” Janet reminded him, “It’s the best way to get things from him. Trust Sha’re, she knows him best.”
Sha’re turned and hushed them with a sharp look.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re said firmly, “Tell me what you see.”

“I...” he hesitated, wincing, “I can see their books. They’re old. Carter is nearby, she...she...”

“Dan’iel, I am here,” Sha’re quickly took his hand, placing it on her cheek to calm him, “Ignore her, she does not exist anymore. All that exists is the text in front of you and me. Now look at what is in front of you. Do you see anything that can help us?”

“Yes,” he breathed, “I can see there should be a power source.”

Sha’re took the pad and pencil, placing them in Daniel’s hands, “Draw it for me.”

All three leaned forward watching Daniel as he drew, at first he was hesitant but very quickly he started to draw with confidence. He finished and Sha’re took both items from him placing them on the table, Jack drew the pad over so he and Janet could see what had been sketched.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re took his hands again, “When I count to...” she paused and turned to Janet who held up her fingers, “three,” Sha’re continued, “You will awaken feeling refreshed. One, two, three.”

Daniel’s eyes opened and he looked hopefully at his wife, “How did I do?”

Sha’re took his face in her hands and quickly kissed him, “Very well, my love. You gave us something.”

Daniel turned to Jack who passed him the pad where in the centre of the page was a drawing of a cylindrical object with several Ancient symbols around it.

“Do you know what it means?” Jack asked.

Daniel grinned, “We’ve got it. Now we just have to find it.”
Chapter 8

Carson sighed as he checked to see how many people he had still to see from the Colony and found it was a lot. There were only two doctors and Janet was busy with Daniel’s hypnosis leaving him to do this alone.

“Carson,” Laura Cadman called as she walked in with another young woman, also a redhead at her side.

“Yes, love,” he smiled warmly at her, “I hope this isn’t an emergency. I’m trying to get through all the medicals of Major Ferretti’s people.”

“Which is why I’m here,” Laura grinned at him, “Meet Jennifer Keller,” she pointed to the woman at her side, “Dr Jennifer Keller. She was the one who patched me up.”

“Another doctor?” Carson asked, astonished at such a welcome blessing.

Jennifer shrugged, “Yep.”

“Welcome,” Carson smiled, he placed an arm on her shoulder, “You can start as soon as you’re ready.”

Laura laughed as Carson mouthed a thank you to her before she left them to continue their work.

Laura headed along the corridors to meet up with John so that they could go over new patrol schedules now they had a few more people that could help. Lost in her own thoughts she didn’t see Rodney until he tapped her on her shoulder.

“Hey,” she smiled; still amazed to see him now walking and acting as though he’d never had the implant.

“Haven’t seen you in a while,” Rodney told her, “Are you avoiding me?”

Laura was a little surprised by his question, “Why would I be avoiding you, Rodney? I just thought you’d be glad not to have me hanging around annoying you all day. Besides since you don’t need me anymore, John has me working on some projects of my own now.”

“Oh,” was all Rodney said.

“I have to go,” Laura told him, “I know you have things to do.”

“Yeah,” Rodney murmured, he hesitated before catching her arm, “I just wanted to say...that...well thank you. For everything you did for me when I was...you know.”

Laura dropped her eyes, “It was...well...” she looked up at him, “I owed you.”

Quickly before he could say any more, Laura left Rodney standing. He watched her leave feeling his stomach turn as he realised she’d only been there for him over the months because she felt guilty.

Starting back to his lab, Rodney was so lost in his own thoughts that he didn’t see the woman walking towards him until he slammed into her.
“Sorry,” he murmured automatically, wanting to get back to his lab as fast as possible so he could lose himself in his work and forget.

“Don’t worry,” the woman smiled at him, “I wasn’t watching where I was going,” she looked at him for a few moments, “You’re Doctor Rodney McKay.”

Rodney frowned, “How do you know that?”

“We used to work together...well not together,” she explained with a shy smile, “But I was one of the botanists in Area 51. I’m Katie Brown.”

Rodney looked at her for a second, red hair, green eyes and pretty, Rodney decided that dwelling on Laura and the pretence of a relationship was stupid so he took her hand, “Nice to meet you, Katie.”

******************************************************************************

Sam saw the man lying on the ground and dropped to check if he was alive or not. Finding a pulse which faded she moved to give him CPR. As he grabbed her, Sam felt something wriggle into her mouth there was sharp pain before blood filled her mouth. She heard the Colonel yelling at her and was soon through the Gate.

Sam walked through the corridors to the locker room feeling strange after her medical exam, as she entered the empty room – now the female locker room- Sam felt something inside her.

Knowledge flooded her brain and she staggered at the weight of it.

“Well,” Sam murmured as she moved to stand in front of a mirror, “A Goa’uld...no wait, you’re Tok’ra.”

Panic came from the creature inside her and confusion that made Sam smile, “How do you know what I am?”

“I am not what you think,” Sam told her, “I didn’t even know until this moment, it’s thanks to you that I know.”

Horror filled the Tok’ra, “No. You cannot be.”

Sam closed her eyes and managed to squeeze the symbiote until it squealed; “Now I need some information.”

Sam watched the Ashrak with amusement, pretending once more to be Jolinar and trumpet the wonder of the Tok’ra cause. The device that it aimed at her was powerful but Sam managed to push it all onto the symbiote, enjoying its cries as it was tortured. As the Ashrak left, Sam pretended to fold to the ground and waited for the medical team to arrive. She could feel Jolinar clinging onto life, desperately trying to hold on so that she could warn the others but Sam was stronger, much stronger now that she knew who she was.

Feeling the Tok’ra die, Sam relaxed back on the bed.

She had always felt out of place and unsure but now...now she knew who she was and where her destiny lay.
“We have been reviewing your progress on the project for reducing their fertility,” Ithin told Sam. She stared at the projection of the Andurian High Commander, “And?”

“And it appears to be ahead of schedule,” he replied, “You have that at least in hand.”

Sam bristled slightly but managed to retain her blank expression, “Now I have removed the incompetent from my ranks we will make more progress in finding O’Neill.”

“You know you should have killed him a long time ago,” Ithin reminded her.

“Unfortunately that would have raised suspicion and hampered our plans for taking over Earth,” Sam replied, “I have several leads on where he and Daniel are now, once I find them then work can begin again on discovery of the Ancient’s Lost City.”

“What about the power source?” Ithin asked, “You had one working on that also.”

“Rodney McKay,” Sam rolled her eyes, “I’m sure he is with O’Neill. We’ll get them both and we will find our way there.”

Ithin nodded, “Continue with your projects. I want the location of the city so we can take what they stole from us.”

“Of course, High Commander,” Sam nodded before scowling as the screen went blank.

Now she had to find the irritants that were screwing with her destiny.

*********************************************

“I know what that is,” John noted as he passed the drawing Daniel had done under hypnosis on to Ferretti.

“Really?” Jack asked, as everyone else stared at John.

“Yes,” Ferretti crowed and punched the air, “I knew it was important.”

“Knew what was important?” Sha’re was the one to ask, as usual she sat at Daniel’s side with Jack on her other side. Rodney and Janet completed the group sitting around the table.

Ferretti grinned at her, “When we raided one of the Zombie’s warehouses not long after I took over the group we came across a whole load of things they’d brought with them. I just knew this,” he tapped the drawing, “Would be important.”

“Does this mean we have it?” Sha’re said hopefully.

Ferretti and John nodded in unison.

Silence descended on the room as they all took in what had just been said.

“I need to study it,” Rodney spoke up, “And work out how to connect it to the Gate but otherwise...”

“We’ve got everything we need,” Daniel finished, a grin spreading across his face, “We’ve got our way to Atlantis.”
Ferretti muttered to himself as he hunted through the items they’d rescued from the Colony, he had always thought what they’d taken was important but it had never crossed his mind that it would be this important.

“Hey,” Jack leaned against the door, “Any luck?”

“I know it’s here,” Ferretti told him, “John put it with everything else, I just have to find...aha.”

He grinned and held up his prize, “Here we go.”

Jack nodded and led him along the corridors to where Rodney and Jennie where waiting for the device.

“You got all this from the Tok’ra?” Ferretti noted as they walked.

Jack nodded, “After we told Daniel what was going on we took a quick detour to where they’d hid a lot of this stuff. Jacob gave me it and showed me how to use it while he went looking for the other Tok’ra.”

“So you and Teal’c set up this group,” Ferretti nodded, he grimaced as he saw the look on Jack’s face, “Sorry.”

“No,” Jack waved his apology away, “We got as many of the SGC as possible who we knew were distrustful of Carter and her new friends then kept recruiting as best we could. It was losing Hammond that forced a lot of them into action. Walter was killed getting us information on several scientists Carter was trying to get a hold of a few months after. When we recruited John he gave us everything we needed to get Daniel back, and T’s last words to me before we started the mission was that he didn’t matter, all that mattered was getting Daniel out.”

Ferretti stared at him, “He sacrificed himself.”

Jack sighed, “That was our Teal’c.”

Ferretti frowned, “You think he’s dead?”

“I think,” Jack replied, “That if he wasn’t, she’d have found a way to gloat.”

When they reached the lab, Rodney was waiting and eagerly but gently took the crystal device from Ferretti. He nodded quickly at the two of them but other than that said nothing and walked over to the equipment he had set up.

“Thank you, Colonel,” Jeannie said for her brother.

Jack grinned at her, “Give me an update in five hours unless you have something before then.”

She nodded and quickly crossed the small room to join her brother.

***********************************************************************

Sha’re sat with a list of everyone they now had within the resistance base, she was trying to see if there was anyone within the base with skills they needed. Now that they had the co-ordinates to Atlantis and a possible power-source then going there was now a more reachable goal Sha’re had volunteered to go over what Jack jokingly called the passenger manifest.

Her computer skills had grown quickly over the years she’d been on Earth, especially in the creation of the database of all their people – although it was Rodney who created what he termed a kill
switch. Jack had started her on it as a diversion to the despair she’d felt at Daniel’s incarceration and the loss of her child.

Recently thought she had been given names and brief description of skills by Ferretti and now she had to go through each so that if...when, she reminded herself, when they reached their new base everyone was utilised to the best of their ability.

“Hey,” John appeared at her side.

“Is something wrong?” Sha’re asked, knowing he was meant to be working with Jack concerning their plan.

“I wanted to check out some of the names of the new guys,” he told her, “We need more people with weapons training of any kind.”

“Let me check,” Sha’re told him, starting a new search in the database. “I have a few,” she told him, quickly printing out the list and handing it to him, “All of those we were told had some kind of military or weapons training.”

John grinned at her, “Thanks,” he threw over his shoulder before disappearing leaving her to work again.

Daniel finished going over his notes, just making sure he was right before heading through the corridors – avoiding the kids running past him so he could get to his meeting with Jack. As he walked to the room Jack had claimed as an office, he passed by his wife’s small office and stopped for a moment to watch her work. Her dark brown eyes were focussed intently on the screen in front of her, her fingers tapped across the keyboard while every so often she pushed a stray curl away from her eyes making him smile.

She didn’t realise how often he did this, just watch her engrossed in her own projects but after everything that had happened to them it made him thankful for what he had. After a few moments he slipped away and entered Jack’s office.

“Danny,” Jack grinned when he saw him, “Actually on time for once.”

“You’re a riot, Jack,” Daniel threw back as he dropped into the seat across from his friend.

Jack smiled briefly before becoming serious, “I wanted to go over this with you before taking it to the rest of them.”

Daniel nodded, “Sure.”

Jack took a deep breath, he hated being in charge and missed Hammond but he had no choice.

“There are two possibilities for doing this,” Jack stated, “The Gate in Washington...”

“Too open,” Daniel instantly noted, “No way to get in and out without being seen with too high a possibility of casualties.”

“Exactly,” Jack smiled at Daniel’s knowledge, “Or home sweet home.”

“Cheyenne Mountain,” Daniel nodded.

“Best thing is, it’s been sealed off as one of the Zombies main bases,” Jack told him, “We know the
layout and it’s underground.”

Daniel nodded.

“The plan, so far,” Jack continued, “Is we make the tunnels so that they intersect with the base. McKay will have a way to connect our power source to the Gate...”

Daniel listened intently as his friend explained his plan, Jack finished finally and waited.

“What?”

“There is one major flaw in your plan, Jack,” Daniel noted.

“Which is?” Jack asked, knowing exactly what his friend was about to say.

Daniel grimaced, “We’ll need the codes for the computer and the only way we can get them is...”

“In Carter’s office in the ‘Educational Complex’,” Jack finished for him, “I know. That’ll be my job.”

“Jack...”

“Daniel.”

“You can’t,” Daniel snapped, “We need you, you’re our leader.”

Jack reached out and squeezed his friend’s shoulder, “That’s why I have to do it. Besides there’s someone else much more suited to leading than me.”

Daniel stared at him in horror, “Not me.”

“Hell no,” Jack laughed, “But you are married to her.”

“Sha’re?”

“She was raised to lead, Daniel,” Jack reminded him, “Not to mention it’s due to her we have half the people here. All she needs is advisors to help her which is where you, John and Ferretti come in.”

“Jack...”

“You have to trust me, Daniel,” Jack cut him off; “I have a few tricks up my sleeve that I haven’t told any of you about. Besides this isn’t something I can ask someone else to do.”

Daniel nodded, “I guess.”

Jack took a deep breath, “Hopefully McKay will have something for us soon and we can actually do more than talk about this.”

Daniel nodded again absently, trying to think of another way to get the codes because losing Jack would be something he didn’t want to happen.
Jack glanced around the room as he entered to explain the plan to them. As usual Daniel and Sha’re sat together, they were talking quietly and Jack smiled slightly as he saw his friend sneak a quick kiss from his wife. Janet and Carson were at the couple’s side discussing what Jack assumed was something medical, next to them was Rodney, John, Laura and Jeannie before Ferretti and his own second-in-command, Lorne completed the group.

They were all sitting, waiting for Jack to explain the plan and to give their own input into it. Jack took his seat and waited until everyone finished their conversations.

“Okay,” Jack stated, “We’ll have to tell everyone what is going to happen but for now we are the ones who have to set it up so here it is. Rodney, you’re confident you can set up the...what did you start calling it?”


“ZPM,” Jack nodded, “So?”

“With Siler we’ve got a way to connect it to the Gate’s power relays,” Rodney told him, “Our problem is we don’t want to leave it behind but there’s no way to take it with us. We’ll have to destroy it.”

“Which is where I come in,” Laura noted; “We fix an explosive charge to the Zero...ZPM and boom.”

“But we’ll need it until the last person goes through,” Daniel reminded her.

“Easy,” Laura told him, “Last person to go through hits the button and starts a timer.”

“Good,” Jack nodded, “Okay, getting everyone through?”

“We are in contact with several other resistance groups,” Sha’re spoke up, “I believe Louis knows of a few more. We should be taking those people with us if they wish to come.”

“That could be hard getting in touch with them all,” John noted.

Sha’re shook her head, “We keep in contact with them as we move near each one. It allows us to know what the state of the place above us is, it will be easy enough to speak with them and bring them here.”

“That could be a lot of people,” Ferretti reminded her.

“We can make the room,” Sha’re told him pointedly, “We cannot deny the possibility of safety to others.”

“She’s right,” Jack noted before turning to the young woman at his side, “Can you handle it?”

Sha’re nodded, “I know all our contacts but I shall need some help evacuating them here.”

“I’ll help,” John told her, “I’m useless until we get to the actual fighting.”

“Lorne will pitch in too,” Ferretti nominated the man at his side who rolled his eyes.
Sha’re smiled, “Thank you. We will start as soon as the meeting is over.”

“As for the meeting,” Daniel said, “How about we get to the actual plan, Jack.”

Jack heard the sharpness in his friend’s voice and winced but took a deep breath and launched into the plan.

Silence filled the room.

“Jack,” Sha’re started but stopped speaking as Daniel shook his head.

“You don’t have to do it,” Ferretti spoke up, “I will.”

“Or I’ll do it,” John added.

“Look,” Jack held up his hand to stop them all, “Daniel and I have already gone over this, several times, “The only place we can get those codes is her office. We have the cloak that can get me in without being seen.”

“What about getting out?” Janet said; her voice wavered slightly.

Jack shrugged, “I have a plan.”

“Are you going to share?” Janet demanded.

“No,” Jack replied, his voice brooked absolutely no argument from any of them.

“Allright,” Sha’re broke the uneasy silence that settled in the room, “We all have a great deal of work to do. Since our aim is to leave next week then we have to ensure that we are ready to.” As no one moved, Sha’re stood and folded her arms across her chest, “Now.”

*********************************************

Janet went through her supplies recording everything for Sha’re’s accounts. Glancing over to where the young doctor was fixing a cut knee of one of the little girls that had come with Ferretti and his people. Like Carson she was relieved to have another pair of hands to help with the work. As much as she wanted them to go to Atlantis and safety, she didn’t want to leave Cassie here. She stopped working for a moment as she thought of the day she lost her daughter to the woman she had thought of as her best friend.

Janet took several shaky breaths as she walked quickly through the streets; her car had been surrounded by police, so she had to walk to Jack’s house and hope there was no police waiting there.

Walking quickly through Jack’s neighbourhood, relief filled her as she saw one light on and no other cars in the driveway. Whispering a quick wish she knocked, when no one appeared she knocked again and continued to until Jack opened the door.

“Doc?” was all he managed to say as she wrapped her arms around him.

Jack drew her inside and locked the door. Sitting the upset woman down, he pulled a chair over so
he was facing her.

“What happened?”

Janet licked her lips, “They think I hurt Cassie.”

“How?” Jack gasped in horror.

“She’s...she’s in hospital,” Janet told him, “She was beaten so badly and the doctor said she told them I did it.”

Jack shook his head, gently rubbing Janet’s arm as she finally let go and started to cry for her daughter.

“Sam was there,” Janet breathed, “She said she wouldn’t cover for me anymore, she...she...you were right, Colonel.”

“Damn,” Jack murmured, he’d hoped whatever was happening with Carter wouldn’t affect Cassie and Janet.

Seeing how distressed Janet was he pulled her into a tight embrace, rocking her as she cried for her daughter.

“Look,” Jack said after a while, “I know this is hard but I can’t do anything now. I’ve been forced to retire but Hammond is going to send Jacob to see me the moment he arrives. Until then, you’ll have to stay hidden here.”

“Janet?”

Janet jumped and dropped the clipboard in her hand as Sha’re looked at her worried. They both crouched down to retrieve the fallen item, Sha’re still held the look of concern.

“Are you ill?” Sha’re’s concerned voice made Janet sigh.

“No,” Janet shook her head, “I’m just thinking about Cassie and that I have to leave her.”

Sha’re reached out and took the other woman’s hand, “We know Cassandra is safe and she is studying to be a teacher. There is no way we could retrieve her and even if we could...”

“I know,” Janet whispered, “Sha’re, I was just having one of those moments.”

Sha’re nodded in understanding.

“I’m almost finished with this,” Janet stepped back and became professional again.

Sha’re nodded, “Good. Until we leave, try and ensure you keep a note of everything that is used.”

Janet gave her a firm nod and smiled slightly to herself as she watched Sha’re leave, Jack was right about her.

********************************************************************

Jeannie sat staring at the computer in front of her waiting for the programme to finish and wondering where life had taken such a bizarre twist.
“Hey,” John said at her side making her jump a little.

“Hi,” she gave him a slight smile, a little confused as to why he was here when Rodney usually chased him out for annoying them.

“Since we’re moving,” John said as he pulled over another chair, “And you sort of got grabbed without any notice...”

As he trailed off, Jeannie looked at him confused, “What?”

“I sent someone to your old apartment,” John explained, starting to look a little embarrassed, “We got you some stuff we thought you might want. It’s in Rodney’s room for now.”

Jeannie stared at him, she’d been wearing clothes from what Janet called the closet, “That’s so nice of you.”

John shrugged looking embarrassed, “I did kidnap you. I thought I owed you.”

At his apologetic uncomfortable face, Jeannie laughed and impulsively kissed his cheek.

“Thank you.”

John stood up and gave her one of his ‘nothing bothers me’ grins, “I’ve got to go; we’re meeting with the first group soon. Sha’re has no patience with people who are late.”

Jeannie looked up as her brother called her name; he was motioning her over to look at something. Life was strange these days, for starters she had never ever seen herself working so closely with her brother. She wasn’t sure how she felt about this move to Atlantis, leaving Earth was something a few months ago she never would have considered – she’d never even gone through the Stargate to one of the tourist planets. Now they would be going to a new galaxy where they had no idea what was waiting for them. She’d stood listening to Jack’s announcement and had an overwhelming urge to put her hand up when he asked if anyone wanted to stay but she also knew there was no way she’d be safe if she stayed here.

At least joining the insane trip through the Gate she would be with her brother - they’d become closer in the past few months than they’d ever been, she’d made friends with some of the others here and she’d get to see John. He would never see her as anything more than Rodney’s sister and maybe a friend but he was the first guy since Caleb she’d looked at, she didn’t want to lose that.

John walked through the corridors to join Lorne and Sha’re at the transport, “So,” he grinned when he arrived, “Where to first?”

“We are going to see Radek first,” Sha’re told him, “He works with us a great deal of the time so explaining this to his people will be easier than to those I do not know as well.”

John nodded in understanding, Sha’re was extremely eloquent and commanding but she always seemed anxious when talking to people she didn’t know. John took this as a left-over from her possession or possibly from the fact she grew up somewhere she knew almost everyone.

“Okay,” John tapped the control panel opening the door, “Our chariot awaits.”
Sha’re smiled and entered the shuttle, taking a seat and waiting for the other two to join her. Lorne looked a little stunned as the small vessel sped through the tunnels towards its destination as John and Sha’re sat indifferently – both had a great deal of experience using this particular method of transport.

It was barely fifteen minutes when they reached their destination and John stopped Sha’re so he could exit first. He relaxed when Radek Zelenka stood grinning at him.

“Welcome to Germany,” Radek greeted them, “Everyone is waiting for you.”

Sha’re licked her lips slightly before nodding, “Good, we have very little time.”

Radek nodded and motioned her to follow him, Sha’re glanced at John who gave her an encouraging smile before she raised her head proudly starting forward with John and Lorne at either side, her silent bodyguards.

The mood of the base was sombre as everyone took in the announcement Jack had made earlier in the day. Daniel, Jack and Ferretti spent most of their day organising how they were going to carry out their plan. Janet, Carson and Jennifer spent their day getting the infirmary ready to move while Rodney, Laura and Jeannie worked on their part of the plan. Those not directly involved in the planning were packing up equipment, supplies and any personal items they could carry.

Sha’re sighed in relief when they finally arrived back in the base, they had visited every one of the groups they knew and she’d given the same speech to all of them. She walked through the corridors with John at her side; Lorne was delivering some of Radek’s work he’d sent to Rodney. John took the turn and headed for the infirmary with some information for Janet and Carson while Sha’re walked on alone.

Reaching the small office Jack used, Sha’re smiled as to find just Jack and Daniel sitting talking. She took the one spare seat and the water offered by her husband.

“So?” Jack asked, looking expectant.

“Most agreed to come with us,” Sha’re told them sipping the water, “I gave very little actual information on where we were going or how we were getting there. It did not please many of them but thankfully John and Evan managed to remind them that we had a great need for secrecy.”

“Good job,” Jack told her with a smile.

“They’re waiting for our signal to start the evacuation,” Sha’re continued, “They are also sending me lists of their supplies to add to our own. There are a few more medically trained staff amongst those but none as qualified as Janet or Carson. Also we have more who were once military who I know we will need.”

Jack grinned, “Excellent. Go get some sleep, honey – you look like you need it.”

“You both need to sleep too,” Sha’re told them, “Make sure you do.”

She leaned over and gently kissed her husband before at Jack’s mock look of hurt she kissed his cheek.

“Goodnight,” she smiled, leaving them alone again.
Janet saw John wander into the makeshift infirmary hoping nothing had happened while they were speaking to the other groups to warrant medical assistance. She liked John Sheppard, in some ways he was like Jack hiding behind his unflappable easiness but she knew underneath was someone who had lost just as much as all of them.

“What can I do for you?” Janet asked as he strolled over to her, “There are no visible injuries.”

He gave a short laugh before reaching into his pocket and pulling out a small photograph, Janet stared at it in confusion. Slowly she reached out and gasped as she saw the smiling face looking back at her, “Cassie.”

“One of the groups we went to see had a new guy,” John told her, “He used to teach at your daughter’s school and became a bit too interested in some things the Zombies were up to. He had a few of the yearbooks and when Sha’re saw the picture of Cassie he happily gave us it for you.”

Janet bit her lip trying not to cry as she stared at the teenager looking back at her, “She looks happy.”

“Looks can be deceiving,” John reminded her.

“Thank you, John,” Janet whispered, wiping her eyes, “Thank you.”
Sha’re lay with her back against Daniel’s chest as he sat against the wall, she sighed softly as his hands gently massaged her shoulders while they waited. Closing her eyes she listened to his deep breathing and enjoyed the solitude they had for the moment. The base had been collapsed and all that was left now was the large hall where everyone was waiting for the signal to go as well as a few small rooms like this that a few of the others were finishing their packing. Last night had seen the influx of the other resistance groups so they could execute their plan to go to Atlantis. Soon everything would change and Sha’re knew that today they may very well lose everything.

Daniel kissed the top of her head and his hands moved to clasp hers, “It’s almost time.”

“I know,” Sha’re pulled his arms around her, “I just...”

“Me too,” Daniel murmured in her ear.

Sha’re moved away and stood up, looking around what had once been their room as Daniel stood up and turned her so he could hold her.

“You know why you have to be the one of the first through,” Daniel said, remembering the argument they’d had over this, “Don’t you?”

Sha’re sighed, “No. But I gave you my promise that I would, Dan’iel so I shall.”

“I love you so much,” Daniel took her face in his hands, “You are my world and I know we won’t get to talk once everything starts. I just need you to know I love you.”

“I know,” Sha’re kissed her husband, closing her eyes as he held her close to him, “And I love you,” she breathed before stepping back.

With a sigh she grabbed her bag and started out of the room.

“Sha’re,” Daniel called her back, “We still have a few minutes.”

“And I can’t say goodbye any longer,” she whispered, Sha’re kissed him once more, “Be careful, my Dan’iel. I expect you to be with me tonight.”

Jeannie finished putting the last few items in her bag; she’d spent most of the night with her brother putting the finishing touches to the computer virus they were going to use and both of them were just now getting to their packing.

“You ready?” Rodney asked; his bag on his back as he held his laptop under his arm.

“Yeah, Mer,” Jeannie gave him a small smile, “As ever I will be.”

Rodney looked as though he was about to say something but he stopped as she gave him a wry smile.

“Don’t strain yourself trying to think of something encouraging to say, Mer,” Jeannie laughed slightly, “We have to go and join the rest of them.”

“Jeannie,” Rodney stopped her, “I’m glad you’re coming. I didn’t want to cut you out of my life but
I didn’t want to put you in danger. When Mom died I wanted to go to the funeral but...and when you’re fiancé...”

“Mer,” Jeannie whispered as he trailed off, “I know. I understand now and you have nothing to apologise for. We have a lot to do today, Mer so we should go.”

At her decisive tone he nodded but smiled at his little sister, “I guess we just proved Dad right about how good we’d be working together.”

Jeannie laughed and stared out, turning shocked as he caught her shoulder, “What’s wrong?”

“Be careful,” Rodney told her, “As soon as you’re told to go through, do it. The longer we’re in the SGC the more dangerous it will become. Promise me you’ll go through the instant you can?”

“And what about you, Mer?” Jeannie whispered fearfully.

He gave a slight shrug, “Laura will be with me, she’ll keep me safe.”

Jeannie reached out and took his hand, squeezing it tightly, “Then I’ll hold her to that.”

Jack stood at the entrance to the shuttle to go to the Campus so he could do his part in this insane plan they were about to enact. He didn’t want to do this, he knew he was probably doing the dumbest thing in the world but he didn’t have any choice, they needed those codes and he couldn’t send anyone else to get them.

“Here,” John Sheppard arrived and handed him the cloaking device he had used when sneaking around the Educational facility the day he’d found Jeannie, “It will get you in undetected but I can’t guarantee what will happen once you’re there.”

Jack nodded and attached it to his arm with the Velcro strap, “You’re not taking my place, John,” Jack pre-empted, “I have to do this and as I’ve said about a dozen times, I have a plan to get out.”

“And if you don’t?” John asked; his face was as blank as Jack’s.

“Then you have to continue to advise,” Jack told him, “Ferretti’s good and I’ve known him a long time but Sha’re knows you better and she trusts you. So don’t let her down.”

John nodded and the two men shook hands grimly.

“I’ll see you soon, Colonel,” John told him.

Jack nodded and watched as John left to get ready himself to head to Atlantis.

Over the next ten minutes all of those referred to as the ‘Senior Staff’ appeared to talk to Jack and remind him to make sure he got out of the Educational complex. All except the two Jack was least looking forward to talking to.

As Janet hugged him tightly, Jack wanted to just give up and go with them but they needed these codes otherwise this whole operation would be ended before it began.

“Come back to us, Jack,” Janet ordered, “We need you.”
“It’ll be less annoying without me,” Jack forced a grin onto his face.

“But not as interesting,” Janet replied sadly, she took a deep breath and placed a gentle kiss on Jack’s lips, “You’re our strength, Jack. You’re the one that’s kept us together all these years so don’t think you’re getting out of it now.”

Before Jack could reply she turned and left him standing on his own once more. Checking his watch he knew he had to go very soon but didn’t want to leave before he’d talked to them.

“Cutting it a bit close,” Daniel said making Jack turn to see the young couple walking to him.

Jack grimaced, “As usual you don’t stick to everyone else’s schedule.”

As Daniel laughed, Sha’re moved and wrapped her arms around Jack in a tight embrace. Jack held onto her, the young woman he’d taken in as a sister and in some ways forced to take responsibility for so much of the resistance so she wouldn’t wallow in the newest separation from her husband and loss of her child.

“Be careful,” Sha’re ordered him.

“I’ll try,” Jack gave her a smile before letting her go and turning to Daniel, “So?”

“So?” Daniel echoed before they moved and hugged each other.

Jack stepped back and smiled at them, without a word he stepped into the shuttle.

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Daniel gripped the zat gun he held tightly as he used the Tok’ra crystals to create an entrance into Cheyenne Mountain. Daniel was relieved that there would be no humans in the mountain; once the Stargate had become public knowledge the base had become the Andurians while the secondary Stargate had been moved to Washington and into a large building so that everyone could use it.

“Ready?” he whispered back to John, Rodney, Laura and Siler.

They nodded and the instant the tunnel opened into the surface they took out any Andurians that came close. The one good thing about the crystals was that they managed to bypass all the lower levels so they were only meters from the control room. Daniel led them through the corridors, taking out any Zombies they came across. The moment they arrived, Daniel set up the shield to stop anything transporting into the mountain.

“Go,” he told Rodney, “Get it set up, Jack will send us the codes in a few minutes. We need to be ready to start the evacuation straight away.”

Rodney nodded, with Laura and Siler he disappeared through the corridors to set up the ZPM link.

Daniel glanced over at John who was guarding the door before turning back to the Gate, “Come on, Jack.”

Jack moved silently through the corridors of the Educational Facility, the last time he’d been here was to rescue Daniel and he’d lost one of his closest friends in the process. He knew Teal’c had to be dead but he was almost sure Carter would have found some way to gloat but then again he didn’t know her these days.
He froze almost every time someone moved past him but checking his watch he realised he’d have to hurry up if he was going to send Daniel the codes by the time they’d agreed on. Finding her office, Jack used the door code stolen by John the last time he’d been here to get inside. Hurriedly he got into the system and found the information he was looking for quite quickly.

“Danny,” Jack whispered over the link, “I’m sending the codes.”

There was a slight pause before Daniel replied, “I’ve got them. Now get out.”

Jack took in a deep breath and slipped his hand into his pocket making sure for the hundredth time that his get-away plan was still there. He just needed the time to use it.

Laura glanced over to Rodney and Siler as they set up the ZPM, she’d already set up the explosives and was watching the corridor for any Andurians that came by.

“Cadman,” Ferretti appeared, “Need you up a few levels, Evan will take over here.”

Laura frowned, she didn’t like the idea of leaving Rodney but if she had to. She moved over to him and touched his shoulder.

“You better make it through,” she murmured in his ear.

Rodney spared a moment to glance back at her, “You too.”

With a nod to Siler Laura followed the former leader of SG2 out and along the corridors. They’d been lucky so far; Laura just hoped that luck held out.

Daniel quickly entered the codes for the computer and started working on entering the Gate address.

“Jeannie,” he called over the radio, “I need you here to upload the virus.”

While he was waiting Daniel made sure that he connected the explosives Laura had left with him in the most strategic places. He didn’t want to do this but they had to make sure they had a completely clean getaway.

“What do you need?” Sha’re’s voice made him turn.

Daniel saw her standing holding a zat ushering Jeannie to her seat, she raised an eyebrow challenging him to say anything.

“Dialling the Gate,” Daniel turned to the controls, “Ferretti?”

“The MALP’s ready,” Ferretti reported, appearing in the Gateroom with the mechanical explorer behind him. As Daniel nodded, the robot was sent through the Stargate in the hopes that this was not all for nothing.”

They waited; the only sound was Jeannie tapping the controls as she set up the virus. Finally the MALP transmitted and Daniel grinned.

“It’s clear and looks incredibly intact,” he told Sha’re and Ferretti, “It’s time.”

Ferretti nodded, “I’ll get everyone moving.”
Daniel touched his radio, “Rodney, John, time to start moving. It’s clear.”

John shifted his pack on his back and turned to see Rodney jogging towards him, “Ready?”

“As I will be,” Rodney murmured, “Where’s Jeannie?”

“With Daniel,” John told him, “And we’ve got to go now so we can start the evacuation.”

Rodney nodded and turned to Siler, “Are we ready?”

Siler finished setting the explosives around the door and sighed, “I spent so many years fixing everything in this place.”

“Only fitting you get to take it apart,” John told him.

Siler grinned, “Alright, step back and cover your ears.”

Rodney winced as the small explosion covered the door to the ZPM with rubble making it impossible to enter the room without clearing away the debris. With only a quick look back the three men started towards the control room.

John instantly noted Jeannie was sitting at the computer while Daniel was standing in the corner looking pale, Sha’re was in the Gateroom co-ordinating the shuttles going through to their new home.

“The last one is through,” Sha’re reported, her face was blank as Daniel’s, “It’s time to start sending people.”

Daniel nodded to her before turning to the others, “John, Rodney, you guys are going now. Jeannie, finish up and go.”

John caught Daniel’s eye for a second and knew all he needed from the dull look in the light blue eyes, Daniel dropped his gaze before he turned to where Sha’re stood. John motioned Jeannie and Rodney on, joining the Abydonian woman in the Gateroom as she picked up her own pack. John watched as Sha’re turned to where Daniel stood and mouthed that she loved him. John watched Daniel reply in kind before he turned and took the first step onto the ramp. Taking a deep breath, John stepped into the wormhole and headed to their new home.

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Jack found the information they needed and sent it to Daniel just before he heard the door open. He knew this was going to happen and had prepared himself.

“Well,” her voice came, smug and amused, “You are the last person I expected to see here.”

Jack turned and fixed a cold glare on her, “Carter.”

Sam smiled as she walked around him, “I never thought I’d get to do this, Jack. You’re disappearance was done well.”

He continued to stand silently as she returned to face him.

“What?” Sam gave a mock gasp, “No smart remark or witty retort from the ever amusing Colonel Jack O’Neill?”
“You’re not worth it,” Jack replied.

Rage filled her eyes, she turned and opened the secret entrance, “Move” she ordered Jack who shrugged as he started forward; “I’m assuming Daniel is listening in.”

Jack shrugged again.

They continued through grey corridors that Jack couldn’t help but think were the same as the SGC. Finally they reached a room and the door slid open, Jack was shoved in and two guards took up position at the door.

Sam smiled as she walked to the table that sat at the far end and picked up a knife, it had a gold handle with several precious gems set in it, “Do you know what this is?”

“Is that a trick question?”

Sam laughed, “I’m sure Sha’re and Sara would recognise it, if they’d survived.”

Anger filled Jack but he held himself still, not wanting to give her the satisfaction as she admired the weapon.

“You know Sara screamed and called your name before she died,” Sam told him, “Such a messy death, she cried and moaned for quite a while begging me not to kill her. It was really pathetic.”

Jack felt his control wavering and clenched his fists to keep himself still as she taunted him.

“Sha’re however simply let out a whimper,” Sam mused, “Her hand pressed across the wound as though it could save the baby. Daniel was much more vocal when I told him she was dead – called me a lot of names, most I didn’t even understand. It would have been so much easier for him if Teal’c had actually killed her that day instead of just shooting her shoulder. Speaking of...”

She turned and Jack felt relief fill him as Teal’c was marched in, several guards on either side of him.

“T,” Jack greeted him as normal, “How you doing?”

“The usual, O’Neill,” he replied with a slight nod of his head.

“Oh the witty banter,” Sam sighed mockingly, “Teal’c, I promised you that you would have a front row seat for their execution,” she gripped the knife and slammed it into Jack’s heart annoyed as he only grunted, “I keep my promises.”

“O’Neill!!” Teal’c cried, he pushed forward away from the guards holding him and caught Jack as he fell to the ground.

Sam held the knife and watched the blood slowly drip off it as she watched the life of the great Jack O’Neill slowly slip away.
Chapter 11

Sam smiled; she’d finally managed to get him. Now all she needed was Daniel and Rodney in her possession once more so she could find her way to the Ancients home, bringing the Andurians to their rightful place in the Universe.

Teal’c cradled Jack with one arm, his large hand pressed to the wound in the stricken man’s chest as he spoke softly. Jack lay with one hand in his pocket, his brown eyes half-open but managing to look cocky as always.

“Dr Carter,” one of the Andurians called urgently from outside.

Sam turned and headed outside to find out what was going on leaving Teal’c alone with his dying friend.

Jack looked up at his friend, “Stick with me, T. Just stick around for a while.”

As his words slurred, the life draining from him Jack winked at Teal’c.

“What’s wrong?” Sam demanded of Tolik as he ran over to her.

“They have attacked Cheyenne Mountain,” her head of security reported, “We are unable to transport in. Your orders?”

Sam frowned, “Take it back,” she turned to go and watch her former colleague in his final act, “Wait,” she stopped him, “I’m coming too. Daniel will be there and I intend to retrieve the knowledge he possesses.”

Tolik nodded and Sam turned to the guards outside, “Leave them. Let Teal’c watch O’Neill die and have to stay with him until I return.”

They nodded in unison and locked the door. Sam headed to get what she needed; it was time to end this once and for all.

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Daniel watched his wife as she stepped through the Stargate, Sha’re hesitated for a moment glancing back at him before her chin firmed and she stepped through. Daniel felt relief fill him that she was off Earth and with someone he trusted to care for her, meaning he could finish this.

He heard Sam attack his friend, could still hear Teal’c talking softly to the dying man while Daniel couldn’t help either of them. He watched the evacuation and picking up the remote control for the explosives, Daniel left the control room to get the remainder of the civilians through the Gate before those who had volunteered as guards were able to join them.

“Daniel,” Ferretti yelled in his ear suddenly, “We’ve got problems.”

“Define problems?” Daniel snapped, he picked up a young girl who was struggling to keep up with the crowds and handed her to one of the scientists he knew. The man nodded and held onto the child as he ran through the Stargate.

“Carter has arrived with the Zombies,” Ferretti reported, “We’re holding them back as best we can
“Understood,” Daniel replied, “Pull back to the Gateroom; we’ve almost got everyone through and I don’t want to lose any more people.”

“Jack?” Ferretti asked.

“Just do it,” Daniel ordered before changing radio channels, “Cadman, get to the Gateroom now. I need the remote you set up.”

“I’m a little busy,” Laura yelled back, Daniel could hear gunfire in the background.

Daniel frowned, wanting to help but he had to stay here, “We need to be able to set off the bombs remotely. If they get that...”

“I know, Daniel,” Laura replied, “I’m coming as fast as I can.”

Laura dropped back behind the wall along with Pearson, he’d come from the group that Zelenka had been in charge of. The older man was an experienced veteran who had instantly volunteered to fight so others could escape.

“Daniel needs me back in the Gateroom,” she whispered to him, “We have to get through them.”

Pearson nodded, “On my count, we run.”

Laura took a deep breath and gripped her zat gun tightly; they weren’t using anything with bullets to conserve their supply for their new home but Laura actually preferred these things. They were lighter and you didn’t end up feeling like someone was pounding on your arm every time you fired it.

“One,” Pearson’s voice broke her out of her thoughts, “Two...”

“Three,” Laura finished and jumped up.

They started firing and Pearson stepped in front of her so that Laura could get through the door.

“Come on,” she called to him.

Pearson continued to fire as they moved closer to the elevator, Laura fired as he moved closer caught out when Pearson shoved her into it just before the doors closed.

“Pearson,” she yelled through the doors, “Pearson!!!”

Laura gasped as she heard a thump before a small stream of blood trickled into the elevator. The moment she reached the floor with the Gateroom, Laura attached some C4 to the back of the elevator and ran along the corridor before she hit the button. The ground around her shook as debris fell and dust clogged the air.

Shaking slightly, both at the near miss and losing Pearson who she’d come to respect in such a short time, Laura ran to join Daniel.

Daniel looked up to see Laura push her way through the last few people heading up the ramp.
“I lost Pearson,” she told him sadly, “but I blocked them following me.”

“Good,” Daniel took the remote she carried and connected it to the one he carried for the virus as Rodney had shown him.

“Who are we waiting for?” Laura asked.

“Feretti and Lorne with about five of their guys,” Daniel told her, “Then I’ll be the last one through.”

Laura nodded, knowing better than to argue with him on this, “I’ll wait with you.”

“No,” Daniel told her, “You go through now and tell them we’re coming.”

Laura frowned but finally she started forward, “You better make it. Sha’re will not be happy with you otherwise.”

“I’ll be there,” Daniel smiled slightly.

“You’d better,” Laura told him as she ran up the ramp and through the wormhole.”

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The first thing Sha’re noticed about the city was the strange taste of the air, followed by the lights coming on.

“Who’s doing that?” John murmured as he flanked her right side, Rodney on her left while Jeannie was at his other side.

“The city must be sensing our presence,” Rodney noted as they moved up the stairs to what appeared to be a control centre.

Sha’re glanced around and saw the start of the influx of refugees, “No one is to leave this room,” she ordered, “Not until we’ve determined it is safe.”

John nodded, “Yes ma’am,” before he jogged back down the stairs to keep the traffic flowing and the Gate clear of people.

Rodney wanted to dance at how incredible this place was, he could see Jeannie with a look on her face that he knew mirrored his as they looked at the control systems in front of them.

“Rodney,” Sha’re’s soft voice made him turn, “Start working on this. I want to ensure that the city is safe before we start moving people out of this...Gateroom.”

Rodney nodded, quickly he and Jeannie found a way to connect their laptops and together they accessed the most amazing discovery they could ever make.

“Mer,” his sister’s voice brought him out of his amazement.

“What’s wrong?” he moved to her side.

“Look at this,” Jeannie turned the laptop so he could see. Rodney stared at the screen, “Oh crap.”
“That about describes it,” Jeannie noted, she glanced over to where Sha’re had found an office, 
“We’d better tell her.”

Rodney sighed, “I’ll do it. You keep working.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes but didn’t say a word as her brother slipped away from her. He walked across 
the small walkway to where Sha’re stood looking down on the people arriving through the Gate. He 
could see she was waiting for Daniel to come through and hated to disturb her but this was 
important.

“Sha’re,” he called, seeing her jump just a little, “There’s a problem.”

“How big a problem?” Sha’re asked; her worried face melted into a calm professional look.

“We’re under water,” he explained, “In fact we’re under a ton of it. There’s a shield around the city 
but the power modules that are keeping the shield up are about to die.”

“How long do we have?” Sha’re took a seat.

Rodney shrugged, “I don’t know. It could be days, hours or minutes.”

Sha’re rubbed her hand over her eyes, “We just arrived and it looks as though we may have killed us 
all already.”

“Jeannie’s working on it,” he promised, “And I’ll get back to work too.”

Sha’re stood watching Rodney go back to work before she decided to help John settle the people 
coming through the Gate. She was terrified that she’d watch it close down and Daniel wouldn’t have 
come through. After the two years she was prisoner of the Goa’uld and then the two years he was 
imprisoned by Carter they’d lost so much time together, so much of their lives together than she 
didn’t want to contemplate his loss again. Unfortunately it was all she could see right now.

Taking a deep breath she jogged down the stairs and found Janet who had set up a temporary 
infirmary for her patients from Earth as well as the few injured on their escape. When Sha’re 
overheard a few mentioning that Carter and the Andurians had arrived in the SGC, the fear that had 
settled in her stomach from the moment she’d left Earth bubbled over into full blown panic.

When Janet touched her arm, Sha’re jumped.

“He’ll make it,” the doctor reminded her, “You just have to be patient.”

Sha’re nodded, spinning as she heard the Gate shut down. Seeing the final individual who had fallen 
through the wormhole, Sha’re felt tears fill her eyes.

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“Ferretti,” Daniel called over the radio, “We’re the last to go. Come on.”

“We’re coming,” Ferretti replied as he and Lorne came running into the Gateroom, “They’re right 
behind us.”

Daniel ran to the top of the ramp and pulled the button on the remote; he motioned Ferretti and Lorne 
through and waited for Carter to appear. He knew Sha’re would kill him for this but after what he’d 
heard, Daniel had to face her so that she knew she’d lost.
“Daniel,” Carter’s voice made him stiffen in anger.

“I’d stay exactly where you are,” Daniel told her, “I drop this and the whole place goes boom.”

Carter laughed, “You won’t kill us, Daniel. You’re not like O’Neill or Teal’c and I know you won’t commit murder. You won’t, you can’t kill me.”

“You murdered my wife,” Daniel’s voice became cold and hard, “You murdered my unborn child and you rejoiced in telling me this. You kept me as a prisoner for two years and you killed my friends. Do you really think you know me?”

She took another step forward; the next one would take her onto the ramp. Daniel glanced through the window where he could see the Andurians trying to get information from the computers so Daniel activated the virus.

“Daniel,” she stepped forward once more, as several others aimed weapons at him, “This is your last chance.”

“Wrong,” Daniel replied, he dropped the remote and dived through the Stargate as the Iris started to close.

Sam let out a yell of frustration as Daniel dived through the Gate and then Iris closed.

“Open it,” she ordered the Andurians in the control room.

“We are unable to,” the eldest stated, “Nothing is working.”

“Damn,” Sam snapped until she realised what Daniel had dropped. Without uttering a word of warning she activated her own personal transporter getting her out of the mountain seconds before the explosion happened.

Sam shook her head, a little disorientated as she was suddenly in the sunlight and watched Cheyenne Mountain crumble in on itself.

Anger filled her, now she would have to listen to the council berate her for things that were definitely not her fault. Sam reset the transporter for the Educational Complex and activated it. As the light dimmed she found herself back in her office, she activated the door to the lower levels and grabbed her knife once more.

Marching along the corridors Sam gripped the handle tightly; she had no more need of her prisoner. The guards on the door both snapped to attention as she appeared in front of them.

“Open the door,” she ordered.

Sam took the weapon from the youngest of the Andurian guards, in case Teal’c put up a fight before she stepped inside. She stared in astonishment as she looked around the completely empty cell; the only thing that let her know she wasn’t in the wrong place was the bloodstain on the ground.

“Where are they?” Sam yelled, smashing the youngest across the jaw with his own weapon, “Where are they?”

“It’s impossible,” the elder stated, “No one has entered or left the cell since you ordered it shut.”

Sam let out a scream of frustration, throwing the knife at the wall where it clattered to the ground and
lay as Sam marched away.
Sha’re spun as she heard the Gate shut down. Seeing the final individual who had fallen through the wormhole Sha’re felt tears fill her eyes.

“Dan’iel,” she cried, not caring how weak she sounded as she launched herself into her husband’s arms.

Daniel hugged her tightly, “I told you I’d make it.”

Sha’re took several deep breaths as she buried her face against his neck before she managed to regain her composure, “We have some more problems, Dan’iel. Come with me.”

Taking his hand, Sha’re led him past the small groups of refugees that were huddled around the room and up the stairs to where Rodney and Jeannie were working.

“You made it,” Rodney sighed, “Good. I need you to translate this; I think it might be useful.”

Biting back a sarcastic comment Daniel moved to the computer, aware that his wife was still gripping his hand. He scanned through the entries quickly as Rodney explained what was going on to him.

“What about the failsafe?” Daniel asked, turning to the man at his side.

“Failsafe?” Rodney demanded.

“According to this,” Daniel pointed to the part of the text he was reading, “It’s set so that the moment the power fails the city will rise.”

“That’s great,” Rodney exclaimed, “So all we have to do is lower the power being emitted, but doing it from here might be hard.”

“What about doing it at the actual ZPM power grid?” Jeannie suggested, “If we do it means we also have a working one to keep the shield powered when we need it.”

“Sha’re?” Daniel turned to his wife.

His wife stared at him a little confused as she recognised the tone but didn’t get a chance to ask what he was doing.

“It’s your call,” Daniel told her.

Sha’re nodded, “Do it. Take John with you, Jeannie can monitor your progress from here.”

“Make sure you get everyone to hold on,” Rodney told her, “When this city raises itself off the ocean floor it’s going to be bumpy.”

“I need to be able to talk to everyone,” Sha’re noted to Jeannie, “But it is exceedingly noisy.”

Jeannie smiled at her before she moved to the balcony and let out a long shrill whistle, every one turned to look up at them.

“Try now,” Jeannie smiled before returning to her computer.
Sha’re stared at her slightly shocked before turning back to the crowd all watching her confused.

“I need everyone to listen to me,” Sha’re said as loud as she could without shouting, “This city is under the ocean and the power that holds the ocean back from crushing us is failing,” she saw people start to panic, “LISTEN TO ME,” she yelled, making everyone stop and turn back to her, “We have discovered a failsafe that means once we disconnect the power then the city shall rise to the surface but when that happens the city will shake violently. Everyone needs to ensure they hold on and anything that could possibly be loosened when shaken around is secured.”

Once she finished speaking those that were once military started carrying out her orders as Sha’re turned back to Jeannie.

“Where are they?” she asked.

Jeannie pulled up a map of the city and showed her three lights moving through corridors, “Almost there I’d say.”

“Good,” Sha’re murmured, “Good.”

Rodney winced every time lights came on as they stepped into a corridor, each time that happened they were using more power and if the power failed before they could reach the room with the ZPM’s then they could kiss a shield to protect them goodbye.

John was walking in front of him while Daniel was behind, both armed as Rodney wished he’d learned how to use a gun when Laura had offered.

“We should be there by now,” Rodney told them, “I think it should be just along the next hall on the right.”

“Good,” Daniel murmured, “This place is creepy.”

“Abandoned for a couple of thousand years,” John added, “Anyone else going over every horror movie they’ve ever seen?”

“Not until you said,” Rodney snapped, he stopped as he found himself in front of door to the ZPM control room.

Cautiously John opened the door, readying for anything that might attack but as they found an empty room Rodney squeezed past before quickly scanning over the systems and finding what he needed.

“Here we go,” he told the two men waiting.

“Sha’re,” Daniel called over his radio, “Rodney’s about to disconnect the ZPM, make sure everyone’s holding on.”

“Of course, Dan’iel,” she replied softly, “We are ready.”

Daniel turned to Rodney and nodded. Taking a deep breath Rodney deactivated the ZPM grabbing the control as the city started to shake.

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Daniel stood on the balcony staring out across the horizon; they’d spent the past few hours setting up the city. Sha’re refused to allow people to wander around and find places to stay before they’d been
secured meaning there’d been a lot of annoyed refugees sitting and waiting in the few large spaces they’d found but Sha’re had spoken to them and promised that everyone would be housed as soon as possible. Daniel smiled as he realised just how influential his wife could be.

Finally, after what had to be the longest six hours Daniel could remember John had managed to find everyone a room of some kind, some were much too small for those with families but Sha’re had promised those affected that as soon as John managed to find rooms bigger then they would be moved first.

Now though the sun was setting on their first day and Daniel was having a few moments of peace where he could finally grieve. He closed his eyes as he remembered hearing the sound of the knife slicing through Jack’s flesh, he didn’t want to know where exactly because all he knew was that he was the last one. SG1 was gone, destroyed by one of its own members. Tears filled his eyes and Daniel slammed his hands against the wall.

“You will hurt yourself,” Sha’re’s soft voice made him turn.

“I don’t care,” Daniel snapped; he went to punch the wall before he turned and slid down it to sit dejectedly, “He’s gone.”

Sha’re moved to him and knelt at his side, “Oh, my Dan’iel,” she whispered, taking his hands in hers; “I wish I could find something to say to stop this hurting. All I have to say is I am with you.”

Daniel wrapped an arm around her and pulled her close to him, “That makes it slightly better,” he breathed.

Sha’re kissed him, “Come and get something to eat.”

Wiping his eyes and whispering goodbye to his friend, Daniel stood and linked hands with his wife as they walked slowly along the corridors.

John continued on what had to be his hundredth circuit on another new level, Feretti and Lorne were with him as they explored a little deeper into the city. Sha’re was being exceedingly cautious but John could understand why considering where they’d come from. Their next item on the agenda for space was Janet and Carson needed an infirmary, especially considering they had a few injuries from their escape. They so far had got rooms of some kind for everyone, which had been an amazing thing to do. Rodney had excitedly called over the radio just to let them know that he’d discovered a shield for the Stargate, meaning there would be no uninvited guests. Zelenka and a scientist called Grodin who had come with a contingent from the UK were helping him and Jeannie work out the controls for the city. John stretched his neck and winced as he heard a crack, he really needed some sleep. As they entered the next room the three of them stopped and stared around.

“Janet,” John called over his radio, “You’re going to love what we just got you.”

Feretti laughed as the three men took in the large room with the beds spaced around and equipment sitting waiting to be used.

Rodney felt someone shake his shoulder and waved them away from him, the irritant continued to shake him and suddenly a voice called his name.

“Rodney?”
Confused Rodney sat up, realising that he’d fallen asleep at his computer in the control room, and stared surprised to find Katie Brown standing there holding a plate of pancakes.

“Katie?” he rubbed his hand across his eyes, “What are you doing?”

“I thought you might want some breakfast since you were working all night,” she smiled at him, waving the plate under his nose. “And I was able to make you a few pancakes.”

“Really?” Rodney asked astonished, “That’s really...eh...nice of you.”

Katie gave him another smile as she shrugged, “I like to cook.”

“Well,” Rodney beamed back as he took the plate, “I like to eat.”

Katie pulled a seat over to his side as he ate and simply watched him with a bright smile. Neither noticed Laura Cadman as she watched them from across the room, sadness in her eyes.

Sha’re sat in what had somehow become her office, going through lists of people as she made notes. She had scheduled a meeting in less than an hour and wanted to be ready for it but it felt like she’d taken on a mammoth task she had no business attempting. It was only because Daniel had forced her out of the office and to the room set aside for them that she’d slept the previous night, the first night in their new home.

She heard the alarm she’d set on her watch go off and sighed, she’d hoped she’d have this ready for her meeting but there was no more time to work on it. With a sigh she stood and found her husband standing in the doorway.

“I am coming,” Sha’re told him with an annoyed pout.

Daniel laughed and kissed her quickly, “I just thought you’d like an escort.”

“Whenever you wish, my husband,” Sha’re told him as she took a deep breath and walked with him to the conference room.

Rodney sat beside his sister while John was on her other side; Janet and Carson were next to the three of them deep in discussion. Zelenka, Grodin, Laura, Ferretti and Lorne made up the rest of the group. Daniel and Sha’re walked in and took the final two seats at the table.

“I apologise that I am taking you all away from work,” Sha’re started, “But for some reason you have placed me in charge for now.”

“It was actually Jack’s decision,” John reminded her.

“However,” Sha’re threw him a frown, “I know we have a great deal of work to do so I shall speak briefly. I have been going through the lists each group gave us and there are too many people here who do not know us.”

“What do you want to do?” Rodney demanded, “Go say hi to them all.”

“Of course not,” Sha’re replied with a hint of a smile, “Twelve other groups came with us so I am going to form a council. The leader of each group will take place upon the council so that each person in the city has someone they trust to speak to. Louis, Radek, this includes both of you.”
Both men grimaced but didn’t say a word so Sha’re continued.

“We need to have a definitive list of what everyone in the city can do,” Sha’re told them, “All their strengths, all their skills because we will need them.”

“What about the military?” John asked, “We have a few people with training but...”

“Of course,”Sha’re took up as he trailed off, “Before we had no need of a proper chain of command but now we do. I know that Louis holds the highest rank so you need to discover the ranks of all those who were once military and create the hierarchy. Once we have this then we can start training new recruits.”

She stopped for a moment and took a drink of water, “Rodney, I need you to take control of all those with a scientific background, Dr Zelenka will work with you as will Jeannie. Dr... Grodin?”

Grodin nodded before adding, “Peter.”

“You have been working on the Stargate controls?” Sha’re questioned.

“Yes,” Peter replied in a soft English accent, “It is not too complicated but there are a few things that I want to study further.”

“Continue,” Sha’re ordered, “Once you have it worked out then you will need to teach several more people. It will mean you are not doing a twenty four hour shift.”

A small chuckle rippled around the room.

“I have one point left,”Sha’re told them, “We have many children here so I believe setting up a school will be beneficial. I overheard that there may be a teacher within our group so Dan’iel will set that up.”

“Thanks,” came the wry reply at her side.

Sha’re looked at the others, “Does anyone have anything else?”

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Laura walked through the corridors John at her side lost in thought. She’d not had much of a chance to focus on what she’d seen earlier that day but now she did.

Her feelings for Rodney were a little bizarre; they’d spent so much time together from the moment she’d helped him escape from Carter, and she was the one who’d stepped back to sort out her own feelings but she hadn’t expected him to start up with the first woman who batted her eyes at him.

“Laura,” John tapped her shoulder, “Want to focus here?”

“Sorry, sir,” she replied automatically.

John sighed, “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” came the automatic reply.

Shaking his head, John stopped walking, “Laura, I am not the best person to play agony aunt but if you need to talk about something...”

“I’ll talk with Sha’re or Janet,” Laura retorted, “I’m fine, John. Just Rodney.”
John frowned, “I thought since he had the thing removed you guys were no longer glued at the hip,” he stared at her as she sighed, “Or are you mad he no longer needs you?”

“I’m annoyed that he replaced me with the first bimbo to come his way,” Laura snapped, turning to continue their search of the area they were in.

“You know she’s Dr Brown,” John noted, wincing at the scathing look sent his way, “But bimbo it is.”

Laura turned and walked to the door in front of them, “Ready?”

As she opened the door John stared before a grin slowly slid over his face, “Jackpot.”

Sha’re stared in astonishment, “Ships?”

“And lots of them,” John grinned, bouncing enthusiastically around what he’d already claimed as his, “Just need Rodney here to help work out how they work and then...”

Sha’re smiled at his enthusiasm, he reminded her of a puppy she’d seen on the street outside Daniel’s apartment a few days before they left to Abydos. Turning to where Laura stood she could see the other woman was just as amused.

“What the hell is wrong now?” Rodney marched in, “I do actually have things to do that...” he trailed off and stared, “Ships. Gateships.”

“Puddle Jumpers,” John replied nonchalantly as though he’d actually looked it up.

“But...” Rodney started only to be silenced by a look from Sha’re.

“Can you get inside it?” John demanded, a little petulantly as Rodney wasn’t opening up his new toy.

“Hmm,” Rodney mused, he moved to the hatch and after a few seconds found the release. He stepped back as the hatch slowly moved down to the ground and the other three joined him to look inside.

John stepped inside, surprised as lights came on around him, “It seems to work.”

Rodney moved to the front of the newly christened Jumper but there was no reaction to his touch.

“Why do the systems work for you but not for Rodney?” Sha’re asked John.

“Who knows,” John replied as he drew his hand reverently across the control panel, “But you know what this means?”

Sha’re smiled, “We have ships. We have a lot of ships.”

“Now we need to work out how to control them,” Rodney reminded them.
Chapter 13

Sha’re snuggled into the warmth as she slowly woke up, opening her eyes she smiled as she saw the light filtering in through the gossamer curtains and could just make out the waves over the rail of the balcony outside their room. They were coming up on their first week here on Atlantis and everyone was settling in to their new home. They were still exploring so that they could find room for everyone but for the moment things were fine. They had enough fresh water now that Peter had found and activated the water reclamation system, but soon food may become a problem.

As she woke up properly, Sha’re realised she was being watched.

“Why are you not sleeping?” Sha’re turned to her husband, finding him leaning on his elbow studying her.

“Sunlight,” Daniel told her, drawing a finger along her bare shoulder, “And watching you was more enjoyable than trying to sleep.”

Sha’re smiled up at him, her husband always knew what to say to make her feel special.

“I was also thinking,” Daniel murmured; as he moved down to brush his lips against her shoulder.

“Really, my husband,” Sha’re sighed as he continued to place soft kisses along her neck.

Daniel slid closer to her, “We’re going to have to start sending teams out through the Gate to make allies and find trading partners.”

“Good idea,” Sha’re breathed, totally distracted by her husband’s ministrations.

“John and Ferretti will be the most likely candidates to lead,” Daniel murmured as he kissed her ear, “I can work with either of them.”

Sha’re pulled away from him, anger covering her face, “I do not like being manipulated, husband, even by you.”

“I wasn’t manipulating you,” Daniel told her as she turned her back on him, he slid his arm around her waist and pulled her back to him so he could kiss her neck again, “I was seducing you till you agreed with me.”

Sha’re sighed and turned to look at him, “I do not want you to be in danger, Dan’iel. I do not want to lie alone here at night and wonder if you will ever come back to me.”

“I know,” he soothed, gently stroking his hand along her back, “But I am one of the few people we have who was on an SG team.”

Sha’re pulled away from him and lay on her back staring at the ceiling deep in thought for several moments, turning her head to Daniel after a while, “You were seducing me till I agreed. I am not yet convinced.”

Daniel grinned and leaned closer to kiss her once more.

While Daniel and Sha’re were ‘discussing’ their differences privately, Rodney and Laura were arguing in the middle of a corridor where anyone could see, hear and completely avoid them.

“Please,” Rodney snarled back, “Like you give a damn.”

Laura stared at him, “I spent almost six months at your side, Rodney. I helped you sleep, I slept at your side and you think I don’t care about you?”

“Oh please,” Rodney retorted, “You felt guilty, Cadman. All you wanted was a little absolution because you turned away that day and left me in that hell hole.”

Laura flinched before she turned and marched along the corridor leaving Rodney standing. She just turned the corner and ran into Jeannie who was standing, leaning next to a window.

“Hi.”

Laura stopped and stared at the sister of the man she’d just been yelling at, “What do you want?”

“To explain something to you,” Jeannie replied, starting to walk at the other woman’s side, “If you want to hear?”

Laura sighed, “I’ve a feeling you won’t go away until I let you tell me.”

“My mom called me tenacious,” Jeannie smiled, “Though Mer says I’m more a pain in the ass.”

“I’d go for that,” Laura replied.

“Look,” Jeannie became serious again, “Mer is brilliant but our parents didn’t know how to deal with that so they made a lot of mistakes which leaves him very wary of relationships. You said you owed him and in that thick skull of his, Mer took this to mean that he didn’t mean anything to you and it’s going to take him a long time to realise what a dope he is.”

“Your advice?” Laura asked blandly.

“You want advice?” Jeannie grimaced.

Laura sighed, “Thanks.”

*********************************************

John entered the Jumper Bay wincing as he heard several raised voices, the main one being Rodney’s.

“What part of ‘don’t do it’ didn’t you get?” Rodney snarled at a poor kid who at John’s reckoning looked all of twelve, “Get back to your station and learn to listen to instructions.”

“They are doing their best, Rodney,” Radek reminded the overwrought man, “Most of them have barely spent any time within this kind of environment.”

“That isn’t an excuse for not listening,” Rodney retorted.

Radek frowned at him but rather than get into an argument he knew would only go downhill he returned to working on the control crystals within the Jumper. Radek knew that Rodney had barely slept since their arrival on Atlantis, trying to get everything operational making him exceedingly short-tempered meaning Radek was not going to enter any sort of argument with him just now.

“So,” John interrupted, heading off Rodney before he could yell at anymore of the poor souls in the
room, “When can I try it out?”

“You realise we’ve only been studying this for less than a day?” Rodney demanded annoyed.

“It’s a ship, Rodney,” John reminded him, “And I can fly anything.”

“I want to be sure that I can fix whatever problem crops up,” Rodney told him, “What if something fails and you crash?”

John groaned, he never knew Rodney was such a mother hen, “Look, come with me and you’ll see that nothing, nothing is going to go wrong.”

Rodney hesitated but finally nodded, “Fine, Radek discovered that we can open the roof so we can have a look around the planet.”

John grinned, “Control, this is Sheppard.”

“Is something wrong, John?” Sha’re’s amused voice came.

“Rodney and I are going to take out one of the Jumpers and have a look around the planet,” he told her, “If you don’t mind that is?”

Sha’re laughed, “Just ensure you are home for supper.”

“Yes, Ma’am,” John beamed as he started into his ship and ushered everyone else out. Reaching the pilot’s chair he turned and waited for Rodney who reluctantly wandered in and sat beside him.

John slid into his seat, fascinated as the entire thing lit up at his presence. Rodney gripped the chair tightly as John started the engines and slowly lifted the Jumper off the ground. As the roof opened above them John’s grin amazingly became even wider.

Even Rodney was unable to speak as they smoothly glided through the air, skimming the clouds as they soared through the air.

Carson sat in the small office he’d claimed at the back of the infirmary; Janet’s was the larger one nearer the front and despite arguing that she didn’t need the larger one, Carson had won. He wanted to research why certain systems reacted to some people but not others, it had him fascinated. Janet was quite happy for him to study it while she and Jennifer covered the infirmary.

“Carson?”

Glancing up he was surprised to find Jeannie standing there.

“Sorry, love,” he apologised, rubbing his tired eyes, “What can I do for you?”

“Janet mentioned you were looking for a reason for the bizarre reactions the city has to some people,” Jeannie explained as she placed the computer padd she was carrying down, “I think I might have found something. I’ve been studying the database with Daniel trying to find anything that can help us, I found this.”

Carson scanned over the data she had given him in astonishment, “It’s looking for something, it’s looking for a certain...” he trailed off and started working again not even noticing Jeannie stand up and leave.
Jeannie left the doctor working away and decided to see if her brother had actually managed to frighten any of the scientists into a gibbering wreck yet. Entering what was now referred to as the Jumper Bay, Jeannie watched as one of the small ships gently descended from a hole in the roof before settling into the empty cradle. The hatch opened and she smiled as John Sheppard practically bounced out.

“Have fun?” she asked the pilot.

“Oh I could have stayed up there all day,” he crowed, “Your brother got a little cranky after half an hour.”

“There’s more to life than flying, John,” Jeannie told him.

John paled suddenly, his excitable personality disappearing as he stared at her.

“Are you okay?” Jeannie asked worriedly.

“Fine,” he jumped slightly, “We should get Rodney somewhere else, he needs to sleep.”

Jeannie took a deep breath, “Leave it to an expert, John.”

Smartly Jeannie walked into the Jumper finding her brother slouched in the chair obviously trying to gather the energy to get up again.

“Okay, Mer,” she stated, “Go and get some sleep then eat something. After that you can start working again.”

“You’re not Mom,” he muttered at her, “You can’t tell me what to do.”

“Meredith,” Jeannie snapped, “Now!!!”

Rodney instantly obeyed and stumbled half asleep out of the Jumper to where John was watching Jeannie in absolute bemusement as she just smirked back at him.

“Take him to his room,” Jeannie ordered John, “If he doesn’t go call me.”

With a self satisfied smile Jeannie left them alone as John stared after her astonished.

“I could have walked to my room by myself,” Rodney grumbled as John accompanied him through the corridors.

“I know,” John shrugged, “But your sister is scary.”

Rodney grimaced as he thought back, “She did the ‘Mom’ voice. I hate that.”

John chuckled, stopping as they reached the room Rodney had been assigned and had only been in to dump his belongings at the beginning of the week. With a tired sigh, the exhausted scientist opened the door and with a mumbled goodnight disappeared inside leaving John alone in the corridor.

As he stared to walk again, Jeannie’s words hit him again – “There’s more to life than flying, John.”
John turned to where Meg was frowning at him, “What?”

“Don’t you see what’s happening around you?” she cried, raking a hand through her short jet-black hair, “John, the Andurians are not our friends and Carter is not the saviour of the world.”

John stared at her confused, “You were the one who persuaded me to request the transfer. What’s changed?”

Meg sighed and sat down, “You’ve heard of Jack O’Neill?”

“The leader of the terrorists,” John noted.

“They’re not terrorists,” Meg replied sadly, “They’re the last of the real SGC and those who the Andurians are trying to destroy.”

“Meg,” John sat at her side, “What are you thinking of doing?”

She swallowed, “One of their people, Dr Daniel Jackson is being held by Carter within the facility. He is more than likely being tortured by her for information only he can provide.”

“Meg, this is insane,” John told her, “You can’t seriously believe this? And even if it’s true, you’ll just get yourself killed.”

“So I should just bury my head in the sand?” she yelled at him, “Like you?”

John stood up and grabbed his jacket, “I have to get going. Supplies don’t fly themselves.”

Meg watched him head for the door, “There’s more to life than flying, John,” she called.

Those were the last words she ever said to him.

*****************************************************

Daniel and Sha’re walked along the corridors after dinner towards their latest meeting.

“You do know I would have agreed to you going,” Sha’re noted as she held her husband’s arm, “There was no reason for your elaborate persuasion.”

“But it was much more fun,” Daniel grinned.

Sha’re laughed and pushed him towards the conference room where the others were waiting.

Entering the room Sha’re smiled fondly as she heard John and Ferretti trying to outdo each other on the craziest things they’d done.

“Gentlemen,” she interrupted as she took her seat, Daniel sliding into the one on her right as always, “We shall soon be running low on supplies therefore we must find a source of food be it trading for the food or the seeds to grow our own.”

“Trade?” Ferretti asked with a raised eyebrow.

“Both of you, Dan’iel along with Laura and Rodney will for the moment be the first team,” Sha’re told them, “I have spoken with Peter to see if he can find a planet within the database that could be a potential ally.”
“Hold on,” John stopped her, “Why are we taking Rodney?”

“Because he is the most logical choice to help find a ZPM,” Sha’re explained, “There is no use arguing, I have thought this through extensively.”

At this Daniel smirked but lost it quickly as his wife glared at him.

“I want you to ensure Rodney is able to defend himself,” Sha’re told John, stop him speaking as he was about to argue, “John, he has the most experience with this technology. The only other choice is Jeannie; do you want to take her on a mission?”

Knowing he had lost without even opening his mouth John nodded, “I’ll make sure he’s ready.”

John left the meeting and checked his watch; Rodney should sleep for at least another two hours then he’d make the scientist go get something to eat. As he leaned against the wall trying to work out something to do for two hours when he saw Sha’re and Daniel walking together. He watched them together as they talked softly to each other, their love for one another was something he envied but he knew the pain they’d gone through.

Wandering further on John found a balcony and leaned on the rail watching the clouds float by. He wondered what Meg would have thought of this place, wondered if they’d still be together after everything. He shivered as it started to rain and memories flooded him.

_The coffin was lowered into the ground as the rain battered against him, he was the only one here for the funeral, the only one who had come to say goodbye to her. Meg had been branded a terrorist, exposed on the news as something she wasn’t for trying to help someone she’d never even met._

_Finally it was over and John stood alone staring at the fresh grave as the water poured down his face. After several minutes he felt another presence and watched as a man he didn’t know placed a rose on the grave._

“You,” John snarled as he recognised Jack O’Neill standing at his side, “You got her killed.”

“I didn’t ask her to do anything other than give me information,” Jack told him, “Meg did what she believed was right but I never asked for anything more.”

John wanted to say more, he wanted to yell and scream but nothing came out. Instead he turned but as he was about to walk away he noticed several of the Andurians coming their way. Jack grabbed his arm and the next thing John knew he was in a strange silvery tunnel.

“Jack, you should not have brought him here,” Sha’re scolded the man trying to dry himself while defend his actions, “He is not one of us and he already hates us.”

“She made her own choice,” Jack snapped as he tossed the towel to one side, “I didn’t make her do anything.”

Sha’re frowned at him, “Jack, he is grieving. No matter what you say he won’t care. Someone he loves is dead.”
Jack winced seeing how upset she was getting and moved to hug her but Sha’re stepped back from him.

“I want to talk with him,” she said.

Jack hesitated before nodding, “Fine, you can come in while I talk to him.”

Sha’re gave a sharp nod and said nothing but Jack knew from the look in her eyes she had an idea.

John sat glaring at the doctor who had brought him some coffee and dry clothes, the man was sitting across from him simply drinking his own coffee without trying to fill the silence.

“Carson,” Jack said as he walked in, “Are we good?”

“He’s clean,” the man, Carson, stated in what John absently noted was a Scottish accent.

Jack nodded and grabbed a seat as a woman, beautiful but sad slid into the seat at his side.

“Major Sheppard,” Jack started, “This is Dr Carson Beckett and Sha’re Jackson.”

John said nothing, keeping silent as he took in as much information as possible as Jack spoke of Meg.

“Enough,” Sha’re stood finally cutting him off, “Jack, leave. I wish to speak to John alone.”

“Sha’re...”

“Now,” she stated in a voice that wouldn’t accept an argument, “I want you both out of here now.”

After a few seconds hesitation, Jack stood and motioned Carson to come with him.

“I’ll be right outside,” he told Sha’re, warning John at the exact same time.

John watched the two men leave before he turned back to the young woman who was sitting demurely waiting for his attention.

“How long were you and Meg together?” Sha’re asked.

“Six months,” John answered, not sure why he felt compelled to answer her, “But we’d know each other for at least ten years.”

“And you loved her?”

“Yes,” John said sharply.

Sha’re sighed, “Then you will understand.”

John listened as the sad woman before him unfolded her tale and he understood why Meg gave her life to help Sha’re. In those few moments he made his decision.
“Rodney, you have to keep your eyes open,” John noted as he tried to teach Rodney how to shoot.

Then scientist growled at him but said nothing instead letting off several shots in a row. John smiled as he noticed that even after the short tutorial Rodney wasn’t doing that badly. It had taken a little persuasion on Sha’re’s part to get Rodney to agree to join the team but she managed to convince him by appealing to his ego. Now he had less than twelve hours to make sure Rodney was ready to on their first mission.

Peter had found a Gate address that he was sure would have friendly natives and soon the newly formed SGA1 would step onto a new world. After another hour, John was sure Rodney would be able to defend himself long enough to get back to the Gate and called a halt to the practice.

“Let’s get some food,” John said, “Then get some sleep, we’re starting out early tomorrow.”

Rodney frowned, “I have some things...”

“No,” John cut him off, “Maybe once you’re used to doing things, but for your first mission you need to sleep. Or do I have to call Jeannie to do her thing again.”

Rodney muttered under his breath as he walked away from John who grinned, it was far too easy sometimes.

Rodney got his dinner and saw Laura sitting in the corner reading a book as she absently ate a sandwich; he felt his stomach sink as he knew they would be working together and the last time they’d spoken had been an argument. Laura had been with him throughout the months he had been with the resistance, helping him fight against the implant in his back. She had fought with him, laughed with him, helped him work or rest and now they could barely be within ten feet of each other.

“Rodney,” Katie’s voice drew him out of his contemplation, “I saved you a seat.”

Rodney smiled and grabbed a seat across from her. Laura could be nothing more than a friend if they worked out how to talk to one another again, meaning he had to look elsewhere for something more. He just hoped they could work together on the mission tomorrow. As he heard Katie start to talk he tried to focus on the topic but couldn’t so just let it wash over him.

*****************************************************

Daniel checked his pack and weapons while he waited for John and Rodney to arrive. Laura and Ferretti were at one side talking with Peter who was nervously watching one of his ‘trainees’ at the controls.

“I’ve got it,” Rodney was yelling as he and John entered the room, Rodney trying to fix the straps of the pack properly.

John held up his hands and wandered over to Daniel who grinned at him.

“We have a shield over the Stargate,” Sha’re stated as she joined them, “You all have a code that we
used for the shuttles, that will be your...what did you call it, Dan’iel?"

“GDO,” he replied.

“Exactly,” she smiled at him, “I expect you to be back in twelve hours or at least contact us by then.”

“You got it,” John gave her a smart salute before turning to watch as the Stargate opened; “We’ll see you later.”

“Be careful,” Sha’re called after them, smiling up as her husband gave her a quick kiss, “Be careful, Dan’iel.”

“I promise,” he replied before following the others and disappearing through the wormhole.

Rodney forced himself to focus after he stepped out of the Stargate, he remembered feeling sick when he arrived in Atlantis but with everything that was happening it didn’t seem as potent as this.

“You’ll get used to it,” Daniel said, Rodney glanced to see John and Laura looking just as ill while Daniel and Ferretti seemed fine.

“Which way?” Ferretti turned to Daniel.

Daniel rolled his eyes and glanced around, “Well there seems to be smoke coming from that direction so I’d say that way.”

Rodney followed on trying to shift the weight of his pack slightly, on the mission less than five minutes and already he hated it.

Teyla watched the children run around playing a game that she recalled playing when she was their age. It made her smile as she sipped her tea; she had only a short time before she had to join Halling and the others to find out what their harvest was this season. She was due to talk with an old trading partner in two days, something she disliked doing but since her father had died it was her responsibility.

“Teyla!!” Jinto’s voice sounded through the entire camp, “Teyla!!”

The little boy came scurrying over to her and Teyla crouched down to make sure he was alright.

“There are strangers,” Jinto told her, turning to point to the small group entering the village.

Four men and one woman walked slowly towards Jinto who was motioning them over to Teyla.

“Hi,” the one in the lead said, he was wearing strange wire and glass on his face, “I’m Daniel Jackson.”

“Teyla Emmagen,” she replied with a nod.

Daniel Jackson smiled at her before quickly introducing the others.

“Are you here to trade?” she asked, wary of these new people and their unusual weapons.

“Trade?” Daniel Jackson glanced back at the others, “Sure.”
“We don’t trade with strangers,” Teyla told him, “I am sorry, Daniel Jackson.”

“Just Daniel is fine,” he murmured, “How do we not be strangers?”

“Personally, I like talking,” John spoke up receiving an annoyed glare from Daniel.

Teyla however smiled, “Talking sounds a good way to become friends.”

Daniel glanced round at his group before turning back and nodding, “That’s why we’re here.”

*****************************************

Sha’re listened to the report from one of the ‘council’ members, Ian had been in charge of a small group in Canada and wasn’t relishing still being part of a command structure but had agreed with Sha’re to take it for a few months until they could work something else out. Once he had finished speaking Ian turned to Sha’re who gave him a grateful nod.

“Thank you,” she said softly, “I know how difficult this is for us all but your help in organising our new home is appreciated. Does anyone else have anything before we adjourn?”

“I do,” Caroline, she was from Oxford spoke up, “As good an idea as the school was, Sha’re there are children too young for it. One of my group and I know there are three others who all worked with children that young, they asked for permission to start a nursery.”

“Do we have a place for this?” Sha’re asked.

“There is a room near the infirmary,” Radek said, “It would be adequate though toys may be hard to come by.”

Caroline smiled, “Melissa has several toys she brought as have several others but books and music will be mostly from memory.”

Sha’re nodded, “Excellent, have Melissa set up a schedule but for the day only just now splitting time between the four of them.”

Finished with the council business, Sha’re left to meet Janet and Carson for lunch. It was the only time they had to discuss some discoveries with her, plus it meant Janet could make sure Sha’re was eating properly while Daniel was away.

“How was your meeting?” Janet asked the instant Sha’re sat down at the small table.

Sha’re nodded, “It went quite well. Everyone has ideas and we’re implementing as many as we can straight away.”

“Any word from our intrepid explorers?” Janet sipped her tea watching Sha’re carefully.

“Nothing yet,” the younger woman sighed, “But they are not due for a few more hours,” she shook herself, “What did you wish to talk to me about?”

Janet laughed, “Actually it was Carson who wanted to see you but he’s running late.”

Sha’re rolled her eyes, “Typical. I hope it is concerning his studies on why things react to certain people. I want John to be able to teach others to fly the Jumpers, I have a feeling there is land on this planet and if that is true then we can grow our own crops. Dr Brown, who was part of Louis’ group
has found seeds within one of the labs and I want a dedicated group to work on that and I do not wish to wait for John to return from missions all the time.”

“Can’t expect him to be a taxi driver,” Janet laughed, amused at the image that popped into her head.

Sha’re was about to say something but was interrupted as Carson dropped into a seat beside Janet, a wide smile on his face.

“I’ve got it,” he told them excitedly.

“You’ve got what?” Janet asked as she defended her sandwich from him.

“The reason John could work the ship and Rodney couldn’t,” Carson grinned, triumph filling his eyes, “It’s a gene.”

“A gene?” Sha’re looked at Janet confused.

“Hold on,” Janet said, “You’re saying that John has a certain gene that is recognised by the technology. That’s incredible.”

“It would have taken me months to figure it out if Jeannie hadn’t stumbled across a reference within the database,” Carson told them, “Now I just have to figure out how to test for it, other than the obvious of just making everyone walk into a Jumper.”

“Do you think there will be a way to...” Sha’re trailed off as she tried to find the English word she wanted, “Reproduce it for those who do not have this gene?”

Carson shrugged, “I’m not sure yet but I’ve a feeling I’ve got a lot of studying ahead of me.”

“As long as you sleep,” Sha’re told him sternly, “We do not need our doctors treating one another.”

Carson nodded, “No need to worry, love. I intend to go and sleep just now, I just wanted to share this with you first.”

******************************************************************************

Daniel motioned Ferretti over as they headed towards the tent Teyla was leading them too.

“Something wrong?” Ferretti asked, he knew and trusted Daniel’s instinct for people.

Daniel grimaced, “I’m not sure. There’s just something about this place that...”

“Your spidey sense is tingling?” Ferretti asked.

“In a manner of speaking,” Daniel told him, “I’m not saying there’s any danger to us from these people but...”

“You want me and Laura outside while you talk?” Ferretti guessed.

Daniel nodded before frowning, “You know you’re meant to be in charge of the team, not me.”

Ferretti shrugged, “As a member of SG1, technically you outrank me.”

“That’s a load of crap,” Daniel retorted.

Ferretti just grinned at him before clapping him on the shoulder and propelling him forward to where
John, Rodney and their host was waiting.

“You are unusual,” Teyla said as she gave each of them some tea, “I have never seen weapons like those before. Which planet did you say you were from?”

“It’s called Earth,” Daniel replied softly, “But it’s a long way from here.”

“In a galaxy far, far away,” John murmured, wincing as Rodney elbowed him in his ribs.

Daniel rolled his eyes at the other man before returning his attention back to Teyla, “I know you don’t know us and I know you feel that you can’t trade with strangers but I’m hoping I can change your mind.”

Teyla smiled; there was something about this man that made her want to trust him however as much as she felt she wanted to trust them there was one thing her father had instilled in her.

“I am afraid we do not trade with strangers,” Teyla replied, “And I do not know that one conversation will change that.”

“Well then,” John grinned at her, “We’ll just have to get to know each other. Me, I like Ferris Wheels and college football; anything that goes more than two hundred miles per hour.”

“Like she’s going to know what that means,” Rodney sneered from his side.

“Feel free to speak up, Rodney,” John retorted, “I’m just trying to break the ice.”

Teyla laughed again, “What exactly do you wish to trade?”

Daniel glanced at John before he started talking.

Ferretti watched the people of the village going around their business ignoring the two strangers standing outside the tent of their leader. He found it strange to be on a mission once more after so many years but it felt comfortable, it felt right.

“You okay, Laura?” he asked his companion.

“Fine,” she replied, “Just still in shock that this is another planet with real people on it and not aliens.”

Ferretti chuckled, “This is what a lot of our missions were like, meet and greet the natives and try to make allies. Though every so often there was the running for your life.”

Laura laughed slightly.

“Take the quiet missions when you can,” Ferretti told her, “Because on the days you’re running from the bad guys make you wish for them.”

Before Laura could reply there was suddenly chaos in the village and one of the children came fleeing past them into the tent. Teyla appeared outside followed closely by Daniel, John and Rodney.

“What’s wrong?” Ferretti asked.
Daniel shook his head, “No idea. But I want to find out, come on.”

He led the group over to where several villagers and Teyla were crowded.

Teyla had been concerned at first that the Wraith had invaded when Milo had come rushing into her meeting demanding she come with him but since she hadn’t had any of sense of them it didn’t surprise her that it wasn’t.

A tall man with long hair hanging down in dreadlocks staggered towards them, exhaustion filling his dark eyes but he still held himself ready for an attack. He stopped and took several deep breaths before starting to turn.

“Wait,” Teyla called to the man, “You are injured.”

“I didn’t know there were people here,” he growled slightly, “I have to leave now.”

“Why?” Daniel asked from Teyla’s side.

“The Wraith will come after me,” the man told them.

Teyla gasped slightly, hearing Daniel murmur to his people slightly before he turned to Teyla.

“What is a Wraith?” he asked, sounding worried.

Everyone stared at Daniel, including the stranger.

“You don’t know of the Wraith,” the man demanded in astonishment.

Daniel shrugged, “We’re kinda new.”

“The Wraith are a plague on this galaxy,” Teyla told them, “They feed upon the people of this and every other world. And if you come from a world that has never heard of them then I suggest you return to it.”

“We can’t,” John replied sharper than he intended.

“Why will the Wraith come after you,” Teyla returned her attention to the man, “Who are you?”

“Specialist Ronon Dex,” he introduced himself, “I’m a Runner and I have to leave now or...”

A high pitched whine interrupted Ronon and horror covered everyone’s face.

“What’s going on?” Rodney yelled, terror in his eyes and voice.

Teyla turned to him, her dark eyes filled with horror and anger as a dart like ship flew overhead, “The Wraith.”
Teyla was able to see the flicker of the Stargate before it shut down as the Wraith dart flew over head. The feeling of the Wraith close by made her skin crawl and she steeled herself for what was to come.

Ronon turned to Teyla as her people scattered, “I’m sorry,” he told her; his gruff voice was filled with sincerity.

Teyla couldn’t say anything as the ship landed nearby and a Wraith emerged from it, Ronon pushed her back as he moved towards the alien being bearing down on them. Teyla watched in astonishment as he started fighting the Wraith, she turned and saw her visitors helping get her people to safety. John was the only one who had stayed at her side and was aiming his weapon as soon as he had an opening.

Ronon was flung against a tree and fell to the ground with a grunt, the Wraith turned and started towards Teyla and John. Teyla readied herself to fight, shocked as a loud burst of noise sounded from her side. She turned to see John firing his weapon at the Wraith and watched the alien’s body jerk as each projectile hit it.

“Guys,” John yelled, “Some backup would be nice.”

At his call the woman, Laura and the man called Ferretti appeared joining John in firing their weapons. Ronon stood and fired his weapon with them hitting the alien squarely. Finally the Wraith collapsed to the ground dead.

“Wow, those things are hard to kill,” Laura noted.

“You’re not kidding,” John breathed, he jogged over to Ronon, “You okay?”

Ronon nodded and accepted his help to stand, “I have to leave.”

“Why?” John asked, “It’s dead.”

“More will come,” Ronon replied, “They can find me.” He turned to Teyla who had joined them, “You must hide, because if they come and you are all here, then they will cull your people.”

Teyla frowned, “There is nowhere close to us that can accommodate all of my people.”

“I have an idea,” John told her, “You can stay with us until they’re gone.”

“I can’t,” Ronon replied with resignation, “They can track me.”

“I have an idea for that too,” John grinned.

“Are you serious?” Sha’re snapped when John explained his plan, annoyed that he was not in front of her to yell at.

“Look,” John placated, “It’s only going to be for a few hours maybe a little longer.”

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re demanded sharply.
“These things are bad news, Sha’re,” her husband told her, “We have to help them.”

She frowned and turned to Radek who she had been talking to before the Stargate had opened, he gave a slight shrug and she frowned even more.

“All right,” Sha’re told them, “Bring them here but it will be very crowded.”

“We have one more problem that we’ll need a doc for,” John told her.

“What kind of problem,” Sha’re asked, blanching as she heard the explanation. After a few seconds of silence she ordered whoever was on duty in the infirmary to report to the control room, “John, as soon as the doctor is with you then start sending everyone through to us.”

“You bet,” John replied.

“Sha’re,” Rodney took over, “Is Zelenka there?”

“Yes.”

“Good,” Rodney stated, “Radek, I need you to send a few things with the doctor.”

Carson wasn’t sure how he’d ended up being the one to go through to the planet for some emergency surgery. Janet was already in surgery; one of the injured from their escape was bleeding again while Jennifer was working with the children so he’d been the only one available.

Entering the Gateroom he saw Radek running over to him with another bag of equipment.

“I have everything I need,” he told the scientist.

Radek laughed, “Actually these are for Rodney. He wants this for some reason.”

Carson frowned and nodded to Peter who dialled the Gate quickly, he caught Sha’re’s worried face just before he stepped through the shimmering wormhole.

“Finally,” John said the moment Carson staggered through the gate, “Come on, Doc. We’ve got a lot of people to go through the other way.”

Carson watched a little overwhelmed as the people crowded around before he turned and saw his patient. He was sitting with his back to Carson, exposing a row of scars that shocked the doctor. Using one of the fancy scanners that seemed to work for him Carson checked out what was in the large man’s back.

“Did you try to dig this thing out by yourself?” Carson cried in astonishment.

The big man shrugged, “Can you remove it.”

Carson took a deep breath and nodded, “Just hold still.”

As soon as the Stargate shut down, Daniel dialled Atlantis and sent his GDO signal, “Laura, you and Ferretti are going to get everyone through. We’ll follow as soon as Carson is finished.”

She nodded and started herding people through the Stargate.
As Ferretti passed Daniel he nudged him, “She won’t be happy.”

Daniel shrugged, “I’ll deal, go and get them out of here.”

Once he was sure all the Athosians were through Daniel joined John in waiting for Carson to finish.

“What is he doing?” John asked Daniel as they watched Rodney moving around the small space Carson was using.

Daniel shrugged.

“I’m jamming or at least scrambling the signal the implant’s giving off,” Rodney told them without even looking up, “So that hopefully we don’t encounter any more of those...things.”

John nodded and gripped his weapon just a little tighter, he hated waiting for things to happen but then again he’d been in worse and more dangerous situations.

John looked up from the computer screen as Sha’re walked into the room. Ever since he’d heard her story he couldn’t get it out of his mind and he wanted to help her.

“John,” the young woman greeted him as she took the seat across from him, “Jack tells me that you have an idea you wish to discuss with me.”

He found her so unusual, to have had so much heartache yet she was strong and determined never letting people or herself wallow in misery. In the few days he’d been with the resistance he’d found he wanted to help her.

“Meg was in a position to help get your husband back,” John told her, “I think I can get the information she was going to give you.”

“John,” Sha’re sighed sadly, “It is too dangerous. I do not want anyone else to be hurt because of us.”

Hey,” he caught her hand and squeezed it, “I want to do this because it’s the right thing to do. And I want to make Carter pay for doing this to us.”

Sha’re smiled at him and gently kissed his cheek, “What is your plan?”

“Major Sheppard,” Sam greeted him, “I was worried about you.”

“I needed some time,” he told her, “In fact I thought a lot over the past few days. I don’t want to fly just now, I don’t feel able to.”

“Of course,” Sam oozed sympathy, “No one expects you to. I want you to take as much time as you need.”

“I was hoping that you’d let me take over from Meg,” he continued, seeing suspicion fill her eyes, “I know there was nothing I could have done but I want to be able to try...” he hesitated, relieved as she nodded.

“Of course, Major,” Sam smiled at him, “I’m grateful that you feel no animosity towards us, the loss of Meg has created a huge hole here and we all miss her.”
John nodded, amazed he wasn’t showing just how disgusted he felt speaking to her as though he didn’t know what she’d done, “I’ll head to the command room and start work. Thank you, Doctor.”

Sam stood up and offered him her hand, smiling that he shook it before he turned and left the office.

John worked through everything Meg had left, he’d always known she was good at what she did and she’d managed to hide the information he needed in plain sight. It had only taken him a week to find it.

He hadn’t realised how hard it was going to be to spend time here pretending to work for the people who had murdered the woman he loved, but every time he felt he couldn’t do this, he remembered the way Sha’re had laid out her story to him and he did it for her. He wanted to continue what Meg had started and save Daniel Jackson.

And then he found what he needed.

With the information in hand John finished his work for the day before leaving the command centre.

“Major Sheppard?” Sam said when he entered her office, “Is something wrong?”

“I’m handing in my resignation,” John told her, placing the envelope on her desk, “I wish I could stay but being here is too harsh a reminder.”

“Of course,” Sam told her, “John, I can understand how hard this must have been for you but I would like you to reconsider your decision.”

“Doctor Carter,” John kept his voice even, “This is what’s best for me and this is what’s best for the team. I need time and working here isn’t the best thing.”

“You’ll be missed,” Sam smiled, “And as soon as you want you have a position here with us.”

John nodded and walked out, smiling slightly to himself – he had it.

“John,” Sha’re hurried into Jack’s office, “You said you had something.”

He nodded, “I have your husband’s location in the campus and all the security details you need to get in. You only have a small window to use them though.”

Sha’re hugged him, “Thank you,” she whispered sincerely, “Thank you for this,” turning to Jack she looked at him hopefully.

“Teal’c and I are just getting everything together,” Jack told her.

“Wait,” Sha’re stared at him confused, “You cannot go to the Educational Complex, she wants you dead.”

“I’ve already had this argument with Sheppard,” Jack told her, “And I won then, I’ll win now.”

“Jack...”
“Sha’re, I am going to get Daniel and bring him back here,” Jack told her, “That’s a promise.”

As he left Sha’re stood and moved to the doorway, simply standing there frozen, John stood and walked to her side.

“They’ll save him,” John told her.

Sha’re smiled at him, “Thanks to you.”

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Sha’re watched another influx of refugees enter Atlantis looking as lost and scared as they had been a short time ago.

“Laura,” she greeted the woman as she walked towards Sha’re.

“There’s not many more to come,” Laure reported, “But that thing was...”

“They are called Wraith,” a woman with similar colouring to Sha’re stepped forward, Sha’re recognised the bearing of a leader instantly, “You are in charge?”

“Yes,” Sha’re nodded, “I am Sha’re.”

“Teyla Emmagan,” the Athosian leader introduced herself properly, “Thank you for helping us like this.”

“It is our pleasure,” Sha’re replied before turning to Laura who was waiting for orders, “Laura, start getting our guests settled into the common areas. I will have Evan start assigning proper rooms for them as soon as possible.”

Laura nodded, “Yes, Ma’am.”

Sha’re turned again to Teyla and motioned her to the stairs, “Please join me.”

Teyla sat in the small office of the young woman who was in charge of the strangers; she could see how worried the other woman was. She understood why, the men who were still on the other side of the Ring of the Ancestors had been unusual and Teyla had found she quite liked speaking with them, not to mention the Runner. She’d heard stories but never met one before and she wanted him to be safe.

“How long do you believe your people will need to remain with us?” Sha’re asked.

“From what we know,” Teyla said, “It should be safe to return in a few days.”

Sha’re nodded thoughtfully, “Then we shall say a week, to ensure that it is completely safe.”

Teyla smiled slightly but didn’t have a chance to reply as Sha’re was called by one of the men sitting in the control room.

“Finally,” Sha’re murmured as she hurried to watch the explosion from the ring.

Teyla joined the other woman, seeing the worry in her face.

“It’s John’s signal,” the man sitting near them reported.
Relief filled Sha’re’s eyes, “Drop the shield.”

Together they watched the five men appear, Ronon supported by John and Daniel as the doctor started shouting orders to his team.

Teyla watched her new acquaintances as they returned to their home. The one called Rodney hurried across the room with a bag in his arms towards a man with fuzzy hair and interest in his eyes. The Runner was helped to a moving bed by the doctor and John left with them. Finally, Daniel walked over to where she stood with Sha’re.

“Hi,” he greeted Sha’re, leaning in to kiss her before he turned to Teyla as he slipped an arm around Sha’re’s waist, “Are your people settled?”

“Yes,” Teyla smiled, “Thank you for this. Is Ronon well?”

“According to Carson he’s going to be fine,” Daniel told her, “He’s just going give him a proper medical check. If you want I’m about to go down to the infirmary, you’re welcome to join me.”

Teyla nodded and waited as Daniel turned once more to Sha’re.

“I want to talk to you,” Sha’re told him softly, “Once the doctor has released you.”

“Yes, dear,” Daniel smiled and squeezed her hand before motioning Teyla forward.

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The infirmary was quiet as Carson did a full medical on their new friend, Ronon who was more co-operative than he’d first been, now that they’d gained his trust while Jennifer and Janet took on the task of checking the off-world team. No one was paying attention to the patient lying in the back corner of the infirmary, sleeping after surgery.

As the haze of sedation wore off, noise intruded into the blackness the patient had been in. Pulling against the black towards the noise the patient forced open his eyes.

Seeing where he was and who was close by he grimaced, losing the battle against the sedatives still in his system he slipped back to sleep swearing that when he was strong enough he’d find a way to return to Earth and delivers these traitors to Dr Carter.
Chapter 16

Jeannie sat on the balcony her laptop sitting at her side as she munched on a biscuit, the Ancient database was so vast she felt sometime that it was an ocean and she was a tiny fish.

They’d been here almost two weeks now and had managed to make some friends although they’d run into a new threat that they hoped wouldn’t find Atlantis.

Jeannie had only briefly met any of the Athosians as she, like her brother and Radek, had spent most of her time in one of the labs working on the city’s systems. She was tired, but then again so were most people here. Trying to set up a new society was exhausting, Jeannie could see it in Sha’re the few times their paths had crossed over the past week.

“So this is where you’re hiding.”

Jeannie looked up in surprise to see John leaning against the doorway, “Just taking a break from the lab and getting some fresh air. Were you looking for me?”

“I was,” John grinned, “Since your brother doesn’t like to fly I thought you might like to come along as I have a look to see if there’s land out there somewhere.”

Surprised Jeannie stared up at him, “I thought you would have done that earlier.”

John shrugged, “Sha’re wouldn’t let me. Something about having more immediate concerns.”

Jeannie laughed.

“So?”

“So?”

“Are you coming?” John rolled his eyes.

Jeannie reached out so he could pull her to her feet before she picked up her computer, “Just have to drop this off and I’m ready.”

John grinned at her and motioned her forward.

“This is incredible,” Jeannie breathed as she watched the clouds below them, “Thanks for bringing me along.”

John laughed, “No problem. You’re always good company.”

“How are the Athosians?” Jeannie asked, knowing he’d spent a lot of time with their guests lately.

“Great,” he replied with a grin, “Kids are a lot of fun and Teyla can kick my ass in some strange stick fighting thing. Then Ronon wandered in and had a quick go,” he grimaced, “Kicked my ass as well.”

Jeannie giggled, “Is Ronon going to stay with the Athosians?”

John shrugged, “I don’t know. I’m kinda hoping he’ll stick around and help us. He’s good and has
been fighting these Wraith for years. It’ll give us a good chance against them.”

“Get Sha’re to talk to him,” Jeannie suggested.

John smiled at her, “Not a bad idea. Look at what I ended up doing after talking to our esteemed leader.”

Jeannie laughed for a few seconds before falling into silence as the HUD sprung to life and they stared at the large mass of land.

“Wow,” Jeannie murmured as she stared at the readings.

John nodded and aimed the Jumper for a closer look.

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Sha’re smiled as she watched the children in the nursery, they had two trained nursery nurses as well as several other volunteers who watched the children across the week allowing the parents to work without worry.

She would come here every few days just to watch them playing, sometimes to escape from all the decisions she had to make after Jack had placed her in charge but other times, like today to think about the children she had lost. Sha’re smiled slightly as she felt Daniel’s arms slide around her waist and a gentle kiss pressed to her cheek.

“Hey,” he murmured as he held her close while looking down on the nursery.

“I thought you were working on the database,” Sha’re said, not moving from the comfort of his arms.

Daniel chuckled slightly, “I thought we could have lunch together before the meeting this afternoon.”

Sha’re sighed, “I was waiting for John to return from his trip.”

“You finally let him go looking for land?” Daniel laughed, thinking back to John’s impassioned pleas over the week and then, when Sha’re continued to tell him no, whining.

Sha’re nodded, “He should be back soon.”

Daniel smiled and hugged her slightly tighter as they stood watching the games being played below them.

“They would be down there,” Sha’re suddenly whispered.

Daniel closed his eyes, finally understanding why she came here so often, “I know.”

She turned and buried her face against his chest as a few tears escaped her control. Daniel gently stroked her hair as he rocked her. They didn’t talk about the babies they’d lost very often but it gave Daniel an opening for something he’d been wanting to ask her since the implant had been removed.

“I know we’ve been being careful,” Daniel murmured to her, “But sometimes I think about what our child would be like.”

Sha’re stiffened slightly and Daniel continued on quickly.

“If you don’t want to try again that’s fine,” he told her, “You know I hate sharing you with anyone but...but...” Daniel hesitated as she looked up into his eyes, “I still want to have a family with you.”
Sha’re licked her lips, “I do not want to lose another child, Dan’iel. I never held Asti until he was dead and Lily,” she rested her hand on her stomach, “I never got to hold her. Do you understand?”

“Of course,” Daniel whispered, “It’s up to you.”

Sha’re sighed, “Thank you,” she stretched up and kissed him, “Let us just see what happens.”

“It’s huge,” John grinned as he stood in Sha’re’s small office practically bouncing being watched by Sha’re, Daniel and Jeannie, “And there is wildlife – a possible food source.”

“From what we could see there is a lot of room for starting some farms,” Jeannie took over, “There appears to be fresh water lakes as well that are well stocked with fish. This could be just what we need.”

“Are there any possible abandoned buildings?” Sha’re asked, hoping they wouldn’t have to start from scratch.

“We didn’t look that closely,” John admitted, “Just did a fly round and had a look at the coastline. We could be surfing soon.”

Daniel chuckled, receiving an annoyed glare from his wife.

“John, I know this turns you into what Janet calls a taxi-driver,” Sha’re started, “But I would like you to take a team over to the mainland. Unfortunately the few others who are able to fly cannot activate the Jumpers so until we can determine why and a way around it, you are our only pilot.”

“Sure,” John nodded, “But I’d prefer to do it after we’ve taken the Athosians home.”

Sha’re smiled, knowing how involved he’d become with the natives of the Pegasus galaxy, “Of course,” she smiled at them, “It is lunch time so go and get something to eat before our meeting this afternoon.”

“One more thing,” John caught her, “I think Ronon would be an asset to us and I thought maybe you could talk to him.”

Sha’re looked at him a little bemused, “Me?”

“Well I’ve done every persuasive argument on him I can,” John told her, “You can be very convincing when you want to be.”

“I’ll second that,” Daniel said softly, smiling innocently as his wife glared at him again.

Sha’re let out a huff of annoyance before nodding, “Fine. I shall speak with him even if I do not know what good it will do.”

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Teyla sat on the balcony near the rooms her people were using for the moment, she had been overwhelmed when she realised that this was the city of the Ancestors. John had found her the first evening they had arrived here and told her the story of how they’d come to be here. She had not seen many of the Earthers other than the team that had come to Athos, the three doctors and their leader.

“Am I interrupting?” a voice made Teyla turn to where Laura Cadman stood.
“Of course not,” Teyla smiled at her, “Please, join me.”

Laura sat on the balcony smiling as the sun warmed her face, “It’s fantastic to be above ground again. To just sit in the sun.”

“John told me that your last base was an intricate network of tunnels,” Teyla stated, “It is an amazing story and something your people must take great pride in.”

Laura shook her head, “Only in the fact we’re alive, not that we had to run away. “

“That is something that binds us all,” Teyla noted with a sigh, “Having to run from things more powerful than we are is something my people know all too well.”

“Yeah,” Laura murmured.

“The one thing we can do is to hold onto the family and friends we have,” Teyla continued, “Because as long as we keep the ones we love then we have beaten them.”

Laura leaned back against the wall and mused over Teyla’s words. Maybe she needed to pay more attention to the people she had here and not the ones she’d left back on Earth.

“Your family are part of the Phoenix Community,” Sam said, softly and specifically, “I believe your sister is a teacher at the local school.”

Laura felt her throat tighten even more as she stared into the cell, she couldn’t believe what she was seeing, she couldn’t believe that the rumours were true. And she couldn’t believe she was contemplating pretending that she hadn’t seen it.

“Make your choice,” Sam told her, “A man you don’t even know, who drove you crazy for the few hours you spent in his company or your family. Mother, father, sister. They are counting on you, Laura and they won’t understand what happened. Walk away and go back to work.”

Laura stared at the pathetic soul who was staring back at her, his blue eyes pleading for her to help him.

“Make your choice,” Sam said once more.

Laura whispered a silent sorry before she turned her back and walked away from the cell holding Rodney McKay.

Laura walked through the corridors of Atlantis thinking about her conversation with the Athosian leader. She was beginning to wonder about her motivations concerning Rodney and pulling back from him once they had removed the implant. Being together so much while he was incapacitated by the Asurians made Laura uncomfortable the moment he was free that their relationship could change.

It still confused her that the man she had despised the first time she’d met him was now someone Laura would walk through fire for.

Rodney had changed since the day she’d helped pull him from that cell, all the time she spent sleeping at his side and keeping him sane had made her doubt herself so much.

Reaching the mess, Laura stopped in the doorway and watched where Rodney sat across from the
woman who Laura had called a bimbo on more than a few occasions. Laura sighed and grabbed a sandwich before taking a seat in the corner to eat alone, unable to stop herself glancing over at them every few minutes.

“Rodney,” Katie laughed as she listened to his story, “You’re lying.”

“It’s all true,” Rodney insisted, “Jeannie was afraid of the water so I was trying to help. How was I to know we were standing on a sandbank?”

Katie nibbled on the last of her sandwich, smiling as she listened to him talk. She enjoyed his company, when they’d worked together several years ago he hadn’t noticed her at all and when she’d seen him back on Earth she had said hello just happy to see someone she recognised amongst so many strangers.

They met every morning for breakfast and when he could make it lunch, Katie was finally getting him to open up and talk about his life.

“What story are you telling, Mer?” Jeannie demanded as she took the seat beside her brother seeing Katie’s look of surprise.


“Oh yeah,” Jeannie laughed, it was one of the few stories he told anyone when they were prying into his past, “I remember that.”

She smiled at her brother, promising not to reveal his secret before waving over John, Daniel and Sha’re as they walked past. The other three took a seat making Katie frown, but Rodney was relieved to have some other people there to take the pressure off Katie’s desire to know more about him. Lunch was peaceful, the table filled with meaningless chatter to pass the time. Jeannie glanced around and smiled as she saw that everyone in the mess, they had all lost a lot, they were all refugees from their home but everyone was relaxed. They’d taken this city as their home, safely away from those who had chased them down and taken their lives. Jeannie turned back to the discussion at the table, this was home.

The conference room filled up quite quickly after lunch. Sha’re took her usual seat, still not used to being at the head of the table and in charge. Sha’re watched her husband as he spoke with John and Rodney, glancing round to see Jeannie slide in the doors with Ferretti at her side. Radek and the other council members were sitting talking amongst themselves. Sha’re checked her watch and smiled as Janet and Carson hurried in.

“Sorry we’re late,” Janet said as they both took their seats, “A few of the Athosian children had an accident and there were a lot of skinned knees. Not much different from working at the SGC mind you.”

A chuckle went around the room and Sha’re smiled, “Not a problem. Carson, you said that you had something for us?”

Carson nodded, trying to stifle a yawn, “Alright, I’ve been studying why the technology only responds to certain people within the population. Thanks to Jeannie I managed to find the area of the
database that could help and...”

Everyone waited as Carson yawned again.

“Are we keeping you up?” Rodney asked, sarcasm filling his voice.

“Carson hasn’t actually slept in about thirty six hours,” Janet explained, frowning as Rodney and Radek both rolled their eyes.

“That’s their normal state,” Jeannie spoke up.

Sha’re coughed, “Can we return to the topic?”

“Of course,” Carson apologised, “Alright, to make this as short as possible, it’s a gene.”

“A gene?” Rodney leaned forward with interest.

“It’s a specific gene that means people like myself and John can interact with the systems easily,” Carson started before launching into his complete explanation.

“So,” Sha’re said as silence descended on the room, “You believe you can introduce this gene into those who do not have it?”

“And I have samples of everyone’s blood so I can test for it,” Carson told them, “I’ll have a definitive list of who has the gene and who doesn’t within a few hours.”

“Actually,” Sha’re said sharply, “It will be at least tomorrow before you start on it. Carson, you are exceedingly tired and I want you to get some rest.”

“But...”

“Dr Beckett, I will assign one of the newly trained guards to sit on you if you do not obey,” Sha’re told him sweetly but the iron in her voice made Carson sure she meant it.

He nodded and took his seat again.

“Once we have the list,” Sha’re took over, “John, you need to look over it and see who you can train to fly the Jumpers,” she looked around the room, “Is there anything else that people wish to discuss just now?”

Everyone glanced around to see if anyone was going to say something but no one spoke up. Sha’re smiled and stood, “Then we are finished.”

Janet walked with Carson through the corridors of Atlantis, making sure he actually went to his room before she returned to the infirmary. She checked on her patients, smiling as everyone was where they should be and resting.

“Well,” she walked over to the man who was staring at her, “Awake finally. How are you feeling?”

“Head’s sore,” he rasped, “Back is too.”

“I know,” Janet told him kindly as she injected some painkillers into his IV, “You were hurt quite badly a few weeks ago in the escape from the Colony. You don’t have to worry though, we’re all safe.”
“How?”

Janet smiled slightly at the mono-syllabic questioning, “This is Atlantis. The Andurians can’t find us here. We’re safe, so just relax and don’t worry about anything. I’ll come back in a while and check on you.”

With a final smile Janet headed onto her next patient not seeing the glare he gave her.

He watched the doctor walk away from him, the painkillers she’d given him had dulled what little pain he had left and he wanted to jump up and strangle her for daring to gloat about their terrorism against the peaceful beings who had made all their lives better. Sense prevailed however and he closed his eyes.

He knew what he had to do, but he had to bide his time. Soon, he’d start his plan and then he would deliver these traitors to Dr Carter. Soon.
Chapter 17

Ronon stood on the balcony near the room he had been given, thinking about where to go once he left. He was no longer a Runner, no longer a toy for the Wraith to chase but free, for the first time in years and he felt slightly lost.

He was surprised by his own willingness to trust in these people, trust was something he had in very short supply these days but he allowed himself to go with them. Ronon considered his reasoning at the time. They’d defended the villagers he’d inadvertently put in danger from the Wraith without so much as blinking, offering them shelter until it was safe again before remaining on the soon to be Wraith infested planet while their doctor removed the locating beacon in his back.

Ronon turned as he heard a gentle knock on the door, surprised to find the leader of the city standing there. He’d been extremely surprised to find a woman so young in charge of his new acquaintances, Ronon assumed it was really Jackson giving the orders once he discovered their marriage but he soon found out that she was definitely the one in charge.

“Can I join you?” Sha’re asked, her voice soft and a little unsure of her reception.

Ronon nodded and turned slightly so he could look at her. She reminded him a bit of Melena, slim built, dark eyes with a will of iron hidden behind a gentle manner.

“I confess I am only here because John asked me to speak with you,” Sha’re told him, “He wants you to remain with us on Atlantis.”

“Why?” Ronon sat against the wall, stretching his long legs out.

Sha’re sat across from him with her legs crossed, “You are a great warrior and you have no home.”

Ronon simply stared at her so Sha’re continued.

“Do you know much about why we came to Atlantis?” Sha’re asked.

“Only that you’re escaping your homeworld,” Ronon replied.

Sha’re gave a small laugh, “It is not my homeworld but you are correct. Earth was taken over by aliens who came in the guise of helping and someone who was once a trusted friend of my husband showed them the way. The people here have lost family, friends, everything that was theirs, and are still fighting. I understand that you wish to eradicate these Wraith for what they did to you, and I am not saying you should not want this, but they forced you to be an animal, hunted for their sport for a long time. You have a choice, Ronon.”

“What’s that?”

“You can leave here and continue as a nomad with nothing but revenge to live for,” Sha’re replied, “Or you can stay here, help us and possibly find a place for yourself. It is your decision and if you decide to leave, once Dr Beckett agrees you are healthy then I will have them open the gate to wherever you wish.”

“What if I want to leave before he agrees?” Ronon asked forebodingly.

“I will try to persuade you otherwise,” Sha’re told him with a smile, unfazed by his dark stare, “But I will honour your decision.”
Standing she started to leave before turning back, “I know what it is like to live as a slave, Ronon. My people were slaves to an evil being who kept us downtrodden and uneducated so that we believed him to be a god. Almost exactly one year after we were freed, I was abducted by a creature called a Goa’uld. It is a snake like creature that can only survive within a human host. It enters by the neck and takes over forcing the host to be nothing but an observer,” she stopped for a few moments, swallowing hard against the feelings her story was bringing up within her, “I was held captive like that for almost three years and I vowed never to be a slave or allow anyone else to give into slavery again. Do not be a slave to your anger, Ronon. We are offering you a place here. Think about it and tell me whenever you are ready.”

With that said Sha’re left Ronon alone once more.

John saw Sha’re coming towards him and stepped forward ready to ask but he didn’t get the chance.

“I have spoken with him,” she said softly, telling the former Runner her history had disturbed her more than she had realised it would, “It is his choice, John and no matter what you want you cannot change his decision.”

“Can I ask him to come with us to Athos tomorrow?” John gave her a puppy-dog look.

Sha’re rolled her eyes at him, “Yes,” she walked away shaking her head muttering how he was worse than her younger brother.

John grinned and headed to where Ronon was sitting, humming to himself.

*************************************************************************************

Night fell on Atlantis; in the control room a skeleton crew sat drinking coffee and talking as they watched over the city. The night shift of the city’s guard walked the corridors around the safe part of the city.

Daniel walked through the dimly lit corridors to the room he shared with Sha’re. He found his wife already asleep curled up around his pillow; she was more of a morning person while he had always been a night owl. They’d fallen into a pattern where Sha’re would usually work for an hour or so early morning before joining him for breakfast while Daniel worked later at night – he’d always found it easier to study while it was dark outside.

Daniel swiftly undressed before sliding in beside Sha’re and taking the place of his pillow in her arms, resting his arm across her waist he closed his eyes and fell asleep quickly.

Not far from them in the largest lab they could find, Rodney and Radek were working, talking quietly so not to wake Jeannie. She’d decided to lie down for a few minutes over an hour ago and fallen asleep on the couch. Rodney glanced over at her as she murmured in her sleep. He stopped Radek mid-sentence and grabbed the blanket sitting nearby before gently covering her with it. Rodney rested his hand on his baby-sister’s shoulder for a moment before returning to his conversation.
Ronon Dex slept. His years on the run meant the slightest thing would wake him, however in the few days he’d been with these people he’d slept longer and with no interruption which hadn’t happened in such a long time, even before the destruction of his world.

John was sleeping fully clothed on his bed, the book he’d taken from the library set up was hanging limply from his fingers open at the first page.

In her room Laura was curled up around a pillow sleeping; across the city Ferretti was sleeping face-first in his pillow after a sparring match with Ronon hoping he wasn’t going to be one big bruise in the morning.

In their own rooms on either side of the infirmary, Janet and Carson both slept after a long day leaving Jennifer in charge of the night-shift as the city slept.

In the infirmary he waited, watching the staff as they moved around checking on their patients. Finally the floor cleared as the doctor disappeared into her office and the nurses all moved to the furthest corner giving him the space he needed. Slowly, making sure he looked as though he was merely trying to get up for a walk, he stood and pulled on the slippers sitting at the end of the bed. Slipping from the infirmary he moved slowly through the corridors wondering where he was exactly. Finding a balcony, he stopped staring out across the moonlit sea and the part of the city he could see. Standing there he held onto the banister, trying to rationalise his need to grip the rail as an after-effect of his injuries and not to do with the place he was seeing before him.

It took him several minutes before he could pull himself away from the view. He sternly reminded himself what he was doing here, that he had to stop these traitors.

With difficulty he started on again, walking forward to one of the labs. He smiled to himself as he found everything he needed, it wouldn’t take him long to set up his little surprise. And then he would have to wait for the right time.

********************************************************************************

John slipped into the pilot’s seat of what he’d decided was his Jumper; he grinned as Teyla and Ronon joined him, each taking a seat in the cockpit.

“Just waiting on Rodney and we’ll be ready to go,” John told them.

“What about the rest of your team?” Teyla asked.

“Daniel, Ferretti and Cadman all have other things to do,” John explained, “Besides more than four in the ship gets a bit tight.”

Teyla smiled and looked around the small vessel they were in, not understanding what everything
was for but it made her feel comforted knowing that John obviously did.

“Why bring McKay?” Ronon asked from his seat, “He’s not a fighter.”

“No,” John agreed, “But he is a brilliant scientist whom I want on board if something goes wrong but tell him I said this and I’ll deny every word.”

Ronon chuckled; grinning as Rodney came jogging in trying to juggle a bag and his computer as well as a power bar.

“Are we ready?” Rodney mumbled round his latest bite.

John grinned, “Just waiting for you. Control,” he called over the radio, “This is Jumper One, ready to go.”

“The Athosians are waiting for your word so they can return home,” Sha’re told him, “So do not decide to go for a journey around the entire planet.”

“You’re no fun,” John laughed.

“Go,” Sha’re ordered, obviously trying not to laugh as well.

John turned to Rodney who dialled the Gate barely even looking at the controls as most of his concentration was on his laptop. The automatic system took over and John grinned as the Gate appeared before them, before they moved through the shimmering blue surface.

The first thing John thought when they exited the Stargate was ‘Oh crap’, the second thing he thought was ‘being invisible would be helpful’.

“What the hell is that?” Rodney cried in horror as the large ship sat covering the horizon.

“Wraith cruiser,” Ronon growled, before pointing at the small dart like ships filling the sky, “Can they see us?”

John tilted his head as he moved the ship slowly through mass of ships, “I don’t think so.”

“They can’t. We have an invisibility cloak,” Rodney told them from his seat, he’d found a scientific console just behind the pilot’s seat and hooked up his laptop to it instantly.

“Are you sure?” Teyla asked nervously.

Rodney gave her a quick glance, “Of course I am. We have to get out of here now,” he turned to John, “Right?”

“Right,” John agreed, “The problem is opening the Gate and getting back through without being followed.”

“We could just destroy them,” Ronon rumbled from behind Teyla.

“Okay, one I have no idea what the fire power is on this thing,” John told him, “And two, we’d end up getting killed before we could do any real damage.”

“We also must warn the rest of my people,” Teyla reminded them softly with sadness in her voice.
John winced, seeing Rodney and Ronon both looking as apologetic as he felt for not remembering instantly that this was Teyla’s homeworld. John aimed the Jumper up towards space so he had some time to think of a plan.

*******************************************************************************************

Laura sat in the small lab Radek had directed her to. They’d found several devices they weren’t sure about and since her area of expertise was explosives Rodney had asked, through Sha’r, for Laura to look at them. Taking a sip of tea, Laura placed the current strange shaped object to one side, it wasn’t a bomb – it was possibly a music box.

She sighed, annoyed that she hadn’t been allowed to return to Athos but she knew John wanted to take Ronon along so he could try and persuade the big guy to stick around. Laura was all for that, he knew the territory and was obviously able to fight.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” an apologetic voice came from the doorway.

Laura turned and tried not to wince as Katie Brown stood in the doorway holding what looked like several potted plants.

“I was looking for a sunny spot for these,” Katie told her, “Since we’re only allowed in certain parts of the city I can’t get to the best places just now.”

“Oh,” Laura waited before realising Katie was waiting for her to say something, “Are you wanting to put them in here?”

Katie smiled, “I can see the perfect spot just at the window. If you don’t mind?”

“Sure, sure,” Laura murmured, “Whatever I’m not doing anything with it.”

She went back to work trying to ignore the happy humming from the other woman; Laura gritted her teeth knowing that the other woman wasn’t purposefully trying to annoy her.

“Can I ask you something?” Katie suddenly said.

Laura winced before turning to her, “Sure.”

“You’re close to Rodney,” Katie said, stepping over to the desk, “I was wondering if...well...”

“You want me to tell you how to get close to him,” Laura finished for her.

Katie nodded “He’s sweet and brilliant but I get the sense he’s holding back from getting too involved with me.”

Laura groaned inwardly, “I’m not the best person to ask.”

“But you are,” Katie continued, “I’ve heard that you were the one who helped rescue him from Dr Carter and you were very close for the six months before we came here.”

Laura gritted her teeth trying not to lose her temper with the other woman but she was getting close to the end of her fuse.

“Look,” Laura snapped before pulling her voice back, “Dr Brown, I am not as close to Rodney as everyone thinks. You want to know how to get to know him better, talk to his sister.”

Turning back to her work, Laura studiously ignored the other woman until she left the room before
dropping her head onto the table. Life sucked.

Daniel sat going through the database trying to find any reference to the mainland. Sha’re wanted to know if he could find anything concerning the mainland, hinting that if there had been farms it would be helpful to know where they had been.

Unfortunately he wasn’t getting anywhere since he had spent most of his time thinking over the conversation he’d heard during their escape.

Teal’c was alive; Teal’c had been alive all this time. They’d abandoned him then, and Daniel had abandoned him once again.

“*It was Teal’c’s choice,*” Jack reminded them.

Daniel stared back at him as he sat on the bed in Janet’s makeshift infirmary, Sha’re sitting at his side with Daniel’s arm wrapped around her shoulders while Janet sat in a chair at their side.

“*Teal’c was a big boy,*” Jack continued, “*And getting you back, Daniel was the one thing he wanted above all.*”

“I didn’t want him to die for me,” Daniel snapped, wincing as he almost pulled out his IV.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re tried to calm him, “I did not want anything to happen to Teal’c either but…”

Seeing tears fill her eyes, Daniel pulled her closer before kissing the top of her head, “I’m sorry, love. I didn’t mean to upset you.”

“If he’s alive,” Jack said, knowing that was very unlikely, “Then we’ll get him back,” he watched his friends as they all felt the loss of the former First Prime but Jack felt proud that Teal’c had sacrificed himself to save Daniel.

Daniel grimaced as he realised he’d lost a good bit of time thinking about the past, shaking his head he realised he’d entered ‘Andurian’ into his search instead of ‘animal’.

“Damn it,” he muttered, groaning as it entered the database.

Rubbing his eyes, Daniel started to enter the search properly when he saw the results from the previous database search.

“Oh my God,” he breathed, staring at the screen, “The Ancients knew them,” he leaned forward slightly as more information filled the screen, “And they did not like them.”
“We have to get out of here,” Rodney stated, his voice high with panic.

Ronon snorted, his eyes focussed on the screen showing the Wraith ships all around them as John manoeuvred the small craft around the enemy ships.

“You are correct,” Teyla soothed Rodney, “But first we need to make a plan or they will kill us.”

“So make a plan,” Rodney snapped, “I am not dying here after getting out of Earth.”

“McKay,” John turned on him, “I’ve never done this before either so just give me a little time, okay?”

Rodney said nothing returning to staring at his computer while John grimaced, trying to think of something to get them out of this. With a deep breath he decided just to go with his first instinct.

“Okay,” John said, “Here’s what we’re going to do...”

John took in a deep breath as he gripped the controls, turning he saw Rodney sitting at the seat behind him working on finding weapons if they possibly had any. Teyla was ready to dial the base the moment John ordered it while Ronon was watching the Wraith ships so he could signal John when to go.

“Now,” Ronon ordered.

John sent the Jumper into a dive towards the planet, dodging the darts and starting for the Gate at as wide an angle as possible.

“Dial,” he ordered which Teyla did quickly, the moment the Stargate burst open all the darts headed for them, “Rodney.”

“Atlantis,” Rodney barked quickly, “Open the shield the moment you get our signal and shut it the instant we’re through.”

“Rodney?” Sha’re asked confused,

“Do it,” he yelled back, turning to John.

“Hold on,” John called; he turned the Jumper in a tight curve narrowly avoiding colliding with a dart. Weapons would be nice, he thought, surprised as he realised he’d fired at the darts.

“What the hell?” Rodney demanded, gripping the console as the darts found a target.

“Send the signal,” John shouted, “Now.”

Rodney tapped in his code quickly, breathing a sigh of relief as the blue light loomed before them and then the Gateroom appeared before them. He saw Sha’re standing in the Control room calling out an order and he hoped to hell she was putting the shield back up just as the Jumper’s automation kicked in and they were moved into the Jumper Bay.
Sha’re watched the Jumper slide through the Stargate before turning to Peter and ordering the shield back up, relieved that he was ahead of her. They all watched in astonishment as the shield pulsed several times before the Gate shut down.

“I will be in the Jumper Bay,” Sha’re told Peter, handing control to him as she started out quickly.

As she jogged through the corridors Sha’re heard her name, turning she was surprised to see Daniel coming towards her.

“John and his team have just arrived back,” Sha’re grabbed her husband’s hand, “Come on.”

A little confused, Daniel followed on, skidding to a halt as they found John, Rodney, Ronon and Teyla trapse out of the Jumper.

“What happened?” Sha’re demanded instantly, worry in her eyes.

“The Wraith now infest my world,” Teyla told her, sadness in her dark brown eyes, “We cannot return there.”

Sha’re moved forward and rested her hand on Teyla’s shoulder, “I am so sorry. You know you are all more than welcome to remain here on Atlantis with us, or we will look for another world for you to relocate to.”

“Thank you,” Teyla breathed, “I must go and tell my people the news. Excuse me.”

Sha’re nodded and they all watched Teyla as she walked out the room, her head held high but the sadness she felt trailing her every step.

Once Teyla was gone, Sha’re turned to John, “What happened?”

“They were everywhere,” John reported, “They have a huge ship where the village used to be.”

“Hive ship,” Ronon threw in.

Sha’re sighed, “All of you need to go and have your post mission examination.”

“We weren’t even out of the Jumper,” Rodney protested.

“Its protocol set by the SGC,” Daniel reminded him, “Every trip through the Stargate means a pre and post mission medical.”

Rodney snorted, “Stupid.”

Sha’re folded her arms and frowned at him, “Rodney!!!”

Muttering under his breath Rodney headed for the infirmary; John smirked and motioned Ronon to follow.

Ronon started after the other man before turning back to Sha’re and giving her an enigmatic smile, “I’m staying.”

Daniel turned to his smirking wife and decided not to tell her what he’d just discovered, not until he’d had a little time to get more details.
“You look pleased with yourself,” Daniel noted.

“Ronon has decided to stay in Atlantis,” Sha’re told him, “I know he will be a great asset to us,” she moved closer to him before frowning, “You were rushing to see me, is something wrong?”

Daniel shook his head, “Nope. Just heard the team were back and I knew you’d be coming to see what happened.”

Sha’re nodded, she took his hand, “We should return to work.”

Daniel didn’t move and pulled her back to him, he’d realised that morning when he’d woken up alone that they didn’t really get to spend much time together without the details of running the city intruding.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re laughed as she was pressed against the wall of the Jumper Bay, “I have work to do.”

“So,” he murmured as he started to kiss her neck.

Sha’re sighed at his touches, “I am expected at a meeting with the council.”

“Be late,” he kissed her properly and Sha’re wrapped her arms around him for a while.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re breathed as they parted, “As much as I would love this right now, I have duties. Duties that you and Jack ensured I took on.”

Daniel moaned in annoyance.

“Tonight,” Sha’re told him, “We will both slip away and spend all night using that large bath I discovered in our quarters,”

Daniel grinned and kissed her once more, “Deal.”

*********************************************

“Mer,” Jeannie dodged several of Ferretti’s recruits and caught up with her brother, “What happened?”

Rodney looked at his sister and shrugged.

“And my psychic powers say...”

“The Wraith had taken over the planet,” Rodney rolled his eyes at her; “The Athosians can’t go home. Just like us.”

“Do you regret it?” Jeannie asked, turning to look out the window across the city, “Coming here, discovering all we’ve discovered so far, knowing how much more there is to find?”

Rodney stood and stared thoughtfully at the city as well.

“Do I regret it?” he murmured as his memory threw up something he didn’t want to remember.

“You shouldn’t be so curious, Dr McKay. Look how much trouble it’s got you into.”

“Mer?” Jeannie reached out and touched her brother’s arm, “What’s wrong?”
Rodney turned to her, he hadn’t told her everything. She only knew Carter had imprisoned him for a few months and placed the device in his back but he hadn’t told her everything, he couldn’t because he didn’t want her to know and he didn’t want to remember.

“Nothing,” he smiled at her, “And I guess I don’t regret it. I’d just like things to be different.”

“Speaking of different,” Jeannie said with a smirk, “Your girlfriend has been putting plants everywhere there’s even a hint of sunlight.”

“She’s not...” Rodney frowned at her as she laughed, “It’s complicated.”

“I’ll bet,” Jeannie said blandly, “Considering you’re in love with someone else.”

Rodney nearly choked, “What?”

“For a genius, Mer,” Jeannie laughed, “You’re an idiot,” she patted her brother’s shoulder before walking away leaving him staring after her.

Rodney rubbed the back of his neck as he headed into his lab to see what the idiots who called themselves scientists had done while he was away, stuck in a tin can with alien ships everywhere.

“Good,” Radek said the instant Rodney entered the room, “You have to see this. I found plans for some of mainland stations. You’re going to love this.”

Rodney took a seat and watched as Radek brought up schematics, “Hmm,” he leaned forward, “It runs on geothermic energy. If we can get this set up we can heat the houses for those working on the mainland once we get farms set up.”

Heading to get some coffee Rodney had to fight several plants to find some creamer, “Why is this forest in here?”

“Dr Brown said you didn’t mind,” Radek told him, “You have spent a great deal of time with her lately.”

“Get them out of here,” Rodney ignored him, “This is not a greenhouse and I am not working near these...things.”

Radek chuckled and motioned the two assistants to hurry up as Rodney sat at his computer and started working, growling at anyone who dared come close.

Teyla found a balcony and sank to the floor, closing her eyes as she thought back to the news she had imparted to her people. Their reaction had ranged from anger to sadness and recriminations had echoed through the room until Teyla had left them, needing time alone.

“Bad day?”

Teyla turned to find Laura Cadman standing in the doorway, “A little.”

“Tell me about it,” Laura sighed, “My day kinda sucked, I know not as bad as your day did but I say we share the pain.”

Teyla smiled as Laura produced two bars of candy, “Join me.”
Laura slid down the wall and as soon as she was settled comfortably handed Teyla one of the bars, “How are your people taking the news?”

“Badly,” Teyla sighed, her own grief at losing her home filling her once again, “But I cannot blame them for that. We have no home.”

“Neither do we,” Laura reminded her, “But we’re making this our home. Your people should be grateful that they weren’t there.”

“The Wraith would have culled us all,” Teyla breathed, she tapped the candy bar against her leg, “We are alive and safe. I need to remind them all of this.”

Laura nodded.

“Now,” Teyla turned to the other woman, “How did your day...suck?”

Laura groaned, “I was hoping I could let you talk, I’d listen and that’d be it.”

Teyla smiled slightly, “You need to talk, Laura. I am willing to listen.”

“Fine,” Laura rolled her eyes but remained silent.

Teyla waited, silently eating her candy bar but after several minutes decided to take matters into her own hands.

“This is about Dr McKay,” she noted astutely.

“No,” Laura replied, “This is about the bimbo.”

Teyla smiled as she took another bite of the candy, John had given her the gossip of many of the people in the city and Rodney’s relationship with Laura was one of his favourite stories.

“You are speaking of Dr Brown?” Teyla asked, noting the grimace on Laura’s face, “I believe the term bimbo, according to John, means that she is unintelligent. I thought she could only become a doctor if she were smart.”

“Oh please,” Laura spat out, she closed her eyes and sighed, “She just annoys me.”

“I noticed,” Teyla managed not to smile, “It cannot be easy that she has taken your place.”

“I noticed,” Teyla managed not to smile, “It cannot be easy that she has taken your place.”

“My what?”

“I apologise,” Teyla said, “I was told by John that you and Rodney were extremely close but something recently changed. I have seen the way he looks at you and the way you look when you see him with Dr Brown. I assumed...”

“You’re wrong,” Laura cut her off; frowning at the look she was being given.

“Am I?”

Laura sighed, “Probably not but it’s more complicated than you or anyone else thinks. My feelings can’t erase what I did.”

Without another word Laura stood and left Teyla sitting wondering.
Sha’re walked through the corridors of the city towards the infirmary, she’d just finished her final meeting of the day and needed to speak to Janet before meeting Daniel for their night alone. She’d realised herself that they spent very little time together these days, they slept together but when Daniel would join her most nights she would already be sleeping. That was why they needed tonight, just to be alone together and forget everything else.

“Sha’re,” Janet greeted her, “What do I owe the pleasure?”

“I need to speak with you,” Sha’re told her, “In private for a few moments. Is that possible?”

“Of course,” Janet ushered the young woman into her office and sat her down, “Now, what’s wrong?”

Sha’re licked her lips nervously, “I need you to test me.”

Worry covered Janet’s face, “Test?”

“I think I may be with child again,” Sha’re confessed, “I am not sure but I am feeling the way I felt before and I just want to make sure that...”

“Sha’re,” Janet cut her off before she rambled anymore, “All right, I’ll do a pregnancy test and we’ll find out.”

Janet squeezed her friend’s hand and left Sha’re alone in the office so that she could get what she would need for a pregnancy test. Sha’re sat with her fingers interlaced as her hands sat in her lap, she wasn’t sure whether or not she wanted to be pregnant. Daniel had brought up the possibility of having children again not that long ago; she’d been suspicious at that time but didn’t want to give him false hope. It was one the good things about getting up earlier than him, it meant he never saw how bad she’d been feeling the past few mornings.

“You know I’d never thought I’d get this,” Daniel murmured as he looked at the people of Nagada sitting around the fire.

Sha’re turned to look up at him, “Get what, husband?”

“Family,” Daniel replied, he reached out and pulled her close to him, “I lost my own so long ago that I never dared dream that I’d get another.”

“Then you wish to have children, husband?” Sha’re smiled up at him, they’d only been married a few weeks and Sha’re was still a little unsure how to act around him so reverted to the Abydonian mode of address for him.

“I want lots and lots of kids,” Daniel leaned over and gently kissed just below her ear before murmuring in it, “We could go home and try now if you want.”

“Here we go,” Janet’s voice brought Sha’re back to the present, “Just need to take some blood and then I’ll do the test.”

Sha’re held out her arm and winced slightly as the needle penetrated her skin, despite everything she’d seen in the years she’d been on Earth and Atlantis there were times like now that the amazement still hit her of how primitive, Daniel called it low-tech, her upbringing had been.
It didn’t take that long and Sha’re closed her eyes as Janet revealed the results of her test.

He sat on his bed in the infirmary; the doctor had left with a woman he didn’t recognise and frustration filled him. He needed to get out of here but he needed the doctor to release him so no one would come after him.

“Hey,” a nurse came over to him and checked him, “You’ll be out of here as soon as the doctor has finished with Sha’re.”

Sensing an opportunity he looked interested, “Who?”

“Of course, you were unconscious when the group you were with joined us,” the nurse smiled, “Sha’re’s in charge of the city. She’s our leader.”

“Oh,” he mused.

“She’s doing a great job merging the different groups,” the nurse continued to talk, “Got a council formed, made sure the kids are looked after so everyone can work.”

He nodded, “Hope I get to meet her.”

The nurse smiled again, “Doctor Fraiser will be over soon.”

He watched the nurse leave and a plan started to form in his mind, he knew he’d have to find someone important to get back to Earth and now, the highest ranking person of this whole despicable terrorist group had just fallen into his lap.

Sha’re walked slowly as she left the infirmary, her mind a confused jumble after seeing the results of her test. Stopping at a window she looked out across the city, a new home, a new beginning for them all.

Shaking herself Sha’re decided to head to the commissary and pick up some food for them to share as she knew Daniel would forget about dinner. Sha’re smiled to herself as she thought of the upcoming night alone with her husband.

Starting forward Sha’re became aware suddenly of someone walking beside her; she glanced to her side and found a man she didn’t recognise walking beside her. Before she could utter a sound he grabbed her and pressed a knife to her throat.
Chapter 19

Daniel sat in the small lab he’d commandeered, going over all the records he could find concerning the Andurians. He was determined to learn as much as he could before he told Sha’ré what he’d found. Daniel paused, allowing himself a brief amused smile that he now worked for his wife before glancing at the clock to see how long he had before their agreed rendezvous time.

It slightly amused him, though annoyed him more that they had to set up specific times to spend some time alone together and that was why he needed to find as much as he could about the aliens that had torn their world apart and why his friend Sam had become their enemy, Carter.

Daniel glanced at the clock and decided to finish up for just now. He wanted to get the room prepared for Sha’ré. The large bath had fragranced salts hidden in a compartment beside it – he’d stumbled across them one day, and once Sha’ré had made this date for them his mind started to turn as he tried to think of ways to make it special.

As he turned off his computer, Daniel heard his radio beep and touched the button, “What’s up?”

“Daniel,” Ferretti’s voice came through, “Get to the Gateroom.”

“What’s going on?” Daniel asked, even as he started out of the room.

“Just get here,” Ferretti said before the line went dead.

Worry coursed through Daniel and he started to run through the corridors of the city, as he reached the Gateroom he entered and Ferretti grabbed him to stop him doing something stupid as all Daniel could see was his beloved Sha’ré standing with a knife pressed to her throat.

Sha’ré used every lesson her father had taught her to remain calm as she was forced along the corridors by her captor but even those weren’t helping.

“What do you wish?” Sha’ré asked softly, “We will help you.”

“Shut up,” he snarled, he pressed the knife harder against her skin, “I don’t want anything from scum like you. Now move.”

Sha’ré did as she was told, he had one hand holding the knife to her throat while his other arm was around her waist keeping her close so she couldn’t struggle free and no one could hurt him without hurting her.

People in the corridors moved out of the way as Sha’ré was forced along, she could see many of them wanted to help but she managed to communicate that they were not to interfere. If one of them made a move and wasn’t fast enough then Sha’ré knew she would be dead and Daniel would be alone once more.

Sha’ré wanted to try and speak to her abductor, to explain who she was, how she had survived the Goa’uld possession and how she had been hurt by Carter but she knew he wouldn’t listen.

Finally they were at the Gateroom and Sha’ré saw everyone turn and stop as she was forced into the centre of the room.
“Open the Gate to Earth,” her abductor ordered.

“We can’t do that,” Peter said, his voice soft and soothing.

Sha’re felt and heard him laugh, “I’m not stupid. I want it opened, now.”

“They have to reinstall the extra crystal,” Sha’re explained, “We removed it so that no one could dial Earth.”

“You’re lying,” he pressed the knife hard again making her give a small squeal of pain, “I will kill her.”

Sha’re closed her eyes for a second in fear before she opened them again and saw Daniel standing there in front of her with pure panic in his eyes.

John was in the gym with Ronon when he was called. Samson, one of the military recruits, had been in the corridor passed by Sha’re as she was held hostage and instantly called John to let him know what was happening. Unknown to Sha’re the corridors were filled with John and Ferretti’s recruits as he and Ronon raced to Gateroom another way.

“I want to know who the hell this guy is,” John snapped to the heads of every department as he and Ronon rang through the corridors, “I want everything on him by the time I get to the Gateroom.”

They were able to get there before Sha’re was forced through the doors and discreetly made sure everyone was out of the way while making it look as busy as always. John felt both anger and fear fill him as he watched Sha’re being forced into the centre of the room.

“I want this guy’s name now,” John snapped over his radio as he stayed back out of sight.

“Sheppard,” Ronon rumbled, nodding down to the floor.

John winced as he saw Daniel come running in, relieved that Ferretti was there to stop him in his tracks.

“John,” Janet came running in, “I know who he is.”

John grabbed the piece of paper from her and quickly read the name at the top, Aidan Ford.

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“Lieutenant Ford?”

Aidan looked up as the doctor came over to him, instantly he was off his seat, “Are they okay?”

The doctor dropped his head, “I’m sorry but they both inhaled a large amount of the gas. There’s nothing we can do but make them comfortable.”

Aidan dropped back into his seat as the doctor’s words floated round and round his head, his grandparents, the two people who had raised him from the day his parents had died in a car crash were dying.

“Is there anyone you need to call?” the doctor asked, resting his hand on Aidan’s shoulder.

Aidan shook his head, “There’s only my cousin and she’s at school on Taris just now.”
The doctor nodded, Taris was a research station that could only be reached by ship and was notoriously hard to contact.

“If you want to see them,” the doctor told him, “You can. In fact I think they’d want you there.”

Aidan walked slowly into the hospital room that contained his dying grandparents, victims of the latest terrorist attack and stopped before he entered properly. They were lying in beds that were side by side, together as they had been for over fifty years, it was horribly poetic that they were going to die together.

“Aidan,” his grandmother called softly.

“Hey,” he forced a smile onto his face, “You’re looking better.”

Rose Ford frowned at her grandson, “I raised you better than to lie, young man.”

This broke the thread holding back his fear, “Grandma...”

Rose reached out to him and Aidan automatically moved to her side, glancing slightly to her side and seeing that his grandfather was sleeping. Rose reached out and cupped her grandson’s cheek, the only child of her son and smiled.

“I am...we are so proud of you,” Rose told him, “I know I did not want you joining the Marines but you have made me so proud.”

“Grandma...”Aidan shook his head as he couldn’t find the words; he took her hand and frowned as her head lolled to one side, “Grandma?”

The sun was shining much to Aidan’s disgust, it should have been raining on the day he buried his grandparents but instead it was the best day of the year so far. He’d tried his best to contact Lara but she was still on Taris and there was no way she’d be able to get home in time for the funeral even if she’d started her journey the day of the accident.

As everyone moved away, many giving him their condolences, Aidan stood and stared at the headstone. He barely noticed someone come to his side but just stood and thought about the people he’d lost.

“Lieutenant,” a woman said softly, “I wanted to extend my condolences on the death of your grandparents.”

Aidan turned and stared a little shocked at who was standing in front of him. The blond woman standing was wearing a black suit with a white blouse looking exactly the way she did on the television.

“Dr Carter,” he breathed stunned, “What are you doing here?”

“Call me Sam,” she told him before she dropped her eyes slightly, “I wanted to do something,” she told him sincerely, “Your grandparents were victims because I couldn’t...” she stopped and motioned him to walk with her.

Aidan followed the woman dubbed ‘Saviour of Earth’ to a bench and sat beside her waiting.
“The people behind the attack your grandparents were caught in are led by a man called Jack O’Neill,” Sam explained to him, “He was once a member of the SGC and I called him friend but for some reason he could not accept peace when it came to Earth. I should have done more but instead I let my feelings of friendship get in the way and now...”

“Why are you telling me?” Aidan asked.

“Because I know you want to be able to do something,” Sam told him, “And I’m offering you the chance to help stop the people who killed your grandparents.”

Sha’ré licked her lips and decided to try once more to get through to the man currently holding her hostage.

“I know that you are confused,” Sha’ré spoke softly, “But we can help.”

“Help?” Aidan snarled, “Why would I want help from people who would prefer the Goa’uld were still trying to destroy us?”

“Look at my neck,” Sha’ré told him.

“What?”

Sha’ré saw Daniel staring at her confused at what she was doing but she pressed on, “Look at the scar on the back of my neck, that is where a Goa’uld entered my body and forced me to do things I cannot bear to think of. No one is more grateful than I that they are gone.”

She felt Aidan stiffen slightly and pushed on.

“Look around you,” Sha’ré whispered, “We are just trying to live in peace.”

John watched Sha’ré as she tried to talk down her the man holding her hostage and he knew that one wrong word would mean her death. He wasn’t about to accept that.

“Can you hit him?” John asked Ronon.

“Easily,” Ronon brought out his gun and set it to stun, as he started to aim it Janet pushed it to face the floor.

“You can’t do that,” Janet told them, “You’ll hit Sha’ré too.”

“She’ll be fine,” Ronon assured her.

“No,” Janet sighed, hating that she was going to reveal this without Sha’ré’s permission, “Sha’ré’s pregnant. If you hit her with a stun beam it could kill the baby and she can’t lose another child.”

“The only other way is to kill him,” John reminded the doctor.

Before either could say another word, Ronon took a gun from one of the guards and let off one shot.

Sha’ré knew she was getting through to him, she knew she only needed a few more minutes and he
would let her go but she never got the chance. A loud bang was accompanied by her face being splattered by something warm and wet before the man holding her hostage fell to the ground.

Sha’re saw the bullet hole in the young man’s head and realised that it was his blood and brains that she was covered with. She took a staggering step forward and found Daniel holding onto her as the world around her exploded into a frenzy but all she could do was stare at the body on the ground as Daniel held her.

“Sha’re,” Janet appeared and gently touched the young woman’s face to get her attention, “Sha’re, look at me.”

Sha’re lifted her head and focussed slowly on the doctor, “I am fine. I just want to clean up and get some rest.”

“I’d prefer you come to the infirmary,” Janet said with a frown.

“No,” Sha’re whispered, watching as the body was removed from the floor, “I need to sleep, Dan’iel shall stay with me.”

Janet looked over to Daniel who nodded before she sighed, “All right. Get some sleep and I’ll see you in the morning.”

Sha’re allowed Daniel to lead her from the room but before they left she turned to the men moving the body.

“He is to be treated with respect,” Sha’re ordered, “Ensure that happens.”

Daniel drew Sha’re along the corridor to their room, once there Daniel quickly ran the bath as Sha’re sat on the bed simply staring at the wall. Daniel grabbed a cloth and sitting at her side gently cleaned her face before helping her undress.

“Destroy them,” Sha’re whispered as she tossed her blood splattered clothes to one side before she slowly walked to the bath.

Sliding into the warm water Sha’re closed her eyes while Daniel watched her, briefly thinking that this was how they’d planned to spend their night but he wished it was more how he’d planned all day.

“Hey,” Daniel sat at the side of the bath, “Ready to get out?”

With a sigh, Sha’re nodded and took her husband’s hand to help her out of the bath. Daniel wrapped her in the towel and gently drew her back into the bedroom.

“Could you make me some tea?” Sha’re asked her husband, smiling as he nodded and gently kissed her.

Sha’re found a clean nightdress and slid into it before resting back on the bed against the headboard. Daniel handed her a mug and sat beside her as she drank in silence. Once she’d finished Sha’re slid to lie down and cuddled close to Daniel as he wrapped his arms around her.

Finally she started to cry as she let the day affect her, sobbing as Daniel held her until she fell asleep.
John sat on a balcony after his morning run, he hated that they’d had to kill the kid but they’d had no choice, he was unstable and there was no way they could have got him away from Sha’re without her being hurt.

“Can I join you?”

John glanced up and saw Jeannie standing a mug of tea in one hand and what looked like muffins on the plate in her other.

“Depends,” he motioned the plate, “Chocolate?”

“One of the Athosian berry things,” Jeannie replied, “But I will share.”

“Then grab a seat,” John told her with a grin.

Jeannie sat leaning against the wall and placed the plate between them, “So,” Jeannie clasped her mug tightly, “Are you okay?”

“Why wouldn’t I be?” John evaded her question as he pulled off a piece of the muffin beside him.

“Because you had to kill someone,” Jeannie whispered.

“Ronon did it,” John reminded her, “Not me.”

Jeannie simply looked at him, holding his gaze even though he wanted to look away before saying, “But you had to give the order.”

John finally managed to drop his gaze, “Yeah.”

“You need to take some time off,” Daniel stated as he marched beside Sha’re through the corridors.

“I am perfectly fine, Dan’iel,” she told him, “I do not need to be coddled.”

“Sha’re, you were held hostage less than twelve hours ago,” Daniel reminded her, annoyed at his wife’s insistence to go back to work.

“I am perfectly aware of that,” she snapped.

Daniel gritted his teeth as she marched ahead of him, “You are just like your father sometimes, you know that?”

“I am sure he is pleased his lessons were listened to,” Sha’re shot back.

Daniel let out a cry of annoyance and grabbed her arm pulling her onto the nearest balcony, “Honey,” he said softly, “Please understand why I’m worried. You cried yourself to sleep last night.”

“And I woke in your arms,” Sha’re squeezed his hand, “I spent almost three years a prisoner in my own body, our child was murdered within me by Carter and last night I had a knife at my throat. Do you know why I am fine?”

“You’ve lost me,” Daniel told her.

“Dan’iel, when I woke after Ammonet was removed you were injured so you were not there to comfort me. When she,” Sha’re paused and swallowed hard, “When she killed our baby, you were a
prisoner and not there but last night, last night I slept while you held me and when I opened my eyes you were laying beside me watching over me.”

Daniel sighed and pulled her into his arms, dropping his forehead onto her shoulder before he kissed her.

“You meet me for lunch and have an early night,” he ordered.

“Yes, my husband.”

“Mrs Jackson?”

Sha’re and Daniel stopped confused to see a man standing waiting in Sha’re’s office. Daniel rested his hand on his wife’s waist and moved her to her desk.

“I’m Andrew Wiley,” the man introduced himself, he nervously ran a hand through his dark brown hair, “I wanted to talk to you about Aidan.”

“Aidan?” Sha’re looked confused at her husband.

“The guy from yesterday,” Daniel murmured softly.

“Oh,” she turned back to Andrew, “What do you wish to speak about?”

Andrew dropped his head, “Aidan was a good guy, we trained together in the Marines or we trained together until I dropped out. I was the one who brought him into the group after his grandparents were killed in what was meant to be a ‘terrorist’ attack, I thought he...he saved my life during an attack which is where he was injured.”

“What do you want?” Daniel demanded sharply, he really didn’t care to learn about the man who had threatened his wife.

“I want to be able to bury him properly,” Andrew told them, “I understand why you don’t care but he saved my life and I feel I owe him this.”

“I understand,” Sha’re said softly, “John Sheppard shall fly you and Aidan’s body to the mainland tomorrow, you can lay him to rest properly.”

Andrew closed his eyes in relief, he’d been sure his request would be denied, “Thank you,” he said before leaving quickly.

“Why are you still hovering?” Sha’re asked her husband after Andrew had left.

“I just wanted to tell you how amazing you are,” Daniel smiled at her, “And I can’t wait till you get to pass that on to our kids.”

Sha’re stopped as she realised he didn’t know yet, the wonderful news she had planned to tell him during their romantic night was still her secret. Knowing here in her office, which was in full view of everyone, was probably not the best place to do this Sha’re considered briefly waiting to tell him but decided now was the best time to do it.

“Dan’iel,” she moved to face him and took his hands, “I have something I need to tell you.”
“Guys,” Peter Grodin interrupted them, “Sorry but there’s a ship in orbit.”

“A ship?” Daniel demanded as they followed him into the control room, “Is there anything in the database? Do we recognise it?”

Peter shook his head but before he could answer a bright light filled the room. Everyone stared as a man stood in the centre of the Gateroom.

“So,” Jack O’Neill said as he looked around interested, “Did you guys miss me?”
Chapter 20

Sam turned and headed outside to find out what was going on leaving Teal’c alone with his dying friend.

Jack looked up at his friend, “Stick with me, T. Just stick around for a while.”

As his words slurred, the life draining from him Jack winked at Teal’c. As soon as the door closed Jack pulled a smooth grey stone with a white symbol out of his pocket, shakily he drew his thumb across the symbol and the room dissolved in a bright white light. Teal’c stared in astonishment as he realised he was on an Asgard ship and relieved as the small grey alien appeared in front of him.

“Greetings, Teal’c,” Thor said, “Place O’Neill within the chamber quickly or he will die.”

Stunned Teal’c lifted his friend’s prone form into the healing chamber and watched as it closed sealing him in. It seemed to take hours but was only a few minutes before Jack opened his eyes, looked around a little amazed then rapped on the glass.

Thor pressed the button, opening the chamber and allowing Jack to climb out.

“Nice timing,” Jack told the small grey alien before turning to Teal’c, “Told you to stick with me.”

Teal’c reached out and gripped Jack’s arm with his hand before pulling him into a tight hug, Jack slapped his back and grinned as they stepped back from one another.

“Good to see you too,” Jack told him, he took a deep breath, “Alright, let’s get started.”

“Have a plan?” Teal’c asked as he joined Jack at the monitor Thor motioned him to.

“We’re going to join everyone in Atlantis,” Jack told him, “But first we have to pick up a few things. Okay, Thor send me down and as soon as you bring us back up grab the supplies then haul ass to our next destination.”

Thor nodded as Jack grabbed a gun before light surrounded him.

Cassie finished writing her essay and saved it. Looking out the window of her apartment she saw the guards look up at her, she gave them a wave and a fake smile so they would look away and let her stare at the sky in peace.

“Nice view you’ve got here,” a familiar voice said from behind her and Cassie spun.

“ Uncle Jack,” she gasped in a breathless whisper moving to hug him tightly, “You came.”

“I promised I would, didn’t I?” Jack smiled and gently kissed her forehead, “Now it’s time to get out of here. Are you ready?”

“I’ve been ready since you contacted me three months ago,” Cassie told him, “But how do we get out? There are guards everywhere, just like there’s been since I was put in this prison and how did you get in?”

“Cassie,” Jack said sternly, “Questions later, grab your stuff.”
Cassie frowned but did as she was told; she’d packed everything she wanted in a few bags several weeks ago and hidden it under her bed along with the picture of her mother. Once she had her bag she moved to Jack’s side, jumping as someone knocked on the door.

“Cassie?”

Jack grimaced as Carter called to the young woman at his side, he’d hoped to have a little more time but this was it. He caught Cassie’s arm and activated the Asgard transport beam taking them both back to the ship.

“Thor,” Jack shouted the moment they were solid, “Grab the stuff and get us out of here, now.”

Cassie dropped her bag as Jack called orders, turning to one side she saw Teal’c standing and ran into his arms.

“I thought you were dead,” she laughed, giddy with happiness, “I thought I was never getting out of there,” she stopped and looked at the two men she’d called uncle almost from the day she’d been rescued, “So where are we going?”

Jack came over and rested his hand on her shoulder, “We’re taking you to see your Mom.”

O’Neill,” Thor said interrupting Jack as he went through the supplies Thor has beamed up, “We are approaching Abydos.”

“Great,” Jack headed over to where Cassie and Teal’c were sitting playing chess on her laptop, “I’m taking a quick trip.”

“A trip?” Cassie asked suspiciously.

“I need to talk to Kasuf,” Jack told them, “Hopefully he’ll know whereabouts we can find Jacob and the rest of the Tok’ra.”

Jack held up his hand, stopping them from asking to come with him before he turned expectantly to Thor.

“I shall be waiting to bring you back aboard as soon as you call,” Thor told Jack.

Before he could reply he was in the middle of the desert and Jack grimaced, “Sunglasses, knew I’d forgotten something.”

Kasuf sat with the other elders discussing the coming harvest. He focussed on his tasks so that he didn’t think about his children and what he’d lost. When Jacob Carter had returned to Abydos after Daniel and Sha’re had returned to Earth, the other man had told him of Daniel’s incarceration and the loss of Sha’re’s child. Kasuf ached to be at her side, to comfort her as he would when she was a little girl but the Chappa-aii had to be buried to keep safe all those he was responsible for so there was no way to go to her.

“Kasuf,” one of the boys came running in, “Kasuf, O’Neill is here.”

At this the old man was up and racing out as though he was his son’s age, heading to where a familiar figure was moving towards him.
“Kasuf,” O’Neill greeted the Chief Elder, taking his hand, “It’s good to see you again.”

“And you,” Kasuf nodded, he looked around hoping to see two people who weren’t there.

“They’re not with me,” O’Neill told him, “But they are safe and they’re together.”

Kasuf gave him an appraising look, “You are certain of this?”

O’Neill nodded, “I promise.”

Relief filled the Chief Elder before he motioned Jack to his tent for some privacy.

Jack could see the tension drain out of Kasuf when he told him Daniel and Sha’re were safe, he’d hated the fact that Jacob had been bringing bad news back to the Elder but it was the only way he knew to persuade Kasuf to rebury the Gate.

“Here,” Kasuf motioned them to take a seat, “Tell me everything.”

Jack gave the Chief Elder a quick summary of the past few years, ensuring he emphasised how Daniel and Sha’re were alright now – he couldn’t help but smile at the pride in Kasuf’s eyes when Jack told him how Sha’re had been placed in charge of the resistance now in Atlantis.

“Kasuf, I need to know where Jacob went,” Jack told the old man, “We’re going to join Daniel and Sha’re in Atlantis, I want to take the last of the Tok’ra with me.”

Kasuf nodded, “He left me with something he called a tracker.”

“I need it now,” Jack sighed in relief, “Kasuf, I’m sorry but we have to go as soon as we can. I want to get to Atlantis.”

“And my children,” Kasuf smiled slightly.

Jack chuckled, “Got to make sure Sha’re doesn’t kill him for being stupid.”

“It is a hard task,” Kasuf smiled slightly, “One I know well myself,” he dropped his head for a moment, “I hope one day to see them again but if I do not...tell Sha’re and Dan’iel that I love them both.”

Jack nodded sadly, reaching out he gripped the old man’s hand, “They know but I’ll make sure to tell them.”

They both stood, Kasuf moved to another part of the tent and retrieved Jacob’s parting gift. He handed it to Jack but as Jack turned to leave he turned back as Kasuf called his name.

“It is an honour to know you, O’Neill,” Kasuf said, “I hope we meet again someday.”

“Me too,” Jack whispered before activating the transmitter and disappearing into a bright white light.

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Jack handed Thor the tracker Kasuf had given him, saddened by the fact he may never see the man again and that Kasuf might never see his children again either. Taking a breath he waited for Thor to work his magic and find the last of the Tok’ra.
“Jack,” Cassie’s voice made him look down to where she stood at his side, “Are you okay?”

He wrapped his arm around her, “I will be once we get Jacob and the rest of his gang then get to Atlantis.”

“And Mom’s there?” Cassie breathed, her eyes filled with hope.

Jack turned to her and smiled, “Yeah. So is Daniel and Sha’re, Ferretti’s with them too.”

“Good,” Cassie told him, “It’s been so long since I saw her because of what they made say,” panic covered the young woman’s face, “What if Mom can’t forgive me?”

“Cass,” Jack hugged her before pushing her back and making her look at him, “Your Mom is going to be ecstatic to see you, I promise.”

Jack waited as Thor scanned the planet they were currently in orbit around; he hoped they could get the rest of the Tok’ra fast and get the hell out of dodge.

“If you wish all the remaining members of the Tok’ra brought up,” Thor stated as he buzzed about his controls, “You must go down to the planet and gather them together in one place.”

Jack nodded, “T, let’s go and round up the kiddies.”

“What do you want me to do?” Cassie demanded as she watched them each grab weapons.

“Help Thor,” Jack replied with a grin, he shrugged as she frowned at him, “What do you think your mother would do to me if I took you down to a possibly hostile planet?”

“I guess you’re right,” Cassie sighed.

Jack grinned at her, “We’ll be back soon,” he turned and nodded at Thor who beamed him and Teal’c down to the surface.

“Next time remind me to ask Thor for a weather report first,” Jack yelled over the battering rain.

Teal’c said nothing as he scanned the horizon for any signs of their objective.

“Okay,” Jack pulled out the tracker and tried to get a reading, happily giving it up as Teal’c took it from his hands.

“This way,” Teal’c told him, motioning towards ominous grey mountains.

Together they started forward, both warily watching for an attack as they moved across the planet smartly.

“Where to now?” Jack asked, stopping at the mouth of several caves.

Teal’c checked the tracker but couldn’t work out where it was sending them next, as he looked around rings appeared around them and transported the pair down into Tok’ra tunnels. As the light surrounding them faded, Jack grinned at the man standing across from them.

“It’s about time,” Jacob told them, he stepped forward and clasped the hand of both men.
“How many are there?” Jack asked, getting to the point straight away.

Jacob dropped his head, “Only fifteen Tok’ra. Garshaw sacrificed herself to save us,” he then gave a slight grin, “But we also have a few of the rebel Jaffa as well.”

“How?” Teal’c demanded.

Jacob motioned them to follow him, “Come say hi.”

The three men walked through a short length of tunnel to a large room where several familiar faces were scattered around.

“Father!!”

Teal’c started in astonishment as his son ran towards him, “Rya’c,” he breathed, embracing the teenager tightly before moving him back and looking at how grown up the boy was now. Glancing up, Teal’c saw his mentor walked towards him also, “Bra’tac.”

Jack grinned, recognising Martouf and Aldwyn amongst the surviving Tok’ra, “Alright, listen up. I need you to gather up everything and get ready to go. We have a ship waiting and I really want to leave as soon as possible.”

“Where can we go?” someone called bitterly.

Jack grinned, “We found a safe haven in another galaxy.”

“Jack?” Jacob asked, placing everyone’s questions in that one word.

“Thor is waiting for us,” Jack grinned at him, “We’ve got Asgard transportation.”

Jacob laughed and nodded, “Alright, let’s get packed.”

“Jack,” Cassie’s voice came over the radio, “You better hurry. Thor’s detecting Andurian ships approaching.”

“Dammit,” Jack snapped, “Everyone grab what you can carry. Thor, can you beam us up from inside the tunnels?”

“Now that I have your radio signal to lock onto then yes,” Thor replied, “Tell me the moment you are ready.”

Jack looked around, watching as everyone scrambled to get all their meagre belongings and the supplies they had. Jack waited impatiently, tapping his watch when Jacob glanced over to him.

“Jack?” Cassie called, “Hurry up.”

“Everyone in here now,” Jack yelled, “We’re out of time.”

“That’s everyone,” Jacob told him, gripping his own pack.

Jack nodded, “Thor, bring us up.”

Cassie sighed in relief as Thor announced that transport had been successful, he’d had to locate them to a cargo area to ensure they were all on board.
“You may wish to keep a hold of the bar,” Thor advised Cassie as he started working again.

Cassie hit her radio, “Everyone grab onto something.”

As the large Andurian vessel came close to the, Thor activated the hyperdrive and the ship jumped; more violently than it normally would in his hurry to remove them from that space. Cassie held on as he suggested, sighing in relief as the vessel steadied.

“We are safe,” Thor assured her, “And now ready to travel to Atlantis.”

“I’ll tell Jack,” Cassie called as she started to leave the room, suddenly stopping and turning back to him, “How long will it take us?”

“Four Earth days,” Thor replied.

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Jack stood staring out into hyperspace hoping that they found everyone safe and well in Atlantis. He was thankful that both the Tok’ra and rebel Jaffa had spent enough time in one another’s company that they all worked well together; there was very little friction. Teal’c was ecstatic to have both his son and his mentor back in his life.

Jacob’s reflection appeared and Jack sighed, “Something you want?”

“I need to know,” Jacob said as he moved to Jack’s side, “What happened to Mark? What did she do to my son?”

Jack closed his eyes, he knew this moment would come but he had hoped that he’d be able to avoid it a little longer. Finally he turned to the older man, the man he’d called friend for so many years.

“Your son, his wife and their children were killed in the first ‘terrorist’ attack,” Jack told him, resting his hand on Jacob’s shoulder as he saw the grief overwhelm him.

“Colonel,” Selmak stated, “Thank you.”

Jack nodded, he’d never been fond of the Tok’ra but just now he was grateful that Jacob wasn’t alone in his grief. As they left Jack alone once more he sighed, thinking of all the lives that had been ruined by the woman they had all trusted so implicitly.

He thought of Sara, his beautiful Sara. He had begun to mend the damage he’d done to their relationship when she’d been murdered by Carter, a murder disguised as a robbery gone wrong.

He wished she was still here, as much as he loved his friends he’d never truly gotten over her loss.

“O’Neill,” Thor’s voice filled the room, “We are approaching the designated planet. You wished to be here when we entered orbit.”

“I’m on my way,” Jack called back; he wiped the small tear that had escaped his eyes before jogging along the corridors.

Jack walked into the control room and smiled as he saw the blue planet they were approaching, “That’s a lot of water.”

“The planet is covered mostly in it,” Thor replied, “I have located the city of Atlantis.”
“And?” Jack held his breath waiting for the answer.

Thor turned to him, “It is occupied.”

Jack let out a sigh of relief, “Great.”

“Well?” Cassie burst out as she came running in accompanied by Teal’c, “Are they there?”

Jack grinned at them and found Cassie hugging him as Teal’c closed his eyes in relief.

“Okay,” Jack said, “Thor send me down.”

“Just you?” Cassie asked suspiciously.

Jack grinned again, “I am not giving up the fun of bringing you all done one at a time and seeing their faces.”

Cassie rolled her eyes and gave him a look worthy of her mother, “Alright but don’t drag it out too long. I want to see everyone.”

Jack winked at her before nodding at Thor, the grey ship surrounding him disappeared and he was suddenly in a large bright room with people, some he recognised and some he didn’t all staring at him. Glancing up he saw Daniel and Sha’re standing gaping so he did the only thing he could.

“So,” he said, looking around the room, “Did you guys miss me?”
“Jack,” Daniel breathed; he ran down the stairs, his hand holding Sha’re’s pulling her with him, “You’re alive.”

“Disappointed, Danny?” Jack teased, smiling as his friend hugged him before stepping back and allowing Sha’re to hug him.

“More shocked,” Daniel smiled; relief and happiness filling him.

Jack laughed as he looked around the Gateroom, “Nice place.”

“You’re late,” John noted as he walked in, he stepped forward and took Jack’s hand, “We’ve missed you, Colonel.”

Jack grinned, “So, is there somewhere I can tell you what happened?”

“Of course,” Sha’re smiled at him, “Come with us.”

Jack followed Daniel and Sha’re as John called the rest of the core group to the briefing room. He looked around, very impressed by the city but what pleased him more than anything was watching everyone wandering around going about their business without the fear of being discovered by the Andurians. As they entered the large room, Jack smiled as he watched Sha’re instantly taking the head of the table with Daniel at her side. Jack didn’t sit down; content to wander the room as they waited for the others to arrive.

“Jack!!”

He turned and found Janet throwing her arms around him, hugging him tightly as Rodney, Carson, Jeannie and Laura walked in. They all took their seats and waited, a few minutes later Zelenka walked in followed by Ferretti who smiled at Jack.

“Thank God,” Ferretti sighed, dropping into a spare seat, “I’m no longer in charge.”

“Guess you all want to know what happened to me,” Jack stated as he stood in front of the table.

“We thought you were dead,” Rodney noted, “And from what I heard you beamed down by an Asgard, so yeah.”

Jack chuckled; he glanced over to where Daniel was watching with a blank expression and Jack knew there was a conversation coming that he was not looking forward to.

“Carter...well...she stabbed me,” Jack shrugged before rushing on as they all stared at him, “But I had a plan. Sorry I didn’t tell any of you this but I’d been contacted by Thor a while ago, we arranged that if that did happen all I had to do was signal him and I would be brought to his ship.”

“What if you died before you could signal?” Daniel demanded; his voice soft but the edge was there.

“If I died first then the moment I was alone in the room then he would have brought me onboard the ship anyway,” Jack replied, “Luckily I was able to signal and managed to bring a friend with me.” He grinned and pulled out a small communicator, “Okay, can I have mystery guest number one, Thor?”

Everyone gasped as the new occupant of the room appeared in front of them.
“Teal’c,” Daniel breathed, jumping up and moving to his friend, “You’re okay.”

Teal’c nodded, “I am, Daniel Jackson. As are you I see.”

Daniel beamed, “Thanks to you,” he clasped Teal’c’s hand in his before moving as he realised Sha’rê wanted to greet the former Jaffa.

“You know,” Jack said as Sha’rê embraced Teal’c, “If we do this every time I bring someone down this could be a long day.”

Sha’rê pulled back and motioned Teal’c to sit down, he took the seat beside Janet who reached out and squeezed his hand.

“Where was I?” Jack mused for a moment before nodding, “Oh yeah. I was healed; yadda and then I went to pick up my second surprise guest.”

“Jack,” Daniel warned, noticing how much his friend was enjoying this.

“I’ve been looking forward to this for days,” Jack told him, “Let me have my fun.”

“Some of us have work to do,” Rodney reminded them.

“Mer,” Jeannie scolded her brother.

“He is correct, however,” Sha’rê noted, “We have a city to run, Jack. Please continue but...”

“Speed it up,” Ferretti finished.

“Spoilsports,” Jack pouted before shrugging, “Okay, Thor can I have guest number two down.”

Janet gasped as the light faded to reveal a sight she never thought she’d see again, “Cassie!!”

Cassandra grinned and ran to her mother, hugging her tightly. Janet held her daughter not caring about the tears trailing along her cheeks.

“Jack,” Sha’rê said softly, “Please continue your story.”

Cassie pulled back from her mother and took the seat quickly vacated by Teal’c, so Jack could continue.

“Okay,” Jack grinned, “I’ll finish up. After getting Cassie and some supplies to help us we visited Abydos.”

“Is my father with you?” Sha’rê whispered, gripping Daniel’s hand tightly.

“No,” Jack shook his head, “He’s needed on Abydos but he does send his love. He was able to help me locate the Tok’ra, who also had a few of the Jaffa rebellion with them and we all came here.”

Everyone turned as John let out a groan, “This means I have to find more rooms.”

Sha’rê smiled to herself as Daniel brought lunch to their room, after the meeting Jack and Teal’c had returned to the ship so that they could organise the move of the Jaffa and Tok’ra to the city before Jack was going to go over John and Ferretti’s work with building up their own military/police force. Janet had gone with them to help pack Cassie’s things not wanting to be parted from her daughter.
just yet. They agreed to meet with him again for dinner before Daniel hustled her to their room for a private restful lunch.

“Come on,” Daniel took her hand and moved her to their balcony where he set down a blanket for them.

“This is lovely,” Sha’re smiled at him; she took the fresh juice and leaned back against the wall. Daniel sat at her side and Sha’re rested her head against his shoulder, “You are being very quiet considering the circumstances.”

“I’m just...” he trailed off, sighing happily, “They’re safe, Jack and Teal’c, Jacob, Bra’tac, Cassie. We got them all back; I never thought I’d see any of them again.”

Sha’re squeezed his hand, “Well Jack and I have a great deal to talk about.”

Daniel chuckled and softly kissed her forehead, pulling her closer as he still couldn’t forget that he’d almost lost her less than twenty-four hours ago.

“You were going to tell me something before Jack made his entrance,” Daniel said, as he remembered their conversation earlier, “What was it?”

Sha’re smiled as she hoped this time she’d get the chance to give him her news without something interrupting them.

“Sha’re?” Daniel asked as she pulled away from him and stood, he followed her to stand by the balcony, “Are you alright?”

Sha’re reached out to touch her husband’s cheek, “You asked me not long ago about trying for a child once more.”

“And now you’re pregnant,” Daniel grinned at her.

Sha’re frowned, “I was too obvious telling you.”

“Nope,” Daniel shrugged, “Do you really think I didn’t notice your morning sickness? I figured you’d tell me when you were ready.”

Sha’re hit his arm, “You...” she was cut off as Daniel kissed her.

“We’re going to have a baby,” Daniel whispered.

Sha’re nodded, wrapping her arms around him, “Yes, we are.”

Dear Jack,

Jack stood on the bridge of the ship looking out over the city as Jacob and Teal’c sorted out their collection of refugees. John and Ferretti had signalled they now had a place for everyone to sleep so now Teal’c and Jacob were deciding who was going where. He knew Sha’re would want to hand control of the city over to him but he couldn’t do it. Jack didn’t want to step back into that role, he knew that Sha’re had done a better job than he ever could do in establishing a new civilization.

“Jack,” Jacob called, “Sheppard just contacted us, he’s ready for the first group to be sent down.”

“Good,” Jack replied, “Are Cassie and Janet away?”

Jacob nodded; he moved to leave before turning back, “Something bothering you, Jack?”
Jack gave a slight shrug, “Just thinking about a few conversations I have coming at me.”

Jacob raised an eyebrow but said nothing waiting for the other man to continue.

“Sha’re will expect me to take charge again,” Jack explained before sighing, “And Daniel is going to argue with me.”

“I’m not even going to ask about what,” Jacob chuckled, “Look, we’re here and now we have to remake our lives as best we can.”

“Yeah,” Jack mused, he was about to say something else when Thor arrived.

“I have sent all the supplies to the room specified,” the gray alien noted, “However as soon as the ship is evacuated I must leave.”

“Why?” Jack asked.

“The council are expecting me,” Thor explained, “I shall return as soon as I can.”

“The council are negotiating with the Zombies,” Jack reminded the Asgard.

Thor tilted his head slightly, “We have no proof that the Andurians are in control of Earth, and you have been painted as a terrorist. I shall stall them as much as possible but you must find a way to persuade them yourself.”

“Aren’t you the Supreme Commander of the Asgard fleet?” Jacob asked confused.

“It is known that O’Neill was befriended by myself,” Thor reminded them, “And they believe I am not an objective party.”

“Thanks for your help, Thor,” Jack told the small alien sincerely, “We appreciate it.”

Thor gave what Jack thought was a nod, “Take care and I shall return soon with news.”

Janet smiled as the young woman at her side; she couldn’t believe that her daughter was here with her and safe. Janet was grateful that her room had enough space for the two of them to share for a while, although she knew eventually she’d have to let Cassie have her own place for just now they wanted to be together.

“Mom,” Cassie said softly as they walked along the corridors carrying their lunch, “I’m sorry for what I said. I wanted...I tried...”

“Cassie,” Janet soothed, gently stroking her daughter’s hair, “It’s all in the past and here, we have a new future in front of us.”

Cassie grinned, “Mom, there’s so much I want to tell you. So much has changed since...well since we were last together.”

Janet hugged her close before leading her to a nearby balcony, as Janet took a seat to eat Cassandra stepped forward and gazed at the beautiful world before her. The ocean was glistening in the midday sun and Cassie smiled in relief as she let all the guilt, fear and tension from the past four years slip away, replaced very quickly by even more worry. Turning to look at her mother, the second in her life Cassie sighed.
“Mom, there’s something important about me that you need to know,” she said nervously, “And I don’t know how to tell you.”

Janet motioned her over, “Then don’t. Let’s have lunch and you can tell me whatever it is once you’re ready.”

Cassie smiled and sat at Janet’s side, eating lunch in comfortable silence.

Jeannie sat eating lunch listening to the chatter going through the city, everyone was buzzing about the fact that Jack had arrived in the city. Those who knew him were explaining to those who had never met him everything Jack O’Neill had done to save them. She had to admit she was relieved to have him back, especially to lead the military aspect of the city. John and Ferretti were doing a good job but neither wanted to be in charge and neither had Jack’s experience.

She’d heard briefly about Janet’s daughter as that was all there ever was, brief mentions; a slip of the tongue that people would quickly cover so not to upset the woman who cared for their health.

“You know,” John dropped into the seat across from her, “It probably would have been a good idea to have extra space set out just in case.”

Jeannie laughed, “Bad day?”

“I hate playing realtor,” John rolled his eyes as he nabbed a bit of her sandwich.

“Get your own,” Jeannie slapped his hand away.

John gave a theatrical yelp, “That hurt.”

“Try to steal any more of my food and it’ll hurt a hell of a lot more,” Jeannie told him, “Never steal food from a McKay, John. You’ll regret it.”

John smiled, deliberately reaching out to steal some of her salad. Jeannie wielded her fork daring him and jabbed him when his hand reached her plate.

“Ow,” John pulled back his hand and frowned, “You’re evil.”

“Poor baby,” Jeannie teased, “I’d kiss it better but then you might get the wrong impression.”

John tilted his head thoughtfully, a glint in his eyes, “And what wrong impression would that be?”

“That I’ll let you steal my food,” Jeannie grinned, taking a bite of her sandwich.

Laura entered the commissary, looking around for a spare seat and smiled as she saw Jeannie and John sitting talking. As John started to leave Laura headed towards the other woman and took the recently vacated seat.

“So what’s going on with you two?” Laura asked, smiling as Jeannie looked shocked.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean the fact that you were watching his ass as he left,” Laura teased, “And from what I saw you guys were flirting like crazy.”
Jeannie blushed, trying to hide by taking a drink, “It’s not what you think.”

Laura laughed, “Really?”

“Yes,” Jeannie said sharper than she meant, “Even if I felt anything like you’re suggesting, John just sees me as Mer’s little sister – nothing else.”

Laura shrugged, “You’d be surprised. Love comes from the strangest places. You should take chance, Jeannie.”

“You are not giving me advice on my love life,” Jeannie mocked, “Considering the fact you’re in love with Mer and the two of you can’t seem to get it together.”

Laura dropped her eyes and started eating, “You don’t know everything, Jeannie. My relationship with Rodney is much more complicated than you know.”

“Then explain to me,” Jeannie said softly, “Let me help, Laura. I see you sitting on your own while everyone else sits with Mer. We’re your friends too, so why do you hide away?”

Laura sighed, she didn’t want to reveal this especially to Rodney’s sister but she had already witnessed the tenacity of Jeannie McKay when she wanted to know something.

“I met your brother one day when I was sent to help him move things from one lab to another and I hated him,” Laura started, “I just never wanted to see him ever again. It was several months later I was walking through the Campus and I stumbled across an opening to the lower levels that I didn’t know existed.”

Laura paused for a few moments, sipping her tea as she tried to focus herself.

“As I walked through the corridors I realised I was in a dungeon,” Laura continued, “I knew I should get out of there but I couldn’t. I kept walking and then I came across a cell that I could look into. Rodney was in there, on the floor because she’d already put that thing in his back and he looked so frail. I remember staring at him and he suddenly realised I was looking at him. He stared at me and in his eyes he begged me help.”

“Is that when you got him out?” Jeannie asked, she’d been told very little about this.

“No,” Laura whispered, “Carter was there. She reminded me that my family were in an Andurian town, how easy it would be for her to get to them if I did anything other than walk away. So, I walked away.”

“But you went back,” Jeannie reminded her, “You got him out.”

“You don’t understand,” Laura sighed, “I walked away and I had no intention of coming back for him,” she stood up to leave but before she did she looked back to Jeannie, “And Rodney knows this.”
“John,” Sha’re smiled as he tapped on the door to her office.

“Hey,” he greeted her, “You summoned me?”

Sha’re took a deep breath as he took the seat across from her, “I am going to ask you to do something for me and I will understand if you are uncomfortable but I need you to do this.”

John frowned at her confused, “Sha’re, I thought you would know these days I’d do anything you ask me to.”

She gave him a soft smile before taking another deep breath, “I need you to fly the body of Aidan Ford to the mainland and help his friend Andrew bury him with respect.”

John froze; this was the last thing he’d expected her to ask him to do, “Why?”

“You are our only pilot just now that we know of,” Sha’re reminded him.

“Not what I mean,” he replied, his voice cold, “He tried to kill you.”

“John,” Sha’re reached out and took his hand, “He was lied to by Carter. She got to him just after his grandparents were killed in a ‘terrorist’ attack. He deserves to be respected. And I promised Mr Wiley.”

“When?”

“Tomorrow morning,” Sha’re told him, relieved that he agreed.

“Fine,” John stood, “Tell whoever to be there at 0800 exactly or I leave without him.”

“John,” Sha’re called him back, “If we do not do this then we are no better than the Andurians.”

He paused for a second before leaving her sitting, watching him retreat.

Sha’re sat working in her office checking the time every so often, it had taken a lot of persuasion to get Daniel to leave her alone for a few hours but she managed it although he told her he’d be back to take her for dinner then she was to rest.

Sha’re mused for a moment that telling her husband about her pregnancy less than a day after she was taken hostage may not have been the best idea as he was now in hyper-caring mode but she had to tell him before he found out some other way. Though considering he already knew meant it really was a moot point. Resting her hands on her stomach, Sha’re closed her eyes and thought of the child growing inside her. Hoping and praying that she would be get to keep this baby.

“Am I interrupting?”

Jack’s voice brought Sha’re back and she quickly moved across the room to where he stood. Without a word Sha’re hugged him tightly.

“You know if this is how I’m getting greeted these days,” Jack laughed, “I’ve got to say I like it.”
Sha’re laughed with him and retook her seat, “I am so glad to see you, Jack.”

“I got that,” he dropped into the seat across from her, “This is definitely a step up from our old base.”

Sha’re nodded before getting down to work, “I have a lot to brief you on, the council I have set up, the school, the gene, the ships...and we have found land.”

“Stop,” Jack said, he sighed and pushed his hand through his hair, “Sha’re, I’m not taking over.”

“What?” she breathed confused, “But you are our leader.”

“No, I’m not,” he told her, “Sha’re, most of the people here don’t know who I am but they know you, they trust in you.”

“Jack, I cannot do this,” she cried.

Jack pulled his seat so he was at her side and took her hands in his, “You already have. I was talking to Ferretti earlier and he told me about the council you set up so that every single person in the city has a voice. I never would have thought of that.”

Sha’re smiled slightly.

“Besides, even back on Earth you made most of the decisions concerning the people,” he reminded her, “I did the military stuff and that’s what I’ll continue to do.”

“I am pregnant, Jack,” Sha’re told him, “I am unsure I can run the city as well as raise a child.”

“Your father did it,” Jack reminded her, “And when I told him you were in charge you should have seen the pride in his eyes.”

Sha’re blushed at this, her father’s approval was something she had always strived for. She sighed and nodded before telling him, “You are joining the council.”

“Well...” Jack started, stopping as he recognised the look on her face, “I’ll join.”

“Good,” Sha’re checked her watch, “It is time for dinner, Dan’iel will not be happy if I am late. He is a little protective just now.”

“I heard what happened,” Jack told her, “I can understand that.”

As they started walking through the corridors, Jack slung his arm around her shoulders, “Now tell me about the Athosians and this guy Ronon.”

Laura wandered the corridors unable to sleep; her conversation with Jeannie had opened up the flood of guilt she had been managing to repress for the past few months. As she wandered she met up with some of the newer members of the city, watching as they tried to settle in to their new home just as she had several weeks before.

“It is late,” Teyla said from behind, making Laura jump.

Laura shrugged, “I can’t sleep. What about you?”

“I am taking my evening walk to think about the day that has just been,” Teyla explained, “Would you like to join me or will I leave you to your musing.”
For a second Laura contemplated telling Teyla to get lost but she knew she couldn’t do that where the other woman was just concerned. Teyla had been nothing but a concerned friend as well as someone to share her doubts with.

“Sure,” Laura forced a smile onto her face, “I need to tire myself out.”

“Our population has grown in size,” Teyla noted, nodding briefly to the Jaffa who passed them.

“Colonel O’Neill brought the last of the Tok’ra and Jaffa here to safety,” Laura explained, “More refugees.”

Teyla nodded, she could see the other woman was depressed about something and hoped she could at least help her forget for a while.

“We appear to be segregated however,” Teyla noted, “Each group lives within a small area with no others of another race.”

Laura laughed, “It’s just how everyone got here. And I know there are plans to explore further out into the city once we’ve established ourselves more. You might get a Jaffa neighbour in a few months.”

Laura entered her room; she’d bid Teyla good night about ten minutes before and decided to try get some rest. As she lay on her bed Laura closed her eyes taking several deep breaths hoping to fall asleep, hoping to even get into a relaxing state. Laura managed to get to sleep but her dreams weren’t restful.

Several times during the night she awoke thinking she was still back on Earth in her old apartment, that she had actually abandoned Rodney to Carter, that she hadn’t been able to get him out of that prison. After the sixth time, she pulled on some clothes and headed to the lab, not once considering he wouldn’t be there. As she reached the room Laura smiled to see Jeannie asleep on the couch while Rodney had his head resting on his arms, sleeping on the lab bench. Relieved to see him safe Laura returned to her room and finally managed to fall asleep.

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Daniel lay awake thinking of everything that had happened over the past few days. He turned over to look at his wife who was fast asleep, he rested his hand on her stomach where their baby grew and smiled as she cuddled into him. He pressed a gentle kiss to her forehead before he detangled himself from her embrace, Sha’re shifted slightly pulling his pillow to her but didn’t wake up. Daniel watched her for a few moments before he pulled on some clothes and went for a walk.

As he came to a balcony near the lab he’d been using Daniel saw a familiar figure standing staring out across the sea.

“Nice view,” he said, moving to stand at the other man’s side, “Don’t you think?”

Teal’c turned to his friend, “It is a great improvement on the one I have had for the past few years.”

“Was that a joke?” Daniel laughed before sobering quickly, “I wanted to tell you thank you for getting me out of that place. I’m sorry I...we...”

Teal’c stopped Daniel, “I made my decision, Daniel Jackson. Your importance was greater than mine.”
“No...”

“Not only to Sha’re and O’Neill but Carter needed you more than she needed me,” Teal’c explained to him, “I have never regretted my actions especially as I see what she was after.”

Daniel stood silently at his friend’s side for a few moments before turning back to him, “It’s good to see Bra’tac and Rya’c,” he paused for a second, “What about Drey’ac?”

“Drey’ac died two years ago,” Teal’c sighed, “Her symbiote matured and there were no new ones to replace it. The only option was if someone donated their symbiote to her but Rya’c says she refused the offer.”

“I’m sorry, Teal’c,” Daniel told his friend sincerely.

Teal’c nodded gravely, “I am grateful that you and Sha’re are happy together.”

“We are,” Daniel smiled slightly, “And she’s pregnant.”

Teal’c clapped his friend on the shoulder heartily, throwing Daniel forward slightly, “My congratulations.”

“Thanks,” Daniel winced, rolling his shoulder to get the feeling back in it, “Want to grab something at the mess?”

Teal’c nodded and walked with his friend through the dimly lit corridors.

Jack waved Daniel and Teal’c over to the table where he was sitting staring out at the starlit sky.

“What are you two doing up?” Jack asked as the two men sat.

“Neither of us can sleep,” Daniel noted, “You?”

“I’m a little out of whack just now,” Jack shrugged, “Besides it’s just nice to see everyone doing so well. Kinda expecting if I go to sleep, I’ll wake up and we won’t be here.”

“I know the feeling,” Daniel murmured, he looked at the mug Jack had trying to see what his friend was drinking.

“Do you wish to have some coffee, Daniel Jackson,” Teal’c asked, standing.

Daniel nodded, “If you’re getting one.”

Teal’c nodded slightly and left the two men alone; Jack became very interested in his mug.

“So,” Daniel said.

“So?”

Gritting his teeth, Daniel stared at his friend, “Want to tell me why?”

“Why?”

“Jack, why the hell didn’t you tell me you were in touch with Thor?” Daniel demanded, managing to keep his voice low enough so no one else could hear, “Didn’t you trust me?”
Jack rolled his eyes, “Is that what you think?”

“What am I supposed to think?” Daniel retorted coldly.

“I didn’t tell you because when it came time for you to hit that button, you wouldn’t have,” Jack told him.

“You think...”

“Daniel,” Jack cut him off, “You would have stayed on Earth because you would want to help me and I couldn’t let you do that. Sha’re needed you here,” he sighed, “I wanted to tell you but I knew that if I did then you’d have stuck around as you’d think there was at least a chance of escaping another way.”

Daniel started at him not sure how to refute his words, thankful when Teal’c returned with some coffee and the conversation turned to other subjects.

Sha’re woke up and turned to hold her husband a little shocked to find him not lying beside her. Checking the time she frowned confused, it was still early and since coming to Atlantis even if he awoke first he’d never got up before her. Reaching over Sha’re found his side of the bed was cold but she knew he’d come to bed last night.

Confused Sha’re had a quick shower before dressing; she caught sight of herself in the mirror and wondered what her father would say about the clothing she wore. Although it had taken her a few years to move away from wearing dresses similar to her native clothing she found that occasionally wearing trousers to be extremely comfortable. Daniel especially liked when she wore jeans.

Relieved she wasn’t feeling too bad just now, Sha’re headed to get something to eat assuming she would find her wayward husband already there.

Entering the designated mess Sha’re stopped, sitting at a table near the back were Jack, Daniel and Teal’c. The three men were talking and laughing as though they hadn’t a care in the world.

Daniel turned and saw her standing; he gave her a smile motioning her over to join them. Sha’re walked over to the table, shaking her head as Daniel gave her an appreciative look.

“Good morning,” she greeted the three men, quickly kissing Daniel as she took the spare seat, “You are all up extremely early.”

“Actually we’re up extremely late,” Jack told her, motioning to Daniel and Teal’c with his mug of coffee.

Sha’re turned to her husband who shrugged, “I couldn’t sleep. I went for a walk and met Teal’c and Jack so we caught up.”

Sha’re laughed and moved to kiss her husband, “Just do not complain about being tired tonight.”

“I won’t,” Daniel promised before throwing part of his roll at Jack.

Sha’re checked her watch and sighed; she’d have to get something to eat a little later. She kissed Daniel again, “Enjoy your breakfast. I need to see John before he leaves.”

Daniel squeezed her hand, turning back to his conversation as she left the room for the Jumper Bay.
John completed his pre-flight checks and left the Jumper to wait for his passengers. The young man who appeared with the quickly made coffin didn’t dare glance up at John until the coffin was inside.

“Thank you,” Andrew whispered, “I know you don’t want to do this.”

“Sha’re asked,” was all John said, motioning the younger man into the ship.

As he stood for a few seconds calming himself John saw Sha’re enter the room, she walked over to him and without a word kissed his cheek.

“Thank you for this,” she told him.

John shrugged, not knowing what to say.

“Room for one more?” a deep voice from behind made them both turn to find Ronon standing there.

“You want to come to a funeral?” John asked confused.

Ronon nodded solemnly, “I was the one to take his life, I want to help bury him with respect.”

“Thank you, Ronon,” Sha’re said simply, “I expect you to return by lunchtime.”

John watched her leave before they entered the Jumper and started the engines, taking off towards the mainland.

Ronon fixed the small marker on Ford’s grave before stepping back and turning to Andrew, “Say whatever you want now.”

Andrew turned to them, silently asking them to leave. John tapped Ronon’s arm and motioned him away leaving the young man to say goodbye to his friend in peace. The two men walked back to the Jumper in silence.

“Thanks for coming,” John said, breaking the silence.

Ronon shrugged, “It’s the right thing to do. He was a kid who didn’t deserve to die.”

John nodded as he walked to the pilot’s seat and dropped into it. He had to admit this was one of the reasons he was so relieved Jack was back; John didn’t want to be in charge of anything.

“So,” John said, “Are you going to stick around?”

Ronon nodded, “Sha’re was right, and you obviously need my help.”

John snorted in amusement; he started the ship so that as soon as Wylie was done they could return to the city when he noticed a blip.

“What?” Ronon demanded as John tilted his head in surprise.

“There’s an energy reading about ten metres in front of us,” John told him, he grabbed his gun, “Come on.”

Heading out of the Jumper John jogged towards where the energy signature was coming from, he
stopped in amazement and grinned at Ronon as the two men came across a building similar in design to Atlantis.

“I think we found something.”
“Good morning,” Sha’re greeted the Atlantean council as she entered the conference room, “Before we start I want to tell you all that I am perfectly fine. So there is to be no question concerning that,” she smiled at them all, “Now, you may have noticed we have some new additions within the city and in our meeting.”

A chuckle went up around the group as Sha’re paused.

“Firstly we have Teyla who for the moment shall be representing the Athosians as they are unable to return to their home planet,” Sha’re introduced the woman, “Next representing the Jaffa is Master Bra’tac,” she motioned to the man at Teyla’s side before turning to the man directly to her right, “You have all heard of Jack O’Neill, he is taking over of our military from John and Louis to their great relief and finally, Jacob Carter/Selmac for the Tok’ra.”

“Carter?” Caroline demanded.

Sha’re glanced at Jacob, she had persuaded him that joining the council was a good idea but first they had to get through this little problem.

Jacob touched Sha’re’s arm to let him speak, “Yes, Carter. Sam was my daughter but if you think I’m in any way a supporter of her then you’re wrong. She tried to kill me; she killed my son, his wife and my grandchildren. She’s no longer my daughter and I’m not going to mention it again.”

Caroline nodded, “I’m sorry.”

Jacob gave her a slight nod, “You had every right to worry but let’s move on.”

“John,” Sha’re scolded as he burst into the meeting, “What are you doing?”

He grinned at her, “I thought you might want to hear what we found and I hate to repeat myself.”

“Come on, Sheppard,” Jack sighed, “Knock off the theatrics and just tell us what you’ve found so I can go get lunch.”

John grimaced at him before turning back to the council, “We found what looks like a research station on the mainland but it also seems to be part of a farm. From what I could make out there is something about farm animals in some kind of stasis.”

“This is good,” Edward French noted, “Isn’t it?”

“Well,” Teyla said, “My people are farmers, and as grateful as we are that you have given us a place in the city we miss the outdoors.”

“Are you sure?” Sha’re asked.

“Allow me time to speak with the others and I shall give you our decision as soon as possible,” Teyla promised.

“Well if the Athosians take over the farm we’ll still need a science team,” Caroline noted, “Dr McKay should be able to put together a team, right?”
Jack chuckled, “He’ll have to trust someone enough to put them in charge first.”

Sha’re threw him an annoyed glance before turning back to John, “Thank you, John. Next time do not barge into our meetings.”

Duly chastised he nodded and left the council smiling and amused.

“I’ll do it.”

“What?” Rodney, John and Radek cried in astonishment at Jeannie who simply stared back at them.

Sha’re turned to the other woman, “Are you sure?”

Jeanie sighed, “Mer, don’t get me wrong I enjoy working with you but there’s times I feel like I’m there because Mom and Dad made you watch me.”

Rodney frowned, “I like working with you, at least you understand what I’m talking about. Some of those idiots need their instructions repeated three times then written down with less than two syllables.”

“I know that you could lead the team,” Sha’re told Jeannie, “But I want to ensure that you are completely certain about doing this.”

“I am,” Jeannie replied, she looked at Rodney, John and Radek sitting there with a frown, “Come on, guys it’s not like I’m volunteering to work inside an active volcano.”

“Rodney, pull together a team to work with Jeannie;” Sha’re ordered, “John, I want a team of soldiers to go with the science team. I am sure you can arrange that but remember to speak to Jack concerning who you are sending, I want them to be ready to go in two days.”

John and Rodney nodded.

“How are we going to get them all there?” Radek asked, “John is our only pilot at the moment.”

“Carson’s list has given us a starting place for John to start training people,” Sha’re explained, “It also shows that Jack carries the gene so that gives us two fully trained pilots.”

“You want me to train people to fly the Jumpers in two days?” John asked incredulously.

“I want you to start the training,” Sha’re told him, “You and Jack shall be transporting the team. I just want to ensure that one of those on the mainland has the ability to fly the Jumper in an emergency.”

“I’m not going that far away,” Jeannie reminded her brother as he stood in the doorway to her room as she packed, “It’s just the mainland.”

“I know,” he replied, “But...”

“But?”

“I’ve got used to having you around,” Rodney told his little sister, “I can find someone else to take over...” he trailed off as she glared at him.
"You want to demote me?" she asked sharply, "You were the one who told me I could do whatever I wanted, remember?"

"That was...we were..." he sighed, "That was before we ended up in another galaxy. Jeannie, I just don't want anything to happen to you."

"I will report in at least once a day," she smiled at him, "I promise."

Rodney reached out and hugged her, "Be careful."

Jeannie smiled at her protective big brother, "One thing before I go."

"What?"

"Talk to Laura," Jeannie told him, "I know what she means to you."

"Jeannie..."

"I know what you mean to her," Jeannie continued as though he hadn't spoken, "I want you to be happy and being with her will do that. So just think about it."

"I'll think about it," he promised.

The next few weeks went by quietly.

Jack and John started training as many people as they could to fly the Jumpers, making sure that each team sent to the mainland had at least two members who were able to fly the ships.

Daniel, Jack, Teal’c and Laura started working as an offworld team while John, Rodney, Teyla and Ronon worked together as well as Ferretti, Lorne, Wylie and a scientist called Madson. Sha’re decided that for now three teams were enough until they could train more people and as much as she hated Daniel being offworld was relieved that SG1 had reformed.

Rodney and Radek were finally using their own rooms to sleep at night now they had things sorted into a proper routine for the science teams. Rodney still wasn’t happy that his sister was on the mainland but since she contacted him at least once a day, as promised, he was able to keep up with her progress as well as making sure she was alright.

The one thing he hadn’t done was talk to Laura. They spoke briefly every so often but other than that they still avoided one another. Whilst dodging Laura as much as possible Rodney was also avoiding spending time with Katie when she could try to get to know him.

And for several weeks, things were quiet.

Cassie watched the kids head to the play area of the school and smiled. She’d wanted to be a teacher while back on Earth but Sam...Carter had pushed her into other areas. Now, here in Atlantis her mother had been nothing but supportive of her decision.

"They appear to be enjoying your lessons," Sha’re said as she entered the room, smiling at the children as they ran past her chatting away.

"I’m enjoying teaching," Cassie told her, taking a seat as Sha’re took the other one, "It’s hard to
believe I’m here sometimes but I guess everyone feels like that.”

“True,” Sha’re laughed, her hand resting on the small bump that had appeared in the past few days.

“Why are you down here?” Cassie asked, “Don’t you have a lot of things to do?”

“I am taking some time to myself,” Sha’re told her, “Dan’iel is due back tonight and he gets a little annoying if he finds I have not been resting now I am with child. I like watching the children play, they do not understand everything that happened and can just be free.”

Cassie nodded, “They’re really sweet kids. Though a lot of them do understand, several of them have only on parent while others know friends who disappeared.”

Sha’re wandered the halls of the city, nodding softly to those she passed going over the next few meetings she had in her head, looking around confused as she heard someone crying. Sha’re walked over to one of the transporters and blinked confused to find a small boy about three years old with bright red hair sitting curled in the corner, crying.

“Hello,” she said, taking a seat beside him, “What’s your name?”

“Timmy,” the soft voice said as head came up and two green eyes looked at her.

“It is nice to meet you, Timmy,” Sha’re replied, “My name is Sha’re.”

“I want my Daddy,” the boy sniffed, wiping at his nose with his fist.

“Come here,” Sha’re reached out and pulled the child into her arms; she gently rocked him rubbing his back soothingly, “Now what is your Daddy’s name?”

“Daddy,” Timmy told her with a shrug.

Sha’re smiled, she managed to stand still holding the boy in her arms. Once she had him settled on her hip, Sha’re touched her radio.

“Melissa, are you missing a child?” she called the nursery.

“You found Timmy,” the other woman sighed in relief, “He wandered out while I was cleaning up the painting. One of the girls cut her finger and as Sharon was tending her he disappeared.”

“He wished to see his father,” Sha’re explained, “Can you tell me who that is?”

“Hugh Mitchell,” Melissa replied, “He’s a nurse in the infirmary.”

Sha’re gently kissed the top of the little boy’s head as he hugged her, “I will take him to see his father then either Mr Mitchell or I shall bring him back.”

Sha’re smiled as her new friend told her all about the activities he participated in while in nursery and the games he played. As she walked Sha’re enjoyed the sensation of a child in her arms.

“What happened to make you want to see your father?” Sha’re asked the little boy.

Timmy dropped his head onto her shoulder, “I was sad.”
“What made you sad?” Sha’re turned into the infirmary and saw Carson look at her confused as he walked over to her.

“Beth said her Daddy was gone,” Timmy whispered, “I want my Daddy.”

Carson reached them as Timmy started to cry again, Sha’re hushed him, gently rocking him again.

“I see the wee man is looking for his da’,” Carson noted with a smile, he motioned Sha’re to follow him. They entered the back room of the infirmary where a man was standing sorting a cabinet.

“Hugh,” Carson called, “Someone to see you.”

The man turned and saw Timmy who reached out for his father, “Daddy?”

Sha’re happily gave the little boy to his father before she left them alone, walking back with Carson.

“How is your research coming?” she asked as he escorted her through the infirmary.

Carson shrugged, “I’m hoping to have a breakthrough soon before Rodney drives me to distraction. He calls me almost constantly to start some of the strange devices.”

Sha’re chuckled, “At least with him off world just now you get some peace.”

“Aye,” Carson agreed with a smile, “And I treasure every moment of it. I’ll see you later I’m sure.”

“SG1 are due back in three hours,” Sha’re smiled back, “So, yes.”

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Rodney sighed in relief as he stepped back onto Atlantis. He’d never been an outdoors kind of person but being on the team meant he had to be. Looking up he saw Sha’re looking down at them.

“We’re heading to the infirmary,” John called up to her, they moved out of the road of the wormhole as it opened again this time returning SG1 to the city.

John, Rodney, Ronon and Teyla looked at the four mud encrusted people who staggered through the wormhole.

“What happened?” John asked, trying not to laugh and failing.

“It was wet,” Laura replied, glaring at the completely clean team, “It became very muddy and we fell, a lot.”

“I think that Carson is waiting for you all,” Sha’re walked downstairs, stopping her husband at arm’s length when he moved to kiss her hello, “You are not touching me until I can see your skin, Dan’iel. Go,” she ordered before turning to the other seven, “All of you.”

Jack sighed in relief as he dressed in warm clean clothes; he was getting too old for this. Traipsing across a planet in the pouring rain was for the young and stupid. Checking his watch Jack headed up to the conference room for the debriefing with Sha’re, he was so proud how well she’d done in organising everything. He’d known she was a natural leader from the day she walked into his office a few days after being rescued from Carter and told him what he was doing wrong. Since John’s team arrived back first they did their debriefing first which also gave SG1 a chance to get cleaned up.
As he reached the room he started in only to stop as he found Sha’re and Daniel already deeply involved in a private meeting. He’d been ecstatic that they were expecting again and hoped nothing went wrong for them.

Jack decided to wait outside until Laura and Teal’c made an appearance, despite Daniel’s complaint that Jack always interrupted them Jack usually went out of his way to let them have as much time alone as possible.

Moving to the nearby balcony he watched the waves, after this meeting he wanted to take a Jumper out for a while. He hadn’t had as much time as he could flying them due to his other duties and was itching to get the chance to see what the little ships could do.

“What’s going on?” Laura demanded as she and Teal’c arrived, “Why are you out here?”

Jack nodded towards the conference room, “Private meeting going on.”

Laura rolled her eyes and started to the door, beaten by Daniel sticking his head out, “What are you guys out here for?”

Jack rolled his eyes at his smugly smiling friend before ushering them all into the room.

Rodney frowned as he looked at the small scanner in his hand; it only worked some of the time for him because he didn’t have the gene. There was something on this stupid balcony that had his sensors going haywire.

“Rodney,” Katie said delighted to see him there, “I didn’t know you were back.”

“I had a lot of work to do,” he told her, hoping she didn’t start trying to get to know him again.

“Well, we could have dinner,” she said hopefully, “After I’ve checked on the plants here.”

Rodney winced inwardly but nodded, “I’ve got a lot to do but I can take a break soon.”

Katie smiled at him, she moved to check on the plants she had left on the balcony as Rodney continued to look for the power source.

“Oh look,” Katie said as she crouched down near the corner of the balcony, “That’s strange. Rodney, it seems to be a crystal that’s glowing.”

Rodney turned and saw her about to touch it, “No,” he snapped, he grabbed Katie and yanked her back but it was too late.

As Rodney pushed Katie to the ground he heard an explosion, the world around him filled with light for a moment before it faded to black.
“Peterson?” Rodney looked around the lab for the young man, “Peterson?”

Annoyance filled him and he turned about to yell again when Miko appeared, “Do you know where Peterson is?”

The young Japanese woman handed him a page, “This email was just received, Dr McKay. He has resigned.”

“What?” Rodney grabbed the paper and started to scan it, “Family troubles?” he glanced at Miko, “I didn’t know he had any.”

Miko frowned, “I believe he has an elderly aunt but other than that I am unsure.”

Rodney rubbed the bridge of his nose, “Alright, Miko you know the projects he was working on?”

A bright smile lit her face; although she was qualified she had somehow ended up working as his assistant, “Yes.”

“Brief Ellis and Simons,” he told her, not seeing the disappointment on her face, “In that order. Simons isn’t ready for the first one.”

“Of course, Dr McKay,” Miko gave a gentle nod of her head before disappearing into the lab.

Rodney glanced back down and the email and scrunched it into a ball, tossing it into the nearest trashcan before heading into his office.

Rodney unlocked his computer and quickly sent an email to Sam requesting a replacement for Peterson before leaning back sighing. He couldn’t understand why he kept losing so many people from this project, why things kept going wrong when he was working in the state of the art lab.

To be honest it didn’t matter who worked for him but the fact they kept changing so quickly upset his work and the projects they were doing. It had got even worse when Radek left. Rodney had trusted Zelenka above everyone else, which was an unusual thing for Rodney. The two men had become friends, as much as Rodney made them. As well as working on several projects, they would eat together while continuing to work.

Then one day, out of the blue Radek resigned by email and when Rodney travelled to the apartment Radek had lived, it was cleaned out.

“Dr McKay,” Sam’s voice shook him out of his thoughts, “Rodney, I’m sorry about Dr Peterson. I was sure he would be a good candidate to work with you. I’ll have a few new recruits for you by this afternoon.”

“Good,” Rodney nodded brusquely.

Sam reached out and gently squeezed his arm, “I’ll see you later.”

Rodney watched her leave before returning to his work – it was going to be a long day.
The day moved on and Rodney oversaw all the projects his team were working on while managing to get some headway on his own. As time moved on the lab emptied, people went home to see their family, or to get freshened up for dates and other things Rodney didn’t have any interest in. Checking his watch he knew he’d have to go home to feed his cat soon or it wouldn’t be happy.

“Dr McKay,” Miko poked her head into his office, “I am leaving. I shall take the file on the Artemis project to work on tonight.”

“Great,” he waved her away, still caught up in trying to work out when he’d last fed his cat. When her words finally filtered through Rodney groaned, he needed that file himself. As he walked into the now empty lab, Rodney frowned to find Miko was definitely gone. Annoyed he grabbed his jacket and started out. Rodney then had to go back to the lab to find out where the young woman lived but finally he was on the way to her apartment.

Rodney entered the pleasant sandstone building where Miko lived and entered the elevator. As he waited for the ascent to the sixth floor he went over in his head the new applications he’d scanned briefly around lunchtime.

When the doors finally opened Rodney wandered along the corridor, checking each door for the right number. Finally he found the right apartment and Rodney started to knock, worried when the door opened slowly.

“Dr Kusanagi?” Rodney called, swallowing hard as he could see inside the small apartment and what he could see looked worse than his place, “Miko, are you in here?”

Torn between running away, pretending he’d not been here and wanting to help the young woman Rodney closed his eyes. Taking a deep breath he slowly stepped inside.

“Miko?” he called again, reaching into his jacket to get his phone in case he needed to call for help, “Miko?”

The room was a mess, furniture overturned with papers, DVD’s and other various unidentifiable items were strewn around. A soft shuddering breath from behind the couch got Rodney’s attention; he slowly walked towards it terrified of what he’d find.

“Oh my God,” Rodney gasped as he found the young woman lying against a wall; her hand was pressed to a wound in her stomach.

Her eyes snapped open, “Dr McKay...”

“Just relax,” Rodney said shakily, he dropped down beside her and tried to think of what to do. After a few moments he pulled out his cell phone but before he could call an ambulance Miko caught his arm.

“Not yet,” she whispered; her breathing harsh as she gripped him tightly, “I need you to do something for me.”

“I have to call for help,” Rodney told her.

“No,” Miko reached into her pocket and pulled out a flash-drive, “I hid it on me so they couldn’t find it,” the young woman explained, “You must deliver it for me.”

“What?”
"Many lives depend on the information on this," she told him, Miko placed it in his hand and stared into his eyes, "Promise me you will deliver it?"

Rodney wanted to turn and run away, he wanted to not have come after the stupid file but he was here and the young woman he had taken for granted was begging him to help her.

"Alright," Rodney promised, "Tell me when and where, then I call the ambulance."

Rodney climbed out the taxi; he numbly paid the driver before staggering into his apartment building. Miko had died three hours ago; the police had asked him about everything he remembered before finally letting him go home.

Once in his apartment Rodney ripped off his clothes and headed for a long hot shower. He’d held Miko until the ambulance had arrived, she told him his schedule for the next few days as they waited. As the small apartment was filled with police and medics, Rodney found he was sitting on the floor alone with blood covered hands before one of the detectives helped him off the ground. He closed his eyes as he stuck his head into the harsh hot spray for a few minutes before he managed to get out and dressed.

He had to honour her last wish – he just hoped he didn’t get himself killed doing it.

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Miko had given him very precise instructions about where he was to go. Rodney followed them through the quiet streets wondering why he had never noticed the differences in the world since the Andurians had arrived. True the streets were cleaner and there seemed to be less crime but there was something about the calm that didn’t seem right.

Finally he reached the small hardware store he’d been directed to and taking a deep breath walked inside.

An old man stood behind the counter, watching warily as Rodney walked in, "Can I help you?"

Rodney took a deep breath, "I’m here to see Mr Burns."

The old man simply stared at him and Rodney began to think he’d got it wrong before the other man gruffly asked, "Got an appointment?"

"It should be under Otto," Rodney nervously rubbed his hands together.

The old man pushed a button beneath the counter and a door opened, Rodney walked through as the old man motioned him in.

Rodney looked around the small room, filled with boxes of stock wondering why he was here. As he was considering just going home he felt a gun press to his back.

Rodney gripped the flashdrive in his hand, desperately going over how he could get out of this.

"Where’s Miko?" the man behind him demanded.

Rodney swallowed, silently shouting don’t kill the messenger, "She’s dead."
“What?” the man sighed, “Damn it, I told her to be careful. Who are you?”

“Dr Rodney McKay,” he said automatically, “Who’re you?”

The man laughed, “Yeah, right I’m going to tell you that. Have you got it?”

Rodney held up the flashdrive.

“Good,” the man said, “Now get out and never tell anyone about this. In fact it’d be best if you forget everything that happened.”

“What about Miko?” Rodney demanded, his anger overwhelming how scared he was, “I’ve to forget about her too? Forget that she died?”

“No,” the man told him, “Just what she died for.”

Rodney felt the gun leave his back and heard a door close, he turned to find he was alone again. The door he’d used to enter was open again and the old man was motioning him to leave.

Rodney looked around trying to find where the other man had disappeared to before leaving the shop and heading to work.

“Did you say Rodney McKay?” Radek asked as he inserted the drive into his computer.

John nodded, “That’s the name he gave me.”

Radek frowned before he hit a few commands into the computer and turned it to the other man; “Him?”

John nodded again, “That’s the guy.”

Radek grimaced, “It is a good thing we’re moving today. McKay works for Carter and he’s very loyal to her.”

“Is the information intact?” John motioned the computer.

“Yes,” Radek replied, “Miko gathered everything we needed. I wish it hadn’t gotten her killed.”

“Me too,” John sighed, “Me too.”

Rodney sat in front of his computer, the copy of Miko’s flash drive in his hand. He’d copied it just before he’d left for the drop and had waited all day so he could study the data. Rodney needed to know what Miko had died for, he needed to know what she’d been willing to die for but he was also terrified to find out the truth.

“Don’t be an idiot,” Rodney muttered to himself, he took a deep breath and opened the file. He stared as he saw the list of names, several of those he knew and had worked with him but every one of them had resigned. There was more information on where they were and he frowned as several of them were noted as being held captive within the Educational Complex.

“Impossible,” Rodney murmured, “They can’t be. She wouldn’t...”
As he sat staring at the computer screen in front of him, Rodney thought back over the past few years and suddenly things started to make sense to him.

Sam sat in her office annoyed that there had been such a huge breach in security. Miko Kusinagi had been such a quiet woman, smart and dedicated she had seemed perfect to work with McKay, the woman had even developed a crush on the idiot.

Sam couldn’t believe that the little mouse had been gathering information for O’Neill and his motley crew. As she stood over the woman, knife in hand, demanding to know where the stolen information was Miko simply looked up defiantly and laughed in her face. It was one of the reason Sam used the knife to kill her enemies so it was personal, so that she could see the look in their eyes when they knew she had won.

A knock on the door interrupted her, “Yes.”

“Dr Carter,” Fer entered the room, “Someone is accessing the classified files.”

Sam rolled her eyes, at least the new protocols put in place after Miko’s thievery were working.

“Who would be doing that?” she wondered as she accessed the computer herself, surprise filling her as she discovered the culprit, “McKay?”

Sam sighed annoyed, she knew he’d found Miko and called an ambulance for her but at no time did it occur to Sam that the mouse would have time to give the egotistical fool anything. Now she would have to get what she needed from McKay the hard way.

“Have a security detail meet me at Dr McKay’s laboratory,” Sam ordered, shutting off her computer and standing, “Dr McKay is becoming a permanent resident of the Campus.”

Rodney swallowed hard as he gripped the flashlight he held in his hand, he needed to find out if Peterson was being held prisoner. He knew that this was dangerous but he had to find out if it was all true, he had to know.

Rodney had found the entrance to the lower levels of the Campus and the thought of the young man who’d been working in the lab only a few days ago being trapped in a cell meant Rodney had decided to try a rescue.

“What the hell am I doing?” he asked himself as he slowly moved through the dark grey corridors, “What the hell am I doing?”

But despite the overwhelming panic filling him Rodney continued forward glancing every so often into the empty cells. Moving deeper into the underground structure Rodney shivered as he heard cries, longing empty cries of pain and anguish echoed through the halls and he wanted to turn and run but he was rooted to the spot. As he listened to the cries tears filled his eyes and he wiped them away. A sharp howl made Rodney jump and he recognised Peterson’s voice in the scream.

Pulling out the taser he’d stolen, Rodney hurried forward hoping he could do something to help the other man.
Sam stood in the cell with the latest scientist she’d had to remove from McKay’s team after discovering he had been in contact with a terrorist group. McKay was wandering through the corridors of Complex at this moment and Sam couldn’t help but smile in amusement at the foolishness of the egotistical ass.

“Wait until he enters the room,” Sam ordered the guard standing there, “Then disarm him.”

The guard nodded and ordered his team out of the room to their posts where they waited for the human.

Sam returned her focus to Dr Peterson and twisted the knife in his side, smiling as he cried out in pain again. She moved back slightly out of sight when she was warned of McKay’s arrival and watched as the idiot opened the door furtively.

“Peterson,” Rodney whispered to the young man, “Peterson, can you hear me?”

“He can’t,” Sam said as she walked forward, “But I can.”

Rodney bounced up and tried to retreat but was stopped by the guards entering the cell behind him.

“You shouldn’t be so curious, Dr McKay,” Sam stated smugly, “Look how much trouble it’s got you into.”

Rodney struggled against the Andurian guards as they forced him through the corridors, he couldn’t believe he’d been so stupid.

“Dr McKay,” Sam sat on the table in the cell he was shoved into, “I hope you like your new home, as you can see it’s been decorated especially for you.”

“How can you do this?” Rodney demanded, watching the weapon in her hand warily, “You’re human. You were a member of SG1. How can you do this?”

Sam laughed and ignored his demands, “The project you’re working on for me, Dr McKay is something extremely important and you’re going to continue your research.”

“Not a chance in hell,” Rodney spat at her.

“I expect results,” she continued as though he hadn’t spoken, “But I also know that despite your ego you’re annoyingly moralistic. So we have a small problem, don’t we?”

“Go to hell,” he snapped again.

“I believe a little persuasion is in order,” Sam motioned to the guards standing behind Rodney who grabbed him.

Rodney struggled, panic filling him as he realised he was being placed inside a small cupboard. He cried out as the door was slammed shut and he was trapped in the dark in the small confined space.

“Think wide open spaces, Dr,” Sam called to him mockingly, “Wide open spaces.”

Rodney sat against the wall in his cell, his legs useless because of what she’d placed in his back. Sam was punishing him because he’d deliberately given readings that blew out several power cells,
something that would take weeks to repair. The device in his back was sending out a signal that
stopped him from sleeping and right now he was within the third day of sleeplessness. He had no
idea how long he’d been here and Rodney was beginning to think he was going to die here.

“Oh my God.”

The stunned whisper made him look over to the door where a familiar woman stood; it was the
marine who had helped him move labs that day. As well as finding her attractive he’d been
impressed by how intelligent she was, unlike the other one helping, she’d teased and laughed at him
as she showed off her own quick mind. He tried to remember her name but couldn’t.

She was staring in at him, her hazel eyes wide with horror as Rodney stared at her silently asking
her to help him. He could hear a soft voice in the background as she looked at him and after a few
moments she broke eye contact turning away. Rodney saw her retreat before Sam appeared in her
place smiling smugly.

Rodney felt the slight hope dispel as he knew he was never getting out of here.
“Rodney!!!”
Laura came running onto the balcony only to be stopped as Sha’re grabbed her arm.
“The doctors are doing the best they can,” Sha’re told her.
“What happened?” Laura whispered, her eyes darting over to Carson and Janet huddled over Rodney’s still form.
“It was a bomb,” Sha’re explained, her hand still holding Laura’s arm, “We don’t know any more than that just now.”
“I...”
“Laura,” Sha’re stopped her speaking, “I need your expertise. Dr Brown saw the explosive, she can give you a description but you have to focus on that,” seeing the fear in the other woman’s eyes Sha’re hugged her quickly, “I understand how you feel but Rodney is in the best hands possible.”
“Okay,” Laura whispered shakily, “Okay, just keep me informed of his condition.”
“I promise,” Sha’re nodded.
Laura walked over to where Katie sat huddled in a blanket as Jennifer stood nearby; taking a deep breath she crouched down beside the woman she constantly referred to as ‘bimbo’.
“Dr Brown,” Laura started, “Sha’re said you saw the explosive.”
Katie nodded, she was obviously in shock and Laura felt sympathy for the other woman
“Can you describe what you saw?” Laura asked, she gently touched the other woman’s hand, “This is very important.”
“It...it was a crystal,” Katie told her, “It was pink, very pretty and I reached out to touch it. Rodney grabbed me and threw me out of the way.”
“Was it sitting against anything or just on the wall?” Laura asked.
Katie frowned in thought, “It...I think it was growing against one of the flowerpots.”
“Was it facing you or out to sea?” Laura continued to question but kept her voice soft and soothing.
“It was facing me only slightly,” Katie whispered, tears filling her eyes, “But mostly out to the sea.”
“That’s good,” Laura told her, “That explains a few things and helps me a lot,” she looked up at the doctor who was standing waiting, “Jennifer is going to take you to the infirmary.”
Katie nodded before Jennifer helped her up; Laura watched the other woman and she sighed; now she had to go looking for more bombs.
Laura headed back to where Sha’re was standing, Daniel and John were with her all three were
watching as the doctors finally started to move Rodney to the infirmary. Laura caught a glimpse of his bruised face and she felt her stomach flip in fear.

“Laura,” Sha’re pulled her attention away from Rodney, “Did Dr Brown tell you anything?”

“Yeah,” Laura frowned, “It was an Andurian explosive crystal. After they’re planted they grow until they’re activated either by a remote or as in this case body heat. Rodney and Dr Brown were extremely lucky, the crystal couldn’t have been fully grown and it grew against a plant pot facing away from them so the explosion was angled differently than if there was nothing against it.”

“Do you believe there will be more?” Sha’re asked worriedly.

Laura nodded, “Unfortunately yes.”

“Ford must have planted them,” John told them, “He was a weapons expert too.”

Daniel’s arm automatically wrapped around Sha’re’s waist, “I guess he planned on going back to Earth, then when we thought we were safe the bombs would go off.”

“Can you disable them?” Sha’re squeezed her husband’s arm as she questioned Laura.

“I can but we’ll have to find them first,” Laura bit her lip in thought, “I’ll need teams spread out across the city, the crystals give off a signal that we should be able to set the cities internal scanners to find.”

“John, I want search teams split across the city,” Sha’re ordered, “Use the Jaffa, they are excellent trackers. Talk with Radek and get scanners fixed for the frequency Laura gives you.”

“Wait,” Laura said, “You’ll need someone to get Jeannie. She’ll want to know about...”

“It’s alright,” Sha’re soothed, she slipped out of Daniel’s grip and moved Laura to one side, “John will go and get her the moment he’s sorted the teams out. And I promise until you are able to be there, I shall stay in the infirmary.”

“Radek has fixed the cities sensors to scan for the crystals energy signature,” Laura told the assembled group before her, a mixture of Human and Jaffa, “The one problem we have is that they only show where they are not how many are planted in the area so you need to look in every nook and cranny using the handheld scanners Radek has prepared. Once you find one of these things call me, don’t try to remove or deactivate it yourself – I’ve had a lot of experience with these things.”

“Okay,” John took over, “O’Neill is going to supervise from the control room. You all know your teams so go and be careful. We already have one person in the infirmary because of these things we don’t want any more.”

The group split into their teams and waited for their assigned areas, quickly the room was empty except for Laura and John.

“Are you okay?” John asked the pale faced young woman.

“No,” Laura replied, shaking her head, “I am so far away from okay right now.”

John gently rested his hand on her shoulder, “Just keep focussed while I go get Jeannie.”

Laura gave him a weak smile watching as he left her, before she reached for her radio, “Okay,
Colonel. I’m waiting for our first hit.”

Daniel squirmed uncomfortably in the infirmary seat, he wanted to be out with the search teams but when his wife had asked him to stay with her while she waited on news of Rodney’s condition...he’d never been able to say no to her.

He studied Sha’re as she sat almost like a statue waiting, she looked drained and Daniel pulled her over to him.

“I am just tired,” she murmured to him pre-empting his question.

“Maybe you’re pushing yourself too hard,” Daniel rested his hand on her stomach, feeling the slight swell of their baby.

Sha’re laughed softly, “We are building a new home for ourselves,” she reminded him, “It is not exactly a relaxing time for any of us.”

Daniel kissed her cheek before sighing, “I wish they’d tell us something.”

“I know,” his wife agreed, “I want to be able to give Laura some news. She’s worried and I can imagine how she feels.”

“Shh,” Daniel breathed, holding her close, “Rodney is in the best hands, the only thing we can do is be here.”

Sha’re closed her eyes and rested her head against his shoulder, “I know.”

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Jeannie looked up from her reading, as a man entered the room, “Hi, Siler.”

“Hi,” he greeted her back, “How are the power relays coming?”

“Considering how old these things are,” Jeannie replied with a smiled, “Pretty good. What about you, I heard you managed to finally get the water reclamation system working finally.”

Siler shrugged, “It was old and we had to repair several systems but it’s working finally.”

Jeannie offered him some coffee, smiling as he leaned back and took a deep breath savouring the smell.

“Enjoying that?” she teased as she watched him.

“Back when we were in the SGC,” he started after taking his first sip, “I wasn’t much of a coffee person but after several months of helping Daniel fix up some shelves in his office, which I had to keep adding to, I began to appreciate it.”

“Daniel’s a coffee drinker?” Jeannie asked, she’d never known him to have anything other than tea.

“Only when Sha’re isn’t around. Daniel was injured when they rescued her from the Gould,” Siler explained, smiling slightly at the memories, “A few days later I was in the infirmary myself and overheard them talking.”

“Why were you in the infirmary?” Jeannie interrupted him, grinning as he looked embarrassed.
“Just a slight burn,” he waved her question away, “Anyway, Janet had been speaking with Sha’re telling her that once Daniel was released he was to rest and not have any coffee. Sha’re, new to our world asked what that was.”

“And Janet ratted Daniel out,” Jeannie laughed.

Siler nodded, chuckling at the memory, “Sha’re made him promise her he would cut back on the coffee.”

Jeannie watched him as his amusement turned to sadness as he thought back to those days.

“I’m going to go grab some dinner,” she pulled him out of his musing, “Want to join me?”

“I would,” Siler grinned at her, “But Diayla asked me first.”

“Oh,” Jeannie leaned forward interested, “Isn’t she the one who told you off for nearly letting the goats out?”

He smirked but before he could answer they heard a Jumper landing nearby.

“This can’t be good,” Jeannie murmured, especially when she saw John’s grim face through the windows.

John landed the Jumper and took several deep breaths when he saw Jeannie’s curious expression staring at him. He’d contacted Atlantis just before he’d landed for news only to be told there was none.

John didn’t want to do this, he didn’t want to tell Jeannie about her brother’s accident, didn’t want to see the fear and panic in her eyes he’d already seen in Laura’s. Jeannie was someone he’d come to care for deeply since he had, well kidnapped her, she was brilliant but sweet and funny.

“John,” she greeted him as he left the ship, “To what do we owe the pleasure of your visit?”

Her grin faded as he continued to stare at her sadly.

“John, you’re scaring me,” Jeannie whispered, “What’s going on?”

To her surprise John reached out and took her hand, “There’s been an accident.”

“Accident?” Jeannie gripped his hand, “What kind of accident?”

John licked his lips nervously.

“John?” she cried, “John, please tell me what’s going on?”

“There’s been an explosion,” John explained, seeing the panic in her eyes he didn’t want to, “Rodney was caught in it.”

“Oh my God,” she gasped, “Is he...Is he...d...d...”

John shook his head, “He’s in Carson and Janet’s care for the moment. I don’t know anything else just now.”

“Okay,” Jeannie pulled away from him, pacing worriedly, “I need to get there but I have to...I have
“Here,” Siler handed her the overnight bag she kept in her room for emergency trips back to Atlantis, “Don’t worry about anything here.”

Jeannie nodded and allowed John to move her into the Jumper, sinking into the seat beside his.

“Hey,” he gently rubbed her shoulder, “He’s going to be okay.”

Jeannie simply leaned back silently and closed her eyes as he started the engines.

Sha’re jerked away from Daniel as realisation hit her that she’d missed several meetings. Try as she might keeping everything straight without constantly looking at the small list she had on her desk was impossible. She needed to return to her office and sort that out but she had promised Laura she’d stay here. To her surprise the doors near them opened and Lisa, a young woman about the same age as Cassie who occasionally helped her, appeared.

“Sha’re,” the young woman came over, “Since you’ll probably be here for a while I cancelled your meetings for today and tomorrow. They’re scheduled for next week now.”

“Thank you,” Sha’re said stunned.

Lisa smiled slightly, “No problem. I’d better get back to the Control room.”

Sha’re watched the young woman go before turning to her husband, “That was unexpected.”

“Yeah,” he stood up, “I’m going to get something to drink. Do you want anything?”

“Water would be nice, Dan’iel,” Sha’re smiled at him, closing her eyes as he kissed her forehead before leaving the room.

Daniel jogged along the corridors to catch up with the young blonde who was walking away.

“Lisa,” he called making her turn back.

“Yes, Dr Jackson,” she asked.

“It’s Daniel,” he told her, “I haven’t said anything to Sha’re about this as I just thought of it but would you be willing to work as her assistant? Keeping her schedule, I don’t know exactly what else but you could work it out I’m sure.”

Lisa smiled, “That would be great. I’m not doing much in the control room other than staring at a console for several hours that someone else uses if anything happens.”

“Like I said I haven’t spoken to Sha’re about this,” Daniel reminded her, “I just wanted to know if you’d take the job.”

Lisa nodded, “Just tell her to let me know when I can start.”

“Thanks,” Daniel said, he let her go before getting some water for both him and Sha’re; he’d approach the subject once they knew if Rodney was alright.
Laura sighed in relief as she managed to disarm what had to be the sixteenth bomb, “Well?”

“The signal’s gone from that area,” Jack reported, “Still got a load to get rid of though.”

“Damn it,” Laura groaned, wiping damp hair off her forehead, “Okay, where to next?”

“T’s waiting for you,” Jack told her, “He’ll take you to the next bomb. You know you could teach someone else to deactivate them.”

“It would take too long,” Laura replied walking along the corridors till she met Teal’c, who greeted her with a quick nod, “Any news on Rodney?”

“Nothing yet,” Jack replied softly, “I’ll tell you the moment I hear, Laura. Just keep focussed on what you’re doing.”

“I’m trying, sir,” she sighed, smiling slightly as Teal’c rested his hand on her shoulder. They hadn’t known each other very long but during their few missions together he’d already become extremely protective of her.

“I know,” Jack whispered.

Jeannie was practically bouncing as she waited for the hatch of the Jumper to open, tearing out the moment she could. John ran to catch up with her as Jeannie raced towards the infirmary. Suddenly she stopped and leaned against the wall.

“Hey,” John caught up with her, “What are you doing?”

“I don’t want to know,” Jeannie breathed, fear in her eyes, “I don’t want to know if I’ve lost him too.”

“Jeannie,” John started but she wasn’t listening to him.

“My Mom,” she raked her hands through her hair, “Caleb, I can’t lose Mer too. I can’t lose my brother after everything we’ve been through. I can’t be alone.”

“Jeannie,” he took a hold of her arms, “Look at me.”

Her blue eyes locked with his hazel ones, the panic in them overwhelming.

“No matter what happens,” he soothed her, “You are not alone. We’re a family, all of us and you are not alone. I promise.”

Jeannie wrapped her arms around John and hugged him tightly, for a moment John hesitated before he held her just as tightly. After several minutes he pulled back and wiped away the tear trailing along her cheek.

“Ready?” John asked kindly.

Jeannie sniffed, “Yeah,” she took a deep breath and nodded, “Let’s go.”
Jeannie reached out and grabbed John’s hand as they entered the infirmary, Sha’re was instantly on her feet the moment she saw them. The Abydonian hugged the other woman quickly before they all turned as Janet appeared.

Daniel was instantly at Sha’re’s side, his arm winding around her shoulders while John did the same to Jeannie as they waited for whatever news Janet was going to give them.

“Janet?” Daniel asked for the small group.

Pulling off the cap she’d worn in surgery Janet took a deep breath, getting ready to give the news to the small family standing nervously waiting.
Laura bit her lower lip as she concentrated on the explosive in front of her, she’d lost count of how many she’d disabled over the past few hours.

“Okay,” she passed the now harmless crystal to Teal’c who added it to the storage container he was carrying, “How many more?”

“One more section,” Jack replied from the control room, “If the pattern continues then there shouldn’t be more than four.”

“Good,” Laura rubbed her eyes; she was exhausted and worried that there’d been no news on Rodney at all since she started doing this.

“Are you ready, Laura Cadman?” Teal’c asked concerned, “Or do you wish a moment of rest?”

Laura wanted about seven hours rest but just shook her head, “No, I want to get this over with so I can get to the infirmary.”

Teal’c nodded and escorted her through the city.

Jeannie squeezed Sha’re’s hand even tighter as Janet walked towards them; she could feel John holding onto her and felt slightly better that she wasn’t alone as she waited.

“Janet?” Daniel spoke up for them.

The petite doctor took a deep breath, “Rodney has three broken ribs, one of them punctured his lung. His left leg is broken as is his left wrist and he had some internal bleeding but we’ve managed to stop it.”

“He’s alright though?” Jeannie whispered hopefully, “Right?”

Janet nodded, “He’s going to confined to the infirmary for a while, Carson’s working on some of the ancient medical equipment to reduce the time he’ll be here – especially since this is Rodney but he’s going to be fine, Jeannie.”

Jeannie closed her eyes and sagged back against John who rubbed her arm soothingly.

“Can she sit with him?” John asked for Jeannie.

“Of course,” Janet smiled slightly, moving to the young woman, “Jeannie, trust me that Rodney is going to be fine. In fact I’ll bet in less than three days he’ll be trying to escape the infirmary.”

“Thank you,” Jeannie breathed as John escorted her through to where her brother lay.

Sha’re sighed as Janet gave them the news she waited until Jeannie left before speaking, “I must return to work. Thank you, Janet. I’m hoping you will not have any more patients today.”

“Me too,” Janet replied, “I’ll see you two later.”
Sha’re slid her hand into Daniel’s and they started walking out along the corridors towards her office.

“I was speaking to Lisa earlier,” Daniel broached, seeing his wife tilt her head slightly in interest.

“About what?”

“I thought she might be a good assistant for you,” Daniel continued, “She seemed quite happy to take the job when I talked to her, I was hoping....”

“What?” Sha’re snapped cutting him off, “You spoke to her before speaking to me?”

Daniel shrugged, “I wanted to make sure she was receptive to the idea.”

Sha’re stared at him, “Dan’iel, I do not need an assistant and you have now placed me in an awkward position.”


“So you decided to help,” she snapped sarcastically.

“I thought...”

“No you did not,” Sha’re raged, “You did not think. You are trying to be in control of something you are not.”

“Sha’re...”

“I am not the naive girl who married you,” she continued, “I am perfectly capable of working without anyone’s help. And I do not need you interfering in things because you feel left out.”

“I wanted to help because I’m worried about you,” Daniel snapped back, “You’re exhausted, Sha’re. I’m not going to stand by and watch you make yourself sick. You’re pregnant remember.”

“It is not hard for me to forget,” Sha’re folded her arms, “I am the one who is sick ten minutes after I eat. I have help and I do not need you hovering over me constantly.”

“Fine,” Daniel snapped, he stopped walking.

Sha’re marched away, “Fine.”

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Rodney’s face was pale, well what she could see of his face was pale Jeannie mused as she took a seat beside his bed. He had a large bruise covering the right side of his face as well as several cuts that looked angry and red.

John gently rested his hands on her shoulders, “I’m going to go get you something to eat.”

“I don’t...”

“Yes, you do,” John told her, “I’ll be back soon.”

Jeannie gave him a tight smile before she turned back to study her unconscious brother. She’d never seen him so still, so quiet. He talked in his sleep, he paced when he worked and muttered constantly.

“I can’t believe you’re doing this to me,” she told him, “This is supposed to be a safe place for all of
us,” Jeannie smiled softly, “You know you saved Katie Brown’s life. I think she’ll be even harder to get rid of now. According to John, Laura is hunting down these bombs and disarming them all. I’m sure she’ll come see you pretty soon.”

She fell silent as a nurse came over and checked Rodney quickly before leaving them alone once more.

“Okay,” Jeannie took a deep breath before leaning back in the chair, “I’m not leaving until you wake up. And since I know you want me to get back to the mainland to supervise then you better wake up soon.” she sighed, “Just wake up.”

Laura hurried through the corridors towards the infirmary, she really needed a shower and to get several hours sleep but she knew until she saw Rodney she wouldn’t be able to rest. The last few hours had been exhausting as she ran around the city disarming explosives, all the while worrying about a man she wanted to hate.

“Laura,” Carson greeted her as she stepped through the doors, “He’s going to be fine.”

“Are you sure?” she breathed, closing her eyes in relief.

Carson gently squeezed her shoulder, “Yes, I am completely sure that Rodney will be perfectly fine – unless we kill him when he starts whining about how long he has to stay here.”

Laura laughed slightly, “Thanks. Where is he?”

Carson wrapped his arm around her shoulders, “Come on. Jeannie’s there already, I think she’ll be glad of the company.”

Laura sighed as they walked through the infirmary to the private room at the back where Jeannie was sitting. Rodney’s younger sister was picking at a roll as she leaned back in her chair staring at the man lying unconscious on the bed.

“Jeannie?” she said softly not wanting to startle the other woman.

Jeannie turned to see Laura walking slowly towards the bed, “Did you get all the bombs?”

“Yeah,” Laura whispered, her eyes searched Rodney’s face; “Carson said he’s going to be okay.”

Jeannie nodded before she moved and hugged the other woman.

“I’m glad you’re here,” Jeannie whispered, as she took her seat again while Laura gently touched Rodney’s forehead, “You’re...I...”

Laura cut her off as she took the other seat and took Jeannie’s hand, “Me too.”

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Sha’re looked up confused as she heard a quick knock on the door to her office, “Edward?”

The balding English man smiled at her confused look, “We had a meeting half an hour ago concerning my proposal.”

“Lisa cancelled all my appointments,” Sha’re frowned confused, she glanced over to her list and sighed, “But you have not been noted. I am so sorry, Edward. It has been a hard day.”
“I heard,” he took a seat, “How is Dr McKay?”

“Recovering,” Sha’re replied, “Janet assures us he will be back to his old self very quickly, and Laura managed to disarm all the explosives. There is no reason to worry.”

Edward nodded, “Have you thought about getting some sort of aide to help you?”

“Have you been speaking my husband?” Sha’re demanded sharply.

Edward looked confused, “No. Did I step on some toes?”

“It is not you,” she sighed, “I apologise, I am just having one of those days.”

Edward gave her a warm smile, “How about we reschedule for next week?”

“Thank you,” Sha’re told him, “And I shall give some thought to your suggestion.”

He gave her a fatherly smile and nod before leaving her alone. Sha’re closed her eyes and groaned, dropping her head onto her arms. After several minutes she stood up and caught Lisa’s eye, motioning the young woman to join her.

“Is something wrong?” the younger woman asked, her brown eyes wide.

“I believe Dan’iel spoke with you earlier concerning you helping me,” Sha’re said, she took a deep breath, “I am unsure how this will work or even if this will work but if you still want to help me I would appreciate it.”

Lisa beamed, “I’m more than happy to help you.”

Sha’re smiled back, “Well we shall start tomorrow. For now I am going to go and get some rest. If anyone is looking for me can you take a message?”

“No problem,” Lisa told her, “And from now on we should let people know to come through me if they need to talk to you. Except Daniel.”

“Possibly even him some days,” Sha’re smiled slightly, “Call me if anything important happens.”

“No problem, boss.”

Jack winced as he watched Daniel hit the punching bag in the gym, he recognised his friend was in a bad mood and hated interrupting because talking to him when he was like this was a real pain but he also knew that leaving Daniel like this was never a good idea.

“Danny,” Jack called, stepping back slightly as the other man turned on him, “Hey.”


“Wanted to talk about whatever is bugging you,” Jack replied, leaning against the nearby wall, “Because you’re scaring the other kids.”

“I’m fine,” Daniel snapped; he punched the bag again before sighing, “Just a bad day.”

Jack nodded, “It has been for most of us. Why don’t you go get Sha’re and have a quiet night together?”
Daniel glanced at his friend for a second before turning back to his the punching bag again.

“Ah,” Jack understood finally, “I’ll leave you to your bad mood.”

Daniel ignored him as he left the room.

Jack saw John walking towards the gym as he stepped into the corridor again.

“I’d give that room a miss for a while,” Jack warned him, “Daniel and Sha’re had a fight, you don’t want to be around him until they’ve sorted it out.”

“Really?” John asked surprised, “They actually fight?”

Jack laughed, “From what I know they used to all the time on Abydos. Recently though they haven’t, which worried me, I guess they were due for a big blow-up.”

“So avoid both of them?” John asked.

“I’d advise it,” Jack told him, “How’s Jeannie doing?”

John shrugged, “Holding up. Now we know McKay’s going to be okay I think she’ll be fine.”

“Good,” Jack mused, “She’s a good kid and she might not have been with us long but she’s part of the family.”

John nodded, “She’s great and...”

Jack clapped John on the shoulder as he started away, “Remember who her brother is before you finish that sentence.”

Sha’re stepped into the rooms she shared with her husband relieved to find he wasn’t there; she was too tired to fight with him again just now. She pulled her radio off and dropped it onto the bedside cabinet before sitting down on the bed, it had been a long horrible day and she just wanted to find some way to relax for a little bit. Her eye caught the large sunken bathtub sitting in the next room and Sha’re decided to indulge herself. She ran the water and chose one of what Daniel called bubble bath sitting there, adding it and smiling at the soothing scent that filled the air around her. Once the tub was filled Sha’re undressed and slid into the warm water. Closing her eyes Sha’re gently drew her hand across her slightly swollen stomach wondering if this would be the baby she would be allowed to keep.

Growing up Sha’re knew that when she got pregnant there was a danger of losing the child, her mother had lost three babies before Sha’re had been born and then another two before Skaara.

She thought back to those days on Abydos when they’d just married and remembered how anxious Daniel would be when she thought she might be pregnant the first few months they were together, he’d later explained how nervous he was at the prospect of being a father especially when they’d only known one another a short time. Now was a different matter thankfully.

Sha’re groaned as she remembered how angry she was at him, it had been a long time since they’d had an argument like that. In the early days of their marriage they had been fairly commonplace. Their first major argument had actually meant Sha’re had returned to her father’s home for several
days, something Kasuf hadn’t been happy about, because they just couldn’t get past the problem. It had taken Skaara locking them in a Mastadge shed over night to get them to make up.

Wiping away the small tear that slipped along her cheek Sha’re tried not to think about her brother. She had no idea what had happened to Klorel when the Andurians started to remove the Goa’uld from the galaxy but she hoped that Skaara was somehow free of the creature living a peaceful life somewhere.

Daniel opened the door to the apartment and glanced inside, “Sha’re?”

“I am here,” he heard her reply from the bathroom.

Walking in he heard the door shut behind him and Daniel took a deep breath, he’d worked out his frustration in the gym and knew he had to talk to her before their argument festered. It had happened more than he liked to think when they first married.

“Hi,” Daniel breathed as he found her relaxing in the bubble bath, he took a seat on the step beside it.

“Hi,” Sha’re replied with a sigh.

They sat in silence for several minutes, waiting for the other to speak. Finally Daniel took a deep breath.

“I’m sorry,” he said.

“About what, Dan’iel,” she demanded, “What you said? What you did? Or are you just saying it because you know I want to hear it?”

“I’m sorry I went behind your back,” Daniel told her, “I shouldn’t have talked to Lisa before talking to you. I’m not sorry that I worry about you.”

“I am fine, Dan’iel,” Sha’re frowned at him, “I am not about to break at any moment. You have to stop treating me that way.”

Daniel caught her hand, “I’ve lost you too many times, I can’t help how afraid I am. I know how different you are from when we married, I see how incredible you are at leading us and trust me I don’t want to be involved in it. When I thought Jack was suggesting I take charge I nearly fainted,” he smiled when his wife let out a small giggle, “I love you; I love our baby and when I see you as tired as you were today I get a little overprotective. I was trying to help.”

Sha’re interlaced her fingers with her husbands’, “You were right, I do need someone to help me with some things. I just wish you’d spoken to me first.” She stopped him saying anything, pressing a finger to his lips, “Promise me you will talk to me before you do anything like that again.”

Daniel kissed the tip of her finger, “I promise.”

Sha’re smiled and motioned him closer, kissing him softly before sliding to the opposite side of the bathtub, “Now, Dr Jackson,” she said with a seductive smile, “Get in here.”

Rodney groaned as consciousness forced itself upon him, every part of him ached – even his hair seemed to hurt which his brain told him was stupid but it still hurt. He heard someone say his name;
well he thought that’s what it was because the sound seemed to be coming from behind a thick wall. Forcing open his eyes Rodney felt his lips curl up in a small smile which even seemed to hurt him.

“La...ra,” he forced out past his dry throat.

He felt her fingers gently stroke his forehead, “Hey,” she breathed, her voice clearer now that he was able to focus on her.

“Wha’ ha..pe..d?” he tried to ask, relieved that she hadn’t left him.

A smile touched her lips, “You’re a hero, Rodney. There was a bomb and you flung Katie Brown out of the way.”

“He...ro?”

“Yeah,” Laura shook her head, “And you were really lucky that you’re not worse off than you are,” her smile faltered and tears filled her eyes, “I thought I’d lost you for a minute.”

“Laura,” he croaked, not sure he was hearing her right.

“I’d better tell Carson you’re awake,” she started to move but Rodney managed to catch her hand making her turn back worriedly, “What’s wrong?”


Laura nodded, she waved her free hand at someone but she didn’t leave his side. Instead she continued to slide her fingers across his forehead and through his hair. Rodney could sense others nearby but his focus remained on the woman standing above him, her long red-gold hair hanging down around her face.

As Carson’s face appeared above him Laura moved to one side and Rodney gripped her hand in case she left him.

“I’m here,” she whispered in his ear, “And I’m not leaving you again,” Laura gently kissed his forehead, “I promise.”
Chapter 27

Jack stood in the doorway watching Teal’c take both his Jaffa and the recruits John had gathered through their paces. In the few weeks since they’d arrived here Teal’c had made sure that both lots worked together, he’d paired up each Jaffa warrior with a human no matter what they were doing. Across from Jack stood Bra’tac, observing and on occasion taking down someone he decided needed dropped down a peg.

“O’Neill,” Teal’c pulled him out of his thoughts, “You wished to speak to everyone before the session finished.”

Jack nodded and stepped properly into the room, smiling to himself as they all jumped to attention.

“I’m passing on a message from Sha’re,” he told them, “She wants to thank you all for your help today finding the bombs. You proved yourselves and did us proud with your efficiency and professionalism. In the next week we’re going to be assigning some of you to off-world teams while others will be working in the city and on the mainland. You want on a team, remember we’re only taking the best. Dismissed.”

As the room emptied, Jack walked over to Teal’c who nodded to him. Waiting until they were alone Jack turned to his friend, “Think there’s any cake left?”

“They are a good group,” Teal’c noted as they walked through the corridors, passing a window that showed the city lit against the night sky, “One or two believe themselves to be better than the others. Bra’tac is planning on taking those to the mainland.”

Jack chuckled, “We’ll have to find a way to record it. Watching the old man knock the stuffing out of them – we could sell tickets.”

Teal’c smiled a little before changing the subject, “How is Dr McKay?”

“Janet assures me he’ll be fine,” Jack replied, “Considering he’s our expert on this technology it’s a relief. Plus he is, I suppose, part of the family.”

“Family?” Teal’c asked.

Jack shrugged, “Something Sha’re started calling the core group.”

“And this includes McKay?”

“McKay, John, me, Sha’re, Danny, Janet, Carson, Laura, and we included Jeannie when she joined us,” Jack explained, “It includes you too, buddy.”

Teal’c gave a gracious nod to Jack.

“Besides, like I said,” Jack turned back to their original topic, “We need him. McKay knows more about the tech around here than anyone. Though his sister is coming a close second. That’s why Carter needed him.”

“That is something I have difficulty understanding,” Teal’c noted, grabbing a tray as they entered the mess, “Samantha Carter was the foremost scientist connected to the Stargate programme. Her
knowledge and genius were well known throughout the base, why did she need someone else to find the way to Atlantis?"

“That’s a good point,” Jack mused.

“The Samantha Carter we knew would have been able to discover the power requirements herself,” Teal’c stated.

“There’s your problem, T,” Jack reminded him coldly, “We didn’t know her.”

*********************************************************

Jeannie sat at Rodney’s bedside watching him as he slept, happy that he was alive and not caring about anything else. When John had told her about the explosion the fear that she would lose him too obliterated almost every sense she had. When she lost Caleb Jeannie had been devastated, then shortly after that was the death of their mother and she felt completely alone thinking her brother had simply abandoned her. Suddenly she found him again, discovering all the bad things she’s thought about him had been completely wrong and along with her brother she gained a whole new family.

“Jea...”

The croak from her side made Jeannie turn round to see him force his eyes open, “Hey.”

“Hey,” he replied, smiling at her gratefully as she placed a straw to his lips so he could sip the water.

Jeannie smiled down at him, “You gave me a hell of a scare, all of us quite a scare,” She saw her brother look around as best he could and smiled at him, “She’s sleeping. Laura spent all day finding and defusing the bombs around the city. I finally managed to get her to lie down for a few minutes.”

“Was anyone else hurt?” Rodney asked, fighting to stay awake.

“No,” Jeannie assured him, “Katie was pretty badly shaken and you might have to pry her off you with a crowbar, but you were the only one hurt.”

Rodney nodded, his eyes closing again. Jeannie smiled and rested her hand on his forehead, “Get some rest, big brother.”

Laura shook herself slightly as she woke up, checking her watch she was amazed at how long she’d slept.

“I thought you were going to sleep for the next week,” Jeannie teased as she handed her some water.

Laura sighed as she took the glass, “It crossed my mind. How is he?”

“He woke up again an hour or so ago,” Jeannie told her, “Managed about a minute and a half conversation this time before going back to sleep.”

“Did he...was he...”

“He looked for you,” Jeannie assured her, “And I told him you were getting some rest. He knows you didn’t leave him.”

“Good,” Laura yawned, “What time is it?”
“Almost nine,” Jeannie told her, smiling as the other woman yawned widely again.

“Do you think they deliver food down here?” Laura asked.

Jeannie laughed, “We could probably guilt them into it.”

Laura sat alone at Rodney’s bedside almost an hour later after they’d managed to get some breakfast, she’d persuaded Jeannie to go get a rest then have a shower and freshen up, agreeing to do the same later. Laura reached out and took his hand, it seemed so strange to see him this still. The months she’d spent helping him sleep meant she had seen him like this many times but even asleep Rodney would on occasion talk in his sleep and when doing that he would wave his hands the same as he would when awake.

She gently traced along his fingers as she watched his chest move up and down with each deep steady breath. Laura was more than happy to sit here as long as it took for him to get better.

“Is he sleeping?” a new voice made Laura wince.

“Dr Brown,” Laura greeted the other woman, “How are you feeling?”

“Better,” she smiled before she stepped closer to the bed and stared down at Rodney’s unconscious form, “He saved my life,” Katie looked at Laura her smile faltering as she saw the other woman holding Rodney’s hand, “You know you can go, I’ll sit with him till he wakes up.”

Laura winced, “I promised I’d be here when he woke up.”

“Why?”

“Because I did,” Laura snapped before managing to steady her voice, “If you want you can stay too but I’m not leaving.”

Katie Brown’s nose wrinkled in annoyance but she took the seat at Rodney’s other side in silence.

*********************************************

Daniel laughed as he watched Sha’re hunt for her hairbrush, making up last night had meant they’d slept in this morning and Sha’re was now running late.

“Stop laughing and help,” she told him, swatting his arm as she passed her husband.

Daniel caught her round her waist and kissed her cheek, “Try and relax for ten seconds then you’d see it sitting there.”

Sha’re frowned as she saw the elusive hairbrush sitting on the sink in the bathroom, with a sigh she wriggled out of her husband’s embrace and grabbed it so she could sort out her messy hair.

Daniel watched his wife as she brushed out her hair; it was coming close to what he had calculated to be their wedding anniversary – taking into account Abydos, Earth and Atlantis time differences, and considering the last few days not to mention the last few anniversaries, Daniel wanted to do something special for her.

“I want to check on Rodney,” Sha’re told him as she pulled her hair back away from her face, “Then I have to speak to Lisa and organise how this will work and then...” she trailed off as she saw him laughing, “Stop it or you shall be sleeping out on the balcony tonight.”
Daniel chuckled and kissed her, “Yes, dear.”

Sha’re rolled her eyes, “You are incorrigible, Dan’iel.”

He laughed, “Come on, we’re running late.”

“What are you late for?” Sha’re asked as they started walking towards the infirmary, “You have no missions scheduled.”

Daniel hesitated; he didn’t want to tell her what he was looking into just yet, he wasn’t sure it was anything important.

“I’m still going through the database,” he replied, sliding his arm around her shoulders, “Remember we’ve got a lot to go through and with Rodney out of commission it’s going to take longer.”

“As long as you come up for lunch,” Sha’re teased, “I do not want to come looking for you.”

“Hah,” Daniel laughed, “The amount of times I have to come looking for you.”

Sha’re touched his chin with one finger and pressed a kiss to his lips before strolling out, Daniel smiled again and moved to catch up with her.

The infirmary was quiet as they entered it. At one side Jennifer was stitching up one of the Jaffa while Janet was in her office, Carson who was in the middle of doing charts saw them enter and walked over.

“Good morning,” he greeted the couple.

“How is Rodney?” Sha’re asked instantly.

“He’s doing well,” Carson told them, “He’s woken two times so far that we know of and seems quite coherent. He’ll be here for a while but there’s nae need to worry.”

“That’s good,” Sha’re sighed in relief before she spotted the two women sitting by the scientists’ bedside, “But that might not be.”

Daniel grimaced as he followed his wife’s eyes to Rodney’s room.

“Jeannie went to get some rest an hour or so ago,” Carson told them, “I sent a nurse to check on her and she’s out cold. Katie arrived not long after and took up residence across from Laura, I’ve a feeling she’s not too happy about Laura being there.”

“As long as Katie doesn’t start a fight,” Sha’re told Carson, “I would leave them just now. Just call me if anything happens.”

“Yes, Ma’am,” Carson gave her a mock salute dodging her swat.

“Enough,” Sha’re rolled her eyes before turning to her husband, “I am just going to check on them before I go to work.”

“Well I have to meet Jack about now,” Daniel told her, “I’ll meet you for lunch, honey.”

Sha’re stretched up and gently kissed him,” Make sure you do.”
Once he’d left the room, Sha’re took a deep breath and walked into the room where Rodney slept.

************************************************

Ronon and John ran through the city, the events of the previous day had made John edgy and he’d stumbled across the former Runner, running. John needed to burn off some excess agitation at how he’d failed to protect his friends – again.

John would never have believed he’d become friends with a man like Rodney McKay but they were friends, in fact they were good friends and he hated the fact he hadn’t been able to protect him.

“You okay?” Ronon asked as the jogged along the upper levels.

“I’m fine,” John replied.

Ronon snorted, “Right. This is about McKay.”

“The first time I met him he was delivering information for one of the people who’d been working with us after she was attacked. He was obviously terrified but she had begged him to help her and Rodney walked into the unknown to do so,” John sighed and stopped to lean against the wall, “The second time I met him, and the first time he actually saw me, he was in a cell with this thing shoved in his back that paralysed him from the waist down and he looked like he’d given up.”

Ronon moved to lean against the opposite wall, listening to the story.

“He thought we were hallucinations,” John let out an annoyed half-laugh, “Because the device in his back stopped him sleeping. We finally managed to persuade him to let us get him out of there quietly and got him to the base.”

“You feel responsible for him,” Ronon noted, “I can see why.”

John stretched his back and groaned at the click, “Let’s go.”

Without another word the two men started running again.

Sha’re sat at the head of the table half-listening to the council talk. They were going on and on about the bombs, Rodney’s injuries etc. All of them had an opinion on who had planted them, how long they’d been there and other things Sha’re didn’t want to listen to.

“And we’re sure there’s no more?” someone asked, Sha’re didn’t know who.

“Yes,” Radek replied aggravation clear in his voice, “There are no more signals, Laura went through the city and deactivated every one of the bombs.”

“How can we know there won’t be more?”

Sha’re let out a sigh and stood up, “We do not. But we cannot go around not trusting the people in this city. We are careful, I have already spoken with John and he is going to arrange with Jack to upgrade the security forces. Sensitive areas shall be protected and we make sure everyone keeps their eyes open.”

“She’s right,” Jacob finally spoke up from his seat, “The reason we’re here is because everyone worked together, if we start suspecting people we create fear and that’s why we left Earth.”
“I agree,” Ian spoke up, “Laura Cadman is an explosives expert, she worked with the Andurians as well for a while and has assured us that she’s removed them. We have to start trusting in our own people.”

“Can we turn our attention to other matters?” Caroline asked pointedly, smiling as Sha’re nodded thankfully at her. “Alright, I have a few things to go over concerning the school and nursery.”

“Where the hell have you been?” Jack demanded as Daniel walked into the lab.

“Slept in,” Daniel replied, “Then Sha’re wanted to go see Rodney.”

Jack smirked at him, “You guys made up then?”

Daniel levelled an un-amused stare at his friend before ignoring him completely, “I wanted you to look at this before I took it to Sha’re and everyone.”

Jack shrugged pulling over the spare stool to the computer, “Sure,” he saw the frown on Daniel’s face and started to worry, “What’s wrong, Daniel?”

Daniel took a deep breath, “I found something and it’s big.”

“How big?” Jack demanded, he knew this feeling he was getting from his friend and it had never led to anything good, “Danny, start talking now.”

Daniel took another deep breath, “I was scanning the database before you even got here looking over things for starting farms on the mainland...”

“Daniel,” Jack cut him off, “Get to the point.”

Nodding Daniel quickly opened up his research, “I accidentally put in Andurian instead of animal and this popped up.”

“The Ancients knew them?” Jack asked, starting to read before stopping as he hit the sentence Daniel had spent an hour staring at, “They more than knew them.”

Daniel opened up the next thing he had to show his friend, “Then there’s this.”

Jack read over the information before turning to Daniel with shock filling his eyes, “Are you sure?” he asked before shaking his head at Daniel’s pointed look.

“How do we tell Jacob?” Daniel demanded.

Jack shook his head, “I have no idea.”
“Hurry up, vampire,” Rodney snapped as Carson took some more blood from him, “I swear you’re drinking this stuff.”

Carson rolled his eyes, “You want to get an infection and not know about it until your arm has to be cut off?”

Rodney narrowed his eyes at the doctor, “That’s some bedside manner you’ve got, Carson.”

“Why thank you,” Carson retorted with a chuckle as he finished, “There, all done for now. I’ll let your fan-club know they can come back in.”

Rodney winced and caught his friend’s arm, “Can you ask Laura to come in first? I want to talk to her.”

Carson nodded before disappearing through the curtains that hid Rodney from the rest of the infirmary. Rodney wasn’t actually sure how long he’d been here since he’d slept for most of it but he knew whenever he woke up, for now anyway, there would be someone there with him.

The only problem at the moment was Katie.

Rodney knew this was coming, he loved Laura – he had finally admitted it to himself and although not to Laura in words he was sure she knew, meaning now he had to tell Katie. Rodney wasn’t the insensitive bastard people thought he was, or even he actually used to be and didn’t want to hurt her especially as she had been so sweet to him. Unfortunately he had to.

Laura tried to stop laughing as Jeannie finished her story; they’d spent the past few days sitting by Rodney’s bedside worrying about him and now while waiting for Carson to finish his tests they were trying to keep each other cheerful. The two women had become friends almost instantly when they’d met on Earth; Laura had reached out to the other woman knowing how afraid she was.

“Laura,” Carson appeared making them turn, “Rodney wants to see you for a moment.”

Jeannie smiled at her friend before she leaned back and closed her eyes to relax, Katie had taken this time to go and freshen up much to Jeannie’s relief.

“How’re things on the mainland? Everything going alright?”

He chuckled, “We’re doing okay,” Jeannie smiled, “The Athosians have got the farms set up, Siler and I have been working on the equipment the Ancients left. Some pretty amazing stuff and I think I might have found something really, really interesting.”

“How interesting?”

Jeannie smiled, one that matched her brother’s most infuriating, “One my brother will probably crawl out of his sick bed to see.”
Laura walked slowly through the infirmary to the curtained off bed, she wasn’t sure what he wanted to talk to her about and that annoying little voice in her head (which sounded a lot like her Aunt Mabel) kept saying that he was going to tell her he loved Katie.

Shaking herself Laura stepped through the curtains and smiled at him as he sat leaning against several pillows, he looked so much better than he had just the few days before.

“Hi,” Rodney said softly.

“Hi,” Laura replied, staying just a few steps back from the bed, “You wanted to see me?”

Rodney nodded, “Yeah. I just wanted...I needed to tell you...I...” he sighed, “Can you sit down, you’re making me nervous.”

Laura laughed and started for the chair but Rodney snagged her wrist tugging her to the bed. At his insistence Laura sat on the edge and waited.

“You didn’t need to stay,” Rodney told her, “You didn’t need to.”

Laura reached out and took his hand, “You asked me to and I...”

“I know,” he pulled his hand back; “You owe me.”

Laura sighed and took his hand back making him look at her, “I wouldn’t have been anywhere else.”

“What?”

She smiled at him, “Rodney, I didn’t mean to say that to you. Yeah, I should have got you out of there the first time but you are...you’re...” she gently stroked her fingers across his forehead, “All the time we spent together when you had that thing in your back, you grew on me.”

Rodney sighed, he leaned forward touching his forehead to hers, “I love you,” he breathed.

“You damn well better,” Laura whispered before she kissed him.

************************************************

“Daniel...”

“Jack,” Daniel cut his friend off as they marched through the corridors, “We can’t tell them until we’re sure we know everything.”

Jack gritted his teeth, “Daniel, we have all we need to tell them. I agreed to keep a lid on this for a few days until you finished going through the database. You have.”

“Jack, this isn’t something we can just drop on them,” Daniel argued back.

Grabbing his friend’s shoulder Jack pulled him back, “What is this about?”

“What’s what about?” the younger man shot back.

“I’ve seen you take the barest minimum of information to me when you’re sure of something, Danny,” Jack said softly, “Why not this?”
Daniel dropped his head.

“Daniel?”

“Because I don’t want it to be true,” Daniel told him sadly, “I don’t want it to be true, okay?”

“Aw, Danny,” Jack shook his head, “You think I want it to be true? You think I want to tell Jacob this? Because I don’t, but we have to.”

“Fine,” Daniel sighed before glancing up at his friend, “But tomorrow, Rodney should be there when we tell everyone.”

“Tomorrow.”

“Uncle Jack,” Cassie called, jogging along the corridor to where he stood.

Jack smiled as the willowy young woman caught up with him, “Hey, sweetheart what’s wrong?”

The young woman who had once been a frightened child on a dead planet shrugged nervously, “I need to tell you something.

Jack frowned, “Why do I suddenly get the feeling you’ve broken something?”

Cassie rolled her eyes, “I’m not a kid anymore, and I only broke that one ornament. It wasn’t even me, it was my dog.”

Jack chuckled, “So, what’s wrong?”

Cassie took a deep breath, “I’ve been trying to tell Mom this since we got here but every time I try, I can’t.”

This worried Jack and he rested his arm around Cassie’s shoulders drawing her into the nearest room before sitting her down.

“This is serious,” Jack noted taking the seat across from her, “Isn’t it?”

Cassie nodded, licking her lips as she steeled herself, “There’s two reasons Sa...Carter kept me so well guarded. First was the whole child she rescued angle, she knew it was something she could cash in on but that if I wasn’t kept locked up you might get me out.”

“What’s number two?” Jack asked.

Cassie looked around the small room, annoyed by how empty it was but thankfully Jack had a pen in his pocket. Slowly she reached out with her mind and brought the pen to her hand as Jack stared.

“That.”

“How the hell?” Jack gasped; he stood and took the pen from her, examining every inch of it.

Cassie sighed, “Nirti. She was experimenting on the people of my planet. When I turned sixteen it kicked in. I thought I was going to die, I wanted to but the Andurians managed to fix it.”

“Cass...”
“I know I should have told Mom but...” she looked up at him with sad eyes, “Every time I tried, I couldn’t find a way to because I don’t want her to hate me.”

Jack reached out and wrapped his arms around her, “Cassie, your mom loves you no matter what. I promise you no matter what you say, she’s not gonna do anything but be your mom.”

Cassie smiled and hugged him tightly, relieved.

******************************************************************************************

John looked up at Teyla and Ronon who were leaning over him with concern on their faces.

“Did I hurt you?” Teyla asked, as Ronon pulled him off the mat.

“Not really,” John choked out.

Teyla smiled watching as John walked around the room to try and loosen up his back, “You have not been practicing.”

John gave her an innocent smile, “I have, it’s just been a busy few days.”

“Of course,” Teyla replied with her quiet patient voice John had come to know meant she was going to beat him to a pulp again, “How is Dr McKay?”

“The last I saw he was complaining about his broken leg being itchy,” John told them, “He’ll be fine, assuming Janet or Carson doesn’t kill him for his whining.”

Ronon let out what John assumed was a chuckle before throwing John his sticks back, John saw the big man coming forward and groaned.

“What did I do to deserve this?” John demanded as he moved to defend himself.

“John, please report to the Sha’re’s office,” Lisa’s voice came just in the nick of time.

John ducked Ronon’s first swing and tossed the sticks to Teyla as he moved out of the way, “Got to go.”

John smiled at Sha’re’s young assistant who now had a small cornered off section of the control room directly outside the bridge leading to Sha’re’s office.

“I’m wanted,” he said finding Jacob standing talking to the young woman.

Lisa nodded, “You’ve to go straight in. They’re expecting you.”

John gave her a quick nod, missing the adoring look she gave him as he walked past – like most of the female population of Atlantis she had a huge crush on John.

“You summoned me?” John said as he walked into the office.

Sha’re smiled at him, “Thank you for coming so quickly. Radek and his team have discovered what appear to be several satellites. Selmak claims to recognise the construction and I was hoping you would be able to take them there.”

“Now?” John asked, surprised by the urgency.
Sha’re nodded, “I know you are not busy just now, unless you feel like getting beaten by Ronon some more?”

John frowned at her but Jacob clapped him on the shoulder, “It shouldn’t take more than a few hours to get there.”

“This could be important,” Sha’re added.

“Okay, I’ll go,” John told her, “Though there are other pilots now.”

Sha’re gave him a bright smile, “But I trust your skills and experience with the Jumper more than the others. And Jack is busy.”

John saw Jacob trying not to grin and rolled his eyes, “Let’s go.”

Jacob studied the exterior of the small satellite floating around the small ice-like planet; John sat at his side ensuring they didn’t hit anything.

“Well?” John asked.

“I was wrong about the construction,” Selmak told him, “However, we may have discovered something else. Can you capture one of them with the Jumper?”

John turned in shock, “What?”

“We think there’s a toy surprise in them,” Jacob explained, “If we can get one back to Atlantis then one of the science teams can see if we’re right.”

John nodded and started to manoeuvre the small ship nearer to the satellite, he gritted his teeth as the tin can he was trying to grab came closer than he anticipated almost impacting on the drive pods.

“Careful,” Jacob murmured as he was thrown to one side.

“I’ll try to remember that,” John threw back before he winced as he remembered who was sitting beside him, “Sir.”

Jacob smiled slightly before wincing again as John had to bank hard to one side.

“Okay, I’m about to open the hatch,” John told him, “If this goes wrong...”

“Don’t tell me,” Jacob told him, “Just hurry up.”

A loud clunk from the back portion of the ship announced the capture of the satellite and both men breathed a sigh of relief.

Jacob looked across the small cockpit, “Let’s get out of here.”

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“I thought I told Lisa I did not want to be disturbed,” Sha’re said as a shadow covered her desk.

“But,” her husband replied, “You forgot to tell her that included me.”

Sha’re looked up at him with a grimace, “I am very busy, Dan’iel and there is at least an hour before
we agreed to meet for dinner. What do you want?”

“Can’t I just be stopping by to see my beautiful wife?” Daniel teased, losing his smile as Sha’re glared at him, “Guess not.”

“Dan’iel!!”

He dropped his head and pulled the spare seat round to her side, “I asked Lisa to give me time for a meeting tomorrow, I found something and it’s important.”

Sha’re took his hand in hers, “Whatever it is then we shall deal with it, the same as we have everything else.”

“Glad you feel that way,” he sighed, squeezing her hand, “I need you to talk Janet and Carson into letting Rodney come to the meeting.”

Sha’re frowned at him, “He has barely begun to recover...”

“I know,” Daniel cut her off, “But what Jack and I have he needs to hear too.”

“I shall do my best,” Sha’re promised, she studied his face tilting her head sympathetically, “This must be something very big for you to be so worried.”

“It is,” he moved to her and pressed a gentle kiss to her lips.

Sha’re sighed slightly knowing she should chase him away so that she could finish her work but the temptation his presence presented was too much for her to resist. Daniel’s fingers slipped into her hair drawing her closer as the kissed and Sha’re rested her hands against his chest to try to keep herself from sinking too deep into his embrace.

As they parted Sha’re smiled at her grinning husband, she moved back away from him to steady herself gasping in shock as Daniel suddenly disappeared in a bright white light.

“Dan’iel!!” she cried involuntarily, spinning as Peter came running into the room.

He skidded to a halt seeing her panic, “There’s an Asgard ship in orbit.”
Chapter 29

Janet sat in her office going over the reports from Carson, Jennifer and the rest of the medical staff. She was exceedingly pleased by how well they had managed to pull together both here and back on Earth, they were a team and Janet felt proud of all of them.

“Doc,” Jack’s voice interrupted her.

Looking up Janet was surprised to see her daughter and Jack walking towards her, “Hi, is something wrong?”

Jack placed his hand on Cassie’s shoulder, pushing her forward, “Not wrong but Cassandra has something she needs to tell you.”

Interested Janet looked at her daughter, surprised at the apprehension she could see in her eyes, “Cassie?”

“I’ll be outside,” Jack started to leave, stopping as Cassie grabbed his arm, “Then I’ll stand right here.”

He closed the door to Janet’s office and stood, essentially blocking the way out. Cassie pulled the spare seat over and sat across from her mother.

“Honey,” Janet reached out taking her daughter’s hand, “Whatever’s wrong you can tell me, I thought you knew that.”

“Some things you never forget,” Cassie smiled at Janet before becoming serious again and telling her everything she’d told Jack earlier.

Janet struggled to find something to say as her daughter revealed she was telekinetic, as she looked at Jack for confirmation he disappeared in a bright white light.

“Typical,” was all Janet could think to say.

Jack looked surprised as he stood side by side with Daniel facing Thor.

“Hey,” Jack greeted the diminutive alien in front of him, “You’ve got to learn how to call ahead.”

“Damn right,” Daniel muttered under his breath.

“Apologies,” Thor told them with a slight dip of his head, “I hope I did not interrupt anything important.”

Jack saw Daniel grimace but the younger man said nothing as Jack shook his head.

“Good,” Thor started away and after a second the two men followed him, “I apologise that it has taken me so long to return, I assume your people are doing well?”

“We’re doing fine,” Jack assured Thor, “Had a few problems recently but things have been smoothed out.”

“Why are you back?” Daniel asked.
Thor glanced at him quickly, “I have spoken with the council concerning what is happening on Earth.”

“And?” Daniel pushed.

Thor tilted his head in what Jack and Daniel thought might be annoyance before he turned and continued through the ship without saying anything else. The two men continued on behind the alien in silence, since neither knew what to say.

Finally they reached their destination and the two men stopped in the doorway as they saw another Asgard standing behind a console.

“New guy?” Jack asked Thor, “Or have we met before?”

“This is Hermiod,” Thor introduced them; “He has agreed to help me gather the evidence I need to persuade the council against the Andurians.”

“What kind of evidence?” Daniel leaned against the wall, “What aren’t you telling us about the Asgard Council?”

Thor grimaced, at least that’s what Jack and Daniel assumed, “The High Council do not believe the Andurians have invaded. Since Dr Carter was a member of SG1 and is their liaison they wish proof.”

“Proof?” the men asked in unison.

“As I said they will not believe me,” Thor continued, “With O’Neill being painted as a criminal by Carter I decided I required an impartial observer to record testimonies from the people within the city, those hurt most by the Andurians. Hermiod has agreed to do this.”

“What’s he owe you?” Jack smirked, grinning at Daniel as both aliens ignored him.

“If you agree Hermiod and I shall interview all the citizens of the city and record their stories,” Thor told them, “Both words and thoughts.”

“Like the Tok’ra memory device?” Daniel mused, “That’s a good idea but I warn you not everyone, myself included, will want to think of everything she did to us. But I’ll go first as soon as you’re ready and after we’ve told Sha’re.”

“I shall contact you tomorrow morning to begin our sessions,” Thor told them before the white light filled their vision again and they were standing in Sha’re’s office.

Sha’re, Peter, John and Jacob stared at them in surprise as the two men shrugged.

“We’ve got news,” Jack told them.

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“Are you getting Déjà Vu too?” Rodney asked as Laura pushed him through the corridors of the city towards the conference room, “I could have used crutches you know.”

“Not with your arm,” Laura reminded him, she smiled to herself, “Besides I like pushing you around.”

“Don’t I know it,” Rodney muttered.
Laura stopped and tilted his head to her placing a quick kiss on his lips, “And you love it too.” As they started moving again Rodney smiled to himself, she was right.

He was extremely surprised that Carson was allowing him out of the infirmary for this meeting but considering Carson and Janet would be there it was probably a moot point. At least they let Laura bring him alone; he would have hated an entourage.

As they entered the room Rodney took note of who was in the room, considering the veil of secrecy on what this meeting was about he was interested in who had been invited. Sha’re had her usual seat at the head of the table, on her right sat her husband who looked disturbed and was murmuring to himself. On Sha’re’s left was Jack, then Jacob, Carson with Janet and Cassie. Next to Daniel sat John, Bra’Tac, Teal’C and Jeannie with space for him and Laura. Finally Ferretti entered the room and the doors closed.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re spoke up once the doors closed turning to her husband, “It is your meeting.”

He swallowed nervously and stood up, looking around the room at the people waiting for him to speak. His eyes settled on Jacob and Daniel sighed.

“While trawling through the database not long after we first got here,” Daniel started, “I accidentally entered into the search engine Andurian. I was shocked to discover an entry, actually a lot of entries on them.”

“The Ancients knew them?” Laura spoke up before anyone else could.

Daniel nodded, “They knew them alright. Back when we were SG1 and Jack first met the Asgard he was told about an Alliance that existed a long time ago between the Asgard, Ancients, Nox and another group called the Furlings.”

“How are the Andurians the Furlings?” Ferretti demanded.

“Want to let me finish?” Daniel frowned at him, receiving a mouthed sorry before he continued, “Anyway, the Furlings controlled several planets with what they called primitive races. One of these was the Andurians; they were unusual because the Gould can’t take over them. In fact, from what I read, any symbiote will be trapped and the Andurian can even deflect pain of a...a zat onto the symbiote without any pain themselves.”

“That’s amazing,” Janet murmured before looking up at an annoyed Daniel, “Sorry.”

“'You’re probably all wondering where I’m going with this,” Daniel sat down again, reaching out to take his wife’s hand, “Using what was in the database, I think I know what happened to turn Sam, our friend, into Carter, the enemy.”

Everyone at the table stared at him, all wanting to know but also every one of them didn’t know if they wanted to hear it. Finally a voice spoke up breaking the silence.

“Daniel,” Jacob said softly, “I want to hear, I need to know what happened. So, tell me.”

As Sha’re gently squeezed his hand, Daniel nodded, “Okay.”

“The Furlings left our galaxy to travel,” Daniel said after taking a long drink of water, “When they
left the Andurians travelled to what had been the Furlings homeworld and raided it for as much technology as they could. The Ancients didn’t like this development and, before they left for Pegasus they somehow – I have no idea how but I’d love to ask, they made sure that the Andurians couldn’t use Ancient technology. As far as I can tell if an Andurian was looking for the Gate address for here they would never find it no matter how hard they searched.”

“Which is why she needed you,” Janet deduced, “If the Andurians couldn’t work out where Atlantis was then they needed someone who could. But what about Rodney? Sam...Carter was one of the top scientists on Earth, why couldn’t she discover how to increase the power to the Gate?”

Daniel dropped his head; he looked around the room but avoided Jacob’s eyes, “The Andurians don’t use the Gate because it’s Ancient technology so they can’t travel to other planets that way. From what I’ve read they like to conquer but in an unusual way,” he glanced quickly at Jacob, “They send out small ships throughout the galaxy, once at a populated planet they find a pregnant woman and...and...”

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re whispered, resting her hand on his as he couldn’t continue.

Jack pushed Daniel down into his seat, “Once they’ve got their subject the foetus is removed,” Jack had studied it with his friend and knew this part as he’d read it over and over again, “Think of a cuckoo, it lays its eggs in another bird’s nest for that bird to raise. The Andurians use the foetus as a template and implant the pregnant woman with an Andurian foetus with a few modifications. Then they return the woman back as though nothing happened and they wait.”

The silence in the room was heavy as they all took in what Jack’s words meant. Jacob was staring at the table as Selmak comforted him as best she could. No one moved, the only sound was soft breathing as everyone tried to think of something to say

“Was she ever...” Janet started, trailing off, “Was she ever our friend?”

“Yes,” Daniel answered softly, “As Jack said there are modifications to the baby. The Andurian DNA is like the centre of an onion, it builds up layers around itself using the DNA of the baby it replaced so that there is no way anyone could know. There is also a false personality, one that is used to integrate with the world it’s in until something triggers the real personality. Basically when they make contact with the Andurians.”

“So,” Jacob said, “My daughter was never really my daughter.”

“Part of her was,” Daniel told him, “But she was murdered. That’s the only way you can think of it, Jacob.”

Sha’re sat on their bed watching as Daniel stood on the balcony staring out across the horizon, he’d been there over an hour now and Sha’re was beginning to get worried. When she’d first married Daniel she discovered his tendency to keep his worries and fears to himself, it had taken her a long time before she brought his walls down so that he would include her, so that he knew she was there to help him. Deciding she’d left him alone long enough Sha’re stood but before she could join her husband the chime on their door sounded.

“Jacob?” Sha’re stared in surprise at the man standing there, after the meeting he’d walked out and headed into the city to be alone, “Are you alright?”

The older man gently squeezed her shoulder, “I am, sweetheart. I came here to talk to Daniel, is he
“Yes,” Sha’re motioned him into the room and drew him to the balcony, “He is there.”

Jacob leaned over and placed a kiss on her temple, “You don’t have to worry about me.”

Sha’re shook her head and hugged him, “But I do,” pulling back Sha’re gave him a soft smile, “You came to talk to my husband. Go.”

Jacob left Sha’re and walked onto the balcony where Daniel was standing. He could understand why Daniel searched the galaxy for her, Sha’re was so sweet and brightened the room when she smiled. Jacob was just another of one in a line of people who would do anything for her.

As Daniel turned Jacob focussed on why he’d come here. Daniel stared at the older man, his blues eyes wide with sorrow and Jacob stepped forward. Without hesitation Jacob hugged Daniel, his fatherly instincts coming through with the young man he’d always felt paternal towards.

“I’d thought you’d hate me,” Daniel whispered as he moved back from Jacob.

“For telling me the truth?” Jacob frowned at him, “That’s pretty dumb.”

Daniel shrugged, “Guess so. But....”

“No buts, Daniel,” Jacob scolded him; “Yes, hearing it was hard, knowing that the daughter I loved and who saved my life by bringing me to the Tok’ra is gone forever hurts but I refuse to be a casualty of the Andurians. I have Selmak who is helping me through this and I might go knock out some of Jack’s recruits later.”

Daniel smiled slightly, his own sadness over what he’d revealed at the meeting still shone in his eyes though.

“Don’t you forget,” Jacob cuffed Daniel’s shoulder, “That you have someone in there waiting to know if you’re okay. Get in there and let her know.”

With that said, Jacob left the balcony – stopping briefly to say goodbye to Sha’re.

Daniel watched Jacob leave before he turned back to his contemplation of the clouds thinking over everything Jacob has told him, a few moments later he felt Sha’re’s arms slide around his waist.

“Jack once told me of a saying,” she murmured as she rested her cheek against his back, “When someone is thinking deeply you offer a penny for their thoughts. I do not have that but I will offer you a kiss.”

Daniel let out a quick laugh before he turned and gently kissed her, Sha’re fastened her arms around his waist again and leaned against his chest.

“I know how hard to reveal what you had found to everyone,” Sha’re told him, “Especially Jacob. But I know how hard it was for you because you wanted there to be some way to save her.”

Daniel pulled away, “After everything she did to us? You think I want...”

“Yes,” Sha’re cut him off, “Because she was your friend. I know there was a part of you that hoped
she was under the influence of some outside force, that this was not her and I am sorry, my love.”

Daniel pulled her close and kissed her again, he moved them inside and sat on the bed with his wife gently tracing her face with his fingers for several minutes in silence as he stared into her dark brown eyes.

“When you were taken,” he finally started speaking again, “My world shattered and she...Sam was there pushing me to sleep, giving me things to take my mind off what had happened to you, helping me learn about the hierarchy of the base. If I’d been there I would have known something was wrong and I could have stopped this.”

Sha’re sighed, “That is why she found a way to keep you away.”

“I’m sorry,” Daniel cried, realising what he’d just forced her to remember, “Honey, I’m so sorry I wasn’t thinking.”

“I know,” Sha’re assured him, “Now you have to stop feeling sorry for yourself and focus. You are one of the leaders of the resistance; you need to start to fight because if you let this distract you she will take advantage of that weakness.”

Daniel let out a soft snort, “When did you become a military tactician?”

“I have spent a lot of time in Jack’s company,” she reminded him with a smile.

Daniel tilted her head up and pressed a kiss to her lips, “I love you.”

“Good,” Sha’re pushed him back against the bed, “because I love you too.”

As she slid onto him Daniel closed his eyes and kissed her, nothing else mattered but the fact they were together and had survived whatever the universe threw at them.

And now Daniel was ready to fight back.
The interior of the Asgard ship was different from anything Sha’re had ever seen, but even that couldn’t distract her from the worry that sat in her stomach. Daniel had agreed to be the first to give testimony to the Asgard, which was making her exceedingly nervous, especially as it was the day after Daniel had revealed all he’d discovered concerning Carter.

Yesterday morning before the meeting Jack and Daniel had spoken to the council concerning the Asgard’s request. Since Daniel had already organised a timetable of sorts for each group that had come with them, they simply asked the members of the council to arrange who was to give testimony to Thor and when.

Of course Daniel had already volunteered to go first but Sha’re, Jack and Teal’c had decided they would give their statements then also.

“Sha’re,” Thor greeted her with a slight nod, “It is a pleasure to meet you.”

“And you,” she replied, liking his voice, “I hope you understand how difficult this shall be for many of us.”

“I do,” Thor told her, his head tilted down to her small bump, “You carry a child?”

Sha’re turned to her husband as he wrapped his arm around her before returning her attention to the alien, “Yes, we are having a baby.”

Thor and Hermiod both studied her intently for a few moments making Sha’re feel a little uncomfortable. Thor noted this and dipped his head.

“Forgive us,” the alien said, “We are a people who have not created new members of our species in a great many years. This situation is something we are not used to.”

Sha’re nodded slightly in understanding thankful when they started discussing the testimonies and how it was going to work. In all honesty Sha’re didn’t want to go speak about everything that had happened over the past few year but if this was going to help them then she would do it.

Sha’re cried as she listened to Daniel talk, he’d told her absolutely everything that had happened to him while in Carter’s prison mostly because Sha’re had forced him to. She’d cried then as well. Jack rested his arm around her shoulders, drawing her close as Daniel continued talking – his tone flat and even.

Finally he finished and Daniel moved to his wife so she could hold him. Sha’re wiped her own tears away before wiping away his.

“My turn,” Sha’re murmured to her husband, “Just be here for when I finish.”

Daniel nodded and let her take the seat where Thor was waiting.

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“You know there’s no real point in me talking to the Asgard,” Jeannie noted as she absently swatted
her brother’s hand away from the laptop she was using.

They were sitting in Rodney’s room in the infirmary, Janet and Carson had given up trying to get rid of Laura and Jeannie for the moment as long as they didn’t agitate the patient.

“They want to talk to everyone,” John reminded her as he walked in, “You just have to tell them about your conversations with Carter.”

“What are you doing here?” Rodney asked, still trying to see what Jeannie was working on.

“Came to tell you guys that we’re up next,” John explained with a shrug, “Daniel will contact us soon then we’ll be beamed up.”

“Hold on,” Jeannie closed her computer, “They’re actually letting Mer out of the infirmary? Without supervision?”

“Hey, this isn’t my idea,” John held up his hands to defend himself, “Janet says it’s fine. It won’t be that long and the Asgard can send him back instantly if it’s needed.”

Jeannie frowned for a few seconds before nodding, “Fine.”

John turned and saw Rodney shrug, Jeannie was being extremely protective of her brother at the moment but considering what had happened nobody blamed her. It wasn’t until later John realised that throughout the whole conversation Laura didn’t say a word.

Jeannie rested her hand on her brother’s shoulder once he was settled into the wheelchair. She glanced to the other side of her brother where Laura was standing looking pale as Rodney held her hand.

“Hey,” John appeared at Jeannie’s shoulder making her jump, “Ready?”

She frowned at him, “As we will be.”

John nodded and settled his hand on Jeannie’s arm before hitting his radio, “We’re ready.”

The white light surrounded them made Jeannie jump a little but John’s hand on her arm steadied her. The first thing any of them saw was a small grey alien, Jeannie felt John’s hand tighten slightly on her arm as she stared at the being moving towards them.

“I am Thor,” he introduced himself, “Follow me.”

John gently rubbed Jeannie’s arm before he took control of Rodney’s wheelchair, Laura and Jeannie walked behind slowly.

“Hey,” Daniel greeted them as they entered a small room with a few chairs along a wall, one of the walls was glass and inside the next room was a single seat, “How’re you feeling, Rodney?”

“I’m bored,” Rodney replied jerking his head at the two women nearby, “And constantly watched by them.”

Daniel chuckled, “Hermiod is getting things ready for you. Once Sha’re’s finished talking to him Thor will start taking your testimonies.”

“Dr Jackson,” Thor motioned Daniel over.
“I’ll be back,” Daniel told them before heading over to talk to the alien.

As Daniel headed across the room Rodney turned to John only to see a strange expression on his friend’s face.

“What?” Rodney asked.

John grimaced, “Are they meant to be naked?”

Daniel stared at Thor as the small grey alien explained his proposal.

“What?” Daniel asked hopefully, glancing over at where Rodney sat in a wheelchair.

“It is simple,” Thor replied, “Our technology can heal his wounds.”

“Are you sure you can do that?” Daniel asked, “Because the side-effects...”

“No,” Thor replied, “This shall be perfectly safe for Dr McKay. I shall reprogram the pod to work for human biology.”

“I’ll explain to Rodney and his sister,” Daniel smiled, “Thank you, Thor.”

The small being dipped his head before turning to his work. Daniel jogged over to the waiting room where the next four witnesses were sitting.

“What’s up?” John asked instantly.

Daniel smiled at the, “Thor has offered to use their healing technology on Rodney.”

“What?” Laura demanded, speaking for the first time as she stood to look over at the small grey alien.

“This is a good thing,” Daniel reminded her, “He’s certain it’ll heal all of Rodney’s injuries including the broken bones.”

“And it’s a small box,” Laura retorted, “We can’t put him in there.”

“Hey,” Rodney interrupted them; he motioned John to push his wheelchair, “I am right here. Laura,” he took her hand in his good one, “I’m ecstatic you care but if this will heal me and I can get back to work. I want to do this.”

“What about your claustrophobia?” Laura breathed as she crouched beside him, “I know...I...she made it even worse.”

Rodney closed his eyes, “I can handle it.”

Laura shared a look with Jeannie who had her arms wrapped around herself at the thinly veiled clue as to what had happened to her brother while being held by Carter. Rodney took a deep breath and turned to Daniel.

“I’ll do this as soon as Thor’s ready,” Rodney told Daniel before looking hopeful, “Can he knock me out first?”
Jack sat eating a quick lunch; he’d hated thinking back over everything that had happened with Carter. Having to remember the betrayal of someone he’d trusted with both his life and the lives of his closest friends for several years had been difficult. It was worse to then hear what she’d done to the other three.

What had been worse was seeing the look of sadness on his friend’s faces as he spoke of discovering Sara’s body – he’d never told them anything more than she’d been killed and hated that they had to know what had happened.

“Sara,” Jack called as he opened the front door carrying pizza, “I brought dinner.”

He frowned as he didn’t get an answer; she’d said when he’d left this morning that she wasn’t going out at all today.

When they’d rescued Sha’re and he’d seen the joy in his friend Jack had started thinking about Sara and how much he missed her.

It was actually a chance meeting at the grocery store that had kick-started their reunion. They’d started talking as they stood in the bread aisle and Jack had taken the chance to invite her for a coffee so they could continue their conversation. Coffee turned into lunch and they agreed to meet once a week if possible for dinner.

As the months passed they met more and more often, each date beginning and ending with a kiss. On the anniversary of Charlie’s death that year they went to his grave, that night for the first time Jack talked with his wife about the death of their son and Sara had stayed the night.

Over the next few months they spent more and more time together. Now that he’d retired from the SGC after the treaty with the Andurians Jack was able to promise Sara he wasn’t doing anything dangerous anymore and convinced her to move in with him again.

“Sara?” he called again, dropping the pizza onto the kitchen counter, “Are you here?”

Jack shrugged; assuming she’d went out for a while so he grabbed a few slices and headed into the lounge to eat. Opening the door he dropped the plate, not caring about the mess when it smashed on the floor as he scrambled to where Sara lay crumbled on the rug.

“Sara?” Jack cried, he turned her over feeling his blood freeze as he saw the knife wound in her heart and the blood all over her, “Baby, please don’t do this to me. Sara,” he pulled her close desperately trying to find a pulse as he grabbed the phone to him to call for an ambulance.

Jack stood watching as Sara’s body was removed from his front room. The past few months, everything that had happened with Cassie and Janet, the Andurian representatives arriving on Earth and his work to find out what was really going on had taken its toll on him but being able to come home to Sara every night gave him a sanctuary that had been ripped from him. Jack knew that despite the police verdict of a robbery gone wrong this had been the work of Carter and her band of Zombies. He cursed himself for not warning Sara, for not hiding her away with Janet but in all honesty he hadn’t thought she was in any danger.

Everyone thought he’d retired and was spending his days taking tourists out on a boat to fish; at
least that’s what he’d assumed. Now his stupidity had cost the life of the woman he loved, he’d never forgive himself for that.

As the police left Jack pulled out the small communicator from his rucksack that Hammond had slipped to him on his last day within the SGC, he’d lost Sara and he was going to make sure the people who took her from him would pay.

“Colonel?”

Jack looked up to find Teyla standing at his table, “Yeah?”

“Do you mind if I join you?” she asked, motioning her tray to the table.

Jack hesitated for a second before nodding, “Grab a seat. I’m bored anyway.”

Teyla slid into the seat across from him, she hadn’t spent much time with the man who had taken over the military of Atlantis and felt she should get to know him better. Especially as he was the one protecting them.

“How’re things going on the mainland for your people?” Jack asked; picking at the muffin he had sitting on his plate.

“Halling says that our first harvest shall be soon,” Teyla told him, “And the cattle are growing in number. Food shall not be scarce soon.”

Jack nodded approvingly, “That’s something at least.”

They sat in silence; Teyla ate as she tried to find some way to continue their conversation, she rarely found herself unable to communicate with people but this man was different. He didn’t give her any opening to start a conversation, finally she thought of something.

“I was speaking to Major Sheppard earlier,” Teyla said, “He explained about the ship in orbit just now; the aliens are gathering evidence to help you win your world back?”

Jack nodded, “We’re trying to persuade the Asgard council not to form an Alliance with Earth while the Andurians are there.”

“I can understand that,” Teyla stated, she took a sip of her water, “If there is anything that I or my people can do to help?”

Jack shook his head, smiling at the young woman sitting in front of him, “For the moment, no but thanks, Teyla. You guys are a blessing; I don’t think there are that many farmers amongst our group – though I’ve a feeling Daniel might have managed it. He adapts.”

Teyla chuckled at his wry look as they continued eating in comfortable silence.

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Jeannie watched her brother as he opened his eyes, a mixture of panic and relief covered his face. Rodney tested his arm and leg, a smile covering his face as he realised they were no longer broken.

“Rodney?” Daniel asked reaching out to help the other man off the bed, “You okay?”

Testing his slightly wobbly legs Rodney nodded, “I feel better than I have in ages,” he turned and
grabbed a surprised Laura in a tight hug.

“He’s fine,” Jeannie noted to John and Daniel, “Can we start on our testimony things cause now Rodney’s fine I can get back to work.”

“That is a good idea,” Sha’re noted as she walked over to join them, “Thor is ready to begin. But before he does, Dan’iel, he is sending me back to Atlantis. I have several meetings today and Lisa has called me several times already to remind me.”

“Ohay,” Daniel leaned over and gave her a quick kiss, “I’m going to stick around till we’ve got through these.”

Sha’re waved a quick goodbye to the others before she returned to Thor’s side and disappeared in a bright white light. Once she was gone Daniel herded the other four back to the waiting room.

“Who’s first?” he asked softly.

Laura shrunk back as Daniel asked who wanted to speak first, relieved as Jeannie volunteered. The young woman had very little contact with Carter and the Andurians, with the exception of the day at the campus. It was a good way to start the session.

Laura listened and paced, as every moment that passed meant she would have to tell her story. John and Rodney were sitting watching Jeannie as she talked, both were tense but even in the nervous atmosphere Rodney kept testing out his newly healed limbs. Once Jeannie had finished, she thanked Thor quickly before rejoining them in the waiting room.

“Next,” she said softly.

John let out a long sigh, “I’ll go. Sooner I do this...” he trailed off and moved into the other room.

Laura continued to pace, trying not to listen to John speaking because the last thing she needed was to hear about someone else’s nightmare. Getting more agitated as she paced, Laura stopped suddenly as Rodney stood in front of her.

“What’s wrong?” he asked with a frown.

Laura shook her head, dropping her eyes as she tried to move around him but Rodney caught her arm.

“Hey,” Rodney made her look at him, “Tell me. I thought we’d sorted this.”

Laura sighed and moved so she could rest her head against his chest; confused Rodney wrapped his arms around her placing a gentle kiss on the top of her head.

“Laura,” he whispered, pushing her back so he could look in her eyes, “Tell me.”

Moving him away from where Jeannie sat listening to John’s story, Laura swallowed hard and sighed.

“I can’t do this,” she confessed.

Rodney frowned confused, “Do what?”

“This,” she motioned to where John was sitting, “Rodney, I can’t talk about what happened.”
“Laura...”

She shook her head emphatically. “I’m not doing it.”
“Laura,” Rodney frowned, “You have to do this. We’re all spilling stuff we don’t want to think about but we’re doing it because it’s the best chance we have of getting the Asgard council to help us.”

She sighed, dropping her face against his chest, “Rodney, please.”

“Laura,” Rodney tilted her head up to look at his, “I don’t get this. What did she do to you?”

She shook her head as Rodney gently stroked her hair, “It wasn’t her, Rodney. I don’t want to remember what I did...what I almost...we’re finally getting on with things and I don’t want you to remember...”

She was cut off as Rodney kissed her, as they parted she stared at him in confusion.

“I know what you did,” Rodney reminded her, “And I remember,” he gently slid his fingers through her hair, “I remember everything you did for me. I remember every night you lay beside me and murmured stupid things in my ear to help me sleep.”

Laura felt her lips twitch in a smile, “Rodney...”

“Whatever you think you did before that,” Rodney cut her off, “You more than made up for it.”

Laura wrapped her arms around his waist and hugged him tightly feeling him hold her close, “Okay, but on two conditions.”

“Which are?” Rodney demanded suspiciously.

“You go first,” Laura told him.

“And?”

“You don’t leave me once you hear everything.”

Laura, where are you?”

Laura rolled her eyes, hoping her apartment would be fixed soon before living with her parents again drove her insane, “I’m coming, Mom.”

April Cadman stood in the kitchen sipping her tea motioning her daughter to eat the toast that was sitting on the table for her.

“I knew there was some reason I liked being back here,” Laura grinned at her mother as she ate her breakfast.

“Speaking of?” April mentioned, “When are you moving out?”

Laura laughed around a mouthful of toast, “Wanting rid of me so soon?” she grinned as her mother shrugged, “Next week. I talked with my landlord and he said the workmen should be finished by then.”
Her mother nodded, sipping her tea in silence.

“Mom, it’s not my fault the idiot upstairs started running the bath and being blind drunk fell asleep, meaning my ceiling caved in on me,” Laura reminded her, “Trust me, I do prefer my own apartment.”

Laura stood smartly as she watched the famous Dr Samantha Carter enter the room; around her were the other new recruits to the Andurian Educational Facility each hoping to impress.

“Lieutenant Cadman,” Carter stopped in front of her, “Welcome. I’m so pleased that you decided to accept my invitation to join us.”

“I was honoured to be asked,” Laura replied, trying hard not to grin, “And I can’t wait to start.”

Carter smiled at her enthusiasm, “You’ll be working with Tasser, he’s the Andurian explosives expert on Earth. If you head to the security office he’s waiting for you.”

Laura nodded before walking smartly out the door and along the corridors; this was going to be the best job.

This job sucked, Laura thought as she tried to tune out the really annoying man who she had been ordered to help. He assumed they knew nothing, seemed to think he was the centre of the universe and Laura was having a hard time not just knocking him on the head with one of the large books they were carting about.

Telford who was working with her grumbled and moaned about how he’d been stuck with this job, wondering what he’d done to deserve it and irritating the life out of Laura almost as much as McKay.

“Careful,” McKay snapped at Telford as the young man almost dropped one of the boxes, “If you drop that it could explode.”

“Don’t worry, Doc,” Laura came up behind him, “Telford’s so wet he’ll smother any explosion.”

To her surprise he laughed, his blue-grey eyes becoming a deeper blue in his mirth before he turned away and Laura smiled – he had a sense of humour.

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Laura walked slowly through the corridors of the Educational Complex wondering what had happened to the annoying scientist she’d helped move several months ago. He’d been really irritating but the few times she’d seen him since helping him move McKay had always given her an amused smile. She found she missed seeing him around the place, something she knew was completely stupid but for some reason she liked seeing him.

Walking along the corridors Laura found she’d moved into part of the Complex she’d never been in before. A chill slid along her spine as she continued walking despite part of her mind telling her to go back.

Laura frowned in confusion as she saw what looked like a secret passage and her curiosity overtook her better judgement. Laura entered the passageway and started walking along the long corridors.
“What are you doing here?” she murmured as she continued deeper and deeper beneath the building she worked in.

Her stomach clenched as she heard cries of pain coming from all around her and she wanted to run but for some reason she kept walking forward.

There was a door at the end of the corridor she was walking along and Laura wanted to know what was in it. She didn’t know why, her better judgement was screaming at her to turn and run but she wasn’t listening.

Reaching her destination Laura looked through the glass and gasped, “Oh my God.”

He turned to her and Laura stared at the man she’d helped only a few months ago who was sitting on the floor of a cell, he looked as though he’d been out through the wringer and his blue-grey eyes were pleading with her to help him.

“A terrible sight,” Carter’s voice made her jump but Laura couldn’t tear her eyes off the man in front of her, “I’m unarmed and you have your gun, Lieutenant. But before you try to rescue Dr McKay might I remind you what a wonderful job your sister has been doing in the school.”

Laura swallowed hard as she heard the threat.

“And your parents,” Carter continued, “They’re such active members of the community. I know several of the Andurians who think they’re wonderful neighbours.”

Laura bit her lip as she continued to stare at the man in front of her; she didn’t even know his first name only knew him as Dr McKay or that ‘pain in the ass’.

“Let me make this easy for you,” Carter’s voice was smooth, silken, “If he disappears then so do they.”

Laura shuddered; she took one last look at the man before her before turning away and finding herself face to face with the woman who had reportedly saved the world.

“Go home for the night, Lieutenant;” Carter told her, “I expect to see you here tomorrow morning. I’m sure you already know what will happen if I don’t.”

Laura had never been a big drinker, even when her friends were getting completely drunk Laura had always been the sensible one. Tonight however, she was drinking everything in her apartment including the strange cream liqueur her friend had brought to the last party and Laura was hammered.

The first thing she’d done when she’d come home was call her mother, Laura needed to hear the voices of her family to know she’d done the right thing by turning her back on a man who needed her.

As she emptied the final bottle of alcohol Laura started to cry, she’d left him in that place and Laura knew nothing could ever change that.
It had been two weeks since Laura had walked away and she couldn’t stand it anymore. She couldn’t take the gnawing guilt that ate away at her every day and night, couldn’t go to the Complex every day knowing that below her feet a man was being tortured.

That was why she was sitting in her apartment writing a goodbye note to her parents, careful not to put anything in it about McKay or they would still suffer. Tears flooded down her cheeks as she picked up her gun, she couldn’t believe she was considering doing this but Laura couldn’t take this anymore.

“You know that’s probably not a good idea,” a man said from behind her.

Laura spun and aimed her gun at the intruder, he was leaning against her wall unconcerned about the weapon she had trained on him.

“Who the hell are you?” she demanded.

He smirked, “My name’s John, and I’m here to help you.”

Laura stared at him suspiciously, “Help me?”

He pushed off the wall, “We know Carter is blackmailing you. And we know it has something to do with McKay. Help us get him out of there.”

“I can’t,” Laura cried, “Don’t you think I would if I could.”

John shrugged.

“She threatened my family,” Laura sank into a chair, her gun was dropped onto the table, “If I do anything that could help him, she’ll kill them.”

“So you’re going to kill yourself?” John asked, “That won’t help anyone.”

Laura let out an annoyed laugh, “What do you suggest? No, forget that question and just tell me who you are and who this ‘we’ is?”

John licked his lips slightly, “You’ve heard of Jack O’Neill, right?”

Laura stared at him, “Supposedly a terrorist,” she murmured, “But he’s not, is he?”

“You’ve already met the real Samantha Carter,” John told her, “Are you surprised the man she’s painted as the bad guy isn’t?”

She shook her head.

“Look, Cadman,” John said, “Let’s get back to this. O’Neill has gathered together people who all want rid of the Andurians and we want to get McKay out of that prison but we need your help.”

“I’ve already...”

John cut her off, “There’s more than you think you can do.”

Laura sighed, “I can’t go back there.”

John handed her the note she’d been writing, “You do this as planned with one tiny difference – you
“You want me to disappear on my family?” Laura demanded, she pushed her hand through her hair.

John took a seat, “You were going to do it anyway; at least this way there’s a chance you’ll get to see them again.”

Laura walked slowly through the strange tunnels with John at her side, she’d had to leave everything including pictures of her family, every keepsake she had and part of her wished she hadn’t agreed to John’s plan. But now it was too late.

“Jack,” John called as they entered a large room that had a lot of people wandering around. Laura watched as a tall grey-haired man walked towards them, she instantly stood to attention at his presence.

“At ease, Lieutenant,” O’Neill said with an amused smirk on his face, “We’re not really much for standing to attention here.”

Laura nodded dumbly as she looked around the room, “Sure.”

John rested his hand on her shoulder, “Come on, there’s a few people you should meet.”

Laura walked with the two men through the corridors, she smiled as several people greeted the two men at her side. It amused her even more that despite being told they didn’t stand to attention both men were greeted mostly by their titles.

Jack motioned her into a small office where they all took a seat, “Okay, Cadman we have a plan to get McKay out. All I need from you is where he’s being kept.”

“That’s all?” Laura asked confused.

Jack nodded, “John’s managed to get a hold of the codes for the next three days, he’ll take a small team in for the rescue. We just need to know where we’re going.”

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Laura led the team through the dungeon below the Educational Complex, she’d decided she wasn’t going to sit back and let other people endanger themselves while she could be helping. Reaching the door Laura glanced in and saw Rodney sitting in almost exactly the same position she’d seen him in the first time. John joined her and managed to open the door. Laura moved to Rodney’s side crouching down beside him.

“It’s you,” he murmured as she gently touched his face.

“Yeah,” Laura smiled, “It’s me.”

Rodney dropped his head, “I dreamed you’d come back but you never did. I hate these dreams.”

“This isn’t a dream, Dr McKay,” John said, he motioned to Jenkins to join them, “We’re getting you out of here.”

Rodney stared at John blearily, “I know you.”
John nodded, “I’ll explain later. Jenkins, can you carry him?”

The big man nodded, “Easily.”

“Rodney,” Laura said softly, “We’re getting you out of here but you have to trust us.”

He stared at her, “I don’t even know your name.”

“My name’s Laura,” she told him, motioning Jenkins to lift Rodney so they could move, “We’ll talk later once we’re out of here.”

He nodded and sighed as they started out.

Laura stood in the small waiting room along with John and Jack as well as Daniel and Sha’re Jackson who she’d just been introduced to. There thankfully hadn’t been any hitches getting Rodney out of the Educational Complex, now Laura wondered if they’d rescued him only for him to die here.

“Janet and Carson are just checking the device in his back,” Sha’re assured her, “If it is the same as Dan’iel’s then we have some idea of what it does.”

Laura glanced over to the man in the wheelchair who was talking quietly with Jack, “What if it is the same? What does that mean?”

Sha’re gently touched her arm and sat them both down, “The device as well as paralysing Dan’iel sends out a signal every few weeks that disturbs his sleep patterns. I am able to help with that but Rodney does not have anyone like that so this may not be as easy for him.”

“Oh,” Laura sighed, her mind going over everything Sha’re had said and she made a decision almost instantly, “I can do it.”

“Laura,” Sha’re said softly, “You have to understand how hard this will be for both of you. Dan’iel and I are married and at times it is extremely difficult. You barely know Dr McKay, what you will be doing is incredibly intimate. Are you sure you can deal with that?”

Laura shook her head, “I owe him, Sha’re.”

Looking back up Laura found herself caught in Sha’re’s dark gaze, she wanted to turn away but couldn’t.

Finally Sha’re nodded, “Alright, Laura. If you are sure then I will do whatever I can to help you.”

Rodney opened his eyes and stared around in confusion. He blinked, wondering if maybe his hallucinations had escalated. He tried to get himself to remember what had happened but nothing was coming.

“Dr McKay,” a woman’s voice came from his side and he turned. The woman was small with dark red-brown hair but he noticed her eyes were filled with warmth and concern.

“Where am I?” he whispered, he was so afraid this was all a trick.

“You’re safe,” the doctor, he was sure she was a doctor, told him, “There’s someone who wants to
see you.”

The woman stepped back allowing a more familiar woman to move over to Rodney’s side, “Hi.”

“Cadman,” he breathed amazed to see her.

She took his hand as she sat down, “Its Laura, remember.”

“You came back,” Rodney stared at her confused, “I thought…”

Laura shook her head biting her lip, “It doesn’t matter anymore, Rodney. You’re safe and I’m not leaving again.”

Laura finished speaking and shakily turned to where Rodney was standing with John and Jeannie. She quickly thanked Thor and headed to back into the waiting room, she stood nervously watching Rodney who shook his head.

“Come here,” he told her, wrapping Laura in his arms as John and Jeannie moved away from them to give them some privacy, “Why were you so worried?”

“I left you,” Laura whispered, the guilt she’d felt for so many months spilling over.

Rodney rolled his eyes at her, “You came back, Laura. You helped John get me out and you stayed with me while I had that thing in my back,” he gently kissed her, “You have nothing to feel guilty about.”

Laura buried her face against his chest, his words lifting the weight of guilt she carried from her. Looking back up at Rodney she sighed, “I love you.”

Rodney beamed at her, “Considering how much you disliked me when we first met…”

“Even considering that,” Laura laughed.

“Good,” he smiled at her, “Because I love you too.”
Jack walked into Sha’re’s office and dropped into the seat across from her.

“Is there something you want, Jack?” Sha’re asked glancing at him briefly before she returned to her work.

“When were you going to tell me?” Jack demanded.

Sha’re looked up at him, “About what?”

“You know full well,” he frowned at her, “I thought I’d be the first person you told.”

“That I am having a baby?” Sha’re asked, pure innocence covering her face, “I thought you would have noticed by now.”

He glared at her, “You know what I mean, Sha’re.”

The young woman laughed slightly at his annoyed look, “Jeannie is not completely sure yet and I did not want to get either you or John’s hopes up with the promise of a ship.”

“But this could be an actual, proper space ship,” Jack cried.

Sha’re shook her head, “Go away, Jack.”

“I have dibs,” he reminded her as he left the room.

“Go away, Jack.”

Sha’re smiled to herself as Jack left her alone in her office once more. Jeannie had passed her the information on her work on the mainland a few days before and now they’d found something that could possibly be extremely useful in their fight to reclaim Earth.

If it worked.

Jeannie knocked on the door to Sha’re’s office about ten minutes after Jack had left. Sha’re smiled at her and motioned her to sit down as she finished what she was working on.

“Is everything alright?” Sha’re asked concerned, knowing Jeannie had just heard what her brother had experienced as a captive of the Andurians.

Jeannie shrugged, “Hearing what Mer went through, hearing what John and Laura went through makes me extremely thankful I was kidnapped when I was.”

Sha’re chuckled softly as Jeannie’s wry smile.

“But everything is fine,” Jeannie continued, “When Laura and Mer got back they disappeared to his room so I don’t think we’ll see them for a while.”

“Well I will speak to John about taking you back to the mainland in a few days,” Sha’re said with a smile, “If that’s alright with you?”
Actually I was hoping to go back as soon as possible,” Jeannie replied, “I want to see if we really
do have a ship.”

“Unfortunately Jack has found out about it,” Sha’re shrugged, “So you might prefer to be away from
him as quickly as possible. I will tell John to take you back tomorrow morning, will that be
acceptable?”

“Completely,” Jeannie smiled as she stood, “Thank you, Sha’re.”

Sha’re checked the clock on her computer and sighed. It was time for lunch but Daniel was on board
the Asgard ship co-ordinating the group giving their testimonies. She’d been relieved when he’d
offered to do that but now she was beginning to realise it was going to disrupt their daily routine.

Walking through the corridors Sha’re nodded hello to anyone who greeted her, as she entered
the commissary Janet waved her over to join her.

“Hello, Janet,” Sha’re greeted the other woman as she placed her tray on the table, “I did not expect
to see you here today.”

“I put Carson on the list before me,” Janet shrugged, “I’ve a few patients I want to keep an eye on
over the next few days. Daniel has me in the same group as Cassie,” she chuckled, “I think he’s a
little overwrought organising this.”

“But he is the best person to do this,” Sha’re replied with a soft smile, “He has an amazing capacity
to remember details about people.”

Janet smiled at her friend, “Now all you have to do is sigh dreamily.”

Sha’re opened her mouth before closing it with an annoyed snort, “He is my husband, I am allowed
to adore him.”

Janet batted her eyes teasingly, “Of course.”

“Stop it,” Sha’re laughed.

Janet grinned at her, “You know I’m just jealous.”

Sha’re popped a slice of fruit into her mouth, “I know.”

The testimonies took several weeks and Daniel spent most of the time on the Asgard ship working
with the aliens so that everyone gave their statement on what had happened to then during the
Andurian invasion of Earth. It was actually extremely disturbing to hear what everyone in the city
had experienced at the hands of a woman he’d once called friend.

“Well?” Daniel asked as he stood watching Thor at his console.

Thor looked back up at the man standing there, “Everything has been logged and witnessed by
Hermiod. We shall return to the Council and hopefully this will be enough to persuade them not to
enter into any sort of treaty with the Andurians.”

“Hopefully,” Daniel echoed disgustedly.
“You must remember that Dr Carter is human,” Thor replied, “And she is the one in charge of the treaty.”

“We gave you proof Carter isn’t human,” Daniel snapped, he stopped and took a deep breath, “At least you should be able to prove to our ambassadors what’s really going on.”

Thor rested one hand on Daniel’s arm, “I shall do my best, Dr Jackson. I promise you this.”

Daniel nodded, “Any idea when you’ll be back?”

Thor tilted his head thoughtfully, “I believe it shall be about a month. Now we know where the city is it shall not take us so long to travel here however speaking with the council may take some time, they will not be easy to convince.”

Daniel nodded, “Can you beam me to my wife’s office?”

“Of course, Dr Jackson,” Thor replied.

Daniel smiled as Sha’re came into view, his wife moved from behind her desk to embrace him. Daniel took her face in his hands and gently kissed her, slipping his arms around her rapidly expanding waist.

“Have the Asgard left orbit?” Sha’re asked as they parted.

“For the moment,” he replied, his hands gently massaging her lower back, “It’s great to see you. I feel like I haven’t seen you in ages.”

Sha’re chuckled, her warm breath tickling at his neck, “Well considering for the last few weeks you have only come to bed when I was sleeping and were gone by the time I awoke...”

Daniel cut her off with another gentle kiss, “I’m all yours now and I’ll do anything you say.”

“I am so glad you said that,” Sha’re smiled, “Because I have something for you to do.”

Daniel frowned slightly as she moved away from him, “Like what?”

“Jeannie has been working on several entries she found in the database in the central building on the main land,” Sha’re explained taking her seat one more, “She feels there must be more than she has found but does not have the language skills. You do.”

Daniel grimaced, he took the seat across from his wife, “I don’t want to go to the mainland and leave you. We’ve barely seen each other for the past three weeks.”

Sha’re looked at her husband remembering the man who had stumbled into marriage, who had gone up against a god and who had risked his life to save her not once but several times. Resting her hand across her stomach where the baby he’d given her lay Sha’re smiled at him.

“You are an idiot,” she told him.

“What?”

Sha’re laughed shaking her head, “Jeannie has sent me everything and we have established a link between the computers. You are not getting out of the night I have planned for us.”
“Really?” Daniel’s eyes lit up mischievously, “Like what?”

“Go to work,” Sha’re ordered, “And meet me for dinner in our room.”

Daniel jumped up and gave her another kiss before he headed to his lab leaving his wife with a satisfied smile on her face.

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John stood in the lab watching Rodney and Radek as they buzzed round the thing he and Jacob had brought back a few weeks ago. It had been put to one side while Rodney got up to speed on what had been going on during his absence as well as his reorganising of the teams now they’d been here for a while.

“Hey,” he greeted the two scientists, “Why am I here?”

Rodney frowned at the man, “I don’t know, why are you here?”

John rolled his eyes, “Sha’re said you had something and sent me down to investigate.”

“Oh,” Rodney shook his head and motioned John over to the other side of the room, “The thing you brought back seems to be completely useless but guess what we found inside?”

John groaned, he hated twenty questions – especially when Rodney was the one doing the answering.

“Rodney, tell me what you’ve got before I hit my head off a wall,” John replied exasperated.

To his annoyance the other man grinned, “Have a look.”

John rolled his eyes and crouched down to look at the inside of the machine he’d found floating in space several weeks before and grinned.

“ZPMs?” John said with a grin.

Rodney shook his head slightly, “It’s not fully charged but,” he paused a wide grin on his face, “I think if we get the rest of these then together they make either a weapon or a charger for the ZPM.”

John frowned, “A weapon or a charger?”

“Well,” Rodney replied, “We won’t know until we get all the pieces together.”

John shook his head and leaned against the wall, “And you want me to go get them.”

“Well you and whoever else can fly,” Rodney shrugged, “This could be a major breakthrough.”

“Or a complete waste of my time,” John countered, he was trying to hide his smile as he goaded his friend since he knew Sha’re would agree with Rodney.

The look on Rodney’s face could have frozen fire but John was immune after so long, “Even if it isn’t what I’ve said there are still ZPM’s in these things, some of which might still have their full charge.”

Sha’re listened to Rodney’s excited presentation trying not to smile too much or be distracted by
thoughts of her dinner date with her husband. She’d asked John to discover if this was important or not as Rodney could get excited over the smallest thing and most of the time lost her in his excitement.

“Alright,” she said finally, she turned to the man at her side, “Jack, can you arrange for the rest of the devices to be recovered?”

Jack nodded, “We’ve got a few good pilots these days. I’ll go; John knows where we’re going too.”

“Rodney,” Sha’re turned back to him, “Can you put together a team also. One scientist with one pilot to ensure nothing goes wrong. If we can accumulate as many ZPM’s as well as a way to possibly recharge them then that could be an enormous help to us.”

A smile covered Rodney’s face as he mentally started building his team, “Sure…”

“Rodney,” Sha’re called, making him turn back as he wandered out the door deep in thought, “I shall schedule this for tomorrow afternoon, which should give you enough time to brief your team and Jack to ensure his pilots are ready to do this.”

Rodney nodded and disappeared leaving Sha’re and Jack alone. Jack chuckled softly.

“Scientists,” Jack shook his head amused.

Sha’re smiled before she moved onto the next topic she wished to discuss with him, “Carson believes he will be ready to try his gene therapy on a human subject very soon.”

“Could give us more experienced pilots,” Jack noted, “If it works.”

Sha’re sighed slightly, “We need it to work, Jack. If Jeannie and her team have found a ship then we will need more people with the gene.”

Jack nodded, they both stood together to leave the room and Jack placed his arm around her shoulders.

“You look tired, kid,” he said as they walked through the corridors.

She shrugged, “It has a long few weeks, Dan’iel working with Thor made it hard to talk to him and I would stay awake as long as possible so I could see him. I think I managed it once.”

Jack squeezed her, “Well he’s back now so spend some time together and get some sleep.”

“Yes, sir,” Sha’re snapped off a salute making Jack laugh before she kissed his cheek, “Bye, Jack.”

Jack wandered through the halls of the city, nodding hello to everyone who greeted him. Reaching his destination Jack stuck his head into the office and grinned at the woman working there.

“Are you coming?”

Janet looked up from her work and rolled her eyes, “You’re late, as usual.”

“I had a meeting with our esteemed leader,” he defended himself with a grin.

Janet chuckled and closed down her workstation, “Okay, I’ll let you off this time. Come on, I only have two hours before I have to be back here so let’s go.”
Jack gave a flourished bow and motioned her out of the office, Janet rolled her eyes again and walked past him laughing as he jogged to her side. They walked through the city talking generally passing on gossip as they always had back at the SGC. As they reached the Jumper Bay Jack turned to her.

“Ready for your flying lesson?”

Janet grinned, “Oh yeah.”

With a grin, Jack opened the hatch to Jumper Two – his Jumper, John had already claimed One as his and they both hated using anything else. Janet, more nervous than she let on, slipped into the pilot’s seat for her flying lesson.

Sha’re opened the door to her quarters, singing slightly to herself as she set out the meal she had brought for them. Once it was set out Sha’re sat down for a few moments and looked out across the ocean. She loved this city, she hadn’t expected to but this place was so beautiful and it took her breath away when she had time to admire it.

Over the past few years her life had changed so dramatically several times, she closed her eyes remembering the girl who had stepped forward to give water to one of the strangers who had appeared in her home. She could never imagine anything like this, Sha’re laughed to herself back then she could barely imagine being married.

“Hey,” Daniel greeted her as he stepped into the room, moving to her side he kissed her hello before taking his seat at the table, “This is great.”

She smiled at him, “I thought that we could spend tonight alone.”

A sly smile curved on Daniel’s lips, “So what else do you have planned after dinner?”

Sha’re shook her head, “You will have to be patient, my love.”

“Luckily that’s part of my job,” he reminded her, “To be patient.”

Sha’re smiled sweetly at him, “Good.”

Daniel held his wife close to him, smiling as she passed on some of the gossip from the base he’d missed during his time working with the Asgard.

“So,” Daniel asked, his hand resting on her stomach where their baby lay, “Has Jeannie discovered a ship?”

Sha’re smiled but didn’t say anything.

“Come on,” Daniel cried with a laugh, “You can’t tease me like that. Do we have a ship?”

Sha’re giggled slightly, “And what is in it for me if I tell you?”

Daniel moved so he was leaning over her, “I’m sure I can think of something to give you in exchange for the information.”

Sha’re laughed wrapping her arms around his neck, “Jeannie has discovered a vessel that appears to
have been some kind of war ship. We are waiting until we are completely sure it is repairable before we tell Jack and John.”

Daniel grinned, “Can you see the fight over who gets to fly it first?”

“I think we may have to keep them apart for several days,” Sha’re replied with a laugh before she pulled him down to her and they lost themselves in each other.
Laura grimaced when the warm cocoon she was sleeping in was invaded with cold air as Rodney slipped out of bed.

“Where you going?” she muttered still half-asleep.

Rodney leaned over and kissed her cheek, “Some of us have to work, remember?”

She sighed and turned to look up at him, “Personally I’m going to sleep in.”

“Typical,” he chuckled.

Laura wrapped her arms around his neck stopping him from moving, “I get one day off a week and even then it doesn’t always work out that way.”

Rodney laughed, “I have to go.”

“Typical,” she murmured pulling him down to her for a kiss, “We should have done this ages ago.”

Rodney grinned down at her, “I know. I’ll see you later hopefully with a lot of working ZPM’s.”

Laura chuckled, watching as he left before turning over and cuddling his pillow, she could do with a few more hours sleep.

“Morning, Sha’re,” Laura greeted the other woman as she entered the infirmary.

“Good afternoon, Laura,” Sha’re replied with a straight face as she sat on the bed.

Laura rolled her eyes, so she’d slept in a little, “Why am I here? Wouldn’t this be easier in your office?”

“It would,” Sha’re shrugged, “But after Janet has finished with me here I am taking the rest of the day to myself, well with Dan’iel on Janet and Carson’s orders.”

“So,” Laura smacked her hands together, “Why am I here?”

Sha’re smiled at her friend’s sarcastic enthusiasm, “I have an idea. Do you recall when we first met how you suggested everyone should be training to fight?”

“I was pretty angry back then,” Laura reminded her, “I’m not anymore.”

“But you were also right,” Sha’re replied softly, “I believe it will be a good idea so I propose you put together a class. I will leave it up to you how you wish to organise it. I know that Ronon may also be interested in helping you.”

“Okay, I’ll start working on that,” Laura nodded before frowning, “Why are you here anyway? Is something wrong with you? Is something wrong with the baby?”

Sha’re smiled at her friend’s concern for her, “We are both well.”

“Just a scan,” Janet added as she appeared from her office, “Or that’s what will be happening once
Daniel appears. He’d better get here soon I do have other patients to see.”

“He was working on what Jeannie sent us this morning,” Sha’re reminded the doctor, “He will be here momentarily.”

As Laura gave a quick wave goodbye and Janet disappeared back into her office Sha’re sighed, “Please hurry, Dan’iel.”

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“Okay,” Jack said as he looked around the group of people surrounding the room, “Rodney has split you into teams of two, we want to retrieve every one of these satellites but we don’t want anybody putting themselves in danger.”

He saw everyone nod.

“We need the Jumpers,” he continued with a grin making the room laugh, “Be careful. These things could be important to us, Rodney.”

Rodney stepped forward and started calling out the pairs, they had very few pilots and quite a few of them were very inexperienced but they were all they had just now.

John fixed the Jumper ready to go; he was just waiting for Rodney who was giving final instructions to a few of the scientists before they headed for the satellite that was closest to a meteor. The most complicated one typically.

“Hello, John,” Teyla appeared at his side.

John smiled at the Athosian woman, “Hey, Teyla. What can I do for you?”

“I hoped you would allow me to accompany you on your mission,” she said, “Ronon and I both feel we cannot help as much as we should during this type of excursion and wish to see what they are about.”

“If you’ve not got something better to do with your time,” John replied with a lazy grin, “I don’t care. Where’s Ronon?”

Teyla took her seat knowing Rodney would sit in the co-pilot’s seat for this trip, “He has joined O’Neill for this mission.”

“Good,” Rodney said as he walked in and slipped into his seat, “We’ll need the room. Good thing you’re small.”

Teyla and John shared an amused grin at Rodney’s amazingly easy-going attitude. He’d been a much easier person to get along with since he and Laura had worked out their differences.

“Let’s go,” Rodney told John glancing up from a moment before returning to his tablet.

John winced as Rodney took a sharp intake of breath.

“Don’t do that,” John snapped, “This is hard enough as it is.”
John didn’t wait for Rodney to say anything; instead he manoeuvred the ship for another pass at the metal sphere. They were the last to collect their sphere; it was in a strange orbit which meant John had to time this just right.

“One more pass,” he murmured to himself as Teyla and Rodney shared a glance neither wanting to say anything in case John was distracted.

A loud clang from the rear of the Jumper signalled that they’d managed to get the object finally. With a pleased nod, John turned the Jumper back towards Atlantis.

“John,” Teyla leaned forward as they came closer to the planet, “What is that?”

The three occupants of the Jumper all leaned forward staring at the large dark masses swirling in the atmosphere.

“Oh crap,” Rodney breathed, he looked at the other two, “This is not good.”

“Where have you been?” Sha’re demanded as Daniel finally jogged into the infirmary.

Daniel quickly kissed her, “Sorry, honey. I was cornered by a few people who wanted me to persuade you to give their ideas a go.”

“Why do they not make an appointment themselves?” Sha’re asked confused as he took her hand.

Daniel chuckled, gently kissing her hand, “They already have and you said no. I’m thinking of finding a bodyguard.”

“There you are,” Janet appeared, she smiled at the couple, “Come on we’re set up over here for the scan.”

As Janet organised everything Sha’re slipped onto the bed as Daniel stood at her side holding her hand. Sha’re winced slightly as Janet squeezed cold gel onto her bare stomach before smiling as Janet started the scan.

“That...” Sha’re whispered in astonishment as she saw the ultrasound, “Is that...”

Janet smiled at the younger woman, “That’s your baby, Sha’re. And if I’m working this right then...” she flicked a switch on the Ancient machine and a thrum filled the air, “The heartbeat.”

Tears filled Sha’re’s eyes and she turned to her husband who gently brushed them from her cheek before turning to his friend.

“Are we done, Janet?” Daniel asked.

The doctor nodded, “I did all the blood tests while we were waiting for you. I’ll see you two later.”

Sha’re closed her eyes as she sat with Daniel on a balcony far from the rest of the city’s occupants. Her head was resting on his chest as she sat between his legs; his arms were around her as he did his best to comfort her.

Daniel gently rocked her knowing this was her hormones going crazy. Seeing the baby had just reminded her of the children she’d lost and with the mood swings she’d been having lately...
“Honey,” Daniel breathed, kissing her temple.

Sha’re sniffed slightly, “I am sorry, Dan’iel. I just...I...” she sniffed again resting her cheek against his chest, “I want to be able to hold this baby, Dan’iel. I want to hold my baby.”

Daniel cuddled her, “I know. I know, Sha’re and you will,” he moved one hand to rest on her swollen stomach, “We’re going to get our baby this time. And we’ll get to be the family we always wanted.”

Sha’re suddenly smiled, her tears forgotten as she kissed him.

“Did you bring something to eat?” Sha’re asked as she pulled herself to her feet.

Daniel grinned as he stood up as well, “Of course I did. Who do you think you’re talking to here?”

Sha’re wrapped her arms around his waist and sighed as he held her close, “You are a good husband.”

“Hey,” he cried with mock indignation, “I thought I was the best.”

“You are the best husband I have,” she smiled up at him.

Daniel laughed, “For that I won’t give you any of the chocolate I managed to get for after lunch.”

“Really?” Sha’re pursed her lips with a smirk, “Then I will have to see if I can change your mind, Husband.”

“Rodney,” Janet said as the man headed out of the infirmary, “I want Sha’re to have a day away from the stress of her responsibilities.”

“That’ll have to be another day,” the scientist told her as she caught up with him, “This is important.”

Janet grabbed Rodney’s arm making him stop, “Listen to me. Sha’re is tired, she’s pregnant and she needs to take a day to relax.”

“Considering there are two mega storms coming this way,” Rodney told her, “And they’re going to hit late tomorrow trust me, she’ll have to rest another day after we make sure the city isn’t destroyed.”

Janet shook her head in annoyance but knew she was beaten, “Only Lisa has the code to contact them. I’ll come with you since her orders are only to contact them by my say so.”

Rodney nodded and started striding towards the control tower with Janet behind him jogging to keep up. When they reached the Control room Rodney headed to Lisa’s desk outside Sha’re’s office. The young woman looked up and frowned as she saw Rodney coming towards her. One of the things Lisa discovered when she’d become Sha’re’s assistant was the fact she would have to deal with people, like Rodney who wanted to see Sha’re. She’d become good at facing them down but Rodney was someone who still intimidated her a lot.

“Sha’re’s busy all day,” she said before Rodney could open his mouth sounding more confident that she was when facing him.

Rodney turned to Janet who sighed, “It’s alright, Lisa. I’ll take the blame for this, just call them.”
Lisa grimaced but headed into the office to contact her boss.

Sha’re moaned as she arched back against Daniel’s chest, her husband’s lips slid along her jaw as they lay spooned on their bed moving slowly together. While they were sitting after lunch they noticed that the sky had started to darken and Daniel suggested heading back to their room for the rest of the day. Sha’re had agreed and they’d taken a long luxurious bath together, the bath was one of Sha’re’s favourite things in their room before moving to the bed to continue their love-making.

“Sha’re,” the radio came to life suddenly, “It’s Lisa. I’m afraid an emergency has come up.”

Daniel rolled his eyes and grabbed the radio while continuing to caress his wife, “Sha’re’s busy just now.”

“Dr Fraiser says this is extremely important,” Lisa continued sounding embarrassed, obviously very aware what she was interrupting, “Sha’re told me any order from Dr Fraiser was to be obeyed.”

Daniel sighed, Sha’re looked up at him as he stopped his ministrations a resigned look in her eyes.

“Lisa, tell whoever it is we’ll be there in about twenty minutes,” Daniel replied, he switched the radio off and tossed it back onto the cabinet returning his attention to his wife, twenty minutes was just enough time to finish what they were doing.

Jack stared at the screen in front of them, the large dark swirls meshed together into an even darker swirl.

“McKay?”

“It’s two mega storms becoming one,” Rodney explained to the council, John, Janet, Laura and Daniel, “It’s going to cause hurricanes, tidal waves and a whole load of other problems for us.”

“We have the shield,” Sha’re noted, “That should protect us, correct?”

“Yes and no,” Rodney told her, “The city does have one working ZPM, we haven’t had time to go through what we brought back. Not to mention the people on the mainland are in the direct path of it.”

“Start with the city,” Jack said with a frown, “What’s the yes and what’s the no?”

Rodney started to pace in front of the screen, “We do have enough power in the ZPM to power the shield for the duration of the storm but doing that and keeping everything running with the people in the city using energy too is going to drain it faster. So after the storm we could end up without a shield.”

Sha’re let out an annoyed sigh, “That is not good. Jeannie,” she turned to the monitor that showed Rodney’s sister, “What about the mainland?”

“There are several underground rooms that could be used as shelters for a day or two,” Jeannie told them, “We’ll have to put the animals down there as well but everyone’ll be safe here.”

“Alright,” Sha’re turned to Jack and John, “Start organising an evacuation to the mainland. Jeannie, get everyone there down to the shelters and ready for the influx from the city. Make sure that there is
food and water for everyone.”

“What about the city?” John asked.

“We’ll need a few people to stay and monitor the shield,” Rodney explained, “I’ll do it.”

“Me too,” Laura spoke up from her corner, giving him a smile.

“I have a few patients I can’t move,” Janet told them.

Sha’re frowned, “Is that feasible, Rodney?”

“Keeping the central tower powered along with the shield will be fine,” he assured them.

“I’ll stay too and help out in the infirmary,” Jack volunteered before grinning at Janet, “You get to
boss me about, Doc.”

“Like that’s new,” Daniel chuckled earning a dark look from his friend.

Sha’re coughed making everyone turn back to her, “Dan’iel and I will stay also. We need to start
organising this now, the storm is coming.”

The council split and to start the evacuation, glad Sha’re had insisted on having a plan in place for
such an eventuality.

Sha’re shivered as she looked out across the increasingly darker sky. Daniel rested his hands on her
arms as he stood behind her; smiling as she turned resting her cheek against his chest, her arms
wrapping around his waist.

“It’s going to be okay,” Daniel assured her, “Rodney knows what he’s talking about.”

Sha’re sighed, “I know but I wish we did not have to leave the city. Especially to underground
tunnels. It is far too reminiscent of what we escaped from.”

“I know,” Daniel kissed the top of her head, “But we’re not letting this beat us, honey. We’re not
letting anything beat us.”

Sha’re looked up at him and smiled, she glanced back out across the horizon dark with storm clouds
before she took her husband’s hand. With a deep breath she started them walking so she could do her
part in the evacuation.
“Just lay out as many ‘beds’ as you can,” Jeannie told the Athsian kids who were helping set up the shelter, “Everyone will just have to put up with sleeping in one big dormitory.”

With that done she headed to where Charin was organising food for everyone, Jeannie checked her watch and sighed.

“How’re we doing?” Jeannie asked the elder woman.

Charin looked up from her work, “There shall be enough for all for the one night. You need to get back to your own work, Jeannie and leave us to deal with this.”

Duly chastised Jeannie smiled; the old woman had decided to mother the younger which was something Jeannie wasn’t complaining about. She missed her own mother, even just for the encouraging smile she would get when Jeannie had a problem she couldn’t solve.

“Jeannie,” Siler’s voice broke her from her thoughts, “The first group is here.”

“Okay, send them down;” Jeannie told him, “Halling will get them settled in. I’ll be in my lab trying to get things sorted before the storm hits.”

“Make sure you get to the shelter in time,” Siler told her.

“Don’t worry about me,” Jeannie told him, “Just keep everyone together, start a sing song.”

She heard Siler chuckle as she headed into her lab.

John settled the Jumper down on the mainland and opened the back of the ship to let his passengers out.

“How, folks,” he called as he saw Siler standing waiting, “Follow the nice man to the shelters and I’ll see you soon.”

He heard a few chuckles from the people getting out; the moment the Jumper was empty John closed the hatch and headed back to Atlantis for the next load. They had very little time to do this so he and the few other pilots they had were doing as many runs as possible. John settled the ship in the Jumper Bay and picked up his next lot knowing he had no time to stop and relax before he started back to the mainland.

“John,” Sha’re’s voice came over the radio, “This is your last group. We’ll see you in the morning.”

“Cool,” John replied, “Can I get my stuff before I leave again.”

“Here,” Ronon dropped into the seat beside John holding two bags, “Sha’re sent me with this.”

“See you tomorrow, John,” the woman’s voice came smugly making him laugh.

John rolled his eyes, “Okay, people buckle up back there. It’s getting choppy outside.”
Sha’re smiled as Daniel and Jack dragged the mattress into her office for them tonight. They’d already put one in the ZPM chamber where Laura and Rodney would be spending the night while Jack and Janet would just use a spare bed in the infirmary when they needed to sleep.

Outside the city was already dark and stormy, the wind was whipping wildly outside the windows and Sha’re could see the waves surge against the city. She was fascinated by it, having never seen anything quite like it before.

When Daniel’s arms wrapped around her waist she leaned back into the warmth, “Has the city been evacuated?”

“Last Jumper’s just gone,” Daniel replied, kissing along her jaw.

“It is incredible,” Sha’re noted, cuddling deeper into his embrace, “When I was a child I never would have dreamed that anything like this was possible.”

“Tell me about it,” Daniel replied, smiling at her surprised look, “I grew up in Egypt, remember. Very similar to Abydos. It wasn’t until I moved back to America I realised that not everywhere was a desert.”

Sha’re chuckled softly making him frown.

“What’s so funny?” he demanded.

Sha’re turned and wrapped her arms around his neck, “I am just thinking about what a sweet child you must have been. It would have been interesting if we met as children.”

Daniel laughed, “If we’d met as children, I wouldn’t have had a chance.”

Sha’re kissed him, “And you do now?”

“Good point,” he grinned, frowning slightly as she detangled herself from his arms, “What?”

Sha’re slid into her seat, “As much as I would like to continue, it is still early and I have work to do. As do you, my husband.”

Daniel sighed, “Fine.”

Sha’re chuckled, “Once we work for a while we can have dinner.”

“And after dinner?” Daniel asked with a smile.

Sha’re shook her head motioning him to his own corner of the office, “We shall see.”

Jack sat in the main office listening to Janet as she moved around the infirmary checking on the few patients she wouldn’t allow to be moved. He’d decided since there was no one to annoy him he’d actually get some work done. The recruits they’d been training had to be split into some teams for exploring, the two teams weren’t really enough to travel through the Gate to find more ZPM’s. The past few hours since the city had emptied, he’d left Daniel and Sha’re in her office then ploughed through the pile of paperwork Sha’re lumped on him. Jack wondered where she got this tendency for forms and reports.

“Hey,” Janet poked her head into the office, “Ready for some food?”
Jack looked up and nodded, “You’re my saviour, Janet. This is driving me crazy.”

Janet laughed, “I can tell. You’ve got the ‘I need cake’ look.”

With a slight smile Jack followed her through to her office where she’d set up dinner, Jack loved the fact that Janet was now the woman he remembered from the SGC. She smiled, she sang to herself and the look of despair in her eyes that she carried for the years after Carter had taken Cassie away from them was gone. Jack saw the sparkle reappear the moment Cassie had appeared in front of her mother in the conference room.

“Okay,” Janet grabbed a seat beside him, “Not exactly restaurant quality but...”

Jack chuckled as she trailed off, “Well it is better than you actually cooking, Janet.”

“I’d be insulted,” she told him with a laugh, “If I hadn’t been the one to give you food poisoning.”

Radek sat going over reports from his team as he sat in the corner of the large room they were using to wait out the storm. He glanced up as three children stood near him, shaking his head he returned to his work feeling small eyes on him.

“What do you want?” he demanded of the kids; he didn’t like children, never had and these ones watching him irritated him.

“Are you making things work in the city?” the eldest boy asked.

Radek couldn’t stop his smile at the look on the young faces, “I am reading reports of others who are trying to make things work.”

“Ahh!!” the three children gasped more impressed than Radek thought his work deserved.

“Attí, Lille, Hendi,” a woman called making all three look guilty, “I told you not to disturb anyone.”

“Sorry,” the three chorused before disappearing leaving Radek with the woman.

“They were not bothering me,” he said as he saw them watching from across the room.

The woman smiled and Radek studied her, she had warm brown eyes and light brown hair, she had a kind face and Radek would describe her as handsome as she didn’t seem to fit the moniker pretty.

“I’m Radek Zelenka,” he introduced himself wanting to keep talking to her, to at least find out her name so he could find her again after they were able to leave the bunker.

A smile covered the woman’s face, “Tali,” she introduced herself, “It is nice to meet you.”

“So,” Radek motioned her to join him, “Are they all yours?”

Tali laughed, “Only Lille, the little girl in the middle.”

Radek nodded, now he was looking he could see the resemblance, “She is very like you.”

Tali smiled before looking slightly wistful, “I am pleased about that though sometimes there are times I wish she looked like her father. He died in a Wraith attack before she was born.”

“I’m sorry,” Radek told her gently.
Tali looked embarrassed, “I am so sorry, I do not know why I am telling you this.”

Radek shrugged, “Sometimes it is good to talk with people you don’t know that well.”

“Thank you,” Tali smiled at him again, “It was nice to talk to you, Radek. I will let you get back to your work now while I try to keep my daughter and her friends in check.”

Radek smiled watching her leave suddenly aware of a shadow covering him, looking up he saw Siler with a wry amused grin.

“Not a word,” Radek warned.

“Wouldn’t dare,” Siler smiled before he became serious, “Have you seen Jeannie?”

Radek frowned, “Not since she met me when I got off the Jumper.”

Siler grimaced, “I haven’t seen her in hours. I bet she’s in the lab.”

John saw Siler coming back and saw instantly that he’d had no luck finding their wayward scientist. The sound of the wind outside was making him nervous especially since he wanted to talk to her and she was nowhere to be found.

“He hasn’t seen her,” John stated as Siler arrived back from talking to Radek, “We should have tied her to chair.”

Siler smiled slightly, “Doubt that would have worked, Jeannie does what she wants no matter what anyone says.”

The wind whistled outside letting them know the storm was getting closer and closer to them, John grimaced, “I’m going to go get her. This lab isn’t that far from here, right?”

Siler laughed at the slight whine in John’s voice, “Just across from the building above us. It’s in the red building. You better hurry though.”

John started up to the surface and sighed, “I’m gonna kill her.”

Jeannie winced as she heard the wind outside, she’d come to her lab to make sure everything was shut down and was beginning to think she wasn’t getting to the shelter before outside became too dangerous.

“What the hell are you doing in here?” John demanded as he came bursting through the door soaked, his usually spiky hair flattened to his head.

Jeannie shook her head, “Trying to make sure we don’t lose any equipment. I thought I’d be finished faster than this.”

“Come on,” he snapped, “It’s getting bad out there and you’re not staying here any longer.”

“I’m almost finished,” Jeannie replied sharply, “I’ll be a few more minutes.”

“Jeannie!!”
Jeannie rolled her eyes without turning to look at him, “Doesn’t work on me, John. I’ll be finished in a few minutes. You can either stand and disapprove or you can help so we can get to the shelter faster.”

John frowned but moved to help her, after ten minutes she nodded they were finished.

“Let’s go,” he ordered, taking her arm so she couldn’t do anything other than follow him but as he opened the door the wind ripped it off the hinges.

“John,” Jeannie yelled over the wind as they crouched on the floor in the hopes of not being sucked out the room.

“What?” he snapped, “I’m trying to think of something.”

Jeannie shook her head annoyed, “While you do that I’ll get to the door to the basement.”

She could sense John’s annoyance as she crawled across the floor, it was getting harder to move but Jeannie grabbed a hold of the console and slid her hand up feeling across the panel for the right button. The usual hum wasn’t heard over the screaming wind but Jeannie knew it was open so she reached out for John’s hand and guided him along the floor until she practically fell down the stairs. Jeannie jumped off the stairs and moved to shut the door, she turned back to find John sitting on the steps looking windswept, drenched and angry.

“We should be okay in here till the storm blows over,” she noted, rolling her eyes as he didn’t say anything. As he continued to glare at her Jeannie lost her temper, “What?”

“You should have told someone where you were,” he snapped at her, “What the hell would have happened if I hadn’t come looking for you?”

Jeannie folded her arms across her chest, “I would have come down here myself.”

“This was totally stupid,” John continued ignoring her, “You could been killed.”

“For crying out loud, John,” Jeannie moved till they were face to face, “I am not...”

She never got to finish her sentence as John grabbed her; pushing her against the wall he pressed his lips to hers in a searing kiss.

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Laura chuckled as Rodney continued to tell her the story of a Christmas from his youth. They were setting up the ZPM control room for the night and were just talking generally, something they rarely did – especially in the newness of their relationship. Despite the amount of time they’d spent together before they became a couple, Rodney wouldn’t talk about himself but now he was happy to open up to her and she was enjoying listening to them.

“So,” Laura leaned over his shoulder as he studied the ZPM controls, “Are we staying in here all night?”

“Why?”

At the suspicion in his voice, Laura laughed, “I want to see the storm.”

Rodney rolled his eyes at her, “Why do you want to watch it rain?”
“I like the rain,” she shrugged, “Come on, a watched ZPM never boils.”

Rodney laughed, “Give me ten minutes to make sure everything’s fine and then we’ll go watch the storm.”

Laura kissed his cheek, “Good.”

Rodney finished his work and turned to where Laura was sitting working on her newest project for Sha’rè. She’d spoken to Ronon briefly before the evacuation and was now working out a program for those who took up the opportunity to learn to defend themselves. Rodney was pleased to see her throwing her energy into her new project, although she had joined the reformed SG1 for missions, they were few and far between at the moment as they tried to get themselves sorted in this new situation meaning she generally ended up with guard duty of some kind and he knew his Laura could give more than that. At that thought he smiled, his Laura.

“Hey,” she interrupted his thoughts, “Are you finished?”

“For now,” Rodney told her, he reached out and took her hand moving her to his side, “Let’s go so you can see the rain.”

“I’m not insane,” she chuckled as they walked through the dimly lit corridors. With the city mostly empty Rodney had it on emergency power only in the areas no one was using to conserve power as best they could.

They reached the nearest balcony and stepped outside under the protection of the shield to watch the huge waves from the sea as the rain battered down on the energy bubble keeping the city protected.

“I wonder how they’re doing on the mainland,” Rodney mused as he held Laura close to him.

Jeannie wanted to bounce something off John’s head as he stood in one corner ignoring her. He’d broken the kiss suddenly and she could see a look of horror in his eyes before he pulled away leaving her breathless against the wall. Jeannie watched him try to dry his hair off as she sat on the small bed in the corner, trying to catch his eye but John was steadfastly ignoring her.

Several things came to mind to get his attention; including throwing the books sitting at her side at his head but finally she decided to go with her own thoughts at that moment.

“When Caleb died,” Jeannie said, her voice soft but strong enough so he’d hear her, “I thought the world had ended. I loved him so much. In fact we would have been married by now if he hadn’t been killed.”

She paused; waiting for a reaction but all he did was stop drying his hair so she licked her lips and continued.

“I am attracted to you, John,” she told him, “But I know, especially now that I am not over Caleb. I still expect to see him every morning, I still go to tell him things and when he isn’t there it feels like a knife in my heart. I’m not over him and you’re definitely not over Meg,” he turned to her and she saw the pain in his eyes, “John, we’re friends. Please don’t let what happened ruin that because I need your friendship.”

John moved and sat across from her, “I don’t want to ruin our friendship either. I’m sorry.”
Jeannie squeezed his hand, “Good. That’s settled then.”

John smiled at her before he looked around their lodgings for the night. “So, anything in this place to actually do?”

Jeannie laughed, “I think I have some cards somewhere,” she started looking around the room smiling as something occurred to her.

“What?” John demanded.

Jeannie smirked at him, “I’m just thinking how I must be the envy of a lot of woman on Atlantis.”

Completely confused John frowned.

“Your fan club will hate me,” she explained, “Since I’ve kissed and now I’m spending the night with you,” Jeannie tilted her head before she tossed her hair theatrically chuckling, “I must be the most hated woman in Atlantis.”
Chapter 35

Sha’re lay on the makeshift bed staring at the ceiling of her office as Daniel slept soundly beside her. She wanted to poke him a few times and make him wake up because not only was he sleeping, he was sleeping on his stomach which was the way she preferred to sleep, cuddled up to him except now she couldn’t and it was all his fault. She decided not to wake him up because if she woke him up he’d wrap her in his arms, tell her how beautiful she looked, how much he loved her and make her feel better and right now she wanted to be annoyed at him.

In the dim light Sha’re looked along her body at the bump where her child grew, this was her third pregnancy but her previous two children had been taken from her in the cruellest possible manner. Deciding she wasn’t getting any sleep at this precise moment in time, Sha’re slipped out of bed without disturbing her husband, though she doubted he would wake up if she shouted in his ear, and moved to the balcony to watch the storm. As she watched the tumultuous weather Sha’re thought of the child that lay in her womb but her mind became drawn to the child she’d carried almost four years ago.

Sha’re forced her eyes open, blinking in surprise as Jack stood above her.

“Dan’iel?” she croaked, forcing it past her dry throat.

“I’m sorry,” Jack whispered, resting his hand on her head, “Carter grabbed him and we don’t know where he is. We managed to make you appear as though you were dead so she can’t use you against him,” he turned and looked at someone who was out of her view, “Janet?”

Sha’re closed her eyes again for a moment before realisation struck her and she slowly moved her hand to her stomach.

“Sha’re,” Janet Fraiser appeared above her catching her hand, “You have several stitches I don’t want you to disturb.”

“My baby?” Sha’re’s voice was filled with desperation as tears flooded her brown eyes.

Janet rested her hand on Sha’re’s forehead, “I’m so sorry, Sha’re. The doctor couldn’t save him.”

Sha’re closed her eyes and curled as much as she could into a ball, rocking herself as pain filled her. Arms wrapped around her and Sha’re found Jack was holding her tightly, rocking her as she sobbed for her child.

“You have to rest, sweetheart,” Jack murmured, “You need to get your strength back so that we get Daniel back....” he trailed off wishing he could help her more.

Sha’re lay on the infirmary bed where she’d woken up almost three days before staring blankly at the wall. She was numb. She’d lost everything, her baby, her husband and now she had no way back to her home.

Jack hovered near her every so often, checking if she needed anything but Sha’re couldn’t find her voice, couldn’t find a way to say anything after she’d broken down in his arms. She kept resting her hands across her stomach before dropping them to her sides because her baby was no longer within
her, she couldn’t feel the gentle movement inside anymore. Sha’re squeezed her eyes shut as tears threatened her; she didn’t want to cry again.

“Mrs Jackson,” a gentle voice said from her side, “Do you want some lunch?”

Sha’re glanced to her side briefly, seeing the Dr who had rescued her from the Andurian complex, “No. Thank you, Dr Beckett.”

“Please call me Carson, love,” he smiled slightly at her, “Janet’s sleeping just now, so if you want anything just give me a call.”

Sha’re hesitated before she reached out to him, “Dr...Carson, may I ask you something?”

“Of course,” he replied.

Sha’re licked her lips and took several deep breaths, “You delivered my child, correct?”

Carson winced slightly, “Yes.”

“I know he is dead,” she said, forcing back her tears, “But I wanted to know...I needed to know...what did he look like?”

Carson sighed and pulled a chair over to her bedside, perching as he tried to phrase his answer.

“Actually,” he finally said, “You had a little girl.”

“A girl,” Sha’re breathed, “When she was taken from me...no, I do not want to know anything about the damage done to her.”

Carson was relieved at that, he was also relieved to know she didn’t remember that she’d actually had to deliver the dead child – Sha’re had been delirious by that time.

“Your daughter was beautiful,” Carson told her, he hoped telling her this would help, “With curls just like yours. I’m sorry I couldn’t save her too.”

Sha’re covered her eyes with her hand as she tried to stop crying. Carson squeezed her hand before leaving alone to grieve.

Sha’re walked slowly through the corridors of the resistance’s base. Her stomach was still quite sore and she shuffled slowly determined to reach her destination.

“Sha’re,” Carson’s voice came from behind making her wince. He caught up with her quickly and frowned at her, “And who gave you permission to be out of bed?”

“I need to speak to Jack,” was all she said continuing walking.

Carson took her arm, “You can do that from your bed. Back to the infirmary.”

“Please,” Sha’re whispered, “I just need to talk to him, it is important.”

At the pleading looking in her big brown eyes Carson crumbled, “Alright, but I will be accompanying you there. And no arguments.”

“Of course,” Sha’re said softly knowing she had no chance to get away from the doctor anyway.
Carson rested his hand on her back as he held her arm walking her along the corridors in silence. Sha’re was grateful the doctor was walking with her as she was suddenly feeling exceedingly tired.

Together they walked slowly past the people still trying to set up a resistance base until they reached Jack’s office.

“Sha’re,” Jack cried worriedly when he saw her, “What’s wrong?”

Carson moved her to the couch giving her a quick nod before disappearing and leaving them alone.

“Sha’re?” Jack asked again.

The young woman shook her head, “I needed to get out of that room. Carson would have made me go back so I said I was coming to see you.”

Jack sighed and shook his head, “You scared me there for a minute, kid.”

She dropped her head, “I apologise.”

Jack wrapped his arms around her shoulders giving her a quick hug and a kiss on the top of her head.

“How are you feeling, sweetheart?” Jack asked, his gentle voice made her want to cry again.

Sha’re rested her head against his chest, taking the comfort he offered her, “I miss Dan’iel.”

“My too,” Jack whispered.

“I can only think what they are doing to him,” Sha’re continued, her voice rising with the fear in it, “I know she will have told him that both I and our baby are dead, I know what that will do to him.”

Jack rocked her for a while as she tried to calm her raging emotions; he needed to get her to focus on something other than what was happening to the love of her life.

“I need some help,” Jack told her.

Sha’re looked up at him with interest, “What?”

“I need help,” Jack repeated, he moved back and took the seat beside her, “I’m trying to sort everything out here, trying to create a community in a way and I have no idea what I’m doing.”

“You think I do?”

Jack shrugged, “I think you’re someone I trust. Feel like helping me?”

Sha’re nodded, smiling properly for the first time since she’d woken up in the infirmary over a week before.

Sha’re sat waiting for Janet to allow her to leave the infirmary, she both wanted and dreaded to move into one of the rooms the base held. She was so tired but helping Jack with organising the resistance kept her busy and focussed on things other than her pain. There was a sneaking suspicion that Jack was deliberately keeping her busy so she didn’t think about Daniel.

“Janet?” she asked the woman coming towards her.
“You’ve healed well,” Janet told her, “I just want you to take things easy. No dashes along the corridor, okay?”

Sha’re rolled her eyes at her friend, “You are not funny, Janet.”

Janet squeezed her arm, “There’s a room all ready for you.”

“Thank you, Janet,” Sha’re said as she slipped off the bed, “I will see you later.”

A call for Janet meant the woman could only give Sha’re a quick nod before heading to her next patient leaving Sha’re to simply slip out of the room.

“Sha’re,” Carson called as the young woman walked through the corridors trying to avoid going to her new room for a while, “Sha’re.”

Turning Sha’re waited for the doctor with a slight smile on her face, she’d become friends with the man over the past few weeks.

When he caught up with her he offered her his arm which she took, “Is something wrong, Carson?”

“No wrong,” he told her, “But I was thinking of something that might help you.”

“Can you bring Dan’iel home?” she whispered softly at the sad look in Carson’s eyes she sighed, “I apologise, I am simply feeling sorry for myself.”

Carson gently squeezed her hand, “We’re under my home just now. I’m going to visit my mother’s grave, would you come with me?”

Confused but wanting to see something other than the crystal caves Sha’re nodded, “Of course.”

Jack hadn’t been too happy about letting them go out of the base but Carson had somehow managed to persuade him to let them go. With a stern lecture to take care of themselves Jack allowed them to leave the base. Carson had met her a few moments before carrying two bags.

Sha’re closed her eyes and took a deep breath of the cool clean night air, Carson touched her arm and led her through the graveyard. Sha’re walked with him, looking up at the cloudless starlit sky with relief and sadness. Finally they reached their destination and Sha’re looked at the marker.

Emily Melinda Beckett, loving mother.

Carson placed a small bouquet of flowers on the ground from one of his bags as Sha’re stood nearby feeling like she was intruding as he murmured something, after a moment she realised it was a prayer of some kind. Since the destruction of Ra Sha’re’s people no longer prayed as they knew their God had been a fraud and was now dead.

“Sha’re,” Carson pulled her out of her thoughts, “Will you join me?”

Confused she knelt beside him and watched as he brought out a small rose bush, “I know you weren’t able to bury your daughter and I know how much that hurt you. I thought that maybe we could plant this in her memory where my mother could watch over her.”

Sha’re sniffed as tears threatened, Carson’s offer was something she’d never thought of but to have some way to memorialise her baby girl was something she wanted.
“Thank you,” she whispered.

Together they dug a small hole for the small bush, Carson stopped Sha’re from placing the plant in its new home.

“I think you need to name her,” he said softly, “Before we plant this in her memory, she needs a name.”

“I...We had not talked much about names,” Sha’re whispered, her dark brown eyes glistening in the moonlight, “But I remember Dan’iel talking about a friend he had when he was young, just after his parents died. Her name was Lily and I thought it was so beautiful.”

“So, we’re calling her Lily?” Carson asked.

“Lily Jackson,” Sha’re murmured with a soft smile, “It is beautiful, like my daughter.”

Together they planted the rose bush and Sha’re closed her eyes taking a deep breath in of the fragranced air around it. She knew she probably would never get to visit this spot again but that didn’t matter because she had been able to do this for her daughter.

“Thank you, Carson,” Sha’re said with a deep sigh.

He smiled at her as he helped her to her feet again, “My mum will watch over her for you.”

Janet frowned as she walked past Jack’s office and finding that both Jack and Sha’re were still up at this late hour. As she readied a lecture in her head Janet suddenly smiled as she saw Sha’re sitting across from Jack animatedly talking with their esteemed leader.

She’d been unsure whether or not Jack getting the young woman involved in trying to organise the resistance was a good thing but she’d never really witnessed Sha’re’s tenacity until now.

“Doc?” Jack’s voice interrupted her thoughts, “Do you need something?”

“I’m actually wondering what you two are still doing up?” Janet folded her arms across her chest, “Sha’re, I believe you’re still under doctor’s orders to rest.”

“I am not exerting myself sitting here,” Sha’re said innocently.

Janet chuckled, “I’ve seen you when you’re passionate about a subject, Sha’re. You are going to go back to your room and get a full eight hours sleep.”

Sha’re frowned, “Janet...”

“Sha’re,” Janet cut her off, “I’m still your doctor and you’re still under my care, so you’re going to do what I say or I’ll tie you to a bed in the infirmary.”

Jack choked back a laugh knowing better than to anger Janet or Sha’re. The young Abydonian sighed before nodding.

“What about Jack?” Sha’re asked Janet as they started out the office.

Janet laughed, “I’ll be back to make sure he’s getting some rest once I’ve got you safely tucked in.”

As they left Jack decided to be in his own quarters by the time Janet arrived back, he really didn’t
want to know what she would do to him otherwise.

Sha’re walked into the room she’d been given within the base, Janet followed her in to make sure she was alright before she headed back to check on O’Neill. Looking around the small room Janet was surprised to find a small plant sitting at Sha’re’s bedside just behind the picture of Daniel that Jack had found for her.

Janet took a deep breath of the beautiful scent coming from the plant, “That’s gorgeous, where did you get it?”

Sha’re sat on the bed beside Janet before gently touching the leaves, “Carson took a cutting of the bush we planted for my daughter. He gave me it so that I would have something to remember her by. I know that it is silly....”

“No,” Janet gently hugged Sha’re, “It’s not silly to have something tangible to remember your child by,” Janet smiled slightly, “What did you call her?”

“Lily.”

“Beautiful,” Janet told her, realising now that Sha’re needed to talk about her lost child some more to find her way to acceptance of the loss.

“I miss her,” Sha’re breathed, “I know it sounds silly but I miss her. And I feel so angry at Dan’iel sometimes for not being with me then I remember why he is not here.”

“I know this isn’t the same,” Janet said as she hugged Sha’re tighter, “But we’re here for you, me, Jack, Carson and everyone who loves Daniel. We’re here for you, never forget that and we will get him back – trust me.”

Sha’re lay beside Daniel, her head on his shoulder and her arm draped across his waist. The past two years wondering and worrying about what was happening to him simply disappeared as they soaked in one another’s presence. Once Janet had done all her tests Sha’re had slid onto the bed beside him, making sure she didn’t disturb the IV and held onto her husband.

Daniel broke the moment by kissing the top of her head, “I never thought I’d see you again.”

“I feared that too,” Sha’re cuddled closer to him.

“When she told me you and our baby were gone...” Daniel trailed off pulling her closer hoping she wasn’t a dream.

“Lily,” Sha’re whispered.

“What?”

Sha’re moved slyly so she could look in his eyes, “I called her Lily. Carson and I planted a rose bush for her.”

Daniel swallowed not sure what to say.

“He took a small cutting from the plant,” Sha’re continued, “And it sits in my...our room. A small memorial for our baby girl.”
Daniel said nothing instead he simply hugged her tightly knowing he was lucky to have found her safe and well for a second time.

Sha’re smiled as Daniel’s arms encircled her from behind, his hands rested on her bump and a kiss was pressed to her cheek.

“What are you doing up?” he asked, holding her close to him.

“I could not sleep,” she confessed, resting against him.

Daniel pulled her closer, “Are you uncomfortable?”

Sha’re nodded, enjoying the feel of his arms around her as she continued to watch the storm rage outside the protective bubble of the shield. Daniel kissed her cheek again.

“Sorry, love,” Daniel murmured, “Come back to bed and I’ll rub your back.”

Sha’re smiled, “I think I will take you up on that offer.”

He slipped his hand into hers and drew her back to the makeshift bed. As Sha’re lay beside him Daniel gently massaged her lower back and Sha’re relaxed against him again finally falling asleep.

*********************************************

Sam marched through the corridors of the Complex raging, Sha’re’s body had disappeared from the morgue. It had to have been O’Neill but it didn’t matter, the woman was dead and they had no way of bringing her back.

“Not exactly a victory for you,” she murmured to him, “I have the bigger one.”

Sam touched the keypad and entered the small room, she forced a smile on her face, “How’s our latest patient?”

The young nurse who was cradling the newborn in her arms looked up and smiled, “She’s eating well, almost finished her first bottle. Dr Menkin said to wait another few hours until I put her in stasis though.”

“Why?” Sam asked, not sure she liked that.

The nurse shrugged, “Said it was something to do with the injury she received before she was born, poor thing. I’ve just to monitor her for a while,” she sighed, “It’s hard to believe such a sweet little thing had such a crippling genetic disease.”

“Let me hold her while you clean up,” Sam said sweetly, holding out her hands for the baby.

The child was passed to Sam who looked down on the dark curls, the bow mouth and the features that she could see both parents in. As the rooms other occupant moved away Sam gently kissed the child’s forehead, “You have no idea how important you are, child. There are secrets within your DNA that will help the Andurians rule the universe again.”

Handing the baby girl back to the nurse Sam headed back to her office stopped as the young woman called out to her.

“Yes?”
“Nobody told me,” the other woman said apologetically, “I don’t have a name for her chart.”

Sam smiled, managing to keep it sweet in front of her audience, “Baby Jackson.”
Chapter 36

Sam walked into the meeting room and placed a warm smile on her face as she offered her hand to the man waiting at the conference table sorting through several papers.

“Mr Sheppard,” she said as they shook hands, “I apologise for being late. I was held up in a previous meeting.”

Patrick Sheppard nodded, “I understand completely, Dr Carter. I’m usually the one apologising.”

Sam gave a soft laugh and they both took their seats. Patrick opened the folder in front of him with the proposal, Sam followed him and they started their discussions.

After about an hour as Patrick was putting all his papers back into his briefcase Sam turned to him, “How are you feeling after your heart scare?”

Patrick shrugged, “Going slowly crazy as my son monitors everything I eat, drink and do. I had to sneak out the office this morning while he was distracted.”

Sam laughed, “Well, I’ll make sure I don’t take up anymore of your time otherwise David will come after me,” she shook his hand again; “I’ll get my assistant to start work on everything and contact you when we’re ready.”

“Then until next week, Dr Carter,” Patrick told her.

“Dad?” David looked up as the door to his office opened, “How’d it go?”

Patrick nodded, “Fine,” he paused as David scanned the room for bugs, “I hate being in that place,” he took a seat once assured they were talking privately.

“Did she mention John again?” David asked softly, knowing how difficult a topic this was for his father.

Patrick shook his head, “After I told her we hadn’t seen him in years she’s never mentioned him again. I think he’s dead.”

“Don’t say that,” David cried sharply, “You know John, he’s a survivor and until I see a body he’s alive.”

Patrick nodded; he moved to his son’s side and placed his on David’s shoulder. When his youngest son had decided to go into the Air Force instead of the family business Patrick had tried to get him to change his mind by telling John he was cut out of Patrick’s will. John had simply shrugged and walked away. Patrick regretted his own stubbornness as he had no idea where his youngest child was.

“Here are Carter’s requests,” Patrick pulled out several papers and passed them to his son, “We may as well get working on this. I’m going to contact Davis about our other business interests. I’ll see you later, son.”

David watched his father leave and sighed. When his head-strong brother had decided to join the Air
Force the argument that ensued had shaken the family then John had cut his ties to the Sheppard clan and disappeared.

Then the Andurians had come.

The Sheppard Empire was forefront in working with the new people who had come to help the people of Earth; they worked on integrating the new technology with the existing and were always the first to speak up for the Andurians. But that was all a front, Patrick Sheppard hadn’t trusted the aliens from the moment they set foot on Earth and was using the company connection to find a way to get rid of them for good.

Anything they’d done to discredit the Andurians was usually blamed on Jack O’Neill, unfortunately with the news leaked by Carter that he was killed while trying to assassinate her meant there was no one to take the credit or blame for any attacks they made. It meant they’d had to be extra careful in their planning and execution in the past few months.

David had discovered recently that John had worked at the Educational Complex over two years ago, at the same time his father had been there and they had never run into one another. It was a few weeks ago when Carter had brought up John, wondering if they were related. It had upset Patrick a lot hearing that the son he was searching for had been in the same building at one point.

With a sigh, David started to work.

*********************************************

Sam scanned through the rest of her schedule; she had a few more meetings before the end of the day but just now she had a free half hour. Sam decided to go check on one of her own pet projects – one of her favourites if she was being honest.

“Dr Carter?” Wendy, the young nurse smiled in greeting as she finished feeding the child in her arms, “It’s nice to see you.”

“Wendy,” Sam greeted the annoyingly cheerful young woman, “How are your charges today?”

“Well all of them have been taken out of stasis today,” Wendy sighed with a theatrical roll of her eyes, “It’s been pretty hectic keeping all of them fed, clean and entertained but Dr Minos assures me they’ll be placed back in stasis again by tonight.”

“I’m just here for a visit,” Sam told her, “I’ll keep out of your road.”

“BJ’s over in her cot,” Wendy smiled slightly as Sam gave her a confused look, “Easiest way to remember them all. Each one is Baby something and no two have the same surname so that’s how I tell them apart.”

“Of course,” Sam replied softly, “You do know the reason we haven’t named any of these children is because of the likelihood they may die soon.”

Wendy nodded solemnly, “I understand but it does make things easier for me.”

Sam decided against saying anything and instead headed over to the child she was here to see.

The little girl in the cot was about six months old; she had beautiful black curls and big brown eyes. She lay on her back giggling as she pulled on her feet and Sam smiled malevolently as she looked at
“Hello, Baby Jackson,” Sam said as she lifted the child into her arms, not surprised as the child started to fuss as she always would when held by Sam, “You know how much your daddy would love to know you’re here but he never will. Then again maybe one day I’ll let him know, just before I kill you.”

The little girl tried to get away from the woman holding her, the child’s wriggling in her arms started to make soft whining noises getting ready to cry so Sam placed her back in the cot. The child was undoubtedly Sha’re’s, especially the attitude though the stubbornness in the girl was all Daniel. Back in the cot the child, called Lily by her mother though no one knew that, took a hold of the pink blanket and started to chew on it.

Sam smiled again; she wondered what Daniel would say if he found out that his daughter was alive and well.

Sam left Sha’re’s body in the morgue wanting to laugh but that was a human trait she needed to get rid of, that would be something she’d work on another day just now she had somewhere to be.

“Dr Carter,” the Andurian doctor, Trig greeted her, “What can I do for you?”

“The Jackson child,” Sam said ensuring no emotion filled her voice, “Where is it?”

Trig guided her over to the table where the dead child lay, Sam could clearly see the knife wound to the baby’s heart.

“You cleaned it up?” Sam asked confused.

Trig tilted his head, “It’s the human’s way. I assumed one of the human doctors would want to see it.”

Sam nodded, “Have you managed to get the regenerator working?”

“Yes,” Trig told him, “Unfortunately not for adults but...you want it for the child?”

Sam nodded again, “I want her fixed and put in the genetics nursery.”

Trig looked at her interested, “Why? What’s so special about this one?”

“Her mother,” Sam stated, though she was slightly annoyed at having to explain herself. Then again Trig was in charge of the genetics program, “Her mother was once a Goa’uld host. Meaning she has...well had Naquada in her blood. This could prove useful in finding a way for us to use Ancient technology.”

“Interesting,” Trig mused, “I never considered that possibility. Naquada.”

Sam nodded, “Inform me when the child is alive again. This is one child I want to be kept informed about.”

“Yes, Dr Carter,” Trig nodded.

Sam left and headed down to break the news to Daniel that his wife and child were dead, she was looking forward to seeing how many languages he swore at her in.
Sam had a look at the other children around the room, all but Baby Jackson were happy to be held by her. Sam always wondered if the child was just fussy or knew what Sam had done to her parents

“Fanciful nonsense,” she murmured to herself.

“Did you say something?” Wendy looked up from the child she was currently changing.

“Just talking to the babies,” Sam told her with a fake smile, “I like them to know my voice. I have to go, Wendy. If you need any help placing them back in stasis...”

“I’ll be fine,” Wendy assured her, “They’ll be as good as gold, the same as they have been all day. Isn’t that right?” she cooed to the child on the changing table in front of her.

“Good,” Sam said before walking out.

*********************************************

Sam stood in her office waiting for the Andurian Council to contact her. She hated when they decided to check on her progress, she always felt they were looking to see what ‘human’ mistakes she’d made.

The screen in front of her burst to life and the Andurian Council appeared, “Report.”

Sam went through her report making sure she showed absolutely no emotion, even when talking about the lack of progress in finding Daniel, Teal’c and Jack.

“The genetics program?” Ithin asked.

Sam nodded, “Dr Trig feels that he may have found something. However, he wants to do several more rounds of tests before publishing his results.”

“Have you considered the breeding program?” Ithin continued, “It could be easier than using the children.”

Sam nodded, “However, it’s not as easy to hide the disappearance of the adults with the right kind of genetic make-up. But I’ll start looking into the possibility.”

Ithin scanned over the list he held in his hands, “What is the status of the talks with the Asgard? You haven’t given us anything concerning those for a while?”

“Dr Weir contacted me a few days ago,” Sam explained, “The Asgard are wanting proof that the Andurian race are only here to assist and guide humanity as they grow. I believe that allowing them to come here would show just how much the Andurian race are doing for humanity.”

“They will no longer recognise you as human,” Ithin noted with a frown, “Which would defeat the entire purpose of the visit.”

“Unless you disguise me again,” Sam replied with the hint of a smile, “Disguised once again as the human they once knew I can persuade them that Earth is being helped along.”

“That could be problematic,” Ithin told her, “The ‘human’ version of Samantha Carter may take over.”

“I am confident she won’t,” Sam stated, “I ensured that anything connected to the weak version of
myself was destroyed. I am Andurian and even disguised as one of those pathetic creatures I will know my true self.”

Ithin thought this over, “Very well. Caffison will be sent to Earth to implement the disguise. Once there he will monitor you and the moment he feels you are compromised he’ll remove you until the Asgard have left.”

“Dr Carter,” Elizabeth Weir greeted her when the communication connected.

“Elizabeth,” Sam smiled at the other woman, “I wish we could chat but I unfortunately have a meeting soon. Can you give me your report?”

Elizabeth chuckled, “Of course. We’re stuck on the space station just now since the last round of talks. We’re due to be picked up by them in a few days. Unfortunately they still have issues with agreeing to the alliance.”

“I may have a solution for that,” Sam told her.

“Really?”

Sam nodded, quickly explaining her plan for the Asgard to visit Earth. Elizabeth listened with a smile.

“That’s a great idea,” Elizabeth told her, “I’ll speak with the Asgard council concerning this and your timetable. This should persuade them that we’re still in control of our own destiny and the Andurians are merely helping us.”

Sam smiled again, “Exactly.”

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“You’re kidding me?”

Paul Davis frowned at David Sheppard, “When have I ever done that?”

David shook his head, “This could be exactly what we need. If we can get the Asgard to see the Andurians have taken over...”

“That’s the problem though is trying to get them to see this,” Paul reminded him.

David started to pace his office, “Do we have any idea when the visit will take place? Because we’re going to need time to plan, time to actually make a plan and,” he sighed, “This is big and I have absolutely no idea what to do with it.”

“Yeah,” Paul agreed, “We need to find O’Neill; I don’t believe he’s dead because she would have done more than just leak news of his death.”

David let out a snort of laughter, “How do you think we do that? We’ve not been able to find any trace of him in years.”

Paul sighed, I don’t know. I wish I could think of where he would have gone but O’Neill was good at what he did and honestly I don’t think we’ll be able to find him...assuming he is alive.”
“So we’re on our own then?” David noted.

Paul nodded, “We’re on our own.”
Light poured in through the windows of the Gateroom and into Sha’re’s office where she and Daniel were sleeping. Sha’re grimaced as the light hit her eyes, she groaned and cuddled into Daniel’s shoulder.

“Turn that light off,” Sha’re muttered.

Daniel blinked as the sun hit him too, “Sorry, honey but I can’t.”

Sha’re sighed and sat up, “At least the storm seems to have ended. It is a beautiful day, Dan’iel.”

The young couple got up and dressed quickly, Sha’re grabbed her radio and fixed it in place.

“Rodney,” she called, “Are you awake?”

“I am now,” came the dark reply.

Sha’re chuckled, “My apologies, Rodney. Has the storm passed us completely?”

“Give me a minute,” he told her.

Sha’re sat at her desk smiling as she watched her husband stretch out the kinks from the way he’d been sleeping.

“Yeah, the storm has passed,” he confirmed, “It should be clear on the mainland too.”

“Good,” she replied, “Have John start bringing everyone back. I also want a report as soon as possible on any damage to both the city and the mainland.”

“No problem,” Rodney replied, “I’m removing the shield and powering the city back up. We can all go back to our rooms now.”

“Good,” Daniel spoke up, “I’m not sleeping on the office floor again.”

“Good morning,” Jeannie greeted Siler with a grin as she exited the red building to find him already inspecting the buildings nearby, “How’s everyone?”

“We’re fine,” he replied with a frown as John wandered out squinting into the sun, “What about you two?”

Jeannie laughed, “John’s just a little mad at me.”

“Why?”

“Because he is a terrible loser,” Jeannie smirked, turning she winked at John before heading in to call Atlantis.

Siler turned to John, “What is she talking about?”

John rolled his eyes, “Never play Jeannie at cards. It’s a very bad idea.”

“Oh, I already know that,” Siler replied, clapping John on the shoulder, “I already owe her my salary
for six years.”

Jeannie watched everyone as they got breakfast, she waved hello to a few of the children as they danced around before she walked over to where Radek was sitting.

“Where have you been?” he demanded sharply looking up from his conversation with one of the Athosian women – Jeannie recalled her name was Tali, “Do you know Rodney will have my head if he finds out we didn’t know where you were all night?”

“You do know I am perfectly capable of looking after myself, Radek,” Jeannie reminded him, “And Meredith is not going to find out because I don’t want to have to listen to him.”

Tali started to laugh, “Are you alright, Jeannie? The storm was fierce outside.”

“I’m fine,” Jeannie told her, “John and I sheltered in the small room beneath my lab during the storm.”

Radek nodded, “Well I was waiting for you so we could contact the city.”

Jeannie looked at him confused.

“If I called and he asked to speak to you,” Radek continued, “And you weren’t here...I am not stupid, Jeannie.”

The two women laughed and Jeannie moved to the computer to contact the city.

*****************************************************

Jack walked into the conference room to find Sha’ré sitting back in her usual seat while Daniel was reading to her bump. The young woman was just sitting back with her eyes closed listening to the sound of her husband’s voice.

“I hope that is something interesting,” Jack told them, “And not some really boring archaeological manual. We want the kid to grow up interesting.”

“Ha ha,” Daniel rolled his eyes at Jack.

“Dan’iel is reading the baby part of his mother’s journal,” Sha’ré replied with a smile, “They are the only books we have.”

“Anything funny?” Jack took his seat at Sha’ré’s other side.

The couple simply ignored him as Daniel closed the journal and placed it on the table, “Is everyone else coming or are you it?”

The door opening answered Daniel’s question, Rodney walked in with Laura, Jeannie and Radek. The four of them were laughing as they took their seats, the past few days since the storm they’d all been working hard to evaluate any damage done to the city or the mainland so seeing them so relaxed made Jack smile.

A few minutes later John jogged in, “Sorry,” he said before quickly taking his seat.

“Rodney,” Sha’ré turned to him, “What is the assessment of the city?”
“The shield did its job,” he reported, “We have a few minor flooded areas but that happened before I activated the shield to full power. I took my team to look at these areas and everything is structurally intact thought I wouldn’t recommend anyone moving there,” he paused as everyone chuckled, “We’re fine.”

“That’s good,” Sha’re stated; relieved the city was not damaged.

“I started going through the satellites we brought back,” Rodney continued, “And we have at last count, six partially charged ZPM’s...”

“That is wonderful,” Sha’re breathed as everyone nodded their agreement.

Rodney grinned even wider, “We have five fully charged ones.”

“Five?” Daniel demanded in amazement.

“And we haven’t finished going through them,” Radek reminded them.

Sha’re smiled, “That is excellent news. With fully charged ZPM’s we can protect the city for as long as we need.”

Rodney nodded, “Hell, we could fly it with three.”

“Fly?” Jack and John asked in unison, interest in their eyes.

“Thank you, Rodney,” Daniel frowned at the scientist.

Rodney rolled his eyes, “Theoretically. This city was originally flown from Earth to here, remember but considering that was couple million years ago I doubt it’ll work.”

“Moving on,” Sha’re stopped the two pilots before they could suggest trying to fly the city, “Jeannie, how about the mainland?”

“The buildings survived the storm surprisingly intact,” Jeannie told them, “Then again they were constructed without the bonus of a shield so I’m assuming were built to withstand the elements. The only problem was some of the crops we lost but Halling assures me they’re no problem and we’ll get it back pretty quickly.”

“That is wonderful news,” Sha’re told them, “Now I believe you have something else to tell us, Jeannie.”

Jeannie grinned, “I know there was a rumour a while ago about us finding a ship,” she paused as Jack and John leaned forward hopefully, “Well, we did.”

“Yes,” John crowed.

“It isn’t working,” Jeannie continued rolling her eyes at John, “But Rodney and I feel we can repair it. Especially now with the ZPM’s we have.”

Jack tapped his fingers on the table, interest in his eyes, “What are your plans?”

“We’re going to use the Jumpers to lift the ship,” Rodney took over, “The ship was created to sit on the docks for repairs, I’m assuming some were even built there.”

“Good,” Sha’re mused.
“I’m also going to change the science teams;” Rodney continued, seeing confusion from Radek and Jeannie at his announcement.

“Change how?” Jeannie asked confused.

“I’m sending Radek to the mainland,” Rodney told them, stopping Jeannie from talking, “Jeannie, you’ll be working on the ship.”

“I thought you’d take that job,” John teased.

Rodney rolled his eyes as the others hid their smiles, “I’m busy with the city and the team. Jeannie’s the best person for the job.”

“Thanks, Mer,” Jeannie smiled at her brother in astonishment.

Sha’re chuckled, “What other changes, Rodney?”

“Just mixing up the teams and giving people other challenges,” Rodney shrugged, “I was talking to Katie Brown recently and she mentioned she wanted to study the plant life on the mainland so she’ll be doing weekly shifts back and forth for the moment,” he turned to Sha’re, “That’s it.”

Sha’re nodded and turned to those assembled, “Does anyone have anything else?”

“John,” Jack stated, “Work with Rodney in getting the ship to the city. Wish I could be the one to do this but I have other things to take up my time so work with Jeannie on getting that ship operational.”

Sha’re waited for anyone else to speak before she smiled, “Then we are adjourned.”

Laura jogged along the corridor smiling in the sunlight, she nodded hello to people as she passed them.

“Good morning,” Janet said as Laura arrived in the infirmary, “I will be two minutes.”

Laura shrugged, “No problem.”

She leaned against the wall waiting for the doctor to finish her paperwork; it amused Laura as well as most of the senior staff how much Sha’re liked her forms. Laura’s self-defence class had enough paperwork to drown her and three other people. Ronon, who was happy to help set up and train, had handed over all the admin to Laura.

“Okay,” Janet appeared, “Let’s go.”

The two women started walking through the corridors of the city chatting generally about the past few days.

“I’ve been thinking,” Laura said as they wandered into the commissary, “We need to have a girls’ night.”

“A what?” Janet asked with a laugh.

Laura rolled her eyes, “As much as I love Rodney, there are times I just want a night with some friends to talk about when he annoys me.”

Janet laughed, “So, girls’ night in. That sounds good.”
“The way I see it is you persuade Cassie and Jennifer,” Laura told her, “I’ll talk Jeannie into it then we’ll gang up on Sha’re and get her to come too.”

Janet nodded and Laura clapped her hands together.

“Excellent.”

Sha’re smiled as Janet opened the door and ushered her in, Laura and Cassie were already sitting sipping juice – there was no alcohol on Atlantis though there were rumours of a few of the scientists trying, but nothing had come of it as of yet so Athosian fruit juice was the beverage of the night.

“Come on in,” Janet greeted the young woman, “Grab a seat and a drink, the others should be here soon.”

Sha’re smiled as she lowered herself into the nearest seat, she felt an all encompassing warmth spread through her. Although she had spent many years with these women back on Earth there was no time to sit and just enjoy each other’s company, it had been so long since Sha’re had spent time relaxing with friends.

Jeannie and Jennifer arrived not long after Sha’re did; Janet brought out some snacks and dropped into the empty seat. The six women chatted generally about everything from the work on the mainland to Sha’re’s pregnancy.

“Oh,” Laura said after a few hours turning to Jeannie, “Time to confess.”

“Confess?” Jeannie asked bemused.

Laura pointed an almost accusing finger at the younger woman, “Last week during the storm you and John spent the night alone together. What happened?”

“Nothing,” Jeannie protested with a laugh.

Sha’re chuckled, “I find that very hard to believe.”

“Why?” Jeannie looked around at the other women.

“Honey,” Laura laughed, “You two have been flirting since the day you met.”

“Okay, I will tell you what happened,” Jeannie replied with an annoyed sigh, “We kissed, we decided we’re just friends and nothing else happened,” taking a sip of juice she laughed at the disappointed look on the faces, “Sorry there is nothing really juicy.”

“Well you may have had nothing happen that night,” Sha’re noted, “But rumour is that Radek met someone.”

“You mean Tali?” Jeannie gasped.

“Tali?” Cassie asked as she freshened everyone’s drink.

Jennifer giggled, “I know her. She has a little girl who wants to become a doctor when she doesn’t want to become one of the scientists learning about the city.”

“Tali is lovely,” Jeannie told them, “She and Teyla are quite good friends.”
“Did you not invite Teyla to this gathering?” Sha’re asked softly.

Janet shrugged, “We did but she already had plans with friends on the mainland but I made her promise to come to the next one we have.”

Sha’re nodded, “Good. Now what else do you know about Tali?”

“I don’t know much about her,” Laura noted, “But I do know Rodney recently switched the work assignments to allow Radek to spend his time on the mainland.”

Jeannie started to laugh, “You’re telling me my brother would do that for someone? Please!”

“Rodney can be quite the romantic,” Laura replied with a soft smile, “And since he’s happy he’ll actually go out of his way to help others be happy too.”

“Why do we never actually see this Rodney McKay?” Janet demanded with mock horror as they descended into laughter.

“Oh, I do,” Laura smirked before she turned to Jeannie, “By the way, according to Rodney you’re not allowed to be happy that way.”

“Typical,” Jeannie rolled her eyes as they all started to giggle.

Sha’re walked back to her room, she had enjoyed the night she spent with her friends. The camaraderie, the laughter had been more soothing than a day of rest could be. As she walked she met another pregnant member of Atlantis, she happily chatted with the woman for a few minutes deciding to set up some kind of group for those of the city that were having a child. She had to make sure that there was a class for those who had never had a child, it was something that she had seen back home on Abydos and she recalled how the women would bond together.

As she mused over this she realised that everything that had happened to them on Earth had brought her friends that she wasn’t sure she’d ever have known without the terrible things that had happened to them all. Sha’re smiled to herself, something wonderful had come out of all that had happened to them.

Entering her room Sha’re laughed softly to find her husband sitting on their bed asleep, his glasses askew and the book he’d been reading hanging limply from one hand. Sha’re giggled softly as she removed his glasses and looked down on him, she always loved how adorably sweet he looked like this but she knew that if he slept like this all night then he’d be grumpy in the morning and a grumpy Daniel was extremely annoying.

Once she’d woken him and got her husband to get into bed properly, Sha’re cuddled up to him to sleep.

“Did you have fun?” Daniel murmured sleepily.

“Yes,” Sha’re sighed, “We are going to make it a monthly occurrence.”

“Good,” was the last thing he said before sleep took him.

Sha’re smiled and snuggled closer falling asleep herself.

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Jack checked his pack; their latest mission was to a planet the database program Rodney had created had given as a possible resource on the Ancients or it would be once Daniel finished talking to his wife. Laura and Teal’c were standing nearby waiting as impatiently as he was along with John and his team.

“Sorry, guys,” Daniel ran down the stairs, he took the weapon one of the Gateroom guards was holding for him with a nod of thanks, “Are we ready.”

“Waiting for you,” Jack told him.

“Oh,” Daniel said before shrugging, “Okay, then.”

Jack rolled his eyes, “Peter, dial us up.”

Peter Grodin nodded from his position in the control room, he paused as his computer started to beep, “Ah, Sha’re, Colonel we have a ship approaching us.”

“What kind of ship?” Sha’re asked.

Peter checked the silhouette, “Asgard,” he reported.

Jack shrugged off his pack and handed it along with his P90 to the guard beside him as he jogged up to join Sha’re. He looked at the screen a little surprised that he hadn’t been yanked up without warning.

“Atlantis base to Asgard vessel,” Jack stated over the comm., “Please identify yourself.”

A bright white light filled the room and faded to reveal a small grey alien. He looked around before turning back to the city’s leaders.

“Greeting, O’Neill, Sha’re,” he dipped his head.

“Thor,” Jack grinned, “Not your usual entrance. Usually we come to you so what makes this occasion so special?” Jack frowned at his word, “What’s wrong?”

“There is nothing wrong,” Thor assured the worried looking people in front of him, “But I have brought a few people that you should speak with concerning the Andurian invasion of your planet.”

“People?” Sha’re asked worriedly, turning to give her husband a quick smile as he appeared at her side and slid his arm around her waist.

“I believe that one of these people,” Thor explained, “May be able to help in your campaign to take back your home planet.”

“Okay,” Jack mused, he glanced at Sha’re who nodded, “Bring them down.”

Thor nodded before hesitating, “There is a possibility one may not be too happy with the fact I brought them to you.”

Jack turned to the guards standing there, “Everyone stay alert, we’re beaming some down visitors,” he turned back to Thor, “Stick them in the middle of the circle of guards.”

“Of course, O’Neill,” Thor said before activating the transporter.

As the white light faded again a man and woman stood in the centre of the guards.
“What the hell is going on?” demanded the woman Jack recognised as Dr Elizabeth Weir.
Chapter 38

Elizabeth sat pretending that she was reading over the information the Asgard had sent them while they waited. It felt like they were purposely dragging their feet on cementing this treaty which was why she’d been relieved that Sam Carter was proposing the visit to Earth even if it wasn’t for another six months.

“Have you actually read any of that?”

Elizabeth looked up at the man leaning over her, “Not really, Steven.”

Steven Caldwell took the seat beside her, “You should get some rest, Doctor.”

“I can’t sleep,” Elizabeth sighed, “I just keep thinking how I wasn’t there for Simon.”

Steven rested his hand on her arm, “Elizabeth, it wasn’t your fault. Look, since the Asgard won’t be back for a couple of hundred years how about another game of chess?”

Elizabeth smiled and nodded, “Set up the board and I’ll come beat you again.”

They were half way through their second game when the computer notified them that someone was coming.

Steven jumped up and moved to the computer console, “The Asgard are back, that’s odd.”

Elizabeth nodded and moved to his side, “This is Dr Elizabeth Weir.”

“Greetings Dr Weir,” the voice came back “I am Thor, Supreme Commander of the Asgard Fleet.”

Elizabeth and Steven glanced at each other; this was a new member of the Asgard as far as they knew.

“I have been authorised to take you both on an excursion while the Asgard council discusses the latest developments of the treaty with Earth,” Thor explained to them, “If you wish to come with me?”

“That sounds wonderful,” Elizabeth smiled.

“It does?” Steven asked quietly.

“It’s that or I beat you at chess again,” Elizabeth murmured before she turned back to the screen, “Whenever you’re ready, Thor.”

The bright white light surrounded them and they were transported onto the Asgard ship.

Elizabeth stared at they were transported down in the centre of several people all aiming guns at them. She felt Steven stiffen at her side but her focus was on the three people walking towards them. The first was a familiar man who she’d seen on the news several times, Jack O’Neill – wanted for crimes against Earth. The next was a striking pregnant young woman walking with a blue-eyed man who Elizabeth noted was definitely her lover from the way he was holding her waist.

“O’Neill,” Steven stated, he automatically pulled his gun and aimed it at the man known as a
terrorist.

Elizabeth watched as the younger man placed himself in front of the woman along with another man who wouldn’t have looked out of place in a Conan movie.

“Put it down,” O’Neill said bored as he rolled his eyes, “You think you’ll get a shot out before this lot kills you?”

“Steven,” Elizabeth placed her hand on his, forcing him to put the gun down, “Let’s hear them out.” She turned to her protector and saw the annoyance in his eyes but Steven nodded.

The young woman moved out from behind her shield, “Please follow Jack and we will explain why Thor has brought you here.”

Elizabeth licked her lips but knew there was absolutely nothing else they could but follow on. Steven reluctantly handed over his gun to one of the men standing there before he escorted Elizabeth upstairs.

Sha’re took her usual seat at the conference table, Jack and Daniel at either side of her both looking grim and protective. She’d sent John and Ferretti’s teams on their missions before she had entered the conference room.

“Please take a seat,” Sha’re told their visitors before beginning her introductions, “I am Sha’re, this is my husband Dan’iel Jackson and you already recognise Jack O’Neill.”

“I’m Dr Elizabeth Weir,” Elizabeth introduced herself; she turned to her companion, “This is Colonel Steven Caldwell.”

“Welcome to Atlantis,” Sha’re stated, she glanced to Jack, “You already know Dr Weir I assume?”

“Dr Elizabeth Weir, diplomat,” Jack stood and paced behind Daniel and Sha’re, “She’s the one talking the Asgard into a treaty with the Zombies...sorry, Andurians.”

“And you’re Jack O’Neill, terrorist and the one trying to destroy the peace that’s been created,” Elizabeth retorted,

Daniel laughed sadly and shook his head, “You have no idea, do you?”

“Why don’t you enlighten us?” Steven asked darkly.

Elizabeth placed a hand on his arm to calm him; she could see the two men ready to protect the young woman and didn’t want a fight breaking out until she had all the information.

“Samantha Carter is not the saviour of the human race,” Sha’re stated, “The Andurians are not on Earth to help humanity but to destroy it.”

Elizabeth stared at her, “That’s nonsense. The Andurians stopped the Goa’uld; they helped us escape a war we would never have won. Do you have any idea what the Goa’uld would have done to us?”

“Yes,” Sha’re stated coldly, she stood and walked to Weir. Shaking slightly Sha’re lifted her hair away from the back of her neck revealing the scar Ammonet had created, “I know everything the Goa’uld would have done to humanity.”

“Sha’re,” Daniel moved to her side and led her back to her seat, he turned back to the two people
sitting across from them, “I’m sure you now understand how intimately we understand the Gould but we also know intimately what the Andurians are doing to Earth.”

“We cannot keep talking about everything she did to us,” Sha’re reached out and took her husband’s hand, “But you need to know the truth. Therefore I am giving you access to all public areas of the city, you will be guarded of course but I encourage you to speak to the people of the city.”

“Excuse me?” Elizabeth asked confused.

“You need to hear this from the people,” Sha’re replied, “We may even speak to you ourselves once we feel able to once more.”

Elizabeth stared at her, “You’re letting us just wander around.”

“There is no way you can leave the city without Thor,” Sha’re replied, “I will warn you however that the people of this city have had a great deal of anguish caused by Samantha Carter and the Andurians. Be careful how you treat them.”

“So, how long are we here for?” Steven demanded, obviously not happy.

“I’ll check with Thor,” Jack replied with a shrug, “He is your ride after all.”

Two men, one human and one Jaffa appeared in the conference room and nodded to Sha’re who turned to Elizabeth and Steven, “Lieutenants Martin and Je’van will escort you to your rooms. I advise you not to try and lose them.”

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“Okay,” Jeannie yelled, shielding her face from sparks, “Shut it down.”

They shut down the power and Jeannie sighed, they were still nowhere near getting this ship up and running.

“Yardley,” she turned to the man who had somehow become her second-in-command on the project, “See if you can find what went wrong. I want to check the crystals to make sure we haven’t destroyed any more of them.”

Yardley nodded, “Sure, Jeannie. Don’t worry, we’ll get this fixed.”

“Hopefully before my brother gets back,” she laughed, shaking her head at that thought as Yardley left her alone.

“Ma’am,” a voice made Jeannie look up to where one of the ‘guards’ stood with an unfamiliar woman.

“Can I help you?” Jeannie asked.

“Sha’re has asked that everyone speak with Dr Weir,” he indicated the woman standing at his side, “Concerning the Andurians.”

“I’m kinda busy,” Jeannie replied brusquely, “So what do you want to know, Dr Weir?”

The woman was slightly taken back by Jeannie’s sharpness but rallied her thoughts quickly.

“I simply want to know your experience of the Andurians?”
Jeannie shook her head, “I don’t have any. I was protected.”

“Protected how?” she asked.

Jeannie paused before she shrugged, “Technically I was kidnapped.”

Elizabeth stared at her, “What?”

“My brother was tortured by Carter,” Jeannie said softly, “He was rescued by Jack and the others, to protect us both they grabbed me and here I am.”

Elizabeth stared at her not sure what to say but she didn’t have to say anything else as Jeannie took over again.

“I was just like you when I first joined them,” Jeannie continued, “My fiancé was killed in what was labelled a terrorist attack and I hated them. Then I found out what was really going on. Every person in the city has scars, emotional and a lot of them physical. You’ve met Sha’rè, between them she and Daniel carry a hell of a lot of those scars. There’s no point to talking to anyone but those two.”

Steven walked through the corridors of the city trying to figure out a way to get them back to Earth and warn people about the terrorists’ new resources. As he walked he was aware of the Jaffa watching his every move, he would have to somehow get rid of him but before he could think of a plan a familiar woman stepped into his view.

“Laura?”

Laura Cadman spun and winced at being found when she’d been hoping to avoid him, “Colonel. Hi, what’re you doing here?”

“Me,” Steven snapped as he moved to her, “What about you? You’re supposed to be dead.”

Laura winced again, embarrassment covering her face, “I know.”

Steven reached out and gently touched her shoulder making sure he wasn’t seeing things before he snapped, “What the hell did you think you were doing?”

At his anger Je’van started forward but Laura held up her hand stopping him, she took a deep breath and faced Steven as well as her own guilt.

“Do you have any idea what that did to your parents?” Steven continued, “Do you know the pain you put them through?”

“It’s better than them being dead,” Laura retorted before she took a deep breath, “Come on, I need something to drink if I’m going to have to tell this story.”

Laura motioned him to the commissary where they took a seat in the corner after grabbing some tea. Je’van took up position nearby despite Laura’s assurance he could go for now.

“What happened?” Steven asked.

Laura looked at the man who’d known her since she was a kid; her father had been his commanding officer for years. He became close to the family and she trusted him but as she faced him all the guilt she’d held hidden since she’d made the decision to fake her death came rushing free.
“Why did you do it?” Steven broke the silence, “Why did you get involved with these people?”

Laura sighed, “Steven, these people aren’t the bad guys. These people just want to live their lives, they want to be able to see the people they left behind just like I do. You think I’m happy that my mom and dad think I’m dead?”

“So what happened?” Steven asked.

“I found her torture chamber and a man I knew trapped in there,” Laura explained sadly, she swallowed hard as she thought back to that moment, “I wanted to help but she knew where my family lived and threatened them. Steven, I had no choice. I couldn’t leave Ro...I couldn’t leave him there but the only way I could help him and protect my family was to fake my death.”

Steven stared at her not sure what to say.

“Everything the Andurians told us is a lie,” Laura told him, “And I know how hard it is for you to believe this but it’s true. Everyone here has been hurt by Carter and the Zombies in some way – some more than others. Trust me; they’re not on Earth to help us.”

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“Thank you, Edward,” Sha’re smiled at the man sitting across from her, “This is excellent. Can you ensure that the schedules work with our school? I do not want there to be issues with children left on their own.”

“No problem, Sha’re,” Edward nodded and scribbled the note before broaching the next subject, “I heard a rumour that we have some more guests.”

Sha’re shrugged, “I am hoping that this will be a step towards our reclaiming of Earth but to be honest we have more pressing concerns for the people of the city.”

Edward smiled, “You’re not kidding. I’ll see you in the council meeting tomorrow, Sha’re. Have a good day.”

“And you,” Sha’re gave him a gentle smile as he left the office. She fixed her notes from their meeting before she called Lisa in, “When is my next meeting?”

“You’ve got an hour,” Lisa smiled, “And Dr Jackson called to let you know he’ll be having lunch about now if you want to join him.”

Sha’re smiled back, “That sounds like a wonderful idea. I will be back in just under an hour before my next meeting.”

Lisa headed back to her desk, “Have a good lunch.”

Daniel smiled as his wife placed a gentle kiss on his cheek before she sat down at his side, after she’d allowed their latest guests out into the city. He could see Laura talking with Caldwell and wondered how they knew one another.

“I am sorry your mission was cancelled today,” Sha’re said as she started eating her sandwich, “But Jack wished to remain in the city whilst our latest guests are here.”

Daniel shrugged, “I prefer to be here too. Means I can make sure nothing happens to you.”
“Dan’iel,” she frowned.

“I don’t know these people and the Colonel guy seems threatening,” Daniel told her, “I worry about you.”

Sha’re smiled feeling a blush colour her cheeks wondering how he could still do that to her when she was pregnant with his child. She quickly finished her sandwich and took his hand.

“Let us go for a walk, my husband,” she smiled at him, “I have about twenty minutes before I am due back at my office.”

Daniel raised an eyebrow but without a word he took their trays back before he slipped his hand into hers and led her away from the commissary. As they walked quickly along the corridors Daniel grimaced as they met up with Dr Weir.

“I was hoping to talk to you,” Elizabeth stated to the couple.

Behind her Lieutenant Michaels shrugged an apology; everyone knew how much the couple valued their time alone together.

Daniel sighed, “Sure.”

“We can speak in my office,” Sha’re told the other woman, she motioned Lieutenant Michaels to escort Weir before she turned to her husband, “Sorry, Dan’iel. Maybe later we can have an hour to ourselves.”

“Do you want me there?” he asked worriedly, his fingers gently threading through her hair.

Sha’re kissed him, “No. I can handle this.”

“Well, if you need me I’ll be in the control room,” Daniel started her walking, “I’ve been meaning to start working on looking out some new planets we can visit.”

Sha’re shook her head with a chuckle, “You are over-protective sometimes, my love but I know my father is pleased with that fact.”

Daniel wrapped his arm around Sha’re’s shoulder and walked his wife through the corridors until they reached her office. With a quick kiss Daniel let her go before he took up position in the control room where she could see him and he could keep an eye on if Weir upset her.

“So what do you want to know?” Sha’re asked as she took her seat.

Elizabeth let out an annoyed sigh, “How about everything?”

“That could take a long time,” Sha’re replied; she rolled her eyes as she watched her husband try to watch unobtrusively.

“I just want to know what’s going on,” Elizabeth demanded, “Everybody I’ve talked has said the same thing that I should talk to you and your husband. So I’m here to talk to you.”

Sha’re let out a long sigh, “I knew you would probably end up here and I wanted a little time to gather myself because this is not a story I enjoy telling.”

“Okay,” Elizabeth nodded there was understanding in her voice along with suspicion.
“Have you heard the true story of how the Stargate was opened?” Sha’re asked.

Elizabeth grimaced confused, “What do you mean the true story? I know how the Stargate was opened.”

“Let me guess,” Sha’re clasped her hands on her desk, “Samantha Carter worked out how to work the Stargate and travelled through it with the team to the world of Abydos where she freed the people from the evil Goa’uld Ra.”

“It’s a well known story,” Elizabeth reminded her.

“I know,” Sha’re nodded slightly, “But it is also a complete lie.”

Elizabeth shook her head, “Really? And you know this how?”

“Because my name is Sha’re, daughter of Kasuf Chief Elder of Abydos,” Sha’re told her, “I was there and trust me Dr Samantha Carter was not.”

“What?”

“The man who opened the Stargate is Dr Dan’iel Jackson,” Sha’re smiled with pride, “My husband. He opened the door into the universe, he taught the people of Abydos to stand up to the thing they believed to be a God and with Colonel Jack O’Neill freed us from the evil being called Ra.”

Elizabeth stared at her not sure what to say but Sha’re wasn’t finished.

“I was taken by Apophis and implanted with his queen, Ammonet,” Sha’re continued, “After several years I was rescued and I returned home with my husband. We were there when the Andurians came to Earth. When we returned I was almost nine months pregnant,” she paused, forcing back tears seeing Daniel start to move but he stayed in his seat. Taking a deep breath Sha’re wiped away a few small tears, “Carter abducted my husband and...and stabbed me.”

“She wouldn’t...”

Sha’re stood and lifted the top she wore slightly showing the scar she bore, “I lost my baby. Everyone has told you that talking to me is the thing to persuade you that the Andurians are our enemy - that is why. For some reason they trust me a great deal and I try to lead as best I can.”

Before Elizabeth could reply the Stargate burst to life.

“Incoming wormhole,” Peter announced, he looked up to Sha’re as she marched over Elizabeth in tow.

“Raise the shield. Is there an IDC?” Sha’re asked, very aware her husband had moved to her side watching over their guest.

Peter glanced at the computer beside him, “Its Teyla.”

“Drop the Shield,” Sha’re told him.

They watched the event horizon ripple and suddenly the team came running through John being carried by Ronon and Rodney.

“We need a medical team,” Rodney yelled the moment they were through.
Sha’re and Daniel ran downstairs as Peter called Janet both stopping horrified to see a large bug attached to John’s neck.
Halling watched the children play as he ate his lunch; they had always lived in fear of the Wraith but now in this new world that was unknown to the creatures that had preyed on their people for so long there was a difference in life.

The Athosians worked hard, they always had and Halling was proud that his people had taken over the farming aspect of the small community on the mainland. The Earthers were a good people who were survivors, they’d come to this world and Halling watched as they took their new world in their stride but they weren’t very good at farming.

Several of the Athosians had become close to certain members of the Earthers, at first he wasn’t too sure about this but nowadays he could see the friendships and relationships that had blossomed were a good thing.

Siler hammered the nails into the new fence as Dialya planted her crops. They’d started living together less than a week before and this was the first step into making the small cottage a home for them both.

Siler had lost so many friends over the years fighting, his ex-wife had been amongst the people killed in the first ‘terrorist’ attack and then so many people from the SGC had been killed by Carter and her Zombies. Then again, there were also the ones who had gone with her, convinced she’d saved them all from the Goa’uld.

Siler never understood how they could allow the lies she told. He had been one of the first people Colonel O’Neill had recruited in his fight against his former team-mate.

Siler had never expected to find happiness again until he’d met the woman happily singing to herself. Their first meeting had been completely inauspicious as she yelled at him, but Siler had known from that moment there was something special about her. Personally he was happier here than he had been anywhere.

Radek sat going over the reports from the mainland team, he had been happy to find that Jeannie was extremely organised, even more so than Rodney was, and the teams she had working were perfect for their jobs. Radek had felt slightly useless when he’d first arrived as he seemed to have very little to do, but as they started exploring more, Radek found there was more for him to do.

“Have you eaten yet?”

Radek looked up from his computer to find Tali standing in the doorway, a picnic basket in her hand.

“Not yet,” he replied, motioning her to sit down confused when Tali shook her head.

“You have been stuck inside this room for hours,” Tali shook her head; “We are going to the lake.”

Radek frowned, “I have a great deal of work to do, Tali. I can’t just leave.”

Tali laughed, “I doubt anyone will mind. You told me that there is no one here to demand these things of you. Come with me.”
With a smile Radek shut down his computer, “Very well but if I get into trouble...”
“I will take the blame,” Tali laughed taking his hand and pulling him out of the small office.

Janet laughed as her daughter told her about a few of the kids she was teaching. It still astonished Janet how grown-up her daughter was now, how good a teacher she was and how they were finally back together after all the years apart.

“Dr Frasier to the Gateroom,” Peter’s voice came over the comm. system, “Medical emergency.”

“Sorry, honey,” Janet told her daughter as she grabbed her kit and team, “I’ll see you later.”

Cassie shrugged, “Sure, Mom.”

Watching the team run out Cassie smiled to herself and decided to wander over to talk to Carson for a few minutes – she loved his accent.

“Get this thing off me,” John snapped, as the medical team came running into the room.

“We tried,” Ronon reminded John while telling the others, “I tried to shoot it off, cut it off but it just...”

Janet nodded before turning to her team, “Okay, everyone on three,” she counted to three and her team along with Ronon lifted John onto the gurney.

“What happened?” Sha’re asked Rodney and Teyla as Ronon went with John.

Rodney shrugged, “I’ve no idea. One minute we were heading back to the Gate then he cried out and there it was.”

“Alright,” Sha’re gently touched Rodney’s arm, “Go to the infirmary.”

Rodney and Teyla nodded before they walked out leaving Sha’re and Daniel standing, Elizabeth stood just behind them.

“I apologise, Dr Weir,” Sha’re turned to the woman, “We can finish our discussion now if you wish but I would prefer to be in the infirmary to ensure my friend is alright.”

Daniel frowned as he saw the astonished look on Elizabeth’s face, “What is it?”

“I just...I know him,” Elizabeth said softly, “I met him several years ago while I was at the University.”

“Then perhaps you will wish to join us as we wait for news,” Sha’re said, she took her husband’s arm and started forward not turning to see if Elizabeth had followed them knowing her guard would continue to watch her.

Jeannie jogged along the corridor towards the infirmary worry filling her. Peter had called to let her know what had happened so Jeannie had to make sure her brother and John were safe.
“Oh my God,” she gasped as she skidded to a halt and saw the creature attached to John’s neck.

“What are you doing here?” Rodney demanded coming to her side.

“Mer,” Jeannie turned and quickly hugged him, “Peter told me what happened. Are you okay?”

“Fine,” he told her brusquely, “John’s the only one with any...problems.”

Jeannie took his hand as they waited for Janet to give them her assessment. She looked over to the other side of the room where Daniel and Sha’re sat, and then she could see Elizabeth Weir in one corner.

“Doc,” John yelled, “Are you getting this thing off me today or not?”

“Major Sheppard,” Janet said sternly, using his rank instead of his name to get his attention, “Ronon has already tried to get this thing off by force, we know it doesn’t work. So we’re going to have to try something else.”

“Like what?” Jeannie asked for him.

Janet glanced up at the brother and sister including them in the conversation, “Various chemicals, let’s just say this is going to take some time.”

“Then we will leave,” Sha’re spoke up, “John, we will be back as soon as Janet allows us.”

“As long as this thing is off me then I’ll be ecstatic to see you,” John told her, his face scrunched in pain.

Sha’re squeezed his hand before she and Daniel left, Elizabeth with them so Sha’re could finish the conversation they’d been having.

Jeannie took the seat at John’s bedside as Janet started to gather everything she needed. Trying not to look at the large thing attached to his neck Jeannie reached out and took John’s hand. She didn’t see her brother frown slightly before he was chased away for his own medical check.

“I thought you might need someone here until Janet’s ready,” Jeannie told him.

John gave her a weak smile, “Thanks. Not easy to stick around when this thing’s on me.”

Jeannie squeezed his hand, “Doesn’t take away from your hair.”

“Thought it might have been messed,” John winced as the creature dug in more, “If I don’t get out of this...”

“Stop it,” Jeannie cut him off.

“Jeannie, this is possible,” he told her, “Just promise me you guys...”

“John,” Jeannie cut him off again, “You don’t have to say anything.”

He nodded, his eyes filled with worry and pain, “You’ll stick around for this?”

Jeannie gave him a soft smile, “Don’t worry, I’ll be close by.”
The creature hissed slightly and John winced again.

“Could you hurry up, Doc,” he called out, “I think my guest’s getting restless.”

“Just a few more minutes, John,” Janet replied, “We’re just getting everything we can think of to try and detach this from you.”

“I could try looking it up in the database,” Jeannie offered, stopping as she started to move as John pulled her back.

“You promised you’d stay,” he breathed.

Jeannie sank back into her seat, she touched her radio and quickly ordered one of her team to start going through the database for any reference to the creature and possible ways to get it to release her friend. Once she’d arranged that Jeannie squeezed his hand tightly feeling his hand tighten around hers and they sat in silence waiting for Janet to begin.

Laura hugged Rodney tightly when he entered their room; he’d been kicked out of the infirmary by Janet to get some rest while they worked on helping John.

“I’m fine,” Rodney told her, returning the embrace, “John’s the one with a bug attached to his neck.”

Laura gently kissed him, “I heard. You know there’s someone I want you to meet, it’ll keep your mind off things.”

Rodney grimaced, “Okay?”

Laura took his hand and led him through the corridors.

“You know I was meant to rest,” Rodney told her as they walked.

Laura laughed, “I don’t see that happening. You wouldn’t sleep while you worry about John.”

Rodney shrugged knowing he couldn’t argue with that, so he moved to another topic, “So, who am I going to meet?”

Laura took a deep breath and let out a long sigh, “You heard about our latest visitors?” when Rodney nodded she continued, “Well, I know one of them.”

“Know how?” Rodney asked suspiciously.

Laura grinned and tweaked his nose, “You’re cute when you’re jealous. It’s not what you’re thinking; Steven is an old friend of my family. He bailed me out when I was a kid and got into trouble almost every weekend.”

Rodney chuckled slightly at that admission, “So you’re trying to persuade him we’re telling the truth about Carter and the Zombies.”

“Which is why I want him to meet you,” Laura said, “I’ve told him my story but I want you to tell him yours.”

Rodney froze; Laura squeezed his hand before pulling him down to her.

“I know you never want to think about that again but if we can get Steven and Dr Weir on our side
then it will be a victory for us,” Laura told him, “Weir is the one negotiating a treaty with the Asgard, think about it.”

Rodney looked down at her before he gently kissed her, “Sure.”

In the commissary Rodney took a seat across from Laura’s old family friend trying to put thoughts about how his friend was out of his mind.

“Colonel Steven Caldwell,” Laura said as she slipped into the seat beside Rodney, “This is Dr Rodney McKay.”

Rodney nodded slightly in greeting but didn’t say anything, mostly because he knew that when he opened his mouth a lot of people winced.

“Steven, you remember what I was telling you earlier?” Laura asked.

“It’s kind of hard not to,” Caldwell noted, sipping his coffee.

Laura licked her lips, “Rodney is the man Carter had trapped that I saved.”

Rodney saw Caldwell turn and the man stared at Rodney, behind Laura’s words was the confession – ‘This is who I faked my death and cause my family extreme pain for.’

“Why did Dr Carter need you?” Caldwell finally spoke up.

“Carter,” Rodney stressed, “Needed me to determine the power requirements for getting us here. She was after this city and the technology within it even though she’d never be able to use it. Laura,” he gently rested his hand on her arm, “Saved me. She gave up everything to get me out of what I can only describe as hell.”

Caldwell continued to stare at them, his eyes drawn down to where Rodney was gently and absently stroking Laura’s arm. Laura shrugged as he looked up at her questioningly.

“Steven,” Laura said softly, “I know you want to believe that Carter is doing what’s best for Earth but she’s not. You know how much I love my family and you know the only reason I would have done something like this was if it was incredibly important. The Andurians are killing us, Steven. It might be in a slower and less obvious way than the Gould but they’re killing us the same.”

Caldwell looked at the young woman in front of him, someone he’d known since she was a rebellious teenager and he knew she was telling him the truth. The realisation settled in his stomach and anger filled him. Laura reached out and touched his hand in comfort, as he glanced up at her Laura knew they’d convinced him.

Elizabeth took her seat in Sha’rè’s office once more her mind going over and over the man she’d seen lying on the infirmary bed. She’d met John Sheppard a few years ago when he flew her from the Educational Complex to Washington and remembered how much he’d enjoyed working for the Andurians; she wondered what would turn him away from that.

“Is there anything else I can tell you?” Sha’rè asked, she sat at her desk once more.

Elizabeth stared at her; she was impressed by the young woman who seemed to run this place, at how poised and professional she was. Then again Sha’rè was the leader of a group of people who
were known terrorists.

“How did you get here?” Elizabeth asked, she decided to get as much information as possible for her return to Earth.

“Carter held my husband hostage for almost two years,” Sha’re stated, her voice steady and cold as she spoke never once revealing the depths of emotion these events stirred in her. “She needed him to find the Stargate address. Carter then held another man, Dr Rodney McKay,” Sha’re paused as she saw Elizabeth’s look of surprise, “You know him?”

“I recognise the name,” Elizabeth replied carefully, “He worked at the Educational Complex.”

“Yes,” Sha’re nodded, “Until he discovered what Carter was doing to people in the part of the Complex no one else sees. Then she trapped and tortured him there also, so he would find the power requirements needed to gate to this city.”

“Now I know you’re lying,” Elizabeth snapped, “Samantha Carter opened the Stargate, she worked with it for years and is the foremost expert on Stargate technology on Earth.”

Sha’re shook her head, “Have you ever seen her touch anything connected to the Stargate? Any technology that is neither Human nor Andurian? She is not what she pretends to be and I know how hard it is to believe but it is the truth.”

Elizabeth stared at the young woman across from her, “You have an interesting story, Mrs Jackson but you don’t have a shred of proof to back up your story.”

Sha’re shook her head sadly, “You are correct, Dr Weir except for one point. This is not a story.”

Before Elizabeth could retort Lisa called through to let Sha’re know Janet needed to talk to her.

John screamed in pain as the bug sunk its teeth deeper into his neck when Janet poured a small amount of saltwater onto it.

“I’m sorry, John,” Janet apologised; she took his hand, “The more I try the closer we get to working out how to remove this thing from you.”

“Janet, I can’t feel my arms and legs,” John told her, “You’d better do it fast cause I don’t know how long I can...I will...”

Janet rested her hand on his forehead comfortingly, “There is another idea Carson and I have but it’s dangerous.”

John swallowed, wincing as the bug dug in deeper, “Define dangerous.”

Janet took a deep breath, “We believe that stopping your heart, effectively cutting off the bug’s source of food is the only way to get it off of you.”

“You’re gonna kill me?” John asked, fear sparking in eyes briefly.

“John,” Janet soothed, “Listen to me. Carson and I will be ready to bring you back but this is our only choice considering what you’ve told me.”

John managed to nod slightly, “Okay.”
“Carson,” Janet called to the other doctor, he appeared with the equipment they needed and Janet turned back to John, “Ready?”

“Not even slightly,” John replied, he winced as the thing attached to him bit in deeper once more, “Do it.”

Sha’re, Daniel and Jeannie arrived just as Janet stopped John’s heart. Jeannie gasped and felt Daniel grip her arm keeping her back. Ronon was already standing by ready with his gun to kill the creature as soon as they detached it the same as he had been from the moment they’d started.

“Okay,” Janet stated, “His heart’s stopped. Try to remove it.”

Carson gently tugged on the strange looking bug, his hands gripping its soft underbelly in the hopes of detaching it from John’s neck.

“It’s not moving,” Jeannie whispered in horror.

“Give it time,” Carson spoke up just as he felt the creature release its grip. Carson tossed the now free bug in front of Ronon who shot it without hesitation.

At the same moment Carson had the creature off John Janet started CPR. Jeannie turned into Daniel’s shoulder not wanting to watch in case they couldn’t revive John. Daniel kept his arms around Sha’re and Jeannie, holding onto both women as he watched Janet working to bring back their friend.

“Come on, John,” Janet murmured as she shocked him once more, “You are not getting out of this, come on.”

Finally John’s heart started to beat again and as a steady rhythm echoed around the infirmary they all let out a breath none of them realised they’d been holding.

Janet leaned over John as his eyes opened, “Welcome back, you had us worried for a moment.”

“Got ya,” John murmured before his eyes closed again and he fell asleep.
Chapter 40

Night fell on the city of Atlantis. Jack watched from the balcony just out of sight as Sha’re talked once more with their guests, assigning them rooms for the evening. He smiled slightly as he watched Daniel hover protectively at his wife’s side letting them know if either even tried to harm her in any way there’d be hell to pay.

Jack had kept an eye on both their guests throughout the day, to his surprise Caldwell appeared to have been realised the truth but Weir was steadfastly refusing to believe that Carter was the enemy.

“Hey, Uncle Jack.”

Jack turned and smiled as Cassie appeared at his side, he wrapped his arm around her slim shoulders giving her a quick hug, “What are you doing up here, kiddo?”

“Sha’re agreed to come and talk to the kids tomorrow about Abydos,” Cassie explained, “I just wanted to check if she could still do it.”

Jack glanced over to the office and shrugged, “You never know.”

“Jack,” Cassie started hesitantly.

“Yes?”

“I was pretty well known back on Earth as the child Samantha Carter saved,” Cassie reminded him, “If you want I could speak with them. They might believe me.”

Jack considered this; he remembered the propaganda where the young woman beside him had been paraded on TV for the world to see, her story laid out and Jack hated Carter that little bit more for it.

“We can hold that off for now,” Jack told her, “But I’ll mention it to our glorious leader.”

Cassie chuckled. “You put her in charge, you should have known Sha’re wouldn’t let you out of taking on some responsibility. And let’s face it, Jack, could you have just sat back and let anyone else watch out for her?”

Jack looked at her through narrowed eyes, “I miss the sweet little girl who painted her dog.”

Cassie shrugged, “So do I.”

Sha’re finished brushing her hair and laid her hairbrush onto the dressing table before she turned to where her husband was laying on the bed watching her.

“Are you comfortable?” Sha’re asked with a smile.

“Yeah,” Daniel grinned.

Shaking her head Sha’re slid onto the bed beside him, laughing as Daniel caught her arms and pulled her to him. The couple cuddled together on the bed, listening to the sound of the waves outside.

“Do you ever think trying to persuade the people like Weir and Caldwell is useless, that maybe we should just give up and live our lives here?” Daniel asked after a while.
Sha’re nodded, “Sometimes,” she leaned on her elbow and drew her free hand against his cheek, “Sometimes I think we should forget all about it and have our children, explore this galaxy and live without thinking about her again.”

Daniel sighed softly as his wife traced his features with her fingertips.

“But,” Sha’re continued and Daniel winced.

“There had to be a ‘but’, ” he sighed.

Sha’re kissed him, “You cannot forget the world you were born on anymore than I can.”

“I hate when you make sense,” Daniel told her with narrowed eyes.

Sha’re lay back and batted her eyes at him, “Do you really hate me?”

Daniel rolled his eyes and laughed before he leaned over her, “You know I adore every little bit of you.”

Sha’re reached up, wrapping her arms around her husband’s neck and pulled him down to kiss her.

As night fell in the city, things grew quiet as the night crew took up position for their shifts. Sha’re had ensured that everyone took their turn at working nights, it was one of her rules. In her room for the evening, Elizabeth paced.

She had to find out the Gate address for the city, if she did then the Earth would be safe from this group of terrorists. Her problem was the man who was guarding her door but if she could find a way to get him out of the way for a few hours she could look around and get as much information as possible before Thor returned her to Earth because she was sure they couldn’t keep them here indefinitely.

Elizabeth started rooting through her bag hoping to find the answer in there and smiled as she did. Pulling out the sleeping pills she’d been using after the accident she started working on a plan. The small room she was in was equipped with a tiny kitchen; she assumed that’s what it was anyway. Elizabeth made two cups of what she hoped was tea and emptied three capsules into the second tea before she went to the door.

“Can I help you?” the young guard asked.

Elizabeth nodded, “I was hoping to ask you a few questions. Sha’re did say every member of the city would speak with me.”

He nodded, “Of course.”

“I’m just having some tea, Lieutenant,” Elizabeth continued, “Please join me. It’s easier than standing here.”

Martins mused this over for a few seconds before nodding; he could make sure she stayed in the room if he was there himself. Elizabeth motioned him inside and handed him the tea she’d made.

“What do you want to know?” Martins asked as he drank the tea.

“Why are you here?” Elizabeth asked, deciding to find out some more just now.
Martins sighed, “My sister was part of a research group working with the Andurians. She found out they were using human test subjects and when she tried to stop them...” he trailed off, “They killed her, blaming a ‘terrorist attack’.”

“And you know it wasn’t one?” Elizabeth leaned forward watching as his eyes kept closing.

“Because,” he slurred slightly, “The people she blamed were the ones I was talking...” he never finished his sentence as he slumped to one side and started to snore slightly.

Elizabeth nodded, relieved that the young man seemed alright and she hadn’t poisoned him, before she slipped out of the room and started through the darkened corridors.

Daniel turned in his sleep pulling his wife slightly closer, she murmured before settling again.

“Sha’re, Dr Jackson,” a loud voice cut through the silence, “This is control.”

Daniel jumped and grabbed his radio, “What?”

“Sorry to disturb you, Daniel,” Peter said, his accent seemed more clipped than usual, “But we have a problem.”


“Can’t explain more than show it to you,” Peter replied, “You need to come to the control room now.”

Daniel groaned, “We’ll be up in a few minutes.”

He dropped the radio again and turned to his still sleeping wife giving her a gentle shake, “Sha’re,” Sha’re batted him away curling into the covers. Daniel chuckled and gently kissed her cheek, “Sweetheart, wake up.”

“Not now, Dan’iel,” she murmured in her native tongue, “I’m sleeping.”

Daniel laughed and shook her again, “You’re needed in the control room.”

Slowly Sha’re’s eyes opened properly and she grimaced, “Why?”

Daniel shrugged, “Peter didn’t say, just said it was urgent.”

Sha’re threw her covers back and got out of bed, she dressed quickly and pulled her hair back out of her face before turning to her husband.

“This better be an emergency,” she told him.

Daniel laughed and kissed her again before leading her out of the room, “I think they know better than to call otherwise.”

Peter looked up as Daniel and Sha’re walked up the stairs, “Sorry for waking you.”

“I would say no problem,” Daniel replied darkly, “But it is.”
Peter chuckled.

“Why did you call us?” Sha’re demanded, her hand resting on her bump as she absently rubbed where her baby lay.

“We’ve been getting strange readings,” Peter told them.

Daniel looked at the screen and grimaced, “And you called us? You should have called Rodney, or Jeannie.”

“He did,” Rodney appeared looking grouchy his hair sticking up in all directions.

“The readings are coming from a section of the city we haven’t investigated yet,” Peter told them, “Colonel O’Neill assures me there is no one set to explore this part of the city for the next few months at least.”

“Jack told you?” Daniel asked.

“I’m the one who told Peter to call you,” Jack jogged over, “I’ve already talked with T, there should be no one in that section of the city.”

He glanced at Sha’re who bit her lip for a second, “Alright, Jack go with Rodney. I want you to be there to make sure the energy readings are not harmful.”

“I’ll come too,” Daniel spoke up, he then pre-empted his wife’s protest, “I’ll be fine.”

She sighed but said nothing to him before turning to the others, “Keep in touch.”

“We will,” Jack promised as he led Rodney and Daniel away, Daniel bounced back and kissed his wife before following on.

Sha’re sighed and lowered herself into the seat beside Peter to wait.

Jack walked through the corridors with Daniel and Rodney trying not to think about all the horror movies he’d ever seen. He glanced to his side as Daniel yawned.

“Keeping you up?” Jack teased as his friend grimaced at him.

“Yes,” Daniel replied, “And you have no idea how hard it was waking Sha’re.”

Jack chuckled, “Didn’t think she’d be that deep a sleeper.”

“Now we’re safe,” Daniel said softly, he smiled to himself, “She sleeps the way she did when we were on Abydos.”

They continued on in silence for a few minutes.

“Did anyone think to check on our guests?” Rodney spoke up, his attention still on his computer, “Or have you already done that?”

Jack stopped and swore, “Peter, get someone to check on Weir and Caldwell. I want to know they’re both in their quarters.”

“Of course,” Peter replied quickly.
“Caldwell has the ability to get out and start causing problems,” Daniel noted, “He’ll be expecting us.”

“I don’t think it’ll be him.” Rodney said, walking into Daniel when the other two men stopped.

“Why?” Jack asked.

Rodney looked up from his computer, “I was talking with him earlier, he’s an old friend of Laura’s family. I saw it in his eyes he believes us.”

“Could Weir get away without anyone seeing her?” Daniel posed the question as they started walking again.

The three men frowned as they thought about it.

“Possibly,” Jack mused, “The woman is smart. Why do you think Carter wanted her?”

Before anyone could say another word, the entire city started to shake and a deep thrum filled the air.

Rodney looked at his computer again, “Crap.”

Elizabeth gripped the rail as the entire city started to shudder. She hadn’t meant to activate anything; she had just been trying to get as much information on the people in the city as she possibly could.

The consoles were dancing with lights as the room filled with a deep hum; Elizabeth was beginning to panic as she had no idea what to do. The room dipped to one side, Elizabeth screamed as she lost her footing and fell over the banister, luckily Elizabeth managed to grasp onto a ledge and she clung to it.

“McKay,” a yell gave her hope she wasn’t about to fall to her death, “Stop whatever the hell that is.”

“Oh my God,” Elizabeth looked up to see Daniel Jackson staring at her, “Hold on,” he turned back for a second, “Jack, hold on to me.”

Daniel suddenly pushed himself over the edge reaching down to her, Elizabeth could see O’Neill grab him and kept the other man balanced as he reached down to her. Elizabeth gave a cry as the city shuddered again loosening her grip on the ledge. Daniel grimaced before he wriggled slightly down and managed to grab Elizabeth’s wrist just before she lost her hold.

“Jack,” Daniel yelled at his friend once he had a hold of the prone woman, “Pull me up.”

Jack nodded and grunted as he started to help Daniel up as Daniel pulled Elizabeth up.

“You need to lose some weight.” Jack muttered before grabbing him as the city shuddered again, “Rodney.”

“I’m working on it,” Rodney yelled back.

The city shook once more and Daniel gave a grunt as they swung to one side his arm catching on a loose bit of metal, gritting his teeth Daniel hauled Elizabeth up relieved when she managed to curl an arm around his neck.
“Jack,” Daniel called, “Get us up.”

Jack hauled Daniel and Elizabeth up; he grabbed the woman over the railing as Daniel pushed himself back over. Daniel cradled his arm as he leaned against the railing while Jack stood with his arms folded above where Elizabeth was sitting trying to catch her breath. Finally the city fell silent again and Rodney let out a small sigh, “I’ve fixed it.”

“Good,” Jack said shortly before turning his attention back to the woman in front of him, “Dr Weir, I’d say you have some explaining to do but let’s be honest I know exactly what you were doing.”

Elizabeth simply stared at him in silence as the room was filled with people.

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Carson fixed the bandage around Daniel’s arm as he sat on the bed, “There. Keep it dry and I’ll give it a check in a few days.”

“Is he alright?” Sha’re asked as she arrived.

Daniel rolled his eyes, “I’m here and I’m fine.”

“And you would say that even if you had blood gushing from your head,” Sha’re retorted, “So I am asking the expert.”

Carson tried to smother the smile as he watched the couple bicker, Sha’re turned to the doctor with a raised eyebrow.

“He’s fine,” Carson assured her, “It’s a deep cut but it didn’t need stitches. I promise there is nothing to worry about.”

Sha’re smiled, “Thank you, Carson.”

He nodded to her and left to deal with some other patients.

Daniel turned to his wife, “See?”

Sha’re leaned down and kissed him, “I just wanted to be sure. Rodney is ecstatic about what he has just discovered about the city. I am giving myself some time to calm down before I go speak with Dr Weir.”

Daniel bit his lip slightly; he’d been on the receiving end of his wife’s anger many times and knew the fiery temper well so this cold anger was something new. He took her hand and pulled her to sit with him.

“We’re fine,” Daniel reminded her, “It’s just a scratch.”

Sha’re frowned at him, “Jack told me you were hanging over the balcony and the only reason you did not go flying off is because he was holding you.”

“Fink,” Daniel muttered at his absent friend knowing he’d have to think up something to get him back for telling Sha’re that part of the evening.

Sha’re squeezed his hand, “She could have gotten someone killed and the fact that it was you makes me all the angrier.”

“Which is why you’re staying here,” Daniel held her to him, “I’ve never seen you like this.”
Sha’re cuddled against him, “I just realised tonight how many lives I am in charge of, how much we have to lose and it scares me, Dan’iel. I do not think I can do this.”

“You are doing it,” he reminded her, Daniel gently rocked his wife, “Sha’re, no one could have done what you have to make this city our home. Things happen that you can’t control, love. Everyone is fine, so let’s go back to bed and get some sleep then you can deal with Weir in the morn...later today.”

Sha’re nodded and gave a soft sigh, “That is a wonderful idea.”

The couple stood together, hand in hand they walked back to their room to sleep and forget for a few hours everything outside their quarters and the two of them.

Jack stood on the balcony of the newest lab they’d found watching as Rodney buzzed from console to console. The city could fly, he was pretty astonished but then again he knew he shouldn’t be. This place was incredible; Jack kept watching the scientists dance around every few days as they discovered something.

“So,” Jack said as he watched Rodney, “Have we discovered anything of interest?”

Rodney gave him a look of disgust before turning back to the systems. Jack chuckled to himself; he checked his watch as he heard footsteps coming along the corridor.

Three, two, one.

“Rodney!!”

Jack grinned as Rodney spun to find his girlfriend standing in the doorway. Laura Cadman was dressed in her jeans and a large sweater Jack assumed was Rodney’s, her hair was tied back in a tight ponytail and she looked annoyed.

“Hey,” Rodney gave her a smile, “You would not believe what we found.”

“And you promised me you wouldn’t be long,” she replied with a raised eyebrow.

Rodney frowned; he turned back to the console before back at Laura, “But...”

“Will this be here tomorrow morning?” Laura asked, her voice could have cut through diamonds.

“I...well...it...” he sighed, “Yes.”

“Then come back to bed,” Laura moved and took his hand, “You can study it in the morning.”

She pulled him out of the room, “Goodnight, Colonel.”

Jack shrugged as they left, “Night...or morning.”

He decided to go get some rest himself, but before he did he wandered over to the consoles again and looked over the screens. He touched the side and jumped as it started to beep.

“McKay!!” he yelled as he couldn’t find out how to stop the beeping.

Rodney and Laura came running back into the room and Rodney frowned without saying anything as he moved to look at what the alarm was for.
“Oh,” Rodney breathed.

Jack and Laura shared a confused look.

“Oh, what?” Laura asked first.

Rodney looked up at them amazement in his eyes, “Something’s activated.”

“Something good?” Jack asked hopefully.

Rodney shrugged, “I can’t tell.”
Chapter 41

“Can I have your attention please,” Sha’re’s voice filled the entire city, “The disturbance we felt in the early hours of this morning was due to an unknown system accidentally activated by one of our exploration teams. The situation has now been resolved and I have been assured by Rodney that it will not happen again. Thank you for your attention.”

Jeannie walked into the new lab, found the previous night by one of their ‘guests’ who had activated systems which caused Jeannie to be tossed out of her bed in the early hours of the morning, to find her brother hunched over one of the consoles.

“Mer,” she smiled as he jumped slightly, “You called me?”

“Good, come look at this,” he told her without bothering with any niceties.

Jeannie laughed, “Good morning to you too, big brother.”

He rolled his eyes, “I’ve been trying to find the source of this energy reading but it’s incredibly erratic. I want you here while I try a few things.”

Jeannie stared at him, “Why me? Couldn’t you have got one of the lackeys to do this for you?”

“I prefer working with you,” he told her, “Jack is going to tell Sha’re what’s going on now she’s obviously awake again.”

Jeannie shrugged; sometimes she just didn’t understand her brother and took up position at the second work station. She watched the screen as Rodney started to search for the energy signature that he’d been trying to locate for the last three hours.

“What you two doing?”

Jeannie and Rodney spun at the voice then both frowned as they saw who was standing in the doorway.

“John, what are you doing here?” Jeannie demanded.

He shrugged, “I just wanted a walk.”

“You just got out of the infirmary after almost dying,” Rodney reminded him, “No wait, you did die.”

John held up his hands in surrender, “I’m fine. I just wanted to get out my room for a...” he trailed off as brother and sister gave him identical frowns, “Never mind, I’ll go back to my room.”

“John, we’re just worried about you,” Jeannie reminded him, “I watched Janet restart your heart yesterday so please take care of yourself a little more. We need you around here.”

Guilt filled John, “Sorry.”

Without thought she reached out and squeezed his hand, “Go, get some sleep and I will come get you to have lunch with us.”
John nodded; neither noticed the Rodney’s suspicious expression as they talked. The three of them jumped as Rodney’s computer started to beep again.

“I’ve got it,” Rodney grinned; he tapped a few instructions into his computer and nodded, “John, I’ll walk you back to your room. Jeannie, thanks you can go back to the ship now.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes at her brother, “Sure thing, Mer. John, I’ll see you later.”

She disappeared from the lab, John waited as Rodney detached his computer from the Atlantis system before joining him to walk through the corridors.

“Okay,” Rodney said as they were half way to John’s room, “What’s the deal with you and my sister?”

“What?”

“You know exactly what I mean,” Rodney continued, “You’ve not developed ‘feelings’ for her, have you?”

John was stunned, though amused as Rodney actually put air quotes around the word feelings.

“Rodney,” John said, “The only thing I feel for your sister is the occasional urge to strangle her. We’re friends. Trust me on this.”

“Are you sure?” Rodney demanded, distrust still in his voice.

“She’s part of my family like you are,” John shrugged, sighing as his friend continued to stare at him, “Rodney, we’re friends I promise you. Nothing has ever or is ever going to happen, okay?”

“Okay,” Rodney nodded finally just as they reached John’s room, “Make sure it doesn’t.”

John let out a long sigh as Rodney walked away before he headed into his own room sighing to himself again, “She’s just a friend.”

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Elizabeth paced the small cell waiting. The doctor had checked her out before Sha’re from the other side of the room ordered Elizabeth to be taken to the brig. Elizabeth could see the anger in the younger woman’s eyes, especially as Daniel was getting the cut on his arm sorted at the same time. She couldn’t understand how she’d suddenly activated whatever the hell that was because she hadn’t touched anything.

“Elizabeth,” Steven’s voice made her turn, “What did you do?”

She shook her head at him, “I can’t believe you’ve turned against Earth, Steven. What did they tell you?”

“The truth,” he replied softly, “I know this is hard to believe but I’ve known Laura for years.”

Elizabeth shook her head, “What could she possibly say, Steven. We’ve spent months on this mission and you hate what these people have done.”

“I know now it wasn’t them,” Steven sighed, “Elizabeth, do you remember me telling you about my friend Greg and the daughter he lost?”
Elizabeth nodded.

“Laura was his daughter,” Steven explained, “We all thought she killed herself but she faked her
death to save the life of a man Carter was torturing. I’ve known Laura since she was a kid, she’s
telling me the truth. We were wrong and we have to help put things right.”

Elizabeth shook her head, “I don’t believe it.”

Steven sighed again, “Then I can’t help you.”

It was only a few minutes after Steven left that Sha’re walked in, dressed all in black her hair was
pulled back in a tight bun which only accentuated the anger in her brown eyes.

“We were completely courteous to you, Dr Weir,” Sha’re stated coldly as she stopped just outside
the cell, “I gave you the freedom of the city and you betrayed that trust. Because of your foolishness
and stupidity you almost died, in addition to this you nearly killed my husband.”

Elizabeth stayed silent just keeping her eyes locked on the woman in front of her.

“Do you have any idea what could have happened if Dr McKay had not been able to shut it down?”
Sha’re demanded, “You endangered the life of everyone in this city, this includes many children.”

“I didn’t mean to endanger anyone,” Elizabeth stated just as coldly, “But I will not apologise for
trying to find a way to protect the people of Earth from you...terrorists.”

Sha’re didn’t speak, didn’t move for several minutes and finally she turned to leave but stopped and
turned back to Elizabeth.

“Since we cannot convince you of the truth,” Sha’re told her, “We are waiting for Thor to return to
erase your memory of us.”

With that Sha’re walked out leaving Elizabeth alone again.

Sha’re walked out of the brig trying to calm herself. Leaning against the wall she rubbed her stomach
for a few minutes, thinking of the child that rested inside her. When she’d discovered that Daniel had
risked his life to save Weir she’d been furious though not sure who she was angrier with.

“Sha’re,” Rodney's voice sounded in her ear, “I need to talk to you.”

“Of course, Rodney,” Sha’re sighed, “Where are you?”

There was a pause, “Oh, I’m sending someone to meet you and he’ll bring you to the lab I’m in.
Bring Daniel and Jack too.”

Sha’re rolled her eyes, “We will be there soon. Have him meet us outside the Gateroom.”

“Sure,” came the quick reply before the connection cut off.

Sha’re sighed before she touched her radio, “Dan’iel, Jack, meet me outside the Gateroom. Rodney
has found something.”

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Jeannie heard the chime to John’s room as she hit the button. She waited for a few minutes before hitting it once more. If he didn’t answer in the next few minutes Jeannie was going to leave him to rest but just before she decided to go the door opened.

“Jeannie?” John looked at her a little blearily.

Jeannie swallowed as he stood in the doorway wearing only a pair of sweats and no shirt, his hair mussed and his hazel eyes filled with sleep, she quickly forced her brain back on track.

“Lunchtime,” she smiled at him, “Are you wanting to join me or will I let you sleep some more?”

“Oh, yeah,” John frowned, “Give me a minute and I’ll come. If I sleep anymore I’ll end up with the same sleep patterns as your brother which is not a good thing.”

Jeannie nodded; as the door closed she leaned against the wall, “Wow.”

A few minutes later John reappeared this time dressed in denims and a black t-shirt, he motioned her forward and together they started walking through the corridors. Jeannie snuck a look at the man at her side and frowned at how tired he looked, she’d been surprised that Janet had allowed him out of the infirmary so quickly after what had happened yesterday and looking at the grey pallor of his skin Jeannie was sure it was the wrong decision.

They grabbed some food and a table in the corner once they reached the commissary and Jeannie continued to watch her dinner companion.

“What?” John demanded after a while.

“You don’t look so good,” Jeannie told him.

“I’m fine,” John replied.

Jeannie grimaced but decided to stay silent for the moment and just keep an eye on him. However she didn’t need to.

“Sheppard,” the sharp voice of Janet Frasier made John wince guiltily before he turned slowly to the woman standing beside him.

“Hi, doc,” he gave her a charming smile which faltered as the small woman continued to glare at him. John turned to Jeannie and found the other woman giving him an identical look.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” Janet demanded as she stood above him, “I agreed to let you out of the infirmary if you stayed in your room and rested. Coming out for lunch was not the deal.”

“I needed something to eat,” John said sheepishly.

“Which is why I sent a nurse to your room with food,” Janet replied, she turned to Jeannie, “I’m guessing he didn’t tell you this.”

“No,” Jeannie glared at John who was looking down at his food, “Not when he appeared in the lab earlier either.”

John glanced up at her and threw her a look that said traitor.

“Since you obviously have no regard for your own health, John,” Janet’s voice indicated he had no choice, “You’re coming back to the infirmary where I can watch you. If you even try to weasel your
way out of there until I say so – I will tie you to the bed.”

“Sorry about lunch, Jeannie,” John said as he stood up to go with Janet, “I’ll see you later?”

“I’ll come visit,” Jeannie promised trying not to laugh.

Jeannie shared an amused grin with Janet as John started out of the commissary.

“So, Rodney,” Jack said as he walked in to the lab with Daniel and Sha’re, “What did we find?”

Rodney looked up from the screen he was studying as Carson stood at his side, “The energy signal you discovered earlier this morning finally stuck around long enough for me to find this lab. And then we found this.”

They all turned to where Rodney pointed, it was a long tube that was connected to the wall and they could see an old woman’s face through the clear glass.

“Who is it?” Sha’re asked, staring at the woman.

Rodney shrugged, “No idea. I’ve been going through the logs since I found her and there is no record of this ever being activated. As far as the logs are concerned all these stasis tubes are empty.”

“Why did it take you so long to find?” Daniel asked, moving to scan the logs himself.

Rodney didn’t jump down Daniel’s throat as Jack expected for the question instead the man shrugged, “Because it was set to only go off every so often and make it hard to track down.”

Sha’re frowned, “That is strange.”

“And annoying,” Rodney replied.

“So, can we open it up and see if our friend here can tell us what’s going on?” Jack asked.

Rodney grinned, “That’s why I got Carson to come. Sha’re?”

Sha’re hesitated, she didn’t know if she wanted any more nasty surprises hitting them but then again this woman was still alive and could possibly help them.

“Okay,” she nodded, “Wake her up.”

Sha’re sat down as she waited for Rodney, Daniel and Carson to wake up the woman in the stasis chamber. Jack took the seat beside her.

“How you doing, kid?” he asked.

Sha’re sighed and dropped her head onto his shoulder, “Tired. I was talking with Dr Weir before coming here. I told her we were going to get Thor to blank her memory of us.”

“I don’t think he can do that,” Jack noted.

“I know,” Sha’re let out an annoyed cry, “I just...I was so angry with her and now...Jack, she knows where we are.”
Jack shrugged, “Carter probably already guessed Daniel worked out the co-ordinates to Atlantis. You’re not in danger any more so I don’t care if she knows you’re alive in fact I’d love to see her face when she finds out.”

Sha’re sighed, “I suppose. The only problem is Colonel Caldwell; she knows he believes us which means he has no choice but to stay here. It is not fair on him.”

“This isn’t fair to any of us,” Jack reminded her.

She nodded, “I know.”

“How’s Junior?” Jack changed the subject.

Sha’re smiled, “Not happy that we were shaking about last night but has finally calmed down.”

Jack gently rested his hand on her swollen stomach as the young woman rested against him taking comfort from her surrogate big brother; they sat together waiting until they were needed.

Carson checked the woman’s vital signs as she was wheeled through the corridors to the infirmary. He knew Rodney, Jack, Daniel and Sha’re were following on wanting to know more but his focus was on his patient.

As they reached the infirmary Janet moved over to help him, together they transferred the woman onto a bed and started working. After a while they were sure she was stable they finally allowed the others to come closer.

“Sha’re, she might not wake up for...” Carson started before trailing off as the woman’s eyes opened, “Never mind.”

Sha’re smiled at him before she looked down at the frail looking woman, “Hello? Can you understand me?”

The woman didn’t move or react.

“Yeah,” Rodney grimaced, “That's what I was afraid of,” he waved his hand in front of the woman's eyes, “Freezer burn.”

“It’s been ten thousand years, Rodney” Carson reminded him, “D'you expect her to dance a bloody jig?”

“It's the eyes, Carson, you look at the eyes. The lights are on but nobody's home. Doesn't take a medical professional to know that...” he trailed off as the woman turned to look at him.

“I think she can hear you,” Sha’re shook her head at him before she turned to the woman, “Hello,” she said again, “My name is Sha’re Jackson, can you understand me?”

“It worked,” the old woman breathed.

The group shared a confused look. Daniel mouthed an indignant he didn’t know to Jack’s questioning eyebrow.

“What worked?” Sha’re asked, waving the others back so they didn’t crowd the woman.

The woman gripped Sha’re’s hand, “I’m so sorry, Sha’re. You were right and I only found out too
late.”

Sha’re stared at her, “I do not understand.”

The woman didn’t answer as she fell asleep and Sha’re gently slipped her hand from the woman’s.

“Call me when she is awake again,” Sha’re ordered Carson.

“Better record everything,” Daniel added, “We want to make sure we don’t miss anything she says.”

Carson nodded, “I’ll call you as soon as she’s awake again.”

John sat on his bed in the infirmary bored. He was only staying where he was because Janet had since threatened him with restraints if he didn’t stop pacing her infirmary. He watched them bring in the old woman and caught only half the conversation. Sha’re made a quick visit to his bedside to check on him before she headed to her office to do some work while.

Rodney simply smirked at John as he passed without saying anything and John was once again left sitting alone.

“If you behave yourself for the next twenty four hours,” Janet told him when she passed once the others had vacated the room, “I’ll let you out to rest in your quarters again.”

“What am I supposed to do for a day?” John demanded.

“There are a few books in the cupboard over there;” she smiled, “Read.”

John sighed; he slipped off his bed and walked over to look through the books. He scanned the titles and decided no matter how bored he was he was never, never going to try and wade through War And Peace. Finally he grabbed a Star Trek novel, wondering who had donated this.

As he walked back to his bed he noticed the old woman was awake again.

“Hi,” John said gently as he hit the button to call one of the doctors, “How’re you feeling?”

“Sheppard,” the woman breathed, “It’s good to see you again.”

“Again?” John stared at her, “Do I know you? What’s your name?”

The woman nodded, “My name is Dr Elizabeth Weir.”
Chapter 42

Sha’re walked into the infirmary, secretly relieved to have had the meeting she was in interrupted. Days like these, she just wished she could ignore everyone and everything but unfortunately she couldn’t. As she entered the busy room Janet motioned her over to the cordoned off bed where John was sitting with the woman they’d found in stasis.

“Dr Weir?” Sha’re said as she moved to the bedside of the old woman, “You are Dr Weir?”

The old woman nodded, “Yes.”

“How?” Sha’re breathed in astonishment, “Since she is in our brig.”

The old woman laughed, “I don’t remember that. That’s good.”

“Can you explain to me what happened?” Sha’re took the seat Janet moved over.

“I was a fool,” Weir sighed, “I believed in Carter so much. I believed that I was doing the right thing. I slipped out of my room, drugging the guard assigned to watch me and I managed to find the Stargate address to Atlantis.”

As she paused worry flashed in Sha’re’s eyes but the young woman stayed silent allowing the old woman who claimed to be Elizabeth Weir to continue her story.

“Thor returned me to Earth,” Weir continued, “And I betrayed the location of Atlantis to Carter.”

Sha’re shivered, “What happened then?”

“She brought me along so I could witness what I’d done,” Weir shook her head sadly as tears welled in her eyes, “I watched in horror as the Andurians massacred the people of the city. She killed you as they held your husband back before killing him as he held your body. I...I wish I could get the image out of my head.”

Sha’re dropped her head and took a deep breath at the horrible picture the woman had just given her, “Please continue.”

“I managed to get away,” Weir started talking again after a few moments, “Along with Major Sheppard and a woman, Jeannie we managed to get to a ship. As we tried to get to the mainland to warn them we were shot down. I don’t know how it happened but the next thing I knew I woke up on Atlantis – ten thousand years ago.”

“Then what happened?” Sha’re pushed frowning as the old woman’s eyes closed, “Dr Weir?”

“She’s asleep,” Janet said, resting her hand on Sha’re’s shoulder.

Sha’re nodded, “Call me when she is awake once more.”

“Of course,” Janet assured the younger woman.

Janet watched Sha’re as she left the infirmary looking disturbed before she turned to John who was still sitting quietly in the corner, “You, back to bed.”

John grimaced but didn’t say a word as he slunk back to the infirmary bed that was his home until Janet released him.
Daniel dropped into his seat and started up the Atlantis computers and his own laptop; he glanced down at the bandage on his arm and sighed. He had hoped that they’d be able to persuade both their ‘guests’ that they were telling the truth but unfortunately Weir was just not open to what they were saying. In retrospect Daniel knew the only reason Caldwell had seen the truth was because it was Laura Cadman, an old family friend, who was telling him.

He let out a long sigh, the few extra hours of sleep after what had happened with Weir in the strange lab hadn’t really been restful. Sha’re had fallen asleep quite quickly but she was restless and kept kicking him, usually just when he was falling asleep himself. He took this as her unconscious attempt to continue their discussion about him telling her he was fine in the infirmary.

Since things had quietened down slightly he could return to studying the database, even if he had a list the length of his arm of what he needed to look for. Jeannie kept adding things every time she came across something on the ship that she didn’t have time to look into.

“Hey,” Jack said appearing just as Daniel was getting ready to do some work.

“Hey,” Daniel replied, waiting for his friend to speak rolling his eyes after a few minutes of silence, “What’s up?”

“Just came to see how the arm is,” Jack told him, “That was a pretty nasty cut you got.”

“It’s fine, it’s bandaged, my wife is driving me crazy about it and you’re avoiding something,” Daniel gave his friend a smirk.

Jack rolled his eyes, “Just a training meeting with Ferretti and Jacob.”

“Ah,” Daniel replied, he tilted his head in thought, “I haven’t seen Jacob in few weeks.”

Jack nodded, “He’s been on the mainland helping Bra’tac set up our training camp.”

“Training camp?” Daniel asked with a slight raised eyebrow.

Jack nodded, “Sha’re finally agreed to it last month. Thought she’d tell you.”

Daniel shrugged, “She’s usually so fed up of meetings by the end of the day we go out of our way not to talk about what she’s done. Though you’re right, I’m surprised she didn’t tell me this one.”

“Jack, where are you?” Jacob’s annoyed voice came over the radio.

Daniel smiled at his friend’s groan, “See you later?”

Daniel was finally starting to get some work done when the door to his lab opened and he sighed, it was going to be one of those days.

“Sha’re?” he asked confused to see his wife standing in the doorway looking pale and upset.

He stood to check on her even more confused as she moved and wrapped her arms around his waist burying her face against his chest. Daniel gently rocked her, rubbing her back soothingly. After a while Sha’re pushed back and looked up at him.

“Hey,” he whispered, “What’s wrong?”
Sha’re pushed herself up to kiss him before sighing and cuddling close again, “The old woman woke up.”

“And that upset you?” Daniel asked bemused, as she said nothing Daniel moved them to the seats and sat her down, “Talk to me.”

Sha’re reached out and took his hand, closing her eyes for a moment as he gently stroked her cheek with his free hand, “She is Dr Weir.”

“What?”

“From what she has told us she is the same woman we hold in our brig,” Sha’re told him.

Daniel shook his head in amazement, “I get amazed from that but not upset.”

“She told me that she gave the address for the city to Carter,” Sha’re told him, “That they came here and killed us. That she killed me while you watched and killed you as you held me. I just...”

“Come here,” Daniel murmured, pulling her close to him again.

“I know it was not and is not real,” she whispered, “But just the thought of it...”

Daniel kissed her forehead as she trailed off, “And it won’t happen, we’ll make sure of it.”

Sha’re nodded before she moved into her husband’s lap and kissed him, quite content to stay there all day.

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“So you haven’t made your escape yet?”

John looked up from his book and smiled as Jeannie stood by his bedside, “Hey. What are you doing here?”

“I promised I’d come visit,” Jeannie grabbed a seat and pulled it over; she grabbed the book he was reading and frowned, “Not the type of thing I could see you reading.”

John shrugged, “It was this or War and Peace.”

“Ah,” was all Jeannie said.

“As for the great escape,” John smiled, “Janet is watching and I’m not stupid enough to try anything against her. I’d lose.”

“Well, if you feel you can tear yourself away from your reading material,” Jeannie grinned at his annoyed look, “I have something I need your help with.”

Interest sparked in John’s eyes and he tossed the book he was half-reading to one side, “What do you need?”

“While working on the ship,” Jeannie started.

“Are we ever giving that thing a name?” John interrupted.

Jeannie rolled her eyes, “Considering the suggestions have included Enterprise, Voyager and Galactica I think not yet.”
“I was thinking Orion,” John told her.

Jeannie laughed, “I’ll add it to the list. Anyway as I was saying, looking through the database on the ship I think I may have found the place it was built.”

“What?” John leaned forward, suddenly interested.

“If we can go there then I think it’ll help rebuilding the ship,” Jeannie continued, “John, we might even find more of them there.”

John nodded, “So what do you need me for?”

Jeannie bit her lip for a moment, “I need you to help me work out a way to persuade Sha’re to not only allow a team to go but me too.”

“Oh no,” John told her, “No way. Do you have any idea what Rodney would do to me if I help get you off world?”

“Aren’t you really afraid of my brother?” Jeannie challenged.

John nodded, “When it comes to your safety, yes.”

Jeannie grimaced, “Look, this place will have been deserted for centuries and I know what I’m looking for. Come on, John. You know this is a good idea and I will be petitioning Sha’re anyway. This is my project and no matter what you or my brother think, I’m not some child you can put in her room because you think she might get hurt.”

“I don’t think that,” John defended himself.

Jeannie shook her head, “Yes, you do.”

Before he could say anything else Jeannie stood up and walked out.

“Why are we here?” Jack asked as he perched on the desk in Janet’s office looking around the gathering.

Crowded in the office were Daniel, Sha’re, John, Jeannie, Janet, Jack, Teal’c, Rodney and Laura.

“We’re here because John needs to be in the infirmary,” Janet noted, “And Sha’re wants him at the meeting.”

The others grinned as John grimaced at the doctor but he said nothing, he looked around the room and averted his gaze when he hit Jeannie who glared at him. Thankfully Carson came in at that moment and John was able to turn his attention to the meeting.

“The woman we found in the lab earlier this morning,” Sha’re stated as she absently stroked Daniel’s hand, “She is the same Dr Weir we are holding in the brig.”

“What?” Rodney snapped in astonishment, “But that would mean she travelled in time.”

Sha’re nodded, “That is what she said.

“Is time travel even possible?” Laura asked her boyfriend.
“Well,” Rodney mused, “According to Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity, there’s nothing in the laws of physics to prevent it. Extremely difficult to achieve, mind you,” he glanced at Jeannie who nodded, “You need the technology to manipulate black holes to create wormholes not only through points in space but time.”

“Not to mention a really nice DeLoreian,” John noted with a grin, a chuckle moved round the room though Sha’re just looked confused.

Rodney gave him a disgusted look, “Don’t even get me started on that movie.”

“I liked that movie,” John protested.

“You would,” Rodney retorted.

“Children,” Janet interrupted, “If you’re finished, we’ll get on with this meeting.”

Both men fell into silence and Sha’re started talking again.

“According to her she gave the address of Atlantis to Carter,” Sha’re continued seeing horror in the faces of everyone sitting in the small office, “I need to know if she did find the address.”

“Is it possible for you to even tell?” Laura asked, a frown marring her face.

“Possibly,” Jeannie turned to her brother, “There should be some kind of trail if she accessed anything in the lab.”

“I already checked, “Rodney told them, “There’s no trace of her actually getting into any files. As far as I can tell, she touched the console and the engines activated.”

“Like they were programmed to?” Sha’re asked.

“What are you getting at?” Daniel tilted his head in confusion.

“She said that she did not remember being in the brig,” Sha’re explained, “I think when she was in the past she must have done something to ensure the version of herself here did not get access to the Stargate address.”

Jack nodded thoughtfully, “That makes sense.”

“So, we trust the old woman then?” John noted with a slight frown.

All eyes turned to Sha’re who nodded, “I want to talk to her some more but I feel she is telling us the truth.”

“Then I’ll let you know when she’s awake again,” Janet promised before she shooed everyone out.

Elizabeth paced the small cell she was in; she was getting impatient but knew there was nothing she could do. She turned as the door opened and frowned as Sha’re walked in along with a man pushing a wheelchair carrying a frail looking old woman.

“Dr Weir,” Sha’re said, “There is someone who wishes to speak to you.”

“What kind of trick is this?” Elizabeth demanded, “Let me talk to the old woman and I’ll suddenly think you’re telling the truth?”
Sha’re ignored her and turned to the woman, “We will leave you alone for just now. Carson will be ready the moment you wish to leave. Just touch your radio.”

The old woman nodded waiting until Sha’re and the man left the room, finally she turned to Elizabeth.

“I know you don’t understand,” the old woman said, “But you need to listen to me. Elizabeth, my name is Dr Elizabeth Weir.”

“What?” Elizabeth demanded.

The old woman dropped her head, “You need to listen to me. I know the story I have to tell you is confusing and quite frankly unbelievable but you need to understand that this is the truth.”

Elizabeth continued to stare at the old woman before nodding, “So tell me.”

“So you woke up ten thousand years in the past?” Elizabeth scoffed, “How did you get here?”

The old woman sighed, “I met a man by the name of Janus, he was the one who created the Jumper that could travel in time. Despite the Atlantean council wanting to send me to Earth he helped me. He was the one who made sure when you entered the room you could learn the address for Atlantis it would react against you.”

“Why do you think I’ll believe this?” Elizabeth asked harshly.

“After we set up that,” the old woman ignored the question, “He placed me in stasis and fixed it so they would find me after you were caught. That’s why I’m here, Elizabeth. I’m here to stop you from making the biggest mistake of your life.”

“You can’t be me,” Elizabeth stated, “It’s completely impossible and unless you can prove it then I’ve nothing more to say.”

“Before the accident,” the old woman said softly, “Simon said he wanted to talk to you.”

“So?”

“Your first thought was that you hoped he wasn’t going to propose to you again,” the old woman tilted her head as Elizabeth stared at her in astonishment.

“I was you once,” the old woman continued, “I remember what it felt like to believe in Samantha Carter, how she seemed to be doing the best for Earth but I was wrong and so are you. She’s not helping us, she’s killing us and if you give her any information on the people here then you’ll help her murder the only hope the people of Earth have.”

Elizabeth continued to stare at the woman, she didn’t want to believe any of what she’d been told but in there was enough to make her wonder if maybe she had been doing the right thing.

The old woman looked tired but after she called the doctor to come and take her back to the infirmary she turned to Elizabeth once more, “If these people were truly what she told you then they would have let you die. It would have solved all the problems you brought.”

Elizabeth paced the cell again once the old woman had been taken back to the infirmary, she didn’t
want this to be real. She wanted things to go back to the way they had been where she wasn’t faced with this doubt.

“Hi,” a voice made her turn.

Elizabeth looked at the young woman who stood there for a moment before she recognised her.

“Cassandra Carter?”

Cassie nodded, “Though my real name is Cassandra Frasier. Janet, she’s a doctor here was the one who adopted me.”

“So everything I know about you is also a lie?” Elizabeth asked sarcastically.

Cassie shook her head sadly, “Not all of it. I was found by SG1 on a planet the Gould Nirti destroyed, and they took me back to Earth. Sam stayed with me at all times as they discovered what Nirti did to me. Even when the plan was to abandon the child with the time bomb in her chest somewhere she wouldn’t kill anyone else, Sam stayed with me.”

“This is more like the stories I usually hear,” Elizabeth noted, “So what’s the point of this?”

“Jack, Daniel, Teal’c, Janet they all loved Sam Carter,” Cassie explained, “She was their friend, she was their team-mate and then suddenly she wasn’t. I was adopted by Janet, the CMO of the SGC and one day I was attacked. I woke up in a hospital bed with Sam beside me who told me Janet had hurt me, I was so drugged up I simply repeated the words to the police and my mother was forced to go on the run. When I realised what I’d done Jack managed to contact me and tell me not to make waves, just to stay safe until he came to get me.”

Elizabeth looked at the young woman before her, Cassie was simply staring at her with no hints of pretence and Elizabeth sighed. She’d not wanted it to be true, she’d wanted them to be lying but as she came face to face with the truth Elizabeth found she couldn’t deny it.

She’d been a pawn of the devil and it was time she stopped.
Chapter 43

Jeannie managed to smother the urge to throw something as she sat in the ship trying to work out why she’d ended up with an overprotective big brother and an overprotective kidnapper. Taking several deep breaths she managed to calm down enough to start doing some work again, they were getting close to fixing the ship but she knew that they needed to get to this shipyard and she wanted to be the one to go.

“To hell with them,” she muttered, she’d talk to Sha’re herself and she’d be able to talk the other woman into sending her on the mission whether John and Mer liked it or not.

Jeannie started to pace, she’d probably have to wait until this crisis was over but then again considering how hard it was to get a meeting with Sha’re normally Jeannie decided to book an appointment now.

Shutting down everything Jeannie marched out of the ship and headed up to the control room, Lisa was sitting at her desk working.

“Hey,” Lisa glanced up as Jeanie arrived, “Sha’re’s not here just now.”

“I can see that,” Jeannie smiled, “I was hoping she’d have some free time for an update over the next few days.”

Lisa chewed her lip and started going through the calendar she kept, “There’s some time after lunch tomorrow, if that’s alright but I can’t guarantee she won’t cancel on you with everything that’s going on lately.”

Jeannie nodded, “No problem. Thanks, Lisa.”

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Night started to fall in the city, the days were getting shorter as they moved into the planet’s winter and there was a definite chill filling the air. Janet finished her rounds before she glanced over at the old woman in the corner, she was still sleeping after her visit to see her younger self – there were days Janet wished she hadn’t got involved in the Stargate program, it played hell with your sense of normality.

“Doc,” the man across the room called, “Please, please can I go to my room?”

Janet managed to suppress the smile that threatened her at the pathetic look on his face.

“I trusted you before,” she reminded John with a soft shake of her head, “And you didn’t listen to a word I said.”

John dropped his head back with a groan, “I’ve learned my lesson, Janet. I will stay in my room until you let me out but I can’t stay here any longer.”

Janet gave in and laughed, “Go. But,” her voice stopped him as he jumped off the bed, “If I hear even the rumour that you were anywhere in the city until I come and give you a check-up tomorrow night, you’re back here for the rest of the week. Got it?”

“Yes, Ma’am,” John nodded before he practically ran from the infirmary.
Janet watched him with a smile knowing full well why half the female population would trade places with her whenever she had to do his pre-mission medical check. Turning back to her other patients Janet noticed the older version of Elizabeth Weir was awake once more.

“I wish there was some other way to do this,” Sha’re said as she sat with Steven Caldwell in the commissary, “But now that Dr Weir knows you believe us then it is dangerous to allow you to return to Earth.”

Steven nodded, “I understand but I would be able to do you more good back on earth.”

“Colonel,” Sha’re sighed, “I do not want to be responsible for you being killed. There is no way Carter will leave you alone if she knows you not only agree with us but that you’ve also spent time in Atlantis. Besides we can always use someone with your abilities to help, Jack would be grateful of the help.”

He sighed, “I guess you’re right, Sha’re, I just don’t want to abandon my life on Earth – though I’m guessing that’s exactly what everyone here has already done.”

“Yes,” Sha’re nodded, “Colonel, Atlantis is an incredible place and we have made a home here, you can also. We especially need more pilots.”

“Sha’re,” Janet’s voice interrupted their conversation, “The elder Dr Weir is awake again, you need to get down here – she’s not doing well.”

“We are on our way,” Sha’re said, giving Steven a grateful nod as he helped her to her feet before they started towards the infirmary.

“Ronon,” Sha’re greeted the man lounging against the wall as she and Caldwell turned the corner, “Is there something you need?”

Ronon shook his head and fell into step with them. Sha’re smiled slightly at her silent bodyguard, although she knew Steven was not a threat it made her smile that Ronon cared for her safety.

They reached the infirmary and Janet moved to them, “She’s been asking for you Sha’re.”

Sha’re moved to the bedside of the elder Elizabeth Weir, the old woman was sitting against the pillows looking frail and tired.

“Janet said you wanted to talk to me,” Sha’re said softly.

Weir nodded, “I tried to get her to understand. I hope she comes round, I hope she realises what Carter is before it’s too late.”

“Do not worry about it,” Sha’re told her, “You did what you could.”

Weir sighed, “Can I talk to her again? Just once more.”

Sha’re nodded, “Of course. Janet is sending someone to bring her here.”

“Elizabeth?” Steven said softly, moving to the old woman’s bedside.

Weir smiled as she took his hand, “Steven, it’s so good to see you. I never told you how much your
friendship meant to me, thank you.”

Steven swallowed hard before he squeezed her hand slightly, “It was always a pleasure, except when you beat me at chess.”

Weir chuckled slightly, sighing tiredly after a few moments. She lay back against the pillows conserving her energy waiting for her younger self to arrive. After a few minutes the younger version of Elizabeth Weir arrived flanked by two guards, she moved to the bedside and took the hand of the old woman.

“I’m sorry,” Elizabeth said as she stood beside herself, “I’m sorry and I know now. I know that you were telling me the truth about Carter, and I won’t make the same mistake you did.”

Weir nodded, closing her eyes as a few tears slipped along her cheeks, “Thank you,” she looked up at the small group crowded around her bed before she closed her eyes and sank onto the bed.

Janet moved to her and let out a soft sad sigh, “Time of death...”

Elizabeth stepped away from the bed trying to hold back the tears that were stinging her eyes; she turned and found Steven at her side. She rested her head against his shoulder, taking comfort from her friend who had helped her through Simon’s death just a few weeks before.

Sha’re turned to Elizabeth after a few moments, “She came here to ensure you understood, do you?”

Elizabeth nodded, “I wish I didn’t but I do. Thinking back over the past few years I feel I should have known but...”

“I know what you mean,” Steven threw in.

“Thor shall be returning soon,” Sha’re reminded them, “We shall bury her tomorrow on the mainland. I assume you wish to be there?”

Elizabeth nodded.

“I will allow you to return to the room I assigned you,” Sha’re told her, “But you will be under guard once more. Please do not try to drug this one. Lieutenant Martin is still not feeling well after the tea you gave him.”

The funeral of the elder Dr Elizabeth Weir was quick; she was placed in the ground under some trees in a beautiful spot near a lake. Elizabeth stood feeling chilled as she realised she was at her own funeral.

Steven stood beside her, their guards standing just back slightly from them. Jack O’Neill was there along with Dr Frasier, finally across from her Sha’re stood with Daniel. Sha’re’s pregnancy was more pronounced in the dark dress she wore in mourning. Elizabeth whispered a soft prayer as Jack placed a wooden marker on the spot before she placed a few flowers across the grave.

“Jack will take you back to Atlantis,” Sha’re told Elizabeth and Steven, “I will talk with you tonight before you leave with Thor.”

Without another word she took her husband’s hand and they started away.
Jack turned to Elizabeth Weir seeing a defeated woman in place of the angry defiant one they’d met only a few days ago.

“So,” he said as he fell into step with her and Caldwell, “What are you planning on doing now?”

Elizabeth frowned, sharing a confused look with Steven, “What do you mean?”

“Sha’re’s assuming you want to leave but there’s nothing saying you can’t join us,” Jack replied as they reached the Jumper, “We could use your talents on the council, Doc and Colonel, we need more people to train our teams.”

Elizabeth frowned, thinking over what he’d said, “But we can do more good if we return to Earth and do everything to stop the alliance.”

Jack nodded, “Yeah but no one expects you to put yourselves at risk.”

“Sha’re does,” Elizabeth noted.

Jack chuckled, “I think she’s already worked out what your answer’s going to be to my offer. Is she right?”

Elizabeth shrugged taking a seat, “Yes.”

Steven smiled, “Completely.”

“Then we work out some way to keep in touch with you,” Jack told them, “Because we’ll need to work together to stop her.”

Sha’re smiled as she and Daniel walked back towards the village, this was her first time on the mainland and she wanted to see the community created here. The past few days had been a strain and she had been thinking about all the responsibility that had been thrust upon her.

“You’re awfully quiet,” Daniel teased, pulling her out of her thoughts.

Sha’re smiled as she leaned against him, “I am simply thinking, my love.”

“About?”

Sha’re let out a long sigh, “I think I may need some help running the city.”

“Really?” Daniel smiled, wincing as she elbowed him in the ribs, “You were saying?”

Sha’re gave him an annoyed look, “Our child will be here soon, Dan’iel. I do not want to be rushing about and tiring myself out so much I cannot be with the little one.”

“So, what’s your plan?” Daniel asked.

Sha’re stopped them and they stood under a tree watching the children running around playing happily, “I was thinking of asking Edward to be my deputy. He is smart, dependable and we agree on a great many things.”

Daniel thought of the elder Englishman and nodded in agreement, Edward hadn’t been thrilled at first of being part of the council but he took on a lot of responsibility and Daniel knew his wife valued the man’s opinion.
“Sounds good,” Daniel told her, “Lets you step back a little before ‘junior’ is born,” he slid his hand onto her bump, “He’ll keep you in the loop but take a lot of the menial decisions from you.”

“He reminds me of father sometimes,” Sha’re confided to her husband.

Daniel chuckled, “I can see that. Come on,” he pulled her hand gently, “Let’s go have a look around the village before Jack comes back for us.”

Sha’re moved and kissed him quickly before settling her arm around his waist, snuggling close as his arm draped over her shoulders and they started strolling into the village.

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Jeannie looked from her computer up as a shadow covered her, “Oh, it’s you.”

John frowned at the coldness of her voice.

“So,” Jeannie stopped him from saying anything, “Has Janet allowed you out or should I call her to let her know you’re here?”

“I know you’re mad at me,” John said, pulling a seat over to the lab bench, “But that was low.”

Jeannie’s mouth twitched slightly and John laughed, “You’re smiling.”

“Just at the thought of Janet hauling you back to the infirmary by your ear,” Jeannie retorted.

“I’ve been released from Janet’s tender care,” John grimaced, she was still mad at him.

“So, why are you here?” Jeannie demanded mockingly, “To make sure I don’t cut my finger on my book?”

“Hey, I care what happens to you,” John snapped, “Going to an unexplored planet isn’t exactly the safest thing in the world to do. Yes, you’re more than capable of looking after yourself, Jeannie but you’re not trained.”

“Neither was Meredith,” Jeannie reminded him, “Neither was Daniel when he went to Abydos. Besides I’ve went over the planet’s details and as far as I can tell it’s completely safe.”

“It was,” John argued back, “Ten thousand years ago when those records were made. Anything could have happened since then and we need you here.”

Jeannie sighed, “John, I’m not saying there isn’t the possibility of danger. I’m just saying I’m a big girl and if you come with me then you’ll be there to make sure nothing happens to me.”

John groaned as he looked into her bright blue eyes and knew he’d lost this argument, “Fine. If you can persuade Sha’re to let you go then I’ll come.”

With a grin of triumph Jeannie turned back to her work.

“But if your brother kills me,” he said as he headed out, “I’m blaming you.”

Sha’re frowned thoughtfully as she read over Jeannie’s proposal. The other woman had researched this thoroughly to make sure she had every possible argument covered. However she still stood chewing nervously on her thumbnail as Sha’re read.
“You believe this will be advantageous for your work on repairing the ship?” Sha’re asked, her dark eyes focussed on Jeannie who swallowed nervously. In all the time she’d known the other woman she’d never really seen this side of the Abydonian.

“Completely,” Jeannie replied enthusiastically, “It’ll give me a chance to see how the Ancients worked when they were building it, plus possible spare parts. We might even find another ship.”

Sha’re bit her lower lip for a few moments, “Do you have a team assembled for this?”

Jeannie nodded and handed her the list of scientists she wanted to take with her.

Sha’re quickly scanned the list, “You will need an armed escort, I will speak with Jack about who to send with you.”

“Actually, John’s volunteered to come with me,” Jeannie stated with a slight smile.

Sha’re nodded, “Good. I will add Ronon to the mission as well as the team Jack gives us. When do you think you will be ready to leave?”

“Three days,” Jeannie said with certainty, she’d had this planned from the moment she realised she needed to go to the planet.

“Very well,” Sha’re nodded, “Three days.”

Sha’re looked up as Lisa knocked on the door not long after Jeannie had left, “Yes?”

“Dr Weir is here to see you,” Lisa told her, “And Edward is due in half an hour.”

Sha’re nodded, “Thank you, Lisa. Send Dr Weir in please.”

Lisa smiled and turned motioning the woman standing outside the office in before she headed back to her desk.

“Please,” Sha’re said with a smile, “Take a seat.”

Elizabeth sat in the spare seat and folded her hands in her lap, “I want to apologise again for the trouble I caused. It’s hard to discover someone you believe in is using you.”

“I can understand that,” Sha’re replied, she sighed, “Jack reminded me earlier that you may not wish to return to Earth but stay here. I hope you understand that you are more than welcome to remain in Atlantis. I just assumed...”

Elizabeth chuckled, “I know. To be honest I couldn’t stay. Not when I know I can be of more help pretending I’m still on her side.”

“It is dangerous,” Sha’re reminded her softly.

Elizabeth shrugged, “I have Steven there to protect me. He’s been a good friend to me since we met, and I know he won’t let me do anything stupid.”

“Does he want to return?” Sha’re asked, although she already knew the answer, “We have plenty for him to do.”

Elizabeth stood up and walked around the small office, she looked out across the Gateroom and
control room watching the people working there before she turned back to the young woman sitting watching her.

“We’ve already talked,” Elizabeth said, “We’re going back with Thor and we will do everything we possibly can to help. There is another reason I wanted to talk to you.”

“Which is?”

“The Asgard have been invited to send a delegation to Earth in a few months,” Elizabeth explained, “That could be your chance.”

Sha’re nodded, “Thank you. I will inform you as soon as Thor has arrived. It was a pleasure to meet you, Dr Weir.”

“And you,” Elizabeth smiled back sincerely before she headed out.

Sha’re was alone for about ten minutes before Edward arrived. The elder man with a clipped English accent and a sharp wit that kept council meetings from becoming too dull smiled as he entered the room. He had become very fond of the young woman sitting in front of him and enjoyed working with her. Despite the more unconventional upbringing she’d had, Sha’re had risen above everything that her world had told her was expected of her, and led them with wisdom and gentility, though she could ‘kick ass’ if anyone needed it.

“What do I owe the pleasure of my summons?” Edward asked a twinkle of amusement in his blue eyes.

Sha’re smiled, “I need to ask you a favour.”

“Ask away,” he told her.

Sha’re motioned him to the seat, “Please.”

Taking the seat he frowned slightly, “Is something wrong, Sha’re?”

“Not wrong,” she licked her lips nervously, “As you know I am having a baby.”

“I had noticed,” he smiled, making her smile as well.

“I have been advised by Janet that I need to rest more now and I will want to be able to spend time with my child once born,” she continued, “But I am unwilling to simply abandon the responsibility you have all given me. Therefore I need a deputy, someone to go to meetings and take the day to day decisions while I am otherwise engaged.”

Edward tilted his head in thought for a moment before her words hit home, “You want me to do this?”

Sha’re laughed at his astonished look, “You and I have always found ourselves in agreement over how to run the city. I believe you are the best choice. Please, Edward I am asking you to help me.”

“I should say no,” he sighed theatrically, “Unfortunately I’m a sucker for a pretty face and they don’t come much prettier than yours.”

Sha’re laughed, “I should have you teaching my husband.”
“I doubt he needs my help,” Edward grinned before sobering, “I’m honoured you choose me for this position, Sha’re.”

Relief filled the young woman, “I will speak with Lisa and we will sort out the meetings you can take over from me during the next few weeks.”

He gave her a quick nod before leaving her alone. Sha’re sighed and rested her head on the desk it had been a long day already.

With a deep breath Sha’re started working again, if they were going to defeat Carter the mundane task of running the city had to be done and she had to do it.
“Are you insane?”

Jeannie looked up from her computer, “Hi, Mer.”

“Don’t ‘hi’ me,” he snapped, “You...You...”

Jeannie rolled her eyes she knew that as soon as she left Sha’re’s office that it would only be a matter of time before her brother found out about the mission – it had actually taken longer than she’d expected, “Okay,” she cut him off before he actually managed to get a complete sentence out, “Deep calming breaths. Meredith, I am going on this mission and there is nothing, absolutely nothing you can say or do to stop this.”

Rodney glared at his sister, “Want a bet?”

Jeannie stood and faced him her blue eyes turning grey and icy as she glared at him, “You are not under any circumstances going to stop this. I am the best person to do this, Mer,” she softened her voice and rested her hand on her brother’s arm, “John will be with me, Ronon will be with me. I couldn’t be safer.”

“You could stay,” he noted but without as much bite as before.

Jeannie chuckled, “Sha’re’s only given us two days to go over everything for the moment. I’ll be back by the weekend.”

Rodney looked less than happy but nodded, “Fine.”

Jeannie chuckled as her brother walked away, wondering if she should warn John before deciding against it. He could deal with her brother himself.

Elizabeth stood looking out across the city of Atlantis as the sun set, it was an incredible place and she wished she could stay but Elizabeth knew that the only way they could stop the Andurians was to fight. She had a specific role that could bring down the aliens who had taken over their world and she knew she couldn’t step away from it.

“It’s tempting,” Steven said as he joined her, “Isn’t it?”

Elizabeth gave him a small smile, “Extremely.” She turned to him and shrugged, “But we both know we can’t stay.”

He nodded, “It’ll be fun.”

Elizabeth laughed and shook her head as he stood at her side chuckling with her. They stood together for several minutes before a call came over the city’s comm. for them.

With a small sigh Elizabeth turned and motioned for their guides to head to the Gateroom now that their ride had arrived. As they walked slowly through the corridors, Elizabeth thought about the people in the city, especially the young woman who was in charge. It was strange that despite all the time she’d spent trying to get the treaty with the Asgard she felt more alive, more focussed than she had been in years. Elizabeth suddenly felt truly alive.
“Dr Weir, Colonel Caldwell,” Sha’re greeted them as they entered the Gateroom, as usual her husband stood at one side while O’Neill stood at the other, “Thor is here.”

Elizabeth stepped forward and shook Sha’re’s hand, “Thank you.”

“You are more than welcome to stay here,” Sha’re said once more, “You know that.”

“We do,” Elizabeth smiled, glancing at Steven, “But we both agree we can do more good where we are. Just take care of this place until we can come back.”

“We shall,” Sha’re laughed before she nodded to Jack.

“Thor, our guests are ready to leave,” he said into the Asgard communicator.

The moment he finished the world around Elizabeth and Steven became a bright, white light and Atlantis was left behind.

Jack sighed in relief as their guests left. As good as it was to have them on their side, they had been a hell of a lot of trouble. At his side he saw Sha’re chase her husband away so she could back to work, Daniel kissed her quickly before he left waving quickly to Jack.

As Sha’re headed back to her office Jack followed on and just before they reached it she turned to him.

“Is there a reason you are following me?”

At Sha’re’s question he nodded, “Need to talk to you.”

“About?” Sha’re asked; he could see she knew exactly what he wanted to discuss but wasn’t making it easy or backing down.

He motioned her into the office and for a second she just kept her eyes locked with his before she turned and walked gracefully to her chair. Jack waited until she’d closed the door before he sat across from her.

“Jack, I made my decision,” Sha’re said before he could open his mouth.

“But Jeannie?” Jack demanded, “Jeannie?!!”

“She is more than capable,” Sha’re reminded him, “Not to mention this is her project. Jack, it is not like I am sending her on her own, John and Ronon shall be with her as well as a team you have picked.”

Jack sighed, “Sha’re...”

“Do you think John will allow anything happen to her?” Sha’re challenged, “You know as well as I do he will not. Not to mention Ronon is also protective of her.”

“Didn’t think they even knew each other,” Jack muttered.

“She is Rodney’s sister,” Sha’re replied, “Who is Ronon’s team-mate, as well as friend though neither would admit it. He will protect her so there is no need to argue with me.”

Jack grimaced, “I had to try. Daniel told me it was useless but...”
Sha’re chuckled, “Jack, you have to learn to trust me.”

Jack stood up and squeezed her hand, “I do, honey but...”

“You are still far too used to being in charge,” she finished for him, “Go away, Jack.”

He winked at her before leaving her to work.

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Jeannie stood checking over the equipment she was taking, she glanced up and saw the last of her team entering the Jumper Bay. Now all she was waiting for was John and Ronon so they could get out of here.

Of course her brother also had to show up before they left to remind her for the hundredth time that she was to be careful, he could go instead and some other nonsense she was going to completely ignore.

“So,” John smacked his hands together as he arrived, “Are we ready?”

“Just waiting for you,” Ronon said appearing from behind one of the Jumpers, Jeannie looked over at him amazed since she had no idea he was even in the room.

“Excellent,” John grinned before sighing as Rodney’s voice floated into the room, “I’m getting out of here.”

John ran into his Jumper as Rodney walked into the bay.

“Meredith,” Jeannie cut him off before he said a word, “I’m going, I know what I’m looking for and I will see you in a few days. Okay?”

Rodney rolled his eyes but before he could say a word Laura slapped her hand across her boyfriend’s mouth as she appeared from nowhere.

“We’ll see you in a few days,” Laura told them, “Go before he gets free.”

Jeannie laughed and squeezed her brother’s hand quickly before she joined John and Ronon in the Jumper.

Rodney sighed as he watched the Jumpers leave the bay; he felt Laura wrap her arms around his and rested her head onto his shoulder.

“You okay?”

“I’m fine,” Rodney told her, he tilted his head to the side resting against hers for a few moments before he straightened out and started them out the bay.

“You know Jeannie will be perfectly fine,” Laura reminded him as they walked slowly through the corridors to his lab, “John will look after her.”

“That’s what I’m worried about,” he muttered.

Laura turned to him an amused smile on her lips, “Rodney?”
“What?”

“What?” Laura asked trying hard not to laugh at the look on his face.

“I have something against John and my sister,” Rodney replied sharply frowning as she chuckled.

“You can’t stop anything from happening,” Laura reminded him, “No matter what you think.”

Rodney snorted and headed to his computer, as he started to work Laura slid in between him and the bench. Rodney grimaced at her. Laura kissed him before she gently squeezed his shoulders.

“What is it that annoys you so much?” Laura asked softly.

Rodney frowned at her, “He’s too old for her.”

Laura giggled, “Hate to tell you this, genius but it’s the pretty much the same age difference between us.”

“That’s different,” Rodney protested.

“Really?” Laura raised an amused eyebrow, “Daniel and Sha’re have a good age gap too and you’ve seen them together.”

“It’s not the point,” Rodney retorted.

She hugged him, “It’s cause she’s your sister and she’s not allowed to have a relationship.”

Rodney shrugged, “I don’t want her to get hurt. She loved Caleb so much and I don’t want her to get hurt again.”

“Why do you think he’ll hurt her?” Laura asked softly.

Rodney snorted, “Cause Sheppard has some serious suicidal tendencies and you know it.”

Laura licked her lips, “John lost someone too. We’ve all lost people, Rodney and maybe finding someone we love is how we’ll survive this.”

Rodney sighed and wrapped his arms around her, holding her close.

Jeannie sat just behind John watching the trees fly by. She leaned across his shoulder as the top of the building appeared before them. It had the same look as Atlantis from what she could see of it.

“Where are we landing?” John asked bringing her attention back to him.

Jeannie smiled before looking back at her screen, “There should be a clearing just over there. We should be next to the main entrance there.”

John nodded and guided the Jumper to the ground, landing it softly wincing as he watched Everett in the other Jumper.

“Got to train him more on the landings,” John muttered looking pained.

Jeannie tapped his shoulder, “Come on. Let’s get started, we only have two days.”

John grinned and followed her out as Ronon led them to join the rest of the team. He tried hard to
lose his grin as he watched Jeannie bounce about giving orders and sorting things out as they
prepared to enter the building.

Jeannie walked over to him and elbowed him in the ribs as he stood watching.

“You know you could actually do something to help,” she told him.

“I am,” John replied with a sly grin, “I’m watching the perimeter, so is Ronon to make sure you and
your team are safe.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes, “We’ll be ready to go inside soon. I assume you want to go first.”

“That’s why I’m here,” John reminded her.

“Nice to know you actually have a function here,” she retorted before heading over to one of the
groups as John watched her.

Jeannie gently bit her lip as she entered the code to open the doors, she hoped this worked. The
excitement of her discovery making her almost vibrate. At her side John stood watching an amused
smile on his lips as he watched her as the large doors slowly slid open revealing a corridor that
started to light.

“It worked,” Jeannie cried excitedly, she wrapped her arm around John and hugged him quickly
before she turned to get her equipment.

“Ronon,” John called, “We go first,” he saw Jeannie watching him darkly before he smiled slightly
at her, “Jeannie, you stay with me and no wandering off. Edmonds, we’ll contact you as soon as
we’ve scouted out the place.”

The young man who John had placed in charge straightened slightly with importance before he
nodded.

“Let’s go,” John ordered taking the first steps inside.

Each step he took inside the building brought more lights on, the facility was sensing their presence
and welcoming them.

“Which way?” John asked Jeannie, pulling her attention away from her surroundings.

Jeannie consulted her notes before she started forward, stopping as both John and Ronon grabbed
her by the arm.

“Sorry,” she sighed annoyed motioning them to move.

John stepped forward indicating Ronon to take the rear keeping Jeannie in the middle on them as
they started forward.

“Wow,” Jeannie breathed as they entered a large cavernous room.

“No ship,” John said disappointment filling his voice as he stood at her side.

Jeannie turned to him rolling her eyes, “John, we have a ship. What we need is the spare parts that
are lying around here. Try and focus.”

He turned and smirked at her, “I can be focussed.”

Jeannie elbowed him at the sparkle in John’s eyes before she started looking around for what she needed to find. As she scanned over the room she turned and smacked her head off John’s chest.

“Step back,” she ordered.

“I’m here to protect you,” John reminded her with an amused smirk.

Jeannie glared at him, “Protect me where you won’t get in my way,” John opened his mouth to make a comment but Jeannie cut him off, “Not a word. John, come on we only have a day and a half left to get everything we need so please get serious.”

John gave her a small smile before nodding, “Edmonds, Ronon is coming back for you guys. Leave a team with the Jumpers and bring the rest here so we can get what we came for.”

Jeannie beamed at him before she started working again.

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“So there is no ship?” Sha’re asked as she watched the flicker of the event horizon while sitting in her office.

“No ship,” Jeannie replied, the grin in her voice evident, “But there are spare parts we need and...” she paused and Sha’re saw her husband, Jack and Rodney grin as they waited for Jeannie to finish her sentence, “And there is a database with everything we need. Sha’re, you would not believe it.”

“Can you download it all?” Rodney asked before Sha’re could.

“I’m hoping to get most of it on what we brought,” Jeannie told him, “But we more than likely will need to come back for the rest of it.”

“How long will this take you?” Sha’re absently rubbed her stomach as her child grew restless.

She smiled up as Daniel’s hand rested on hers while they listened to Jeannie let out a long sigh.

“I’m guessing,” she let out a soft hum of thought, “We should be back by the end of the day.”

“Alright,” Sha’re told her, “We will expect you back tonight. And remember, Jeannie you can return so do not overload the Jumper.”

“I promise,” laughter echoed across the open comm. line before Jeannie’s annoyed voice came again, “Shut up, John.”

With that the wormhole snapped shut leaving the four in the room chuckling slightly.

Sha’re turned to the three men, “It is more than we could have hoped for.”

“I was hoping for a second ship,” Jack reminded her, “You know, one for me and one for Sheppard.”

“Go away, Jack,” Sha’re told him.

Jack grinned and he walked out with Rodney leaving the couple alone. Daniel smiled and sat with
his hand on his wife’s stomach, grinning every time he felt the baby kick. Sha’re knew she should chase him away but decided against it and just relaxed with him. There would be plenty to keep them busy soon enough.

“Okay,” Jeannie frowned, “Ronon, go in the other Jumper. That means we can get a few more of the modules.”

“I promised McKay I’d watch you,” Ronon rumbled looking annoyed.

Jeannie frowned at him, “I will be in the Jumper with John for the few minutes it takes to get through the Stargate. I will be fine. Okay?”

Ronon grimaced but nodded, “I leave as soon as you’re in the ship and the hatch is closed.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes and headed to finish organising everything. Ronon stood with John who was watching Jeannie buzz about.

“Is there a reason you aren’t together?” Ronon asked the other man bluntly seeing John jump.

“What?”

“You like her,” Ronon stated, “She likes you. Why not?”

John sighed, “It’s more complicated than that.”

“Why?”

“Ronon, please just leave it,” John told his friend, “Okay?”

Ronon shrugged before he went to help with the final few crates of supplies they were bringing back. Jeannie appeared at his side and grinned. She walked into the Jumper with John and took her seat waiting for the hatch to close; once it was secure she waved at Ronon who entered the second Jumper with a nod.

John started the Jumper lifting it off the ground with ease before he swung round to follow the other Jumper.

“What are you doing?” Jeannie asked.

“I want to get all the equipment through first and we’ll follow,” John told her, “Besides this way I don’t have to watch Everett try to land it.”

Jeannie chuckled and leaned back to enjoy the flight back. As they came close to the Stargate the whole ship jerked.

“What the hell?” Jeannie demanded.

“Turbulence,” John said but didn’t sound convinced.

The ship jerked again more violently and Jeannie let out a cry of shock as it started to fall.

“Hold on,” John called to her as he struggled with the controls.
Jeannie gripped her seat unable to stop the scream that was ripped from her throat as she saw the ground rushing towards them. They were both flung around as the small ship hit the ground and rolled finally stopping only a few feet from the Stargate which winked out leaving them in darkness.

John groaned as he woke up, his leg was broken – he was sure of that.

“Jeannie?” he called, trying to turn so he could see if she was there and safe, “Jeannie, answer me.”

“It’s okay,” her soft voice floated over to him, “I was thrown the other way. I’m fine.”

John sighed in relief grabbing her hand as she appeared at his side, her hair was hastily thrown up out of her streaked face and he could see the worry in her eyes.

“I’ll be fine,” he assured her, “Just a broken leg, I’ve had worse. That bug thing remember?”

“I’d rather not,” she whispered before swallowing hard, “They’ll know something’s happened and will be sending a team back. So just relax.”

John nodded closing his eyes he could hear movement outside the ship.

“The cavalry is here,” Jeannie breathed in his ear, “We’ll be back in Atlantis soon.”

John smiled and squeezed her hand again sighing as his eyes became heavy. He tried to force away unconsciousness but the black pulled him down and the last thing he felt was Jeannie gently kiss his forehead.

John gasped awake crying out as he jerked his broken leg.

“John,” Janet rushed to his side as he realised he was in the infirmary, “John, you’re okay.”

“What happened?” he stared at her, “How did I...how long have...”

Janet rested him back against the pillows, “When the Jumper didn’t return we got together a rescue team. You’ve been back for about four hours. I’m just about to put a cast on your leg.”

John nodded, “What about Jeannie? She looked okay but was she hurt and didn’t tell me?”

Janet’s eyes dropped sadly and John felt his stomach flip in worry.

“Janet?” he breathed, scared of the answer, “What happened to Jeannie?”

Janet took his hand in hers, “She had internal bleeding from the crash, John. She was dead when we found you.”
Sadness permeated the room where the council sat silently for a few minutes in deference to the young woman who had just died. Sha’re finally took a deep breath and started the meeting, however simply sat listening and barely talking. The loss of Jeannie had been such a shock but the matters of running the city couldn’t halt so Sha’re couldn’t acknowledge the pain she was feeling at that moment. Watching the team bring Jeannie’s body back had been heart-wrenching but she hadn’t been able to fall apart and cry as she wanted because she had to make sure that the rest of the people in the city and on the mainland were kept safe.

As the meeting dragged on Sha’re’s mind turned to John wondering if he was awake yet, worrying how he would take the news of what they’d just lost. When she first met John he’d been grieving the loss of his fiancée Meg, he was angry but had taken on Sha’re’s quest to find and free her husband as his own. It had given him focus, a way to channel the grief and Sha’re wasn’t sure there was anything for him to grab onto this time.

“Janet?” John breathed horrified at what he’d just heard, “Tell me, tell me I heard you wrong.”

Janet rested her hand on his shoulder and shook her head, “I’m sorry, John. There was nothing anyone could have done.”

John moved to stand up but Janet pushed him back onto the bed, in his weakened state he had no way to fight against her and he ended up back against the pillows.

“Sit still until I’ve finished,” Janet told him, sternly but with concern in her voice.

He did as he was told waiting impatiently until Janet had put the cast on his leg so he could see Jeannie because until he saw then he wouldn’t believe she was gone. Once the cast had set Janet grimly handed him a pair of crutches. John having had plenty of experience using crutches easily lifted himself off the bed and hobbled slowly towards the morgue where Jeannie’s body lay.

John swallowed hard as he moved closer, not wanting to see what was behind the door but needing to. He could feel Janet behind him but didn’t look back as he stood beside the gurney covered in a white sheet.

“John,” Janet said softly but as he held up his hand she fell into silence.

Slowly John drew the sheet back to reveal the cold still face of Jeannie, her eyes closed - she looked as though she was merely sleeping. He frowned as he saw a small scar along her cheek he hadn’t noticed on the Jumper.

“I’m sorry,” he whispered, “Oh God, Jeannie I am so sorry,” he leaned closer and softly kissed her forehead before he gently rested his forehead against hers for a moment trying to get a hold of his emotions.

As he stood properly he felt someone move behind him, assuming it was Janet he let out a long sigh.

“This is my fault,” John breathed sadly.

“You’re damn right about that,” Rodney snarled from behind him.
Rodney sat in his room staring blankly at the wall. Laura sat at his side not sure what to do for him as he’d simply shut down after he saw his sister’s body brought through the Stargate. Laura gently stroked his arm, her head resting against his shoulder in the hopes that she could comfort him in some small way.

Suddenly he stood ripping himself away from Laura’s comfort, “I need to see her.”

“Rodney,” Laura whispered sadly, sighing as he started out the room.

He stalked through the halls determined to get to the infirmary barely aware that Laura was with him, his pain at losing Jeannie overwhelming. As they reached the infirmary Rodney headed to where his baby sister lay only to find John standing there.

“This is my fault,” John said.

Rodney’s fists clenched in anger, “You’re damn right about that.”

John turned, his face already pale from his injury paled further at seeing his friend standing there with ice in his blue eyes, Laura at his side looking worried and sad.

“You were supposed to protect her,” Rodney snapped, shrugging away Laura as she tried to pull him back, “You told me, you told me that she’d be safe with you that nothing would happen to her.”

“Rodney,” Laura tried to pull him back but Rodney wasn’t budging.

“Jeannie would still be here if it wasn’t for you,” Rodney was shaking with anger, he pointed at John his finger pushed against the other man’s chest, “I will never forgive you.”

With that said Rodney spun and stalked away. Laura closed her eyes sadly before looking over at John.

“He doesn’t mean that, John,” Laura said softly, “He’s just upset.”

John turned back to the still form of Jeannie again, “He’s right. This is my fault. She’s dead because of me.”

*********************************************

It was a cold day when they laid Jeannie to rest. The funeral was attended by many of the scientists, the Athosians as well as the ‘family’.

Rodney stood holding Laura’s hand in his, the only thing that meant he was holding it together; Teyla and Ronon stood at his other side close but not too close. Beside them Sha’re stood with Daniel’s arm wrapped around her waist. Jack, Janet, Teal’c, Carson, Ferretti and Cassie stood on the other side of the grave watching as they lowered the hastily made coffin into the ground. Near them stood Jacob, Bra’tac and many of the Athosians Jeannie had become friendly with when she’d been in charge of the scientists on the mainland.

John stood further back gripping his crutches wanting this to be nothing more than a bad dream, hating that he was once more burying a woman he loved.

Rodney had been so quiet since he’d exploded at John in the infirmary. He barely spoke even to Laura which anyone who knew Rodney McKay would find a complete impossibility. He’d been
nowhere near the labs in days since Jeannie had died, not caring what was happening there and Laura found herself keeping several of the scientists away from him as they came to ask for his help.

Once the funeral had ended Rodney drifted away from the crowd, taking Laura along as she was still holding his hand. His eyes locked on John for a second before he steadfastly ignored the other man. Finally he reached a cliff overlooking the sea and dropped to sit.

“She’s gone,” he whispered as Laura sat at his side, “I tried to make sure nothing would happen to her and...”

“Rodney,” Laura forced back the tears that threatened her at the anguish in his voice. She wrapped him in her arms feeling his body shake as he burrowed against her looking for comfort, “You know I’m here for you. I’m always here for you.”

“I know,” Rodney breathed deeply, “I know.”

“John,” Sha’re caught his arm as he leaned tiredly against the Jumper, “You need to rest.”

“I’m fine,” he replied coldly.

“Do not treat me as though I am not your friend,” Sha’re scolded him making him drop his head, “We have been family for many years so do not dare dismiss me like that.”

John sighed, “Sha’re, please just leave me alone.”

“This was not your fault,” Sha’re told him, “I know you feel it was but it was nothing more than an accident, a horrible stupid accident that no one could have predicted.”

“I should have...”

“John, I approved the mission,” Sha’re reminded him, sadness in her eyes, “And do not think I do not blame myself for what happened to Jeannie. But I know there was no way I could have predicted this.”

“I can’t do this again,” John breathed sadly, “Sha’re, I can’t...I can’t...”

Sha’re took his hand in hers, “I wish I knew the words to make you feel better, John. I know you are grieving someone you love but we need you. You are an important part of trying to free Earth from the Andurians.”

John shook his head, “I’m so tired of this, Sha’re. I just want it to stop for a while.”

“We all do,” Sha’re reminded him, “We all do.”

Daniel and Jack walked slowly through the small village, the Athosians had set out food and drink in one of the small rooms in a strange kind of wake. Both men noticed how quiet the place was, people barely talked as they worked.

“We’ve lost three people,” Jack sighed as they walked around the village, “In one fell swoop.”

Daniel frowned at him, “What?”
“Jeannie,” Jack said her name softly with regret, “Rodney is useless just now and John...I have no idea if he’ll get over losing her.”

Daniel didn’t say anything, knowing that both of them knew the feeling well and only Daniel had been lucky enough to get the woman he loved back.

“What about the database?” Jack asked bringing Daniel back out of his thoughts.

“It’s huge,” Daniel shrugged, “It’ll take me a long time to go through everything,” he let out a small laugh, “Probably the rest of my life.”

“We don’t exactly have that,” Jack told him; he shoved his hands in his pockets to heat them up slightly, “You need help.”

“True,” Daniel tilted his head thoughtfully, “But from whom?”

Jack rolled his eyes, “Before we left Earth Sha’re gathered info on everyone coming with us to Atlantis. There should be a few people in there you can train. In fact considering the baby is due pretty soon you should be thinking about having a staff.”

Daniel nodded, “I’ll talk to Sha’re about it,” he sighed looking over to where the woman he had married was trying to comfort her friend, “Once she can think about something other than today.”

“She has to as soon as we leave here,” Jack told his friend, “I know it sounds cold, Daniel but we have more people to think about who are alive and need our help.”

John wanted to fly.

He wanted to take the Jumper and fly as far out into space as possible in the hopes that the pain would stop.

But Sha’re refused to let John pilot while his leg was in a cast and despite knowing he could do it anyway for some reason she had the power to stop him. When he’d lost Meg, he’d promised himself he would never feel this way ever again and for a few years it was fine. He made friends, got along with almost everyone in the base but he’d never exposed his heart again the way he had with Meg. And then Jeannie had appeared, okay he’d kidnapped her but that wasn’t the point. He felt guilty about being the one to take her away from her life and tried to help by befriending her. He hadn’t expected for her to slip into his heart the way she had and as much as he tried to deny it there were times his feelings for her slipped through the wall he’d built to protect himself.

The kiss the night of the storm had been something he’d regretted instantly, she’d assumed he wasn’t ready for a new relationship and she was right but not for the reasons she thought. John didn’t want to feel the way he’d felt when Meg had died, trapped in a grey world where all he felt was a mixture of anger, guilt and exhaustion. Unfortunately even though he’d tried to stop any sort of romantic relationship developing between them, he was trapped here again.

*************************************************************************

The next few weeks passed slowly.

Rodney finally returned to the labs, though almost everyone who worked there wished he hadn’t as he criticised every little thing and treated them all as though they knew nothing. Radek returned to the city for a few days to try and help but had to return to the mainland when a few problems
Sha’re, now eight months pregnant, had stepped away from being on the council full time, instead working only a few hours a day on important projects that couldn’t spare her. SG1 had split for the moment; Daniel spent most of his time studying the databases from the city and the shipyard while trying to keep in line his new students, Laura was helping with training the recruits in the city while Jack and Teal’c were training new teams in off-world exploration. Things settled down once more.

“Does anyone have any questions for Mrs Jackson?” Cassie asked her class with a smile, several hands shot up, “Kay, what’s your question?”

“Do you miss your home?” the little girl with long blonde pigtails asked.

Sha’re smiled from her seat at the front of the class, “Yes, sometimes I miss my home and my father. But I love being here in Atlantis with Dan’iel and the others who have become my family.”

“Adam,” Cassie nodded to the boy in the front who’d spent most of the talk chewing on his thumb knuckle.

“Why did your people think a Gould was a God?” Adam asked.

“You must remember that my people had no knowledge of technology,” Sha’re explained, “Not the same way you do.”

“How?”

Sha’re laughed, “You must recall that my people were taken from Earth long ago before all the televisions, telephones, computers existed and Ra ensured that we never managed to create these things ourselves by forbidding reading and writing.”

“You mean you never got to read?” a horrified little girl said as she hugged her copy of Harry Potter.

“Well,” Sha’re leaned forward conspiratorially, “It was forbidden but there were a few who secretly wrote the history of our people in a cave and the secret was passed down the generations until...”

“Until Dr Jackson and Colonel O’Neill arrived,” a boy called Mike cried jumping up and down excitedly.

“Yes.”

“Is that when you fell in love with Dr Jackson,” Kay smiled at her.

Sha’re looked fondly at the children in front of her, “I was afraid at first because he wore the symbol of Ra and we thought Ra had sent him. My father charged me with looking after the stranger wearing the mark of Ra.” Sha’re could see Cassie laughing and fought the urge to toss the cushion she was sitting on at the younger woman, “Dan’iel tried to communicate with me by using drawings but I was not allowed to look at those.”

All the small faces in front of her frowned a little confused and finally one hand was stuck up into the air.

“Yes, Amanda?” Cassie invited her to ask her question.

“Then if you weren’t allowed to look,” Amanda frowned slightly, “How did you
“I looked,” Sha’re whispered making them giggle, “Because I was one of the people shown the secret cave. My mother showed it to me when I was no older than you are now. So I showed Dan’iel and we learned to speak to one another there.”

“And you fell in love?” Kay asked again.

“Yes, we fell in love,” Sha’re smiled, knowing the simplified version of the story was best, “Thanks to Dan’iel’s ability to speak Abydonian he managed to persuade my people to fight for their freedom.”

Cassie smiled as Sha’re stopped speaking, “That’s all the time we have for today, everyone. So can we all thank Mrs Jackson for coming and telling us all about her home?”

The class applauded for a few moments before Cassie stopped them, “Alright, everyone has their homework?”

At the nods she turned to the door and allowed the parents waiting outside in to collect their children.

“Thanks for doing this,” Cassie said as she walked Sha’re through the corridors, “They were enthralled.”

“It was my pleasure,” Sha’re told her, nodding hello to those who passed them, “They were a wonderful group. They all adore you.”

“Well until I double their homework they do,” Cassie chuckled.

Sha’re yawned, smiling at Cassie, “Excuse me; I seem to tire very easily these days.”

“I think you have an excuse,” Cassie reminded her, “Come on, I’m meeting Mom for dinner. Do you want to join us?”

“Thank you but I am meeting Dan’iel,” Sha’re replied, “I shall walk you to the mess though.”

Cassie nodded and they continued on.

“How are you doing,” Sha’re approached the subject, “Learning how to use your gifts?”

Cassie turned surprised, “How did you...”

Sha’re gave a small shrug, “Jack told Dan’iel and Dan’iel...he is not very good at keeping secrets from me.”

Cassie laughed, “I should have known that. It’s hard. Trying to do this when no one else can and can’t help me with makes it more complicated.”

“I am sure you are doing the best you can,” Sha’re smiled at the young woman.

Cassie smiled back thinking to the day she’d first met Sha’re and how awed she’d been to meet the woman.
Cassie bounced as Jack opened the door to her and Janet.

“Hey,” Jack grinned as the teenager launched herself into his arms, “Oh, it’s good to see you, kiddo.”

“You too, Uncle Jack,” Cassie hugged him tightly, “Is it true?”

“Is what true?” Jack asked innocently as he dropped her onto the couch.

Cassie rolled her eyes making Janet laugh, “Is Sha’re really here? Did Uncle Daniel finally find her?”

Jack nodded, “Yeah.”

“That’s fantastic,” Cassie cried, “And they’re coming here tonight?”

“Yes,” Janet sighed exasperated, “Cassie, I told you this at least three times today.”

“I’m sorry,” the teenager told them, “I’m just...I just know how much he’s missed her and I want to meet her because Daniel loves her so much.”

Jack sat down beside the girl they’d rescued and all loved giving her a tight hug, “They’ll be here soon.”

About an hour later as Cassie had become fascinated in the film she was watching, the sound of a car made her look up. From the moment Cassie had heard that Sha’re had been rescued she’d been anxious to meet the woman her uncle loved.

First of all she was extremely curious about Sha’re, she’d heard a few stories but Daniel didn’t talk about her much. Secondly though, Cassie wanted Sha’re to like her so that Sha’re wouldn’t want to take Daniel away from Earth.

As soon as the door opened Cassie ran to hug Daniel, seeing the red mark on his forehead that looked extremely painful as Daniel grabbed her in a tight embrace. Daniel gently kissed the top of her head when he let her go and turned to the woman at his side.

“Cassie,” Daniel smiled as he slipped his arm around his wife’s waist, “This is Sha’re. Honey, this is Cassie. She’s Janet’s daughter.”

“It is wonderful to meet you,” Sha’re smiled at Cassie who couldn’t help but grin back, “Dan’iel has said that you are also not from Earth. I hope when we return you shall be willing to teach me all you have learned of this world.”

Cassie beamed, “Sure. Where are you going?”

“We’re going back to Abydos,” Daniel explained before assuring her, “Just for a little while so Sha’re can spend time with her family.”

“But you will be back,” Cassie said intently.

Sha’re nodded, “I promise we will back.”
As they reached the mess where Janet and Daniel met them Cassie smiled to herself. Although it wasn’t exactly how she’d imagined it Sha’re had kept her promise, she and Daniel had returned. Cassie thought about how much she didn’t want to lose her family back then and knew she hadn’t. It had just changed and although one member of her family had turned on them all Cassie knew she could still count on the rest of her family to be there for her. As she took her seat with the people she loved Cassie spotted the lone figure limp away from the crowded room.

Cassie wondered if there was some way the people she loved as her family could help John Sheppard come back from the sad world he was living in. Daniel asked her something pulling her back to the conversation and for the moment John’s sadness slipped from her mind.
“Come on,” Rodney murmured under his breath as the order to start the ships engines filtered from the control room to the ship, “Come on.”

The whole control room held their breath as they waited. After several minutes the small screen in front of Rodney lit up green and he sighed.

“Yes,” he looked over to his waiting crowd, “The engines are working. We have a flyable ship.”

The room erupted into applause and cheers, Rodney glanced over to just outside the door of Sha’re’s office where Laura was standing. She smiled proudly at him making him give a very soft smile back. It had taken them months to get the ship into something resembling working order and finally they’d managed it. Sha’re had decided to name the ship ‘Jeannie’s Star’ but only after she’d had Rodney’s agreement, not wanting to upset him in any way.

“Congratulations,” Sha’re waddled over to Rodney, “You have done excellent work. All of you.”

Rodney nodded to her, “Well the Star is still a long way from being ready to go against the Andurians but we’ve made a good start.”

“A very good start,” Sha’re agreed still smiling.

Rodney turned to everyone, “We still have a lot of work people,” as they stood he rolled his eyes, “I mean now.”

Everyone started rushing around and Sha’re chuckled slightly at how they all ran at his command.

Rodney walked with Sha’re into her office, he paused to make sure Laura would meet him for lunch before escorting his friend so she could sit down.

“You did well,” she said again, “Everyone is now more hopeful we can win against the Andurians,” she paused and looked at him, “How are you?”

Rodney shrugged, “I’m fine. I wanted to thank you though. The name of the ship...” he trailed off.

“Laura told you to say that,” Sha’re chuckled slightly.

“No,” he frowned at her, “But it does sound like she’d have told me to say it. Guess she’s rubbing off on me.”

“I miss her too,” Sha’re whispered sadly, “We all do,” at the sadness in his eyes Sha’re pressed on, “Especially John.”

Rodney stiffened at the name.

“It was not his fault,” Sha’re continued, “It was an accident, Rodney. A horrible, stupid accident and it was not his fault. You have to forgive him, Rodney because he is not going to forgive himself.”

“I...”

“Sit down,” Sha’re motioned him to the seat beside her, as he sank into the seat Sha’re took his hand.
She hesitated for a moment before resting his hand on her large stomach.

“What are you doing?” Rodney asked.

“Just wait,” she replied softly, smiling when he gave a soft cry of shock as the baby kicked, “You felt that?”

Rodney nodded, a little stunned.

“That is my baby, Rodney,” Sha’re said, “A reminder that life goes on. I have lost two children but I have not given up on being a mother.”

He frowned at her for a few seconds before sighing, “You’re about as subtle as a truck – you know that?”

“Dan’iel has mentioned it once or twice,” Sha’re replied.

Laura wrapped her arms around Rodney as he entered their room to join her for lunch giving him a quick kiss.

“I’m so proud of you,” she told him.

“Jeannie did most of the work,” Rodney sighed, resting his forehead against hers, “Jeannie’s Star, it’s the perfect name.”

“Come on,” Laura took his hand and pulled him to where she’d set out lunch for them.

They sat leaning against the wall so they could look out through the doors to the balcony, even if it was raining and looked totally grey.

“Sha’re wants me to talk to Sheppard,” Rodney said after a while.

“Sh’s right,” Laura replied, she took a piece of apple (or what they were calling an apple) studying his reaction to her words.

Rodney turned to her, “I can’t help it. I blame him.”

Laura brushed her hand against his cheek, “I know but it wasn’t John’s fault. I wish...I know...” Laura trailed off with a sigh, “Rodney, I loved Jeannie like a sister. I want her back too but I also know that there was nothing any of us could have done.”

Rodney pulled away from her, he stood and started to pace the room, “I need to blame someone, Laura,” he cried, “I need someone who I can look at and say it’s their fault my sister, my baby sister is gone.”

Laura moved quickly and wrapped him in her arms once more, feeling him rest his head against her shoulder.

“I love you,” Rodney whispered to her.

Laura smiled as he looked into her eyes, “I love you too.”

“Then marry me.”
Daniel winced as someone poked him in the ribs in the middle of the night. He tried to push them away when he heard a cry of pain beside him.

“Sha’re?” he bolted up in bed to find his wife gripping the pillow with a look of pain covering her face, “Honey, what’s wrong?”

“The baby is coming,” Sha’re told him as her contraction finished, “It is time to go to the infirmary.”

“Are you sure? You’re not due for another two weeks,” Daniel demanded worriedly.

Sha’re nodded, “I have been through this once before, my husband. Call Janet, she promised me she would deliver the baby.”

Daniel jumped out of bed and dressed quickly; stopping to hold Sha’re’s hand during her contractions amazed by how calm she was while he was a nervous wreck.

“Janet,” Daniel called as they started walking towards the infirmary, “Sorry if I’m waking you.”

“I’m on the night shift,” Janet laughed, “What’s wrong?”

“It’s...well...”

“The baby is coming,” Sha’re took over for him rolling her eyes at her husband’s sudden inability to talk, “We are on our way.”

Janet’s chuckle made Daniel frown but he quickly forgot that as Sha’re grabbed his hand again.

Sha’re sighed in relief as she was able to relax for a moment, Daniel gently mopped her brow before kissing her.

“It’s almost over,” he soothed, “And we’ll have our baby.”

“I get to hold my baby this time,” Sha’re cried, “Dan’iel, I get my baby this time?”

Daniel moved so he was sitting behind her letting her lean back against his chest, “You get your baby. I promise.”

“Okay, Sha’re,” Janet told her, “Are you ready to push?”

Sha’re nodded, she smiled as Daniel slid his hands into hers gripping them as her next contraction hit.

“Okay, Sha’re push,” Janet encouraged.

Daniel held onto her as she pushed bringing their child into the world, whispering how incredible she was, how much he loved her and all the encouragement he could. Finally Sha’re collapsed back against her husband completely exhausted just as a shrill cry was heard throughout the room.

“Congratulations,” Janet beamed at the couple as the nurse on duty wrapped the newborn in a clean blanket, “You have a beautiful baby boy.”
Daniel slid out from behind his wife, resting her back against the pillows and kissing her before he moved to where Janet was doing all the checks she needed to do. The doctor placed the child into his father’s waiting arms smiling as Daniel gently drew his finger along the baby’s cheek.

“Shh,” Daniel soothed his son who continued to cry while he walked over to Sha’re, he placed the little boy into his wife’s waiting arms watching the joy fill her, “Here’s our son.”

Tears filled Sha’re’s eyes as she held her son, the boy let out a few more snuffles before he settled down. Sha’re moved the blanket away so she could look at his tiny fingers and toes. Sniffing back her tears Sha’re looked up at her husband.

“He is perfect,” she whispered as she rewrapped her son so he didn’t get cold.

“Yes, he is,” Daniel replied as he pulled a chair across to sit at their side, “So, we need a name for this little guy. Any ideas?”

“It is a tradition in my mother’s tribe that the firstborn son is always called after his grandfathers,” Sha’re told him, “I know it probably sounds silly.”

“It’s a wonderful idea, though it’s apparently not a tradition for just your family. I’m named after my grandfathers - remember,” Daniel replied smiling, “So Kasuf Melbourne, or Melbourne Kasuf?”

“The name of the father’s father is first,” Sha’re told him before looking down at her son, “Melbourne Kasuf Jackson,” she named him officially.

“How about we call him Mel?” Daniel suggested, “Cause that’s an awfully long name for a little guy.”

Sha’re pressed a kiss to her son’s forehead, “Mel is perfect.”

Sha’re was finally getting some sleep after feeding her new son who, Janet noted, ate like a champ. But Daniel couldn’t go back to sleep, he just wasn’t feeling tired so he stood watching his new son sleep happily in the hastily put together nursery.

“You should get some sleep,” Janet said as she appeared at his side, “You look tired.”

Daniel turned to her, the smile still present on his lips from the moment he’d held his son, “I can’t sleep, I don’t want to stop looking at him.”

Janet rested her head against his arm as she looked down at the little boy; Mel wrinkled his nose in his sleep before settling down again.

“He’s adorable,” Janet told her friend, “I’ll pull over a seat for you. If you’re going to watch him I’d rather you didn’t fall flat on your face.”

Daniel smiled at her before he returned to watching his baby boy.

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News of the first baby born on Atlantis spread quickly, Janet instantly ensured that only certain people were allowed in to see the couple and their child so she didn’t have a parade of well-wishers trampling through her infirmary.

In the private room Jack was holding the little boy making faces at the child, Daniel and Sha’re sat
watching him as Cassie leaned over Jack’s arm to coo at the baby and Teal’c leaned over his shoulder.

“You know,” Jack glanced up at his friends, “It’s amazing how much he looks like Skaara.”

“Ya think?” Daniel asked moving to his friend’s side. He looked down at his son’s face, “I think he looks more like Sha’re.”

Mel suddenly sneezed and Jack chuckled as the boy’s face wrinkled as he snuggled down again, “Actually there he looked exactly like you, Daniel.”

“Indeed,” Teal’c chuckled, “That is Daniel Jackson’s ‘thinking deep thoughts expression’.”

A gentle knock made them turn to where Laura and Rodney were looking in.

“Is it safe?” Laura asked with a grin before she let out a sigh when she saw little Mel, “Oh, he’s gorgeous.”

Sha’re smiled with pride accepting the hug from her friend, squeezing Rodney’s hand as he kissed her cheek.

“Give him here,” Laura ordered Jack, “I want a cuddle.”

As Jack passed the baby over to her, Laura turned to Rodney with a wistful smile.

“Yeah, one thing at a time,” he shot at her as he took a seat.

“What does that mean?” Sha’re asked, picking up on that there was something unspoken between them.

“Well, we didn’t want to say anything just now,” Laura told them, “But we’re engaged.”

Sha’re let out a cry of excitement and motioned her friends over to her, she hugged Rodney quickly as Laura handed Mel to his father before she moved to Sha’re.

Sha’re sat leaning against the pillows with her son resting against her, Daniel sat at her side just watching them. Fed and changed Mel was sleeping happily in his mother’s warm embrace.

“Can I come in?” John’s voice made them turn.

“John,” Sha’re smiled at him, “Please. How are you?”

John walked to her side; Jacob had been persuaded to use the healing device on his leg the week before so that they had him fit once more. He’d spent the past few weeks on the mainland working with Jacob and Bra’tac in their training camp.

“I’m okay,” he shrugged, “I just wanted to meet the newest member of the city.”

Sha’re nodded and passed her son to John who smiled down at the baby, “He’s cute.”

“Of course he’s cute,” Daniel said with mock indignation, “Have you seen his mother?”

John chuckled before he returned the baby back to his mother, “What’s his name?”
“Mel,” Daniel answered, as his son grabbed his finger.

“Congratulations, you two,” John told them sincerely, “I should go.”

Sha’re motioned Daniel to give her a moment with John, he nodded and disappeared leaving John standing trying not to look Sha’re in the eye. After a moment Sha’re let out an annoyed sigh.

“Sit,” she ordered, pointing to the seat beside her.

For some unknown reason to him he did as she told him unable to defy her. With her son in her arms Sha’re stared at him, “Now, the truth this time. How are you?”

John dropped his eyes unable to stay trapped in her gaze, “I’m working on it, Sha’re. I’m working on it.”

“Then come back to the city,” she replied, absently rocking her son as he became restless, “Stop hiding away on the mainland.”

“Rodney...” he started.

“Rodney was hurting,” Sha’re reminded her friend, “He needed someone to blame. You two need to work together, John. We have the ship almost working as well as the upgrades on the Jumpers and Jack cannot take time away from his other duties to be the test pilot. That is your job, so get back here.”

“Sha’re,” John started.

“You know I am going to win this, John,” Sha’re told him, “So, considering I had a baby less than twenty four hours ago can we forgo you trying to fight me and just do as I’ve told you now instead of later.”

John sighed, nodding his assent and wondered if Daniel ever won an argument against her.

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Elizabeth took a deep breath as she knocked on the door to Sam’s office, she had managed to avoid seeing the other woman for the past few weeks with the excuse of visiting her family but unfortunately vacation time was over and it was back to work.

“Dr Weir,” Sam gave a warm inviting smile as Elizabeth entered the office, “I hope your vacation was enjoyable.”

“It was,” Elizabeth gave a small smile back, “But as usual it can’t last forever. So what have I come back to?”

“I’m afraid I’m sending you out again to the Asgard,” Sam told her, “Colonel Caldwell will, as always, be your companion for the trip. I need you to work out the final details of their visit to Earth.”

“Of course,” Elizabeth nodded; she hoped that once at the rendezvous site Thor would take them to Atlantis once more so she could update them on the situation.

“However,” Sam said cutting into Elizabeth’s thoughts, “There is someone else coming with you this time.”

Why? jumped into Elizabeth’s mind instantly but instead she tilted her head slightly, “Who is it?”
“His name is Patrick Sheppard,” Sam told Elizabeth, she passed a file to the other woman, “His company works closely with us here and I feel that for the Asgard visit to earth I would prefer that he meets them face to face so that any arrangements they need can be met.”

Elizabeth glanced over the file wondering at the name Sheppard, could he be a relation to John or was it just an enormous coincidence? This could either be a huge help or a huge problem and Elizabeth had no idea how they’d work it out.

“Sam,” Elizabeth started at a small detail that caught her eye, “Do you think he should be coming with us considering his medical condition?”

Sam nodded, “Patrick is more than healthy. Besides I know the Asgard, they’re in a better position to help him if anything were to happen.”

“Then I look forward to meeting him,” Elizabeth told her, wondering how they were going to deal with this.

“It’s not like I can tell her we can’t take him with us because we’re going to see the people who want to get rid of the Andurians,” Elizabeth reminded an annoyed Steven.

“Looks like we’re not going to be able to update them on the latest,” Steven murmured before straightening and saluting Sam as she walked over to them.

“Good morning,” she smiled at them, “Are you both ready to head out?”

Elizabeth nodded, “I have a stack of books to read while they keep us waiting as always. I believe Steven had brought several Sudoku books.”

“Well once Patrick is here we’ll dial up the meeting site,” Sam told them.

Elizabeth nodded, smiling slightly as an older man walked over to them. He was tall with silver hair that seemed to stick out despite the attempts to smooth it down and as he gave a wry smile Elizabeth knew she was looking at the father of the cocky pilot John Sheppard.

“Sorry I’m late,” Patrick apologised, “Had to outmanoeuvre my son David. I thought I was going to have to sneak out in garbage truck.”

Sam chuckled and turned to start the Stargate dialling, as she turned away Elizabeth caught the unconscious grimace on his face. He was not a fan of the Andurians, this was the sign she needed to know that if they ended up in Atlantis he wouldn’t be a problem.

“You have everything you need,” Sam told them as the Stargate opened, “I’ll see you in three months.”

Elizabeth nodded and turned aware of Steven at her side and Patrick following on as they headed through the Stargate to the rendezvous.

The moment they stepped onto the planet the Asgard beam took them onboard the ship. Elizabeth turned to see Patrick standing staring at the small grey alien.

“Hello again, Dr Weir,” Thor said nodding his head slightly, “I have spoken with the council. They
are expecting you in four weeks which will give us enough time to return to Atlantis.”

“Atlantis?” Patrick asked looking completely confused.

Thor suddenly realising there was a third member of the party tilted his head, “And this is?”

Elizabeth sighed, “This is Patrick Sheppard, he’s joining us.”

“Alright,” Patrick interrupted, “I want to know what’s going on.”

“Mr Sheppard,” Steven started, turning to Elizabeth to see if she could finish that sentence.

Elizabeth shook her head slightly frowning as she tried to think of an answer to that question.

“One of you,” Patrick snapped glaring at them, “Better come up with an answer and soon.”

Elizabeth let out an annoyed sigh and said the one thing that she hoped would get his attention, “We’re going to see your son John.”
“He is so cute,” Caroline gushed as she and the rest of the council huddled round Sha’ré and Mel. The little boy watched placidly as everyone cooed over him, he just lay back ignoring all the attention happy as long as he was fed, clean and held by either of his parents.

“Alright everyone,” Edward broke up the admiring of the baby, “We have a meeting remember.”

Sha’ré laughed, murmuring soothingly to her baby boy as she rested him in the small cot sitting in the corner of the room. Mel sneezed before he snuggled into his bed, made for him by Siler, and went to sleep. Sha’ré took her seat at the conference table so she could catch up on what she’d missed over the past few days.

Mel was now four days old and although Janet wanted Sha’ré to take some more time off Sha’ré knew she needed to get back to work. However Mel was an extremely placid baby, as Jack noted, if the kid was any more laid back he’d be asleep with his eyes open, so Sha’ré had no problems taking him with her to meetings.

Mel didn’t cry much, he didn’t seem to want to waste the energy. If he was hungry he would wave his hand imperiously, though if he wasn’t fed when he wanted he did start to cry and announce to the world he wasn’t getting what he wanted. He didn’t need to do that very often as both Daniel and Sha’ré had already worked the signal out and were more than happy to get him whatever he wanted.

About an hour and a half later Sha’ré glanced round and saw her son was awake again, she slipped out of her seat and lifted him into her arms cooing gently to the child; taking her seat again she nodded for them to continue.

“Are you sure?” Edward asked.

“He does not need fed for another hour,” she replied with a smile as she held her son close, “He just wants me to hold him for now. Please continue.”

She rested her son against her shoulder absently rubbing his back listening to his gurgles as the meeting continued.

Daniel smiled as he entered their quarters to find his wife feeding their son.

“Hey,” he let her know he was there, “How was this morning?”

“He was an angel,” Sha’ré beamed as she looked down at her son at her breast, “I think this will work for now.”

“Well I can take him this afternoon,” Daniel told her, at her frown he continued quickly, “Since you don’t want the little guy with you while you talk with Jack’s recruits.”

Sha’ré reluctantly nodded in agreement making Daniel smile again, “That is a good idea. You are still studying the database?”

“Yeah,” Daniel sat at her side watching his son, “He is so perfect.”

Sha’ré nodded, tilting her head back so that Daniel could kiss her, “I am sorry if you feel a little left
out, I do not like letting him out of my arms. I love the warmth of him there.”

Daniel smiled and nodded his agreement; he loved getting to hold his son although as she said he did feel that he had to fight sometimes to get the pleasure, Sha’re was extremely possessive of Mel.

Sha’re fixed herself once Mel finished his lunch, she moved him so that he was sitting on her lap and gently started to rub his back.

The couple talked generally for a few minutes until they were interrupted by Mel’s loud burp.

“That was good,” Sha’re cooed to her son, “You are such a good boy. We shall get you changed and then Daddy will take you with him this afternoon.”

Still softly talking to her son Sha’re took him to the changing table and quickly changed her son before setting him down so they could have their lunch. The boy gurgled as he lay where they could watch him; the child relaxed at the sound of his parents talking near him. Daniel and Sha’re finished their lunch and as Daniel cleared up Sha’re lifted their son into her arms again. She held him close, smiling at her adorable little boy.

“You’d better get going,” Daniel told her, “Or Jack will be calling.”

Sha’re kissed her son’s forehead before reluctantly passing him to his father.

“All right, kiddo,” Daniel smiled at the little boy in his arms, “Let’s go to work.”

John sat going through the main systems for the ‘Star’s’ engines. He had to admit he loved the fact Sha’re had called the ship after Jeannie, it meant in a way she was still with them.

Thankfully someone managed to ensure that he and Rodney never actually crossed paths while he was on the ship, it was something he was extremely grateful for as he didn’t know if he could stand to look into Rodney’s eyes and see the hatred the other man now held for him.

He heard a voice and looked up to see Daniel talking to Dr Mason, little Mel held securely in his arms as he handed over a data pad to the scientist.

John had surreptitiously watched Daniel and Sha’re with their son over the past few days, he felt in a small way he was responsible for that little boy’s existence because he’d found the way to free Daniel from the Campus.

Watching them had also got him thinking about his own family, maybe even missing them a little though he’d never admit it. He’d cut all ties with them when he’d joined the Air Force and he knew that his father’s company was working closely with the Andurians. John wondered if his father was still alive or if Carter had done something to get control of the business.

Since he’d lost...since Jeannie’s death John had been thinking more and more about the people he’d left back on Earth. Even if he hadn’t seen them in years before he joined the resistance John worried that something had happened to his father and brother.

“John.”

John’s head snapped up as he realised someone was calling on him, “Sorry, Daniel I was thinking.”
“I thought you might want this,” Daniel handed him a data pad, “Just some upgrades the Ancients were working on for the Jumpers. I don’t know how much they did but it should give you some ideas.”

“Thanks,” John said as he took the computer, he saw little Mel yawn and couldn’t stop his smile at the cute little boy.

“Can you hold him for a second?” Daniel asked handing the boy to John before he had a chance to say no, “I want to show Mason something and I can’t while I’m holding Mel.”

John nodded, “Sure.”

As Daniel moved away John looked down at the little boy, “Hi,” he said a little self-conscious not sure what to do with the baby, “You know your parents are pretty cool and very smart so I know you’ll learn lots of things. I’ll teach you fun things like how to play football and golf and even how to fly the Jumper but that might be a few years from now.”

The boy just stared up at him and John smiled at him. When he looked up to check if Daniel was finished John froze as Rodney arrived on the bridge of the Star. Rodney stared at him for a few moments before walking over to the console John was working on.

“We’ve managed to solve the problem with the shields,” Rodney said, his voice flat, “I’m updating the details,” he gently played with Mel’s hand for a second before he left without another word.

John stared after him confused but relieved. As Daniel retrieved his son John returned to work wondering if maybe his friendship with Rodney wasn’t completely destroyed.

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“Am I ever getting an answer to my question?” Patrick demanded as Elizabeth and Steven continued their game of chess.

“Patrick,” Elizabeth turned to him, “I promise, the moment we get there you’ll find out.”

She turned back to the game smiling slightly at Steven; she seemed to enjoy teasing the older man. They’d decided to keep exactly where they were going to themselves for the moment, mostly because they were sure he wouldn’t believe them.

Thankfully they were only a few hours away from Atlantis and Elizabeth was looking forward to returning to the incredible city, there was something about it that had slipped under her skin.

“Patrick,” Elizabeth turned back, she’d come to like the man over the past few days they’d spent on the ship, “I know you’re frustrated but I need you to trust me. Can you do that?”

Patrick sighed, “Alright Elizabeth. You two are exceedingly irritating but I can wait.”

“It won’t be much longer, Patrick,” Steven told him, “Thor told me a few minutes ago we’ll be there in a few hours.”

Patrick nodded and wandered away leaving them to their game.

Patrick walked through the corridors of the alien vessel thinking. He’d been sent on this mission so that all the arrangements his company would need to make for the Asgard visit could be negotiated
by him. David hadn’t been too happy about this considering Patrick’s heart scare last year but he’d been assured knowing that the Asgard had much more advanced medical technology in case anything happened.

Patrick wasn’t sure whether he should be angry or not about being suddenly kidnapped, which technically had happened, but with the promise of seeing his younger son Patrick couldn’t do anything but go along with them.

“You are deep in thought,” Thor stated as he arrived.

Patrick turned to the small grey being, still unnerved by him, “I’m wondering if my son is truly at the end of this journey or if Elisabeth is using him as a way to keep me compliant.”

“I doubt you are ever compliant,” Thor told him with what Patrick thought might be a smile, “But I can promise you John Sheppard is at our destination. He is one of those in charge and you can be proud of him.”

Patrick felt the smile touch his lips before he turned to look out amongst the stars again. He wanted to see his son again and hoped to hell he didn’t do or say anything that would stop them building any bridges.

“Wow,” Patrick breathed as Thor put up the city on the view screen, “That’s incredible.”

Elizabeth laughed, “Isn’t it just.”

“We will be entering the planet’s orbit within two minutes.” Thor told them, “I will contact the people of the city and tell them of your arrival. Do not touch anything while I am gone.”

Elizabeth smiled as this was aimed at Steven and Patrick who both looked like they’d been caught.

“We’ll be waiting,” Elizabeth assured the small being.

Thor tilted his head thoughtfully before he activated the transporter. As he disappeared Steven started looking around, frowning as Elizabeth jokingly swatted his arm.

“Behave,” she laughed.

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“Good morning,” Jack smiled as Daniel glanced up wearily from his computer.

“It’s morning,” Daniel muttered at him, “I wouldn’t say it’s good.”

Jack chuckled, “What’s up?”

“Mel didn’t sleep last night,” Daniel told his friend as he dragged over a chair, “We fed him and put him down, about an hour later he was screaming so Sha’re got up. She got him back to sleep and an hour later he was screaming again. I held him until he slept then about an hour later he was screaming again. It was a never-ending cycle.”

Jack laughed, “So the perfect baby isn’t so perfect. He was just lulling you into a false sense of security.”

“You’re teaching him far too young,” Daniel accused trying not to smile.
“Where are they just now?” Jack asked.

Daniel shrugged, “Sha’re said something about walking him through the corridors after we had Janet check him out.”

“You think he’s sick?” worry filled Jack’s question.

Daniel let out a long sigh, “Not any more. Janet’s brilliant diagnosis – sometimes babies cry. Get used to it.”

Before Jack could say anything bright light filled the room and the two men stared as Thor appeared in his command chair.

“This is unusual,” Jack said after a few minutes, “You coming to us.”

“There is a reason,” Thor assured him before he looked at Daniel with concern, “Are you ill, Dr Jackson.”

Daniel laughed slightly, “I’m just tired. My son didn’t sleep much last night.”

Thor stared at him, “Your child has been born. My congratulations, I hope to see him.”

“Sha’re’s gonna want to be in this conversation so I’m betting you will,” Jack replied, “Which would make it a good idea to go to the conference room and call her.”

“Of course,” Thor nodded, activating the controls again transporting the three of them to the conference room.

“Welcome back to Atlantis,” Sha’re stated as she walked into the room, Mel asleep as she carried him in a sling.

“He’s sleeping now,” Daniel murmured as he lifted his son into his arms.

Sha’re chuckled slightly looking as tired as her husband before she moved with him to Thor, “Thor, I would like you to meet our son, Melbourne Kasuf Jackson.”

Thor looked down at the sleeping child and said something none of them understood. He saw them all looking confused and tilted his head in amusement, “We no longer believe in deities nor have children ourselves but when we were able to produce offspring we spoke that small blessing wishing the child and parents’ health and happiness.”

“We are honoured,” Sha’re told him before she took her seat motioning Daniel to give her son back to her. Grimacing Daniel did as he was told and relinquished the warm bundle back to his mother, “Now, what can we do for you?”

“I have brought Dr Weir and Colonel Caldwell back to update you on the situation on Earth,” Thor explained, he hesitated for a moment, “There is one more person with them however.”

“That doesn’t sound good,” Jack murmured.

“It possibly is,” Thor told them, “His name is Patrick Sheppard.”

Daniel, Sha’re and Jack stared at him, Mel chose this time to wake up and snuffled loudly not happy that there was silence.
“Sheppard?” Daniel asked as Sha’re hushed their son, “As in John?”

Thor nodded, “Yes, he knows that John is here but I thought you may want to warn him before I brought them down.”

“That is a good idea,” Sha’re agreed, Mel resting against her shoulder gurgling happily, “But this may help him considering what has happened recently.”

“We lost Jeannie,” Jack explained to Thor, “Jumper accident. John took it pretty hard. I’d offer to tell him but Sha’re it would be better coming from you.”

Sha’re rolled her eyes at them before nodding, “John,” she touched her radio, “Can you come to the conference room please.”

John walked into the conference room stopping as he saw the Asgard sitting there. Sha’re motioned him over before handing her son over to Daniel.

Sha’re walked over to him so that they were as far away from the others as possible. John glanced over to see Jack talking with Thor while Daniel walked gently rocking his son.

“What’s going on?” John asked the young woman before him.

“Thor has returned with Dr Weir and Colonel Caldwell,” Sha’re explained.

John nodded, “Good. They can have the same rooms they had last time. Do you want a guard on them?”

“No,” Sha’re replied, “And that is not why we asked you here.”

“Then why?”

“Carter sent someone else with Elizabeth to help with the organisation of their visit to Earth,” Sha’re explained, “He is in charge of a company that works closely with the Andurians.”

“And we don’t know if he’s friend or foe,” John said.

“I have a feeling he may be a friend,” Sha’re hesitated not sure how to tell John this, it had been such a bad time for him losing Jeannie and Rodney blaming him for the accident but she also knew he was strong so decided just to say the words, “John, it is your father.”

John stared at her, “What?”

“Patrick Sheppard is on Thor’s ship right now waiting for word that he can come down to the city,” Sha’re gently rested her hand on his arm, “John, he wants to see you. Are you willing?”

John stared at her before nodding slightly still stunned as Sha’re walked back to Thor to let him know to bring their guests down John shook his head.

“It can’t be him,” he murmured to himself, “Dad hates to fly.”

John stood at the back of the small group in the conference room as the white light faded to reveal three people. Instantly Elizabeth stepped forward to Sha’re and smiled as she looked at the child held
in the other woman’s arm.


Sha’re nodded gratefully, “Thank you. This is our son Mel,” she introduced the child who uninterested simply yawned before settling down to sleep.

“Welcome back, doc,” Jack spoke up, “I hear you have some news for us.”

Elizabeth smiled slightly, “A few things, Colonel. I have a report all ready for you.”

“Once you have settled into your rooms once more,” Sha’re stated, she looked over to the man standing silently as they renewed their acquaintance. He was without a doubt the father of John, older but with the same eyes, jaw line and hair who stood looking at the man who was avoiding looking back at him.

“I see you have brought someone with you,” Sha’re stated, she made her way to Patrick, “Mr Sheppard, welcome to Atlantis. I am Sha’re Jackson. I am the designated leader of the city,” she turned to the others, “My husband, Dan’iel and our military leader, Jack O’Neill.”

“Pleasure to meet you,” Patrick said softly he looked up to where John stood, “In case you’re wondering I’m not a fan of Carter or the Andurians. My company work with them in hopes we can get rid of them. In fact Major Davies would be very annoyed to know I’m here with the infamous Jack O’Neill.”

“Paul Davies?” Daniel asked in amazement.

Patrick nodded, “He’s spoken of the exploits of SG1 a great deal.”

“I am sure you know one of Jack’s and my most trusted advisors,” Sha’re forced John forward.

John frowned at her before he stepped forward and looked into the eyes of the man he hadn’t seen for years, a man who he’d argued with the last time they’d met and swallowed nervously.

“Hi, Dad.”
Chapter 48

Caffison was sombre even for an Andurian and as he sat in Sam’s office she started to wonder if he realised that the grey he was wearing made him look like a statue.

“You do realise that the possible side-effects of this procedure are the emotions of the human may assault you,” Caffison stated as he examined the medical scans he’d taken, “It will happen at any time until you are able to control them once more. I suggest that you become ‘unwell’ for the duration of the treatment.”

“That’s already been taken care of,” Sam replied, her tone as even as his, “We can start the treatments as soon as you’re ready.”

Caffison nodded, “I need access to a medical laboratory. Then it will take about a day to get everything prepared.”

Sam pressed a button and one of the security guards arrived, “Tine, escort Caffison to the lab we have set aside for him.”

Tine gave a small bow before he waited for the other man to move. Caffison gave a short sharp nod to Sam before following his guide.

Sam turned to her computer; she had one meeting this afternoon before she wanted to check out how the new breeding program was coming, now it was almost in its final planning stages.

Sam walked through the corridors of the Complex; she wasn’t looking forward to having to take on the emotional human again. Then again it was the best way to get the Asgard off her back. Sam was annoyed she’d had to send Patrick Sheppard on the mission with Weir and Caldwell, he was easy to work with and as the one in charge of the company meant he could make all the decisions himself without her having to wait. However, he would have noticed the differences in her and that could possibly lead to having to eliminate him which would be an extreme inconvenience.

Reaching her destination Sam entered and waited until Trig finished taking blood from the child, he motioned over the human nurse to return the baby to the nursery before he stored the blood.

“Dr Carter,” he greeted her, “Menkin mentioned you wanted an update today.”

“You have been promising me results for some time now,” Sam reminded him coolly.

“The child known as Baby Masters is useless to us,” Trig told her, “I rechecked the blood three times but there have been no useful results. I’m recommending termination.”

Sam nodded, “Fine. Speak with Endine, he’ll do the termination. Have you found a possible replacement?”

Trig shook his head, “I have a few possibilities but nothing yet.”

“Good,” Sam replied, “What about the breeding program? Have we found any possible mothers?”

Trig activated his computer, “As you can see I’ve found several possible specimens for the program. I’ve gone for ones who won’t be missed for the first round. I’m sending out teams to locate and bring
them here. We should have the first impregnations within a month."

Caffison motioned Sam to lie on the table as he readied the equipment he had. The procedure would take several months to complete because if they rushed it then it could have disastrous consequences.

“Are you ready?” Caffison asked.

“Completely,” Sam replied, “I have ensured that we will not be interrupted for the next six hours. Proceed.”

Caffison checked the computer in front of him and with confidence born of experience he started the process of disguising Samantha Carter’s true nature.

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The rain was falling making the world outside the windows of Atlantis cold and grey, John walked with his father at his side trying desperately to think of something, anything to say to him.

“So,” he finally started, “What did you think of the Asgard?”

Patrick frowned, “Are they meant to be naked?”

John smiled slightly, “Dad...”

“You look tired,” Patrick cut him off, “Are you taking care of yourself?”

John nodded, “I haven’t been sleeping well lately. Someone I care for was killed in an accident recently.”

“And you blame yourself,” Patrick said astutely.

“Her brother blames me too,” John shook his head, “Dad, what are you doing here?”

“I believe I was abducted,” Patrick gave a wry smile.

“Dad.”

Patrick turned and looked out across the choppy sea, “Carter wanted me to join the latest mission to the Asgard so I could speak to them directly about the arrangements they would need.”

“Why you? Why not David?” John demanded angrily before panic and fear for his brother’s safety set in, “Has something happened to David?”

Patrick reached out and caught his son’s shoulders, “Your brother is fine. But I’m the one who meets with Carter all the time, he refuses to do it and to be honest I wanted to meet these aliens that were possibly going to help the Andurians destroy us.”

John nodded, he looked into his father’s eyes wishing he knew how to say what he needed to but as usual moments like this were not his strong suit. Thankfully, he didn’t need to.

“I’m sorry, John,” Patrick said, “I should never have pushed you away from us. You’ve always been like your mother, only she rode horses – you just had to go a little faster than her.”
“She’s planning for the Asgards impending visit,” Elizabeth told them as they sat in Sha’re’s office. Jack and Daniel had taken Mel for a walk to allow Sha’re to catch up with their guests, “I’ve not seen much difference though.”

“And you are both safe?” Sha’re asked intently.

“We’ve both been careful,” Steven assured her.

“Good,” Sha’re replied, she let out a long sigh, “I was worried about you both.”

Elizabeth smiled at the younger woman, “You don’t have to. We both know what we’re doing. All you have to worry about is getting enough sleep with the little one.”

Sha’re laughed, “We are trying.”

“Oh,” Elizabeth pulled her bag over, “I just remembered I have something for you.” She rummaged around and pulled out a small teddy bear, “This is for Mel. I hope he likes it.”

Sha’re smiled as she took a hold of the soft toy, “Thank you. I am sure he will love it. Now, let us begin this update in earnest.”

They sat discussing everything that was happening on Earth, Sha’re mentally taking notes on what she needs to discuss with Jack and the rest of the council. Finally they finished and Sha’re looked at the two people in front of her.

“I believe now would be a good time to stop,” she told them, “You should go and get something to eat. Steven, I believe Laura will be happy to see you.”

He nodded and Sha’re smiled a little more knowing that Laura would want to share her news with her old friend. Sha’re smiled as they left her office, checking the time she decided she should find her husband as it would soon be time to feed her son.

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Rodney glanced over to the second computer he had set up, this was definitely interesting. The information that they’d found at the ‘Ancient Shipyard’ had included Jumper modifications that would be helpful in their fight against the Andurians.

He was finding his pain at losing his baby sister was still great but he’d begun to accept that she was gone and that there had been nothing John could have done. It wasn’t easy but Rodney was trying his best.

“Hey,” Laura murmured in his ear as her arms wrapped round his waist and her lips touched his cheek.

“Did I miss lunch again?” Rodney asked turning to face her.

Laura laughed, “Not yet but I came to make sure you don’t.”

Rodney kissed her, Laura’s hands moved up to cup his cheeks and Rodney caught a hold of them. Pulling back from her he gently traced her ring finger.

“I wish I had a ring to give you,” he told her, “But...you know.”

Laura gave him a soft smile, “I don’t mind, I’m happy to have you. Okay?”
Rodney nodded.

“I heard a rumour that Weir and Steven are back in the city,” Laura told him before giving a wicked grin, “I also heard the John’s father came with them. Could be interesting to see.”

At Laura’s cheeky grin Rodney nodded slightly.

“He needs some family,” Rodney noted as he turned back to his work.

Laura smiled to herself, that small statement let her know that Rodney was on his way to forgiving John for what happened to Jeannie, it might take time but she knew it would happen one day.

“Steven,” Laura beamed and moved to hug the older man when he appeared in the lab, “It’s so good to see you.”

At her enthusiastic greeting he frowned suspiciously, “What did you do?”

Laura rolled her eyes knowing Rodney was laughing, “What makes you think I’ve done something.”

“Because you usually greeted me like that when you were in trouble,” Steven reminded her, he turned to Rodney, “There was this one time she’d been suspended from school for blowing up...”

“Okay, that’s enough of that story,” Laura cut him off.

“Hold on,” Rodney said, “I want to hear that one.”

Steven smiled as Laura glared at him, “Another time, Dr McKay. Best when she’s not nearby to kill me.”

Rodney smiled slightly back before winking at his annoyed fiancée.

“So what do you want to tell me?” Steven asked, grinning at her surprised look, “Laura, I’ve been able to read you like a book for years.”

Laura moved to Rodney’s side and wrapped her arm around one of his, “We’re going to get married.”

Steven stared at her for a few minutes before stepping forward and hugged Laura quickly, “Congratulations,” he whispered before chuckling.

“What?” Laura demanded.

Steven shook his head, “Nothing.”

“Steven,” Laura glared at him.

Trying hard not to laugh, Steven looked up at her, “Weren’t you the one who proclaimed when Fiona was getting married that marriage was slavery?”

“I...Well...” Laura started annoyed.

“Coffee, Colonel?” Rodney said moving the other man out of the lab leaving Laura glaring after them.
“Good morning, John,” Sha’re greeted him as he joined her in the mess, “You look tired.”

“Long night,” he replied with a shrug before he started to eat.

Sha’re watched him for a few moments as she sipped her juice, “How is your father?”

John glanced up at her and shrugged again, “Fine.”

Sha’re frowned at him, “John...”

“Where’s Daniel and Mel?” John cut her off, knowing this could possibly distract her.

Sha’re motioned to the two trays of food in front of her, “Dan’iel was changing Mel while I came to get us breakfast. They will be here soon.”

“Oh.”

“So, how are things going with your father?” Sha’re pushed.

“Sha’re, this is none of your business,” John snapped at her, “For once can you not...”

“Be concerned for you?” Sha’re asked sharply, her voice the same level as it had been when greeting him, “Worry about you?”

He grimaced at her, “That’s not fair.”

Sha’re took another sip of her juice, “When you joined us, John you were so angry. You wanted revenge on the people who had killed Meg and you channelled that into helping me save Dan’iel. Now you have lost someone else you love and you feel there is no one to blame but yourself. You are trying to punish yourself, John and I will not let you. We love you, you are like a brother to me and I will not stand by in silence. Your father is here, John. Someone you can turn to, someone you can talk to about this.”

“My father is not like that,” John replied darkly.

Sha’re shook her head, “Then you do not know him. I saw in his eyes the moment he saw you again how much he loves you,” reaching out she caught his hand before he had a chance to snatch it away from her, “You have to talk to someone and I know you want to talk to him.”

John dropped his head, pulling his hand from hers he stood up and walked away without a word.

Daniel took a seat beside his wife frowning confused as he saw John walk away, “Was it something I said?”

Sha’re shook her head smiling as he placed their son on the table in his carrycot between them, “He is just being stubborn.”

“Really?” Daniel asked, he’d seen the determined look on his wife’s face as he entered the room; it was a look he knew very well. It was one he usually tried to hide from.

Sha’re ignored him as she cooed over her son who was awake and wanting attention from either parent, he wasn’t fussy which one.
“What did you say to him?” Daniel asked, knowing he shouldn’t but couldn’t help himself.

Sha’re looked up at him, “I was simply asking how his father was.”

“Ahh,” Daniel mused taking a sip of his coffee.

“What do you mean?” Sha’re demanded annoyed at the tone of her husband’s voice.

Daniel winced shaking his head, he really should know better than to get involved in this discussion. He sighed, “Honey, you can’t push John into talking to his father.”

“I did not,” she protested, “I just know his father wants to build bridges with him.”

Daniel grimaced, “Sha’re, not everyone is as lucky as you.”

“What does that mean?”

“You grew up with your father who would do anything for you,” Daniel reminded her, “Some of us weren’t as lucky.”

“So I am spoiled?” Sha’re glared at him.

“I never said that,” Daniel rubbed the bridge of his nose.

Sha’re folded her arms across her chest, her brown eyes fixed angrily on her husband, “Then what exactly are you saying, husband?”

At her sharp tone Mel started to get upset, Sha’re lifted him into her arms pushing Daniel away from him when he moved to soothe his son.

“All I’m saying, love,” Daniel said relieved the room was mostly empty, “Is that not everyone was as lucky as you. You can’t push John into anything. It doesn’t matter what you want, Sha’re this isn’t your life.”

Sha’re stood up resting her son on her shoulder, “Come on, Mel. We shall go for a walk until Daddy is less grumpy.”

Daniel watched her go knowing he should have just shut up and eaten his breakfast. Life would have been more peaceful that way.

Sha’re walked through the corridors of the city fuming with her husband, she murmured softly to her son hoping to calm him. Reaching her office she sat in her chair and gently rocked her little boy.

She sang softly to Mel smiling as he waved his little hands towards her, she couldn’t believe how much she loved him.

“Sha’re,” Thor’s voice sounded in her ear.

Reluctantly she touched her radio, “Yes, Thor. How can I help you?”

“Actually I believe I can help you,” the Asgard commander said, “May I speak to you face to face?”

“Of course,” Sha’re replied, her sentence barely finished when light filled the room revealing the small grey alien being, “Hello, Thor.”
Thor nodded his greeting; he looked down at the child in Sha’re’s arms for a few moments before he returned his attention to the woman sitting in front of him.

“I was speaking with O’Neill earlier,” Thor told her, “He mentioned the upgrades that were being made to what you have termed Puddle Jumpers.”

“Yes, unfortunately trying to test them is proving unsuccessful as the Star is not yet able to fly,” Sha’re explained, “I am hoping we will be able to find a way to test them soon.”

“I have an idea for that,” Thor said, “I can take one of the Puddle Jumpers along with a pilot to do the tests you need to do. If you wish?”

Sha’re smiled at him in surprise, “That is a wonderful idea. That would be so helpful, Thor. Especially as you have the technology to beam the pilot out if there are any difficulties.”

Thor nodded again.

“I am going to call Jack to discuss this a little more,” Sha’re said, “As this is his project I feel it would be best for him to be here.”

Sha’re gently placed Mel in his small cot as she called Jack to her office. Turning she smiled as she watched the alien try to interact with the child. Thor tilted his head from side to side watching the boy chew on his fingers. Very gently he reached out and placed a finger on the boy’s free hand, gasping slightly as the small hand clamped around the digit.

“He is very strong,” Thor remarked as Sha’re moved to his side.

“He is,” Sha’re replied with a soft sigh, “He likes you. There are only a few people who he will hold onto as they speak. He may be young but he is very fussy.”

Thor let out what Sha’re thought might be a chuckle before he turned to her, “He is a good child. But I suggest we speak about the mission before I become too engrossed in watching him.”

“Of course,” Sha’re nodded, retaking her seat and motioning Jack over as he appeared.

Thor returned to his own seat, “We have not had children of our own for a long time and I have not been around them almost as long. Your son deserves to live free and it is time we began working in earnest to free Earth from the Andurians.”
John stood staring out at the stars as the Belisknor transported him, the upgraded Jumper and his father to the testing area that had been chosen. He really wanted to strangle Sha’re sometimes when she interfered in his life but then again it was nice to know she cared.

“We should be in a suitable area of space for the test very soon,” Thor told him, “You should begin your preparations.”

John nodded, “Thanks, Thor.”

“Your father is looking for you,” the small alien added.

John nodded again, “Sure.”

Thor started to leave but turned back, “Is something bothering you?”

“No,” John said quickly, “It’s just been one of those days. Sha’re sort of steamrolled me into this mission and spending time with my father. She doesn’t know how to let things go,” he trailed off as he saw the small alien standing there, “Sorry. I’ll go get the Jumper ready.”

With a sigh he headed down to the bay where Thor had transported the small vessel to earlier that day.

John initiated the start-up sequence for the Jumper; he was looking forward to trying out the upgrades he’d worked on with Rodney – even if they were mostly working together through an intermediary.

“How’re things going?” Patrick stuck his head in.

John glanced round and nodded, “Fine. I’ll be ready to go in a few minutes.”

Patrick sighed, he’d been trying to talk to John properly since he’d arrived but other than the discussion they’d had when Patrick arrived, where John basically made sure that both he and David were safe, John had shut down as only John could. Patrick could see his son’s sadness and wanted to be able to help but knew there was no way because John wouldn’t let him in.

“Dad, you should head up to the bridge,” John told him, “Or whatever it is Thor calls it.”

“John...”

“Dad, I kinda need to concentrate,” John forced his voice to remain as normal, “We can talk after the test.”

Patrick nodded and left the Jumper. John turned to apologise but Patrick was gone so he returned to the Jumper controls.

John had never flown anything like the Jumper in all his years of being a pilot and as fantastic as it was to fly through the atmosphere taking it through space was absolutely breath-taking.
He could have stayed here forever but knew that there was work to do.

“Major Sheppard,” Thor’s voice came over the radio, “Are you ready to start the tests?”

“Yeah,” John replied, “Thor, keep an eye on what’s going on because I may need pulled out fast.”

“There is no need to worry about that, Major Sheppard,” Thor told him, “Your father is in charge of that.”

John let out a long sigh, “And that’s supposed to make me feel safe,” he murmured.

“I did hear that you know, John,” Patrick’s amused voice came over the radio.

“Ready whenever you are, Thor,” John called wincing slightly as he started the Jumper guiding it out of the bay doors into space, “Let’s do this.”

Danny gave Lisa a smile as he passed her before he poked his head into his wife’s office where she sat rocking her son.

“Am I allowed in?” he asked with a wry smile.

Sha’re glanced up at him, her eyes narrowed slightly, “Are you going to call me spoiled again?”

“I didn’t call you...” Daniel trailed off as he saw the twinkle in her eye, “Funny.”

She laughed and tilted her head up so he could kiss her; after obliging Daniel pulled the spare seat over and took Mel into his arms for a few moments.

“I am sorry about earlier,” she apologised resting her head against his arm, “I did not mean to get so annoyed.”

“You’re tired, love,” Daniel reminded her, “So am I. And we both know your temper.”

“My temper?” Sha’re looked at him trying to look annoyed but couldn’t quite manage it before laughing, “I have seen your temper, my husband. Never forget that.”

Mel gurgled interrupting them, demanding attention from his parents. As Daniel rocked him, Sha’re gently stroked his cherub face cooing to him.

“Have you finished everything for today?” Daniel asked his wife.

Sha’re gave a half nod, “John is on the Belisknor with Thor testing the upgrades for the Jumper. I am waiting to hear from them.”

“Well,” he kissed her cheek, “You can wait for a radio call in our room just as easily as you can here. What do you think?”

Sha’re smiled at him, “Do you not have work you need to do?”

“I can skim the database there as well as anywhere,” Daniel shrugged, “Come on, I think someone needs changing.”

Sha’re chuckled and slid her arm through his.
Jack winced as the glass smashed, “Cass, you need to try and relax when doing this.”

Cassie turned and frowned at him, “Jack, I’m doing my best but it’s not like there’s anyone else here who can do what I can, to teach me. It’s not easy you know.”

“I know, kiddo,” Jack said, “But Carter wanted you for this reason so we have to make sure that we’re prepared in case.”

“I know, I know,” the young woman cried before dropping into a seat, “I’ve been trying to properly control this ‘gift’ for years. But I can’t, not completely. Small stuff is easy like moving a pen but the rest is...it’s hard.”

“Yeah.”

As Jack took a seat beside his surrogate daughter Cassie rested against his arm. They sat together in silence for a few minutes before Cassie turned round to him.

“Are you happy, Jack?”

“Why do you ask?” Jack frowned at her confused.

Cassie shrugged, “Just wondering.”

Jack wrapped his arm around her shoulders and hugged her close, “Are you?”

“Yes,” Cassie whispered, “I thought for so long I’d never get to see Mom again. That I’d never see any of you guys and here you all are, safe and free. Daniel and Sha’re just had a baby, Teal’c has Ry’ac and Bra’tac again,” she hugged him; “I’m scared of losing that again.”

Jack held her close, gently dropping a kiss on the top of her head, “You won’t. Now, are you ready to continue?”

Cassie let out a long sigh, “Why did Mom ask you to help me with this?”

“Because,” Jack chuckled, “I’m a hard-ass Colonel who won’t let you slack off.”

“Since when?” Cassie laughed, rolling her eyes at him as she turned back to the table and the three glasses still sitting there, “Okay, once more.”

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Rodney stared at the screen in front of him, “Radek?”

The other scientist wandered over, he was on Atlantis for a few days to go over what was happening on the mainland and sort out the new rotation.

“Is there something wrong, Rodney?” Radek asked as he moved over to the other man.

Rodney shook his head, “No. Look.”

Radek stared, “Interesting.”

“Are you kidding?” Rodney rolled his eyes at his friend, “Interesting? That’s all you can say?”
“Rodney,” Radek shook his head, “For all you know the Ancients never got round to actually finishing this thing. You might be getting your hopes up for no reason.”

“Radek, it’s a...”

“Don’t say it,” Radek cut him off.

“Holodeck,” Rodney finished with a smirk.

Radek rolled his eyes, “It is not a ‘holodeck’.”

“It holographically creates anywhere you want,” Rodney challenged.

“But not people,” Radek threw back at him.

“Thank you, Mr Obvious,” Rodney replied, “You’re not looking at the big picture.”

Radek stared at him confused, “What is the big picture?”

“Radek, I know you’re enjoying playing house on the mainland...” at Radek’s glare he trailed off, “Sorry. What I mean is you’ve found someone, but we’re still fighting and we need every advantage we can get against them.”

“I know,” Radek sighed, “And yes, I am happy with Tali but you have to remember, Rodney I left a sister on Earth. I have not forgotten about her or my nephew.”

Rodney stayed silent for a few moments before he grinned, “Let’s go look.”

“Okay, children,” Laura said as she walked with Rodney and Radek towards the transporter after they’d quickly persuaded Sha’re to let them go, “You don’t go running anywhere until I tell you it’s safe. Do you understand?”

“Laura...”

“Rodney,” she cut him off, “Either agree to what I’ve told you or find somewhere else to sleep tonight,” as Radek chuckled she turned to him, “Remember I can contact Tali easily.”

The two men shared a look before they nodded, “We understand.”

“Good,” Laura beamed at them, “Come let’s get going before Sha’re changes her mind.”

“She won’t,” Rodney shrugged as they entered the small transporter, “From the sounds of things she’s too busy.”

Radek nodded as he remembered the sound of Mel crying in the background as they quickly explained over the radio what they might have found. Sha’re had agreed sounding happy to agree with anything they wanted as long as they left her peace. They continued through the corridor towards what they hoped was going to be an important find. Either that or it would be a complete bust which was why they hadn’t told many people about it. Rodney stopped outside and opened the panel beside the door. Laura stood watching the two men work, throwing ideas back and forth as they studied the system. It was good to see Rodney getting so animated again, she knew he was still grieving the loss of his sister and to see him like this made her smile.

“What do you think?” Rodney asked Radek after half an hour.
Radek shrugged, “Let’s try it.”

Laura frowned at the tone in their voices, “Is this going to explode? Should I start running now?”

Rodney threw a withering glance her way before turning back to his computer, “Alright. There seems to be a default setting, let’s start with that.”

“Anytime you’re ready, darling,” Laura told him, smiling sweetly as he frowned at her.

Rodney licked his lips before activating the room; he held his breath as the panel lit up before the door opened. Slowly he walked forward and gasped.

“Oh my God,” Laura breathed as she followed him in, staring around as they were suddenly standing on the mainland at the lake near the village.

“I think,” Radek said as he looked around, “I think it works.”

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John set the Jumper back onto the bay in the Belisknor and sighed in relief. Everything had gone better than he ever could have hoped. The upgrades worked perfectly which meant they could start upgrading the rest of the fleet as well as moving onto the next phase for returning to earth and kicking the Andurians out.

Smiling to himself he started up to the bridge, it had been a good day and he’d spent a good bit of time thinking about his father as he flew the ship. One thing he’d regretted since they’d left Earth was the fact he hadn’t spoken to either his father or brother in years and that he may never get that chance. Of course now he had the chance to heal the wounds between them John found himself trying to run again.

It wasn’t that he didn’t love his father, he did, but John had always been so much more like his mother personality wise, which for some reason meant that after she died John and Patrick just couldn’t get along.

David had always tried to be the peacemaker and found himself on the receiving end of John’s resentment towards their father. John pushed his hand through his hair, there were a lot of things he regretted but this was one thing where he could make sure he never did.

“John,” Patrick greeted his son as he arrived on the bridge, “That was incredible. I can’t believe the capabilities of that small ship.”

John shrugged giving him a grin, “It always helps having a fantastic pilot.”

Patrick clapped his son’s shoulder, “I didn’t want to give you too big a head.”

“Rodney would probably say you’re too late,” John laughed, he sobered quickly as he remembered the rift between him and Rodney. He turned to the small alien watching them, “Thor, how did things look from here?”

“I gathered a great deal of data from your manoeuvres,” Thor told him, “The upgrades made to the vessel seem to have increased the efficiency by at least fifty percent.”

John nodded in satisfaction, “We’ll get this back to the geeks in the city and they’ll probably have a
“I have set in a course back to Atlantis,” Thor told him, “However I wish to do a few diagnostics on the ships systems so we can’t jump to hyperspace just now.”

“So,” John frowned at the small alien as the unmistakable feeling of someone meddling again creeping over him, “How long till we get back to the city?”

“Eight hours,” Thor replied with a slight dip of his head, “You should both take some time to relax as I have a great deal of work to do. I brought some food more palatable for humans.”

“We’ll get out of your way,” Patrick said as he started out.

John was about to follow him when he turned back to Thor, “Sha’re got to you too.”

“She can be,” Thor tilted his head for second, “Very persuasive.”

John shook his head before he followed his father out, hoping to try and talk.

They sat side by side leaning against a wall as they watched the stars slide past the ship but they sat in silence, the same as they had been for the last two hours.

“How’s David?” John finally found his voice, “Is he married? Am I an uncle?”

“David is fine,” Patrick replied, smiling that they were finally speaking, “Not married yet but he is engaged to a lovely woman. Caitlin is a teacher who is a wonderful influence on him.”

“A teacher?” John mused, “So not one of the country-club snobs who used to follow him around.”

Patrick nodded, “Thankfully no. They were introduced by Tom Masters, remember him?”

“The computer guy you hired straight out of college,” John nodded.

“Caitlin is his sister-in-law,” Patrick continued.

John nodded and they fell into silence again. John silently turning the unopened power bar over and over in his hands.

“He misses you,” Patrick said making John look up, “When we discovered you’d been working at the complex at the same time I’d been there...”

“I’m sorry,” John whispered he jumped to his feet and started to pace, “I cut myself off from you after our last argument. I shouldn’t have.”

Patrick moved to stand in front of his son and caught him in a tight embrace. Neither spoke as father and son started to bridge the gap between them.

“Major Sheppard,” Thor greeted him as John and Patrick arrived on the bridge a few minutes after he’d called them, “We are receiving a signal from a nearby planet. I wanted to see if you recognised it.”

“You think it might be one of our teams?” John asked as he moved to the nearest console.
“Possibly,” Thor replied, he turned the speakers up and a high pitched beep started.

Dot dot dot, dash dash dash, dot dot dot.

“Morse code,” Patrick said surprised.

“SOS,” John nodded, “Where is this coming from, Thor?”

“The final planet in this system,” Thor told him, “We will be in orbit in ten minutes.”

John chewed his lip for a moment before he turned back to the small alien, “Alright, you can hide the ship, right?”

“Of course.”

“Okay, then I’m going to investigate,” John told them, “Thor, drop me down somewhere I won’t be seen. I’ll have a look around.”

“Take this,” Thor handed him a communicator.

John pulled out his gun and checked it was loaded, he saw his father watching him.

“Be careful,” Patrick said.

John gave him a quick grin before white light surrounded him and he disappeared.

John grimaced as the grey walls of the Asgard ship turned into brown stone with a lingering odour John was sure he was going to smell for the next week. He ducked round a corner as he heard people coming; thankfully they went the other way. Creeping slowly along the corridor John could hear raised voices.

“Tell me what you were doing?” a man snarled, he was towering over someone John couldn’t see.

John glanced round to make sure there was no one near him before he moved closer. He could make out what appeared to be an Ancient computer console, though it looked as though it had seen better days. That had to be the source of the SOS call.

“Who made it?” John murmured.

Noise from behind made John draw back for a minute and he missed what happened next but as he slid back out towards the console he heard the man again.

“If I discover you were doing something other than the work we’ve assigned you,” he growled, “I won’t protect you anymore. Go back to your cell, you can continue your work tomorrow.”

With this said the man turned on his heel and stalked away. John crept closer as the figure started to stand. As he moved closer John realised it was a woman, his disbelieving eyes saw a hint of blonde under the dirty hair and as she turned so her face was lit by the screen he felt his breath catch.

Jeannie?
Chapter 50

Jeannie picked herself off the ground after Kolya left. She took several deep breaths to control herself as she looked at the computer console in front of her. To her relief there was no evidence of the message she’d sent or the vessel nearby. To be honest she didn’t think the SOS would get out but she had to try, she wanted to go home.

She had no idea how long ago she had woken up in this place, but she had woken up to be told she was a worker for the Great Genii Empire and John was dead. The first night in the cell they’d thrown her in she’d sobbed into the pillow for the loss of everything but after that she refused to give them any indication of how much it hurt. They gave her access to anything she needed as she had shown them she was brilliant, which meant she’d been able to spot what she hoped was an Asgard vessel on the edge of the system and take a chance.

She’d been so intent she hadn’t noticed Kolya until she’d turned; he slapped her but it could have been much worse and she knew it. Jeannie knew that if she wasn’t so valuable to these people, she would be treated even worse, but after one of the guards had tried to get too friendly Kolya had put out the word that if anyone touched the Genii asset there would be consequences.

With a sigh she shut down the work station and started back to her cell, there was no point trying to escape as every possible exit was guarded and the one time she’d tried Kolya had been less nice with his punishment. Jeannie’s back was still bruised from her ‘training session’ with him. He’d used it as a way to beat her for her disobedience without him seeing himself as the bad guy; she just needed to learn to defend herself better.

Panic filled her as a hand clamped against her mouth and she was dragged into a corridor. Jeannie kicked and fought against the man who held her until a voice reached her.

“Jeannie, it’s me.”

John managed to grab Jeannie’s arms as she blindly fought against him constantly trying to get her to realise she was safe.

“Jeannie, it’s me,” he said over and over before being rewarded as her head jerked up.

“John?” she whispered her eyes wide in amazement.

He smiled at her, “In the flesh.”

With a cry she flung her arms around him, “They told me you were dead. I thought...”

“I know,” he gently cupped her cheek, wiping away a tear that was slipping down her cheek; “We thought we’d lost you too.”

Jeannie dropped her head to rest on his chest for a moment, sighing as he kept his arms wrapped around her.

“Time to get out of here,” he pulled back suddenly, but as he reached for the communicator Jeannie stopped him, “What?”

“We can’t leave yet,” she told him.
“Why?”

“They gave me access to everything,” Jeannie explained, “That included their library and things they’ve scavenged from the Ancients. John, I have information on the Andurians we might need. We have to get it.”

John grimaced before he nodded, “Fine but then we’re out of here.”

“No argument from me,” she replied, glancing back out she grabbed his hand and pulled him along the corridor.

Jeannie sighed in relief as they reached the small cell without running into any guards. She saw John look around the room with anger in his eyes; Jeannie touched his arm pointing at the books and data crystals.

“Okay, throw them on the bed,” he ordered as he watched out a crack in the door, “Use a sheet to bag them then we can go.”

Jeannie did as he said jumping as she heard a gunshot and John dived back in, he slammed the door shut.

“I’m assuming you’re John,” Kolya’s voice came, “Jeannie was most upset when we told her you were dead. I surprised you did survive.”

“You don’t know me well,” John shot back, “And you are?”

“Jeannie, I’m hurt you haven’t talked about me,” Kolya mocked, “I’m General Atticus Kolya.”

“So, you’re the one to shoot,” John replied, he turned to Jeannie and motioned her to hurry up.

“You have only one choice,” Kolya called, “Surrender or we start to fire. And if we do we could hurt Jeannie. I’m sure you don’t want that. I know I certainly don’t. She’s very valuable to us.”

Jeannie grabbed the makeshift bag filled with her research and caught John’s arm; he pulled her to him and lifted the communicator to his lips.

“The only way you’ll get Jeannie is if you come in and get her,” John mocked, he pressed the button on the communicator as they heard the Genii guards outside begin to fire, “Now, Dad.”

Jeannie clung to John as the cell evaporated into a white light before she saw the welcome grey of the Asgard vessel.

John felt Jeannie sag against him in relief as they appeared in the Belisknor. She dropped the makeshift bag she was holding and wrapped her arms around John’s waist, hugging him tightly.

“Hey,” John whispered, he tilted her face up to look at him wiping away the tears sliding along her cheeks, “It’s okay.”

“I thought I’d never see you again,” Jeannie breathed, “I thought...”

John rested his forehead against hers, “I know.”
“John?”

At the voice John looked over to find his father watching, John gave him a quick smile before he turned Jeannie to him.

“Jeannie, this is Patrick Sheppard,” John introduced, “My father.”

“Your what?” Jeannie gasped before she gave the other man a small smile, “It’s nice to meet you.”

“And you,” Patrick replied, smiling softly at her.

John took a deep breath as he extricated himself from Jeannie’s arms; he slipped his jacket off and draped it over her shoulders, “Dad, can you take Jeannie to rest while I contact the city?”

Patrick wrapped his arm around Jeannie’s shaking shoulders and drew her to a seat. As they sat down John took in a shuddering breath of relief. He had to contact Atlantis and let them know what had happened.

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Sha’re sat on her bed reading over some reports. Both Daniel and Mel were fast asleep giving her some time to catch up. She looked over to where her son slept, his small mouth moving as though he was eating while Daniel was murmuring slightly to himself, his head resting against her hip with one arm flung across her legs. Putting the file down Sha’re gently ran her fingers through her husband’s hair, it had grown considerably since they’d arrived and although it was nowhere near the length it had been when they’d first met, it was long enough for her to play with.

“Sha’re,” Peter’s voice came over her radio interrupting her time alone, “John’s contacted us. He wants to talk to you.”

“Put him through,” Sha’re said, she slid off the bed so she could pace while she talked – it helped her think.

“Sha’re,” John said after a few moments.

“How did the tests go, John?” Sha’re asked while she fixed her son’s cover.

“Fine,” he replied quickly, “But since we had to come home the slow way...”

Sha’re chuckled, “I did not believe Thor would do that.”

“We passed a planet and received a signal for help,” John continued ignoring her comment, “Sha’re, we found Jeannie.”

Sha’re frowned not sure she’d heard him correctly, “John, repeat that.”

“We found Jeannie,” John told her again.

“Are you sure?” Sha’re couldn’t help but ask as she remembered looking down on the lifeless body of her friend.

“I got Thor to do a DNA scan,” John reported, “Just to be sure and it’s her. She’s alive.”

Sha’re let out a soft breath in astonishment trying to gather her thoughts, “Alright, how long will it take for you to return to the city?”
“Thor says a few hours,” John told her.

“Good, as soon as you arrive have Thor transport you both to the infirmary,” Sha’re ordered. “We will be waiting for you.”

“Yes, Ma’am,” John replied.

“John,” Sha’re said before he broke the connection, “Tell Jeannie...tell her how happy we are to have her coming home.”

“I will,” John told her, “We’ll see you soon.”

Sha’re stood staring at her son as she processed everything John had just told her, relief filling her that her friend was not gone. Slowly she moved to the bed and felt tears fill her eyes, she didn’t want to cry but Sha’re couldn’t stop her tears of joy.

“Honey?” Daniel moved to her side looking confused, he’d just woken up to find her crying, “What’s wrong?”

Sha’re turned and hugged him tightly as tears slid down her cheeks, she could feel her husband’s confusion as he gently rocked her.

“What’s wrong?” he asked again in a soft murmur.

Sha’re pulled back and wiped her eyes, “Nothing is wrong, it is good news. John just told me Jeannie is alive.”

“What?”

Sha’re sniffed again as she nodded, “They are bringing her home.”

Daniel hugged her again, “That’s incredible news.”

Sha’re nodded against his shoulder as her husband held her close, “We need to tell Rodney, I need to tell Rodney.”

“Honey,” Daniel soothed, “You tell Rodney and Laura while I talk to Janet so she’s ready. I’ll take Mel with me, okay?”

Sha’re nodded and kissed him, “Thank you, my love. I will meet you in the infirmary once I have spoken with them.”

With another quick kiss Sha’re left Daniel alone with their son.

Rodney was in high spirits after the discovery they’d just made. They’d decided to get some food before reporting their findings to Sha’re and the council then hopefully they’d get a chance to actually try out the ‘holodeck’.

Laura was walking at his side laughing as Radek told her a story of Tali and her little girl, Rodney had to admit that Radek was so much happier now than he’d ever seen him since he’d met Tali.

“Rodney,” Sha’re’s voice came over his radio, “Where are you?”
“Just heading back,” he reported, “Wait till you see what we found, it’s incredible.”

“I am in your lab,” Sha’re said as though she hadn’t heard a word he’d said, “I need to talk to you and Laura.”

“We’ll be there in a few minutes,” Rodney replied frowning confused at Laura’s questioning look.

“What’s wrong?” Laura asked.

Rodney shrugged, “I don’t know. She sounded...strange.”

Laura and Radek shared a confused look as they continued on to the transporter to get back to the lab.

Rodney and Laura found Sha’re sitting waiting for them, her long dark hair was swept up in a tight ponytail to keep it out of her face and her eyes were slightly red as though she’d been crying. Radek had left them to call the mainland and check up on the scientists there while they talked to Sha’re.

“What’s wrong?” Laura asked as she moved to the other woman.

Sha’re licked her lips, “This is not a bad thing.”

“Then why have you been crying?” Rodney demanded, he didn’t like being around when women cried, especially women he was close to.

“John has just contacted me,” Sha’re explained softly, “While returning from the Jumper tests they received a distress signal.”

“From who?” Laura asked intently, she could feel Sha’re was working up to something and moved to Rodney’s side.

Sha’re swallowed and took a deep breath, “Jeannie.”

“That’s impossible,” Rodney stated flatly, angrily.

“I have been thinking the same thing but Thor did a DNA test to check and it is Jeannie. John is bringing her home,” Sha’re replied, “They should be here soon and Thor will be sending them straight to the infirmary. Are you coming?”

Rodney looked at her as though she was insane before he waved her forward falling in behind her as he gripped Laura’s hand. Laura simply squeezed back and stayed silent throughout the entire trip to the infirmary.

***********************************************************************

Bright light filled the small infirmary room where Janet, Rodney, Laura and Sha’re were waiting, it faded it revealed the two people they were waiting for. The moment Jeannie realised she was back on Atlantis she moved to her brother.

“Mer,” she whispered as he hung back for a second, letting out a squeak as he hugged her suddenly.

After several minutes Rodney let her go and looked into her eyes, “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine, Mer,” she assured him, “And in a few minutes Janet will tell you that.”
Rodney nodded before he hugged her again. When he released her Jeannie found Laura at her side.

“You have no idea how good it is to see you,” Laura told the other woman as they embraced.

“I know, trust me,” Jeannie laughed, she turned to Sha’re and let out a cry, “You’ve had the baby.”

Sha’re nodded, “Yes.”


“We have a son,” Sha’re told her, “Melbourne Kasuf Jackson. Dan’iel has him just now as he is a little fussy. Once Janet has given you a clean bill of health I will bring him to see you.”

“Great,” Jeannie smiled, grimacing slightly as she realised she still had to face a medical along with what she was sure would be a ton of questions.


Rodney moved to his sister once more before they left and hugged her again. As he let her go Jeannie took her seat on the bed watching them leave. She took a deep breath stopping herself from running after them because she knew they were just outside and she would see them soon.

Daniel brought the now sleeping Mel into the infirmary where he found his wife sitting with Rodney and Laura. She happily accepted her sleeping child into her arms, smiling as Daniel leaned slightly behind her. Sha’re rested her head against his hip as he started gently playing with her hair.

After a while John joined them to wait, his father had decided to go get something to eat rather than intrude on the reunion. Jack appeared a few minutes later and silently took the final seat.

Finally Janet appeared and chuckled at the group waiting there, “She’s fine but I’m keeping her here for the night.”

Sha’re motioned to Janet to wait before she turned to her husband, “I will join you in a few moments.”

Daniel nodded and followed the others in to see Jeannie. Once they were alone Sha’re turned to Janet.

“She was well fed whilst there,” Janet told Sha’re, “There’s no sign of sexual assault. She has several bruises on her back that are fading but from everything I can see she’s fine. My full report will be on your desk in a few hours.”

“Good,” Sha’re sighed, “Do you have any idea about the woman we buried?”

Janet shrugged, “I’ll have to do a proper autopsy for that.”

“Then we shall arrange that to happen as soon as possible,” Sha’re replied, “For now I am going to introduce Jeannie to Mel.”

Jeannie laughed as Jack engulfed her in a bear hug the moment he was at her side.
“You look good, kiddo,” Jack told her, “We’ve missed you.”

As he let her go Daniel took his place and hugged her too.

“Where’s the baby?” Jeannie demanded of Daniel.

“Sha’re has him,” he replied with a smile, “She’ll be here in a minute.”

Jeannie nodded, smiling as Rodney pulled a seat right up to her side while John and Jack stood against the wall, “I’m not going to disappear, Mer.”

Rodney shrugged, “I just wanted a seat.”

Laura laughed as she settled against him, “He’s getting old you know.”

“Hey,” Rodney cried indignantly as everyone laughed, “Why are you marrying me if I’m old?”

“What?” Jeannie gasped, staring at her brother as he grimaced realising what he’d just said. Laura and Rodney had decided not to tell Jeannie their news until she was out of the infirmary.

“Laura agreed to marry me,” Rodney gave a soft smile as his sister motioned him over.

She grabbed him in a hug before pulling Laura to her, “Oh I’m so happy for you guys. That’s fantastic news.”

“I see Rodney and Laura told you their news,” Sha’re stated as she walked in.

Jeannie chuckled before she let out a long sigh as she saw the little boy resting in her friend’s arms, “Sha’re, he’s beautiful.”

“Yes, he is,” Sha’re replied sharing a smile with her husband as she placed the boy in Jeannie’s arms.

Jeannie smiled as she looked down at the baby boy she was holding before looking round at the people standing around her bed. At Jack who had managed to get Janet over to join them away from her work and was teasing her about something making her laugh. At Daniel with his arms wrapped around Sha’re’s waist, pulling her so she was leaning back against him and both were smiling as they looked at their son sleeping peacefully in Jeannie’s arms. At her big brother Mer and his fiancé who were bickering good-naturedly back and forth as Laura sat in his lap. Finally at John who had said very little since they’d returned but who’s presence had been almost constant since he’d found her. As she looked at John he gave her his trademark cocky grin and she smiled back.

She was home.
Chapter 51

Jacob nodded to Bra’tac as the old man shouted encouragement to the men running the assault course they had set up near the village. They’d been training since sunrise, and any idea they had of how good they were had been well and truly destroyed since they’d been under Bra’tac’s command.

“I will not let you do this,” a sharp voice made Jacob frown, he recognised Halling’s voice but in all the time he’d known the man he’d never heard him raise his voice.

“What’s going on?” Jacob demanded as he moved to find a group of the Athosians and a team from the city around Jeannie McKay’s grave.

“They are attempting to defile Jeannie’s rest,” Halling snapped, “We will not allow them to do this.”

Jacob looked at the man who appeared to be in charge of the group, “Why has Sha’re ordered this?”

“Because it’s not Jeannie,” Radek appeared from the Jumper, “Jeannie is in the city, she was abducted so we need to know who we buried.”

The Athosians all started to talk and Halling looked at Radek, “She is safe?”

Radek nodded, “I’ll tell her to come see you all as soon as she’s settled.”

Halling smiled slightly.

Jeannie sighed as she opened her eyes to see the private room in the infirmary that Janet had given her to sleep in. She stretched with a sigh relaxing for a few moments; Janet had kicked everyone out after about half an hour though she did make sure she got to hold Mel for a few minutes.

“Good morning,” Carson appeared, a smile gracing his face as he looked down at her, “It’s wonderful to see you again.”

Jeannie smiled, “You too, Carson. But as nice as it is can I get out of here?”

The doctor chuckled, “As soon as Rodney gets here to take you to breakfast.”

“I know the way,” Jeannie told him with a slight grimace.

“Maybe,” Carson replied as he handed her the clothes they’d got Laura to bring for Jeannie, “But he wants to do this and you know your brother, he’s going to coddle you for a good while.”

Jeannie shook her head but there was a very slight smile on her lips, “Okay. Give him a call while I get dressed.”

As she sat up properly Carson moved and gave her a hug, “You’ve been missed.”

He disappeared and Jeannie pulled on the clothes before sitting on the bed to wait for her brother.

Daniel smiled to himself as he listened to Sha’re sing to herself as she took a shower, it was an Abydonian drinking song – something Kasuf would have been appalled to discover she knew and
Daniel watched as Mel squirmed slightly in his arms.

“You want to dance?” Daniel asked his son before he started moving the child slightly to the beat.

As Sha’re finished her song Daniel rested Mel back in his cot, he slipped into the other room and held the towel ready for his wife.

“You want something.” Sha’re noted as she stepped out of the shower to find him there, smiling as he wrapped the towel around her.

“Why would you think that?” Daniel asked innocently as he gently kissed her bare shoulder.

Sha’re pressed a finger to his chest pushing him back, “Because I know you very well, my husband. What do you want?”

“You,” he replied with a suggestive smile making her frown at him, “Teal’c offered to babysit for the evening and let us have some time alone.”

Sha’re blanched, “No.”

“Honey,” Daniel gently rested his hand on her shoulder but she shrugged him away.

“Not yet, Dan’iel,” she whispered, “I need to know he is with either you or me just now. I just cannot...I need...”

“It’s okay,” Daniel soothed, pulling her to him, “It’s okay, I’m sorry. I’ll thank him and say no.”

Sha’re held onto him taking deep calming breaths before she slipped out her husband’s arms and headed back into the main room. She reached out and gently stroked her son’s cheek before she started to dress.

“Honey,” Daniel said as he lifted Mel again, “Are you okay?”

Sha’re nodded sadly, pulling her sweater on she sat at his side, “I trust Teal’c but I...”

“What?” Daniel asked passing their son to her.

Sha’re stared down at the chubby little face, his eyes were wide open as he followed her voice, his hands waving before he decided to suck on the left hand.

“I know it is silly,” she sighed gently rocking her son, “But I am so afraid if he is not with me or you then he will disappear.”

“I understand,” Daniel rested his arm around her shoulders drawing her close gently, “Don’t worry about it. Are you okay with me taking him while you talk to Jeannie?”

Sha’re nodded, “I do not want any distractions while we find out what happened to her.”

“Do you know I know my way around this city already?” Jeannie said as Rodney escorted her through the corridors.

Rodney shrugged, “I wanted to walk with you.”

“Okay,” she rolled her eyes but continued to walk at his side. Silence descended on the siblings for a
while before Jeannie turned to him, “I can’t believe you’re actually getting married.”

Rodney shrugged, “I love her.”

Jeannie slipped her arm through his, “Good. What did you do with my things? There’s something there I want...” she trailed off, “Never mind.”

“Your room’s there,” Rodney shrugged, “We never cleared it.”

“Why?”

Rodney shrugged again, “Because I didn’t have the courage to actually do it and I couldn’t let anyone else touch your things.”

Jeannie hugged her brother tightly, “Oh, Mer. Come on then, I’ve something I want to give you.”

Bemused Rodney followed her to her room; he hadn’t been able to come here since he thought she was dead. He stood watching as she buzzed about ecstatic to be back in her own place once more and he smiled as she gave a quick cry of delight when she lifted her jewellery box. Rodney remembered the Christmas their mother had given Jeannie the box and how much his sister had loved it.

“Here,” Jeannie took his hand and transferred something into it.

“What?” Rodney asked confused as he opened his hand, “Mom’s ring!”

“She gave me it when she thought I was going to marry Caleb,” Jeannie explained, “I want you to give it to Laura.”

Rodney stared at the golden band with a small diamond he held between his fingers before he looked up at his sister, “Thank you.”

“Breakfast,” Jeannie decided smiling as he wrapped his arm around her shoulders to give her a quick hug.

Jeannie entered the conference room to tell her story both relieved and confused to see only Sha’re and Jack sitting waiting for her.

“Am I early?” she asked.

Sha’re shook her head and motioned Jeannie to a seat, “No. We thought it would be easier for you to have only us here. We will summarise any important facts for the council.”


“With his father,” Sha’re replied, “I did not want any distractions while we speak.”

“And you’ll tell Daniel everything later,” Jeannie gave her a grin as Jack chuckled.

Sha’re laughed as well, “I only tell him what I feel he needs to know, it is the way it has always been.”

Jeannie laughed before she took a deep breath and started talking.
"Jeannie woke with a start.

“John?” she called, looking around the strange grey cell, “John?”

The door opened and Jeannie jumped up, she looked at the small bed she’d been lying on before her mind focussed on whoever was coming through the door. The man who walked in had an air about him, an air of authority reminding her of Jack O’Neill except there was also something that frightened her because the Jack she knew, even when he was angry, she never felt intimidated by him.

“Who are you?” Jeannie demanded pressing against the wall.

The man smiled at her, but it wasn’t a pleasant smile it felt feral and Jeannie swallowed nervously.

“Welcome, Jeannie,” the man said, his voice soft but there was no mistaking the tone of arrogance and expectation he would be obeyed, “I am Atacus Kolya and you are now a servant of the Great Genii Empire.”

“Like hell I am,” she snapped, “Where is my friend?”

The man gave a low chuckle, “I’m assuming you mean the man, John I believe you called him. I’m sorry to say, Jeannie but he’s dead.”

“No,” she breathed shaking her head.

The man shrugged, “The crash you had was a bit too much for him.”

Jeannie swallowed trying not to show how upset she was.

“How do you know my name?” she said sharply.

Kolya laughed, “When you and your friends trespassed on our territory we watched. You are extremely intelligent, Jeannie and now you will use that to further the cause of the Genii.”

“From what I worked out,” Jeannie continued, “They got a lucky shot in when they managed to bring the Jumper down. They used some kind of gas to knock both myself and John out.”

“How’d they fool us into thinking you were dead?” Jack asked.

Jeannie shrugged, “I don’t know. I wish I did but it was the one thing I can’t work out and I’ve been trying since John told me on the journey home.”

“Is there anything else you can think of?” Sha’re asked.

Jeannie shrugged, “No. It was pure luck I was scanning when Thor’s ship passed. I think we need to keep an eye out for the Genii, they’re not going to announce their presence and they seem to think they rule the galaxy.”

“Dealt with people like that before,” Jack reminded her, he shrugged, “I’ll need you to give me as much information on their military that you managed to work out.”

“No problem,” Jeannie nodded.
Sha’re listened as Jeannie laid out the things that had happened while she was a captive, relieved that Jeannie appeared to be dealing with her experience quite well. Sha’re frowned, that wasn’t right.

“Jeannie,” Sha’re said, “I am going to give Dan’iel everything you brought back with you and I would like you to work with him. Although I believe Rodney wants you to continue working on the Star.”

“What’s the Star?” Jeannie asked confused.

Sha’re and Jack shared a smile.

“We named the ship finally,” Jack told her, “Sha’re named it ‘Jeannie’s Star’.”

Jeannie stared at him, “What?”

“The only reason we managed to get the vessel working is because of you,” Sha’re explained with a smile, “Most people simply refer to it as the ‘Star’.”

“I’m touched,” Jeannie breathed not sure what else to say.

Jack clapped her shoulder not surprised that she squirmed a little, “Well that’s us finished. If you think of anything else...”

Jeannie nodded, “I’ll arrange to work with Daniel later on today.”

“In a few days,” Sha’re replied, “Until Janet agrees you are on....what was it again, Jack?”

“Medical leave,” Jack told them.

“Go,” Sha’re dismissed Jeannie, “Relax and spend some time with your brother. He missed you.”

Jeannie nodded and with a quick smile to them headed to get some lunch.

*********************************************

Sha’re looked up from the reports she was reading as Daniel gently kissed her cheek, “Good afternoon, my love.”

“How did things go with Jeannie?” Daniel asked as he sat in the spare seat in her office before handing their son over to her.

“Fine,” Sha’re said as she held Mel close, “I want you to work with her on the things she found regarding the Andurians. Now I believe someone will want his lunch very soon, and so will Mel.”

“Funny,” Daniel gave her a mock glare.

Sha’re laughed and rested Mel on her shoulder as she stood, “Come on. I should feed this little one.”

Daniel rested his arm around her waist guiding his wife through the corridors of the city to their rooms. Once they arrived Sha’re sat down and placed her son at her breast so he could get some lunch while Daniel made them some food. As she fed her son Sha’re thought about Jeannie. Being held captive and thinking there was no hope was something Sha’re knew about, she glanced over to her husband as she thought back to when she’d been rescued.
“Mrs Jackson,” Dr McKenzie said as Sha’re sat stiffly across from him, he could see how nervous and uncertain she was as she kept her hands clasped on her lap and her head tilted down slightly so he couldn’t look in her eyes, “Do you know why you’re here?”

Sha’re licked her lips, “General Hammond wanted me to speak with you before he allows me to return home to Abydos.”

McKenzie smiled at the soft reply, “Precisely. He is concerned by how you’re handling what happened to you at the hands of the Goa’uld.”

“Dan’iel said that you wish me to tell you what happened to me and how I feel about it,” Sha’re said, every word was chosen precisely to give away as little as possible.

McKenzie wanted to laugh, he’d had similar conversations with her husband, “Mrs Jackson, I’m not convinced by the act.”

“Act?”

“You are pretending to be a demure, quiet young woman as you believe I think you are considering what we know of your people, when I know for a fact that you speak your mind,” McKenzie smiled at her, “Come with me.”

Confused Sha’re stood and followed him out of his office, they entered another room and Sha’re saw a large window which looked in on where Daniel was sitting along with Jack and Janet. She’d been surprised to find them here when they arrived but discovered it was just a coincidence as they both had business in the hospital that day.

“I want you to look at the people in there,” McKenzie told her, “I can tell that you don’t feel right talking to me about anything that happened. I’m a stranger to you.”

“I...” Sha’re whispered, taken aback by his announcement.

“But there are people here that you can talk to,” he continued, “Have you told Dr...your husband any details of what happened to you?”

“Some,” Sha’re bit her lip.

“The things you aren’t comfortable telling him,” McKenzie said, “Then there are people here who are willing to talk when you need to.”

“But I do not know...”

“Sha’re,” McKenzie cut her off, “Do you know why both Dr Frasier and Colonel O’Neill are here today?”

“They have work to do,” Sha’re said confused.

McKenzie chuckled, “Actually both weren’t due here until tomorrow. They came here to support you.”

Sha’re turned and looked back into the small room watching as Jack and Janet talked to Daniel. Since she’d arrived on Earth both had been incredibly supportive of her and Daniel.

“Now,” McKenzie rested his hand on her arm, “We’re done so you can head home or personally I
"think you should get your husband to take you for a nice lunch."

"I don’t understand," Sha’re frowned, "I thought...

He smiled at her as they started to walk to the waiting room, "You don’t need me. You need your family and friends to make you feel safe. But if in a few months you want to talk I am always happy to help."

Sha’re thanked him before moving to her husband’s side smiling as Daniel wrapped his arm around her.

Sha’re looked down on her son as she thought back, she’d been saddened to hear that McKenzie had been killed in a car crash while she and Daniel had been on Abydos – before the Andurians had come.

She had always been grateful to him for the advice he’d given her. Sha’re looked up to look at her husband and smiled, he’d been right.

**************************************************************************************

Jeannie walked through the corridors of the city smiling at everyone who welcomed her home, there were people she barely even knew telling her how fantastic it was that she’d come back.

Finally she saw someone she wanted to see, “Hi, Mer.”

Jeannie smiled as her brother gave her a hug, “Are you going to continue doing that or is it out of your system.”

“Don’t worry,” he chuckled, “It’s out of my system.”

“Good,” Jeannie grinned at him, “Come on, I’m hungry.”

The siblings headed to the mess in silence but as they passed a balcony Jeannie suddenly slipped outside. Worried Rodney followed finding her leaning against the banister and taking deep breaths.

“Jeannie?”

She turned to him, “I just wanted to breathe the air,” as he continued to look at her worriedly Jeannie shook her head, “I’m fine.”

“I didn’t say a word,” Rodney protested.

“Your look said everything, Mer,” his sister reminded him, “It’s just a little overwhelming and I’m trying to reacclimatise to being back here.”

“Whatever you say,” Rodney replied.

“Let’s go get lunch,” Jeannie rolled her eyes at him.

Rodney nodded and motioned her to lead the way, they started walking again and Jeannie turned to him.

“I’m fine, Mer. You don’t have to worry about me.”
Rodney shrugged, “Maybe not but just let me for a while, okay? Big brother’s prerogative.”

Jeannie nodded giving him a quick hug, “Okay.”

As they continued walking in silence Jeannie sighed to herself, she was sure being home was meant to feel better than this.
Chapter 52

Janet took a deep breath as the coffin was placed on the table in front of her. She wasn’t looking forward to doing this but at least she knew that the person in the box wasn’t Jeannie. Carson appeared at her side, they’d agreed that they’d do the autopsy together and finally they opened the box. Janet grimaced at what she saw.

The body had started to decompose, not much as it hadn’t been that long, enough to show that it was a dead body but the face, the face was Jeannie’s complete and whole, with no signs of decomposition.

“That’s not right,” Carson murmured, he rested his hand on Janet’s shoulder, “I’ll look.”

She nodded relieved; Janet wasn’t squeamish, in her job she couldn’t be, but the thought of finding how Jeannie’s face was staring at her just made her stomach turn in a way it hadn’t since her first year in med school.

Carson gently ran his hand over the face frowning as he felt something on the neck of the body, grimacing at the feel of the skin below his fingers Carson pulled off a small rectangular device. As soon as it was removed from the body the owner’s original face appeared before them.

The doctors glanced at one another before looking at the device Carson was holding.

Jeannie walked through the corridors of the city relieved there was no one floating around here. She wanted to be alone just now to get used to being here again because no matter how fantastic it felt at first to be here she just felt unsteady now.

She wanted to feel safe, she wanted to feel the way she used to but she also wanted to find a dark corner and cry.

“Jeannie?”

Jeannie sighed as she heard someone call to her, she stopped and turned surprised to find John’s father walking towards her.

“Mr Sheppard,” she greeted him with a small smile.

“It’s Patrick,” he admonished her; “I thought we already agreed that?”

“Sorry,” Jeannie told him, “Patrick.”

There was silence between them for a few minutes as Jeannie tried to work out a way to get away from him without seeming rude.

“How are you settling in?” Patrick asked her as they started to walk.

Jeannie shrugged, “Fine. I’m home. My brother is here and my friends are here and...”

“And you’re wandering around by yourself,” Patrick noted, he patted her arm, “I was hoping you’d do something for me?”

Jeannie sighed, “It depends, what is it?”
Patrick laughed, “Help me find my room. I’m completely lost – again.”

“You could use the transporter,” Jeannie reminded him opening the door to the one just behind him.

Patrick shuddered, “There’s something about the thought of being pulled apart at the molecular level and being put back together somewhere else.”

“Oh,” Jeannie chuckled; she tilted her head, “Come on.”

Patrick offered her his arm which Jeannie took with a smile, “Now, while I have your full attention, have you got any good stories about John?”

“I take it by good you mean embarrassing?” Jeannie asked innocently.

Patrick nodded, “Exactly.”

********************************************************************************

Sha’re finished reading over Rodney’s report on his latest find, she could feel his enthusiasm through the words on the page and laughed softly to herself. She quickly typed an email to him letting him know he had permission to continue working on it although the repairs to the Star had to come first. Sha’re checked the time and frowned as she realised how late it was, glancing back to where Mel was lying in his small cot.

“You need a bath, young man,” Sha’re told the boy, “Will we go and get you some dinner then a nice bath?”

Mel sneezed in response making her laugh. Lifting her son into her arms Sha’re took a deep breath smelling her son’s hair as he settled against her shoulder. She quickly let Lisa know that she was finished for the evening before she started along the corridors.

“Jeannie?” she called seeing her friend wandering nearby.

“Hi, Sha’re,” Jeannie said softly before she smiled at the little boy, “Hi, Mel.”

Sha’re waved her son’s hand at her friend, “Are you going for some food?”

“I’ve eaten,” Jeannie replied, “I’m just going to go to my room, read up on a few things and get some rest.”

Sha’re nodded but as Jeannie started to leave she caught her arm, “You know I was once host to a Goa’uld.”

Jeannie nodded with suspicion in her eyes at where this was going.

“I know how you feel right now,” Sha’re whispered, “I know you want to feel settled but I also know that you are waiting for this to end and you will open your eyes to find you have suddenly returned to your imprisonment.”

Jeannie stared at her, trying so hard to control the tears that she found were suddenly threatening her, “How did you...”

“How did I feel that I was safe?” Sha’re finished the question, “My husband. When I felt as though my rescue was a dream I held onto him. My family. When we returned to Abydos I made sure that I was surrounded by those I loved.”
Jeannie nodded, “I’ll try that.”

“Good,” Sha’re moved and gave her friend a one armed hug, “I am always here to talk to if you need me.”

Jeannie nodded, “Thanks. I’m still going to bed though; it’s been a strange day.”

They said their goodnights before Sha’re continued on, Mel had decided by now he was hungry and was getting grumpy. Sha’re absently tried to calm him as she thought about her friend wondering if there was possibly more she could do to help.

Daniel glanced up as Jack entered his small office, “What’s up?”

“I’m looking for T,” Jack said, “Thought he might be floating round here.”

Daniel shook his head, “Nope, why don’t you just call him?”

Jack shrugged, “He mentioned he might be babysitting for you guys.”

“Ah, Sha’re didn’t want to leave Mel,” Daniel told his friend, “Not yet anyway.”

Jack frowned confused, “It’s Teal’c. Does she think he won’t be able to handle the squirt?”

Shaking his head Daniel sighed, “She’s lost two children, Jack. Mel is her baby and she’s not ready to let anyone other than me or her look after him just yet. You have to understand that.”

Jack shrugged, “Yeah.”

“Jack, I have a ton of things to go over,” Daniel reminded his friend, “Not to mention that Sha’re’s given me the stuff Jeannie brought back as well so unless you’re here for a reason...”

Jack shrugged again, “Not really. I take it Sha’re told you what Jeannie said.”

“What she thought I needed to know,” Daniel replied with a slight smile, “My wife is quite the politician.”

Jack chuckled, “It’s getting late, Danny. There’s time to work on this later.”

Daniel stared at his friend for a few moments before nodding and standing, “You’re right. See you later, Jack.”

Sha’re smiled as Mel burped, “Good boy. You are such a good boy.”

Her son gurgled in response before he started to suck on one hand. Sha’re smiled as her son seemed so contented and knew that the moment he was put in the water for his bath he’d scream. As she thought about this Sha’re suddenly had an idea. She placed her relaxed son in his crib for the moment before she started running the large bath in the next room.

Making sure the temperature was set correctly for her baby boy Sha’re returned to the room and quickly undressed, pulling her robe on she set the changing mat next to the bath before she returned to her son.
“Are you going to have a bath with Mamma?” Sha’re cooed to him, “Does that sound fun?”

Mel gurgled kicking his legs as she freed him from the confinement of his babygro and diaper, Sha’re lifted him into her arms and carried him to the bath. Gently she set him on the mat before she removed her robe and slipped into the warm water. Carefully she lifted her son into her arms and lowered him into the water with her, Sha’re waited for the scream that usually accompanied Mel’s bathtime but it didn’t come.

He lay happily in his mother’s arms as she sat back against the wall of the bath while gently dipping him into the water. Once he was acclimatised Sha’re started to tenderly wash him, smiling as he didn’t cry the way he normally did.

“Sha’re?” Daniel’s voice broke through the room, “Where are you?”

“Mel and I are having a bath,” Sha’re called back, feeling her son bounce slightly in her arms at the sound of his father’s voice.

“Oh,” Daniel said as he opened the door before stopping, “Oh!”

Sha’re smiled up at her husband, “I thought this would make sure he did not cry during his bath.”

Daniel smiled back, “Is there room for me?”

Daniel slipped into the warm water and moved behind his wife and son, letting Sha’re lean against him as she gently washed her son’s hair.

“That’s a good boy,” Sha’re murmured to her son who was beginning to yawn, “It is a shame we cannot do this every time we need to bathe him. This is the best he has ever behaved during his bath.”

Daniel chuckled, “It probably has more to do with the fact you’re holding him than anything else.”

Sha’re turned and place Mel into his father’s arms, “Well you hold him while I get a towel.”

She slipped out of the bath and wrapped a towel around herself first before she took one for her son, Daniel gently rested the boy in Sha’re’s arms watching as she dried him before she disappeared into the other room. Daniel lay back in the warm water listening to his wife talk softly to their son while she put him to bed.

“He is asleep,” Sha’re told him as she sat at the side of the bath still wrapped in the towel.

Daniel moved to her, “Are you coming back in.”

“I am dry now, Dan’iel,” she reminded him teasingly.

Daniel pouted, “But my hair still needs washing.”

Sha’re chuckled as he stretched up and kissed her, Sha’re moaned softly as Daniel pulled away the towel she was wearing and lifted her into his arms. Sha’re wrapped her arms around him as he slid them back into the warm water.

“Maybe I will join you again,” she murmured before kissing him once more.

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“Where’ve you been?” Rodney asked Laura the moment she entered their rooms.

“Writing reports and sorting schedules for my self-defence class,” she replied, pausing on her way to change to kiss him quickly, “I’ve been neglecting things a little lately.”

“Oh,” Rodney replied, she disappeared into the other room for a few minutes, “I got us some dinner.”

“Fantastic,” Laura called back to him, “I’m starving. Who knew writing schedules could make you so hungry.”

Rodney smiled as he set up the meal on the small table for them; he reached into his pocket and felt the ring his sister had given him. His proposal to Laura had been a spur of the moment thing, the fear of losing her after losing his sister had prompted it and as time had passed Rodney had begun to wish he’d taken more time and care in proposing to her. Laura wasn’t someone who cared about the fancy things like flowers and candy but Rodney wanted to be able to give her something special.

Laura let out a long sigh as she reappeared dressed in loose jeans and one of Rodney’s t-shirts, her hair was loose hanging around her shoulders, “That feels better.”

“You know you don’t need to dress so formally,” Rodney reminded her, “It’s not like anyone cares.”

“I care,” she reminded him as she took her seat, “It makes me feel as though I’m at work and it lets me distinguish between work and home.”

“Home,” Rodney whispered thoughtfully.

Laura smiled, “Here. With you.”

They ate together talking generally; Laura giving him confused glances as he kept staring into space every so often. Finally they finished eating and Rodney cleared everything away.

“What’s going on?” Laura demanded finally.

Rodney froze looking at her with wide eyes, “What do you mean?”

“You’re not acting the way you usually do,” Laura told him, “And it’s worrying me. So either you’ve done something, or you’re about to, and don’t know how to tell me.”

Rodney swallowed and walked to her side taking the ring out of his pocket holding it tightly in his hand, to Laura’s surprise he dropped onto one knee as she stared at him in astonishment.

“Rodney?”

He took her hand in his and gently slid the ring onto her finger, “I wanted to give you this.”

Laura examined the diamond ring on her finger, “It’s gorgeous. How...where...how?”

“It belonged to my mother,” Rodney told her as he took his seat again, “Jeannie gave it to me to give to you.”

Laura stared at the ring, “I can’t take this, Rodney. This is...it’s...”

“It’s yours,” Rodney told her, “This is forever, Laura. I believe that, so you can take the ring.”
Laura bit her lip before she moved and sat on his lap wrapping her arms around his neck, “So you just gave me the most gorgeous ring, what can I give you?”

Before Rodney could reply Laura kissed him.

*********************************************

John lay staring at the ceiling; it had been a strange kind of day. After finding Jeannie alive he’d felt amazingly uplifted and had stayed as close to her as possible until Janet had kicked them out of the infirmary to let Jeannie sleep.

Then this morning he’d woken up and felt that he didn’t want to crowd her. Jeannie had just got her life back and didn’t need him hovering over her because he was scared she would disappear the moment.

John had spent the entire day trying not to go anywhere near her, trying to give her the space she needed to get used to being back in Atlantis. He’d ended up watching her from a distance, smiling as he saw her and Rodney walk through the halls of the city teasing one another. Though seeing Jeannie and his father in deep conversation did worry him especially as they both seemed to be laughing a lot. Finally after getting very little work done, John had decided to retire for the evening.

He just wished he could get some sleep.

Jeannie sat in her room idly playing with the tag on her sweater. She’d planned on getting some sleep, happy to be back in her own room once more but after a few minutes she started to feel strange and restless.

As she thought back to Sha’re’s advice Jeannie took a deep breath. She didn’t want to disturb her brother, he would have given Laura the engagement ring by now and she couldn’t intrude on such a happy moment. So Jeannie started towards John’s room.

He’d been a constant presence on the journey back to Atlantis, never leaving her until she’d been safe in the infirmary and ready to get some sleep. So the fact she hadn’t seen him all day confused her.

Jeannie hesitated for a second before she reached out and touched the panel for the door chime. As silence greeted her Jeannie turned to leave before she heard the whoosh of the door opening and turned back to find John standing there.

“Hey,” John greeted her, “I thought you’d be asleep.”

Jeannie shrugged, “I can’t sleep. I thought I’d go for a walk and I wound up here.”

They stood in silence for a while before John realised that they were standing in the hall and motioned her inside. Jeannie walked around the room scanning to see what insight it would give her into the man she sometimes felt she barely knew.

“What do you want?” John asked, he leaned against a wall watching her drift around the small space.

“I thought it would feel better,” Jeannie sighed softly, “I can’t seem to relax.”

John moved to her, his hands sitting gently on her shoulders, “It’ll pass. You just need some time to get used to being here again.”
“I’m so afraid, John,” Jeannie cried suddenly, “I’m so afraid if I go to sleep I’ll wake up back there. And you’ll be dead.”

“I’m here,” John reminded her tenderly, “I’m right in front of you.”

“I know,” Jeannie cried, “I know but I still feel that it’s going to get ripped away from me at any moment. If I close my eyes for a second Atlantis will disappear and that bastard Kolya will be standing laughing at my attempts to go home.”

“You are home,” John reminded her.

“Then why does it feel like I’m not safe?”

Jeannie suddenly buried her face against his chest, holding onto him as she tried not to cry. John’s arms wrapped around her gently rocking as he relished being able to feel her pressed against him.

After a while he let her go and placed some cushions on the ground so that they could look out the window at the stars, Jeannie sank onto them, smiling as John took a seat at her side before he wrapped a large blanket around them. Jeannie rested her head against his shoulder again as John gently stroked her arm.

“How do you feel now?” John asked softly into her blonde curls.

Jeannie let out a soft sigh, “I feel safe.”

John smiled to himself and hugged her slightly tighter, “Then you can stay here until you feel safe again.”

Jeannie looked up at him with a grateful smile, “Thank you,” she breathed before resting her head against his chest again.

On impulse John gently kissed the top of her head before he settled down to watch over her as she slept.
Sunlight streamed in through the window of John’s quarters. John groaned slightly as he woke up feeling a weight against his arm and chest, his arm was numb but John didn’t want to wake the woman sleeping at his side.

When Jeannie shifted uncomfortably in her sleep John softly murmured to her trying to soothe the bad dreams that were attacking her. As she settled back against him John started to think about how good this felt and before he could stop his mind started going over what it would be like to wake up beside her every morning.

“John?” the sleepy question made him smile as Jeannie looked up at him.

“Morning,” he smiled down at her, “Sleep well?”

Jeannie closed her eyes wincing in embarrassment, “You should have woken me.”

John shrugged, “You looked too peaceful, I didn’t want to wake you.”

Jeannie blushed and pulled away from him managing to stand, she yawned and stretched before looking down at where he was still sitting.

“We should go get some breakfast,” John suggested as he stretched, wincing at the crack.

Jeannie pushed her hand through her hair, “I need a shower first and some clean clothes.”

“Fine,” John stood, “You go get freshened up and I’ll meet you in the commissary in about half an hour.”

Jeannie nodded; she turned to leave before turning back to him, “Thank you, John for looking after me last night. I...I...” she trailed off.

John stepped to her and gently stroked her cheek, “It was the least I could do.”

Without thinking John leaned in and brushed his lips to hers in a soft kiss, when they parted Jeannie looked at him with a smile.

“I’ll see you at breakfast,” she breathed before leaving him standing.

When the door closed John moaned and rested his head against the wall; he had no chance of stopping this now. He was in love with her and there was no way he could pretend he wasn’t.

“Rodney, are you sure this thing is safe?” Sha’ré asked as she looked over the report.

“Of course it is,” Rodney rolled his eyes, “It’s a holographic imager, similar to the thing that gives us the history of this place. There’s nothing...” he paused before correcting himself, “It’s doubtful anything will go wrong with it.”

“Do you know how to work it?” Sha’ré smiled as he rolled his eyes, “I have to ask these things, Rodney. That is why they gave me this office.”

“Programming it shouldn’t be too hard,” Rodney explained, he tapped his fingers against the table,
“There are environmental basics already set in to the computer. You start with the type of place you’re trying to create, desert, ocean and then you work from there adding buildings or trees.”

Sha’re bit her bottom lip as she thought, “Could we recreate the Educational Complex?”

Rodney shrugged, “The bits we know, yes.”

“Alright,” Sha’re said, “Then we start getting together what people remember of it. Can you speak with one of your assistants and get them working on that?”

Rodney nodded, “I’ve started working on something to make sure it does do what I think it does.”

Sha’re laughed, “I will come by later if that is alright. I do not want to leave you alone too long.”

“I’m not going to blow anything up,” Rodney said affronted beforeshrugging, “Well not accidentally anyway.”

“We have the meeting just after lunch,” Sha’re reminded him with a smile, “Perhaps after that.”

Rodney nodded before sighing, “I haven’t even had breakfast yet. Can we go get that first?”

“You read my mind,” Sha’re smiled standing and taking his arm when he offered it, “I need to check on Mel anyway.”

Breakfast was nearing the end when Sha’re and Rodney arrived, Daniel and Laura were already there sitting talking as Mel rested happily in his father’s arms.

“Morning,” Laura greeted them, “That didn’t take as long as I thought it would.”

Sha’re chuckled, “Rodney has persuaded me that your find is worth looking into,” she turned to her husband, “Have you eaten?”

Daniel nodded, he gently kissed his son’s head before passing Mel to Sha’re, “And I have to go. Teal’c was noting how long it’s been since I’ve trained with him so I’m going to do an hour or so this morning.”

The other three laughed at his wry grimace.

“Thanks,” Daniel leaned over and kissed his wife, “I’ll see you at the meeting.”

Sha’re watched him go smiling as she saw Jeannie enter the room, she waved the other woman over to the table noting how she seemed more relaxed than she had when they’d spoken the day before.

“Morning,” Jeannie greeted them as she took her seat setting her breakfast down.

“Hey,” Laura beamed at her, laughing as Jeannie took a hold of her hand.

“Nice ring,” Jeannie told her, moving Laura’s hand so Sha’re could see the engagement ring now gracing Laura’s finger.

“That is beautiful,” Sha’re smiled at Laura before looking at Rodney, “You have wonderful taste.”

Rodney rolled his eyes, “It was our Mother’s ring.”
“That makes it all the more special,” Sha’re noted to them.

John walked into the mess spotting Jeannie instantly; he paused for a few seconds as he saw Rodney sitting at the same table as his sister. Unfortunately before John could get away Jeannie spotted him and waved him over.

“Hey,” John smiled at them.

Before anyone could answer Rodney was called over the P.A.

“I have to go,” Rodney grimaced; he checked his ear finding no radio, “Must have left it in the room. I’ll see you at the meeting,” he quickly kissed his fiancé before disappearing.

“At least I know it wasn’t something I said,” John noted as he took a seat, seeing Jeannie smile.

A cry from the side made them all turn to where Mel had decided he wasn’t happy, Sha’re tried to calm him but it wasn’t working for the moment.

“I am going to walk him for a while,” Sha’re said with a sigh, “I will see you all later.”

As she started out Laura decided to join the other woman leaving Jeannie and John alone again.

Sha’re looked around the table as everyone started to arrive for the meeting, it was time they stopped playing around and started planning how they were going to remove the Andurians from Earth.

She absently rocked from side to side as her son lay resting against her shoulder, just hanging happily as his mother murmured softly to him. Jack was sitting with Bra’tac and Ferretti deep in discussion whilst Laura, Janet and Cassie were laughing about something. Lorne wandered in, followed by Radek and Rodney. Next Daniel and Teal’c arrived in the middle of a conversation before Elizabeth and Steven were escorted in by Jacob, Carson and Martouf. Finally John and Jeannie arrived, they were talking quietly and Sha’re noticed Rodney watching them intently but the pair separated at the door and took seats at opposite sides of the table. Now that everyone had arrived Sha’re settled her sleeping son into the small crib sitting in the corner of the room before she took her seat again.

“Thank you all for coming,” Sha’re started, “We are all settled here, this is now our home but earth is still under the rule of Carter and the Andurians. We now have the Star, it is close to being fully operational and we know the Asgard are due to visit Earth in a few months so we need to start making plans.”

She paused and looked around the table, “What we need are ideas and a list of what we have that can help us stop the Andurians. So, the floor is open.”

“Well,” Janet started, “There is the device we found on the body we thought was Jeannie’s.”

Jeannie winced, giving Laura a grateful smile when she squeezed her arm.

“Your report stated that it appeared to only be able to create a still image?” Sha’re asked.

“True,” Carson said, “But we do have a few geniuses around us who may be able to upgrade it.”

“Rodney?”
Rodney tapped a pen against his lip, “Grodin is pretty good at reverse engineering, I’ll pass it to him.”

There were several nods around the table.

“Daniel,” Jack spoke up, “You’ve been studying the databases, is there anything in there that can help?”

Daniel rubbed his hand across his jaw in thought, “You do know there is a huge amount of information within the database. I’m getting my team to go through everything but it’s going to take time unless we have more specific searches.”

“What about the information I brought back?” Jeannie asked, rolling her eyes as several people looked at her worriedly, “It happened and I want something good to have come of it.”

Daniel shrugged, “There’s a lot in it and its taking time to go through.”

“Alright,” Sha’re interrupted, “We need to work on finding more specific searches. Rodney, what about your ‘holodeck’?”

Several chuckles rippled around the room and Rodney grinned, “As you know it can create any environment you want. We think it was either for research or training purposes.”

“We’re asking everyone who stepped inside the Educational Complex to give us what they remember of the layout,” Sha’re explained, “If we can create an accurate replica of it then we have a way to plan our attack against them.”

“Moving back to a previous topic, what about the Star?” Jacob spoke up, “What kind of capabilities does it have?”

“It has a hyperdrive,” Rodney told the older man, “Weapons system is extremely advanced, we’re still having some issues with the shielding capabilities and life support has a tendency to cut off when we power off the weapons so there are still a few things we need to fix but from what I know we can take on an Andurian vessel, maybe two at a time.”

“Unfortunately the earth is surrounded by ten of them,” Ferretti reminded them.

Rodney shrugged, “I know.”

“The Asgard want to know that Earth is being protected by the Andurians,” Elizabeth noted, she shrugged, “If what you’ve told me is correct they won’t recognise Dr Carter as anything but Andurian. Won’t that give the game away?”

“Assuming she doesn’t cloak herself again,” Daniel replied thoughtfully, “According to what we found the human version of Sam Carter that we knew was a disguise, it’s possible they have some way to recreate that.”

“So when the Asgard arrive, hey presto human in charge,” Jack said.

“Couldn’t we strip the disguise away?” Martouf asked speaking for the first time, “If it’s merely a disguise then surely there is a way to remove it.”

All heads turned to him and they all looked stunned.
“Why didn’t that occur to any of us?” Jack rolled his eyes before turning to his friend, “Daniel, how about that for a starting point for the students to research?”

“I think that’s a great idea,” Daniel smiled thoughtfully.

“Well,” Sha’re interrupted, “Unfortunately we have no more time as we all have other duties. This is the first of what is going to become a weekly occurrence. Lisa has scheduled everyone in already so there is no way of getting out of it. Thank you for coming.”

As Sha’re finished most stood and started out of the room, Daniel moved to his son who was now awake and sucking on his hand. Lifting the boy into his arms Daniel turned to see Sha’re standing with Rodney, Jeannie and Laura.

“Rodney has something to show me,” Sha’re told her husband, “Do you want to come along?”

Daniel shrugged and handed Mel to his mother before resting his arm around his wife’s waist and following Rodney through the corridor.

“John.”

Wincing slightly John turned to see his father coming towards him, “Hi, Dad.”

“You’re still avoiding me,” Patrick noted, smiling slightly at the guilty look that covered his son’s face. It was the same look he used to get once every week when John was a teenager before the guilt turned into rebellion, “Do you feel like getting some dinner?”

John hesitated before nodding, “Sure,” he grinned, “Though before that how about I take you for a ride in the Jumper?”

Patrick smiled suddenly, “Now that sounds like fun.”

The two men walked along the corridors of the city in silence for a few moments before Patrick turned to his son.

“How’s Jeannie?” Patrick asked, “She seemed despondent when I saw her yesterday.”

John shrugged, “She seems to be settling back in. Jeannie is a fighter, Dad and she has a lot of support around her.”

“Like...”

“Her brother, Laura,” John listed, “Janet, Sha’re, they’re all her friends.”

They reached the Jumper and John slid into the pilot’s seat, Patrick sat in the seat at his side and watched his son, waiting until the ship was skimming the clouds.

“What about you, John?” Patrick’s voice was soft.

John glanced over from the controls, “What about me?”

“You care for Jeannie,” Patrick broached seeing his son’s shoulders stiffen, “I can tell.”

John concentrated on the controls in front of him, “What makes you think that?” despite the drawl the tension in his shoulders betrayed him.
Patrick chuckled, “Because I know you, John. Your eyes gave you away when you arrived back on the ship.”

“Of course I care for her,” John replied, “She’s part of the ‘family’.”

Patrick frowned a little confused, “The what?”

John chuckled, “It’s what Sha’re calls the main group of us from when we were on Earth. We sort of bonded so she calls us the family. I’m kinda proud she includes me in it.”

“So you’re telling me you care for Jeannie like she’s your sister?” Patrick couldn’t get the disbelief out of his voice.

John sighed, “Dad.”

“John.

Setting the Jumper down on the beach John turned to his father, he let out a long breath, “I love her, Dad. I know it’s stupid but I can’t stop myself and she doesn’t feel the same way.”

“Are you sure about that?” Patrick asked, “Because I’ve talked to her and when I got her to tell me stories about you, the look in her eyes and the smile she had told me all I need to know.”

John paused as he stared off into the distance for a few minutes, “Things are more complicated than you know, Dad.”

Patrick noted, he rested his hand on his son’s shoulder, “Aren’t they always.”

Sha’re laughed as Rodney continued to describe some of his plans he’d come up with for the ‘Holodeck’. Her favourite was somewhere for him to teach Laura to ski which led to Jeannie and Rodney talking about when they were children learning to ice-skate. Sha’re liked to see Rodney like this when he was so relaxed and talking openly.

“Can you ice-skate?” Sha’re asked her husband.

Daniel let out an amused snort, “Honey, even when I lived in New York I never went anywhere near ice voluntarily. I hate the cold – like you.”

“I do not hate the cold,” Sha’re protested as the others laughed, “I just prefer to cuddle up with you under the covers.”

Daniel chuckled and kissed the top of her head, “Nice to know.”

“Come on,” Rodney told them, “We’re almost there. Put her down, Daniel.”

Laura theatrically sighed, “He’s such a romantic. I’m so lucky.”

Jeannie chuckled, “Maybe we can get Daniel to rub off on him.”

Laura gave Daniel a long look making him blush slightly before she shrugged, “We can only hope.”

“Ah, Sha’re,” Daniel moved his wife so she was blocking him from Laura.

Sha’re giggled and kissed his cheek, “I will protect you, my darling but you have to make it worth
Rodney stood outside what he had been calling a holodeck from the moment he found it fixing the program for the others following on.

“Are you ready?” Laura asked as she arrived.

Rodney nodded, “Just a few minutes. I want to make sure I’ve got this right for them.”

Laura chuckled, smiling as Jeannie arrived with the Jackson family. Mel was happily sucking on his hand gripping Daniel’s finger with his other hand.

“Okay,” Rodney told them as he opened the door, “Give me Mel.”

Sha’re looked at him shocked, “What?”

“Before I activate it I want you guys to close your eyes and I’d rather you not be holding a baby at the time,” Rodney explained, “Trust me.”

With a grimace Daniel managed to extract his finger from his son’s hand, Mel had a strong grip before Sha’re handed her little boy to the man standing there. Rodney held Mel against his shoulder before motioning everyone inside the room following them inside and closing the door behind them.

The room was empty, the walls and floor were white. The only part of the wall that wasn’t completely smooth was the control panel where Rodney was gently tapping the controls.

“Alright everyone,” Rodney said to them, “Close your eyes and don’t open until I say.”

“Are you able to hold Mel while you do this?” Sha’re asked worriedly.

Rodney rolled his eyes looking down at where Mel was gripping his jacket trying to get it into his mouth, “He’s fine. Just close your eyes.”

Nervously Sha’re shut her eyes feeling Daniel’s hand grip hers as he did the same. Laura and Jeannie at Rodney’s insistence both closed their eyes too and Rodney grinned at the little boy in his arms before he activated the room.

“Open your eyes,” Rodney told them watching the four stunned faces look around the bright desert landscape.

“Rodney,” Sha’re breathed as she looked around seeing the village to one side and the pyramid in the distance, “It is Abydos.”

Rodney grinned smugly as he handed Sha’re her son again, “I thought you might want to see it.”

“This is Mamma and Daddy’s home,” Sha’re cooed to her baby boy smiling as her husband wrapped his arm around them.

Laura moved to her fiancé and slid her arms around his waist, “Teddy bear,” she murmured to him before kissing his cheek.

Rodney smiled back at her before he looked at Sha’re, “What d’you think?”

“I think,” Sha’re turned to him determination in her brown eyes, “That we have the perfect tool to
plan our liberation.”
Chapter 54

The sound of a screaming baby greeted Sam as she entered the nursery. Across the room Wendy was walking up and down with one of the babies on her shoulder.

“Dr Carter,” Wendy greeted her over the screams when she saw Sam, “Sorry, BJ is a little upset.”

“I can see that,” Sam smiled slightly; the human traits were pushing through more and more these days, “Is there something wrong?”

“No,” Wendy sighed, “She just had some blood taken from her. None of the kids like it. She’ll calm down in a bit and I’ll return her to stasis.”

“I want you to hold off on returning her to stasis,” Sam told the young woman, “I’ve a few things to discuss with Dr Trig concerning her treatment.”

Wendy nodded, relieved as BJ’s cry became a whimper as she started to fall asleep. Gently the young woman placed the little girl into the crib and covered her with the pink blanket sitting there.

“If she’s going to be out of stasis I will need some help,” Wendy reminded Sam.

Sam nodded, “I’ll be arranging it once I know more. Have a good day, Wendy.”

“Samantha,” the council greeted her as they appeared on the screen in her office, “How is your camouflage treatment coming?”

“It’s working well,” Sam replied, “Caffison assures me it will only be a few more treatments before I will be undetectable to the Asgard as anything other than human.”

“Good,” Ithin nodded, “I’ve been looking over the progress of the main projects. I wanted to check a few things you’ve noted, firstly the child known as Baby Jackson. You have stated that you want to leave her out of stasis for the next few months?”

“Baby Jackson is the child of Daniel and Sha’re Jackson,” Sam explained, “The mother was once a Goa’uld host so there is Naquada in her system. Over the years we’ve taken samples of the child’s blood to try to work around our inability to use Lantean technology, we’re having some results but they’re not enough. Allowing the child to mature may give better samples to work with.”

Ithin nodded, “That is acceptable. Next, do we have any results yet with the breeding programme?”

“Unfortunately all subjects miscarry within the first few weeks,” Sam told them, “Out with the subjects the embryo starts to mature but never when implanted. We’ve been using the blood of the Jackson child for this also, another advantage of allowing her to mature.”

Ithin nodded, “Very well. Keep us informed of your progress in these areas. Finally the Asgard visit, I assume you have all the arrangements completed.”

“Most of the arrangements are being made by the corporation run by a man called Patrick Sheppard,” Sam told them, “He is with Weir and Caldwell on their mission to the finish arrangements with the Asgard now.”

“He is trustworthy?” Ithin questioned.
Sam nodded, “He believes completely in Samantha Carter, saviour of the human race. There’s nothing to worry about.”

“Then as soon as we no longer need to worry about the Asgard interfering,” Ithin continued, “We can stop doing things in secret and accelerate our plans without anyone trying to stop us.”

The next few weeks passed quickly and soon it was time for Elizabeth, Steven and Patrick to leave for their conference with the Asgard. John and Patrick walked slowly along the pier towards the pickup point.

“I need you to be careful,” John told his father, “I want to be able to come back to Earth once we get rid of the Andorrans and you to be there.”

Patrick chuckled, “It’s more than I could possibly have hoped for, after the last time we talked.”

“I was a headstrong, smartass idiot and I wish I could erase it,” John grimaced, “When you get back to Earth, tell David...tell him...”

“You miss him?”

John squirmed, “Yeah, I guess so.”

Patrick chuckled again, clapping his youngest son on the arm, “Will you do something for me?”

“It depends,” suspicion filled John’s voice.

“I’ve been watching you since I got here,” Patrick told John, “And since you found that girl alive and well you’ve been so much happier. I see how you are when she’s with you and I know you keep saying it’s complicated but it’s not.”

“Dad...”

“You love her,” Patrick continued, “So tell her because I’m pretty sure she feels the exact same way.”

“I’ll think about it,” John said evasively.

Patrick nodded knowing this was as close to a promise as he was going to get. Before John could step away Patrick hugged his son tightly, relieved to get a second chance with his son.

The city settled back down into its routine once Thor had taken their guests to their meeting with the Asgard council and for the next few weeks’ peace reigned.

“Shut it down,” Jeannie yelled as sparks flew from the console she was working at in the Stars engine room.

“I’m guessing that didn’t work,” Mark sighed as he looked at her.

Jeannie chuckled, she liked Mark. He was smart and worked well with her not to mention he made her laugh. All she really knew was he’d been with Radek’s group before they’d escaped Earth and
Rodney swore.

He couldn’t work out why this stupid thing wasn’t doing what he wanted it to do. They were trying to piece together a holographic representation of the Andurian Educational Complex but for some reason it wasn’t coming together as quickly as he’d hoped.

“Piece of crap,” Rodney kicked the wall before he rubbed his hand across his face in annoyance, he’d been sure he could have this done for the meeting tomorrow but it looked like he wasn’t even going to be close to having this ready.

“You know the wall did nothing to you,” Janet said making him spin, “I could find you something else to punch if you want?”

Rodney frowned at her wondering how long she’d been standing there, “I’m having a few issues.”

“I can tell,” Janet chuckled.

“Are you here for a reason, Janet?” Rodney demanded, “I have a lot of work to do.”

“You missed your scheduled appointment with me,” Janet told him, her teasing demeanour gone.

Rodney waved her away, “I was busy.”

“And if you want to leave this city again then you won’t be busy now,” Janet retorted.

“Janet...”

“Rodney,” she cut him off, “Both you and Daniel are due a check-up. He’s had his and if you don’t come with me now I will make your life miserable.”

He opened his mouth to retort when he recalled how friendly Janet was with his fiancée. With a sigh Rodney shut down the computer and grabbed his things.

“Fine,” he sighed, “But can we get this over with as fast as possible. I have a lot to do.”

Daniel sat in his office going over the summaries his team had given him for the translations they’d managed over the week. Mel sat in his lap happily guzzling down his lunchtime feed as Daniel
At just over a month old Mel was a very bright alert baby, he was also extremely fussy and didn’t like not having either of his parents around him. Daniel found it quite strange but he loved his little boy so much he was more than happy to have Mel with him as much as possible.

“What the...” Daniel murmured as he scanned the latest report, he flicked to the end so he could see what section of the database this had come from. He realised that Mel was finished and removed the bottle before resting his son onto his shoulder to burp him. Daniel was sure his son would go to sleep soon; he almost always did after he fed.

Once Mel was sleeping Daniel would have more time to study what he’d found. He could feel Mel getting settled happily on Daniel’s shoulder and Daniel gently rested the boy in the small crib sitting in the corner of the office. Covering the boy with his blanket Daniel watched as Mel rubbed his eyes slightly giving a big yawn. Daniel sang softly to his little boy, one of the Abydonian lullabies that Sha’re had taught him during their first year of marriage. Sha’re could sing it better but Mel still seemed to like the sound of Daniel’s voice. Finally the baby was sleeping peacefully and, after watching him for several minutes, Daniel headed back to work.

Reopening the original report again, Daniel scanned over it before going to the section of the database it had come from. A smile crossed Daniel’s face; this could be something very useful.

John shook his head slightly as he looked up at the three concerned faces looking down on him.

“Are you hurt, John?” Teyla asked worriedly.

John grimaced, “I’m not sure. Give me a minute while my brain stops rattling.”

Ronon and Teal’c both offered a hand to John; he gripped them and let out a cry of shock as they yanked him to his feet.

“Are you ready to try again?” Teal’c asked, handing John his sticks back.

John sighed wondering why he’d thought this was a good idea. His original idea of getting Teyla to train him in the martial art of her people had seemed a good one at the time, then Ronon had joined in and now Teal’c had decided to give his pearls of wisdom also.

“Have I offended the three of you in some way?” John asked as he took the sticks again before facing Teal’c.

“John,” Teyla said softly with a stern undertone in her voice, “You asked me to teach you this.”

“Exactly,” John replied gesturing with one of the sticks, “I asked you. Not the bash twins there. I have more bruises from the past week of training than I have ever had.”

“We can stop if you wish,” Teyla told him.

John sighed, “Never mind. Let’s go.”

“Are you sure about this, John Sheppard?” Teal’c asked.

“No,” John took the first position stance, “But I want to learn this.”

“Then defend yourself,” Teal’c told him before starting an attack.
Twenty seconds later John was on his back on the floor again.

Sha’re entered her rooms after a meeting smiling to find Daniel and Mel were already there. Mel was fast asleep in his crib while Daniel was sitting at the computer working. Sha’re walked over to her husband, smiling as he leaned back so she could kiss him.

“You’re early,” Daniel smiled.

Sha’re nodded as she looked into the crib where her son slept peacefully, “I am only here for a short time. Lorne’s team have a mission and I have a briefing with them concerning that soon. I did not expect you to be here, I believed you would be working in your office today.”

Daniel shrugged, “I was but Mel needed changed and I didn’t have everything with me. Once I was here, I decided to just stay.”

Sha’re laughed and took a seat on his lap.

“So where are Lorne and his crew off to?” Daniel asked, it had been a good while since SG1 had been on a mission.

“PCC 433,” Sha’re told him, “One of your team...” she paused for a second trying to remember the name, “Patterson, found several mentions of an Ancient lab.”

“And you’re sending Lorne’s team?” Daniel laughed, “Why not John’s team?”

Sha’re laughed, “He is already booked to help on the Star and Rodney is working on the holographic representation of the Education Complex.”

“What about SG1?”

“Jack is busy, Laura is busy as is Teal’c,” Sha’re listed before looking at her husband, “And you have a wife and son who you promised you would not leave the city for the first few months of your son’s life.”

“Oh yeah,” Daniel said sheepishly.

Sha’re kissed him. She stood and moved over to look in on her son again smiling to find him awake. He was looking up at her with his big blue eyes, although they had started to darken in recent days.

“Come here, baby,” Sha’re cooed as she lifted him into her arms, “Mamma has missed you today.”

“Hey,” Daniel gave a mock indignant cry.

“Mamma missed Daddy too,” Sha’re kissed her son before turning to her husband and handing their son to him, “I have to get cleaned up and changed for my meeting.”

Daniel nodded and sat down with his son to continue working as Sha’re disappeared into the bathroom.

Sha’re left her family reluctantly to return to her office to prepare for her meeting. She’d been so busy today that she hadn’t spent any real time with Mel whereas normally she’d have him for half the day and Daniel would have him for the rest of the time most nights they were home together to put
him to bed.

Today was an anomaly in their usual schedule but it showed Sha’re how much she disliked being away from her son for so long. She knew Daniel was worried about her need for one of them to be with Mel although she also knew he understood why. She had an irrational fear that if Mel was not with either her or Daniel then he would suddenly disappear. But she knew how silly this was and had been thinking of trying maybe a lunch with either Jack or Janet watching Mel for the duration - possibly both. They were the two people closest to her other than Daniel and she thought she might be able to handle an hour. Reaching her office Sha’re sat down and started her prep, she’d talk with Daniel tonight about a lunch alone together soon.

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Rodney and Laura arrived on the large observation deck first; they set out a few benches before adding as many seats as they could. They estimated that they had about half an hour before people would start to arrive so once they’d finished the set up the couple took the chance to be alone together for a while. Rodney had discovered there was a meteor shower that night and from the records of the previous showers it promised to be spectacular. Originally he was going to grab Laura to watch it on the balcony to their room but when told about it Laura suggested that everyone would enjoy it as not everyone had access to a balcony so he’d sent out a notice to everyone and Sha’re asked him to set up the observation station.

“How many people are we expecting?” Laura asked.

Rodney shrugged, “I’m not sure. I think Jeannie’s going to watch it from the Star. Janet said something about setting up a room with a large window near the infirmary for her patients to watch it.”

“How long till this thing starts?”

“It has,” Rodney replied, “You just can’t see it yet.”

Laura shrugged, “Okay,” she turned resting her legs across his lap as her arms wrapped around Rodney’s neck and pulled him to her.

“Other people here,” Jack called as he walked onto the deck with Marie Ellery, one of the nurses, “Get a room.”

Laura looked up and grinned at him, “Grab a seat and comfy, show starts soon.”

“Looks like something started early.” Marie murmured to Jack before they took seats on the other side of the deck continuing their discussion.

A few minutes later more and more people arrived, several children came with their parents and Laura motioned them to sit on the blankets she’d set up at the front for them.

Daniel and Sha’re arrived with Mel just as the sun was almost set so they quickly found the seats Rodney had kept for them. Once they were settled Daniel handed Share Mel’s bottle and wrapped his arm around his wife as she fed their son.

“Look,” Cassie called as the light disappeared and first clear meteorite could be seen.

A streak of red drew a chorus of oohs and aahs from the crowd sitting there and soon the sky was
filled with different colours. Rodney had given the reason for the different colours but nobody was really that interested as all they wanted was to see the light show.

Daniel felt Sha’re shift slightly making him turn away from the light show, “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” she whispered, she glanced down at her son who was guzzling down his milk, “But I thought we could have lunch tomorrow alone.”

“Sure,” Daniel told her, “We can meet up after he’s fed so hopefully he’ll sleep through it.”

“No,” Sha’re replied, “I thought we could ask Jack to watch him while we had lunch.”

Surprise covered Daniel’s face, “Are you sure you’re ready?”

“No. But I think it is a good idea.”

Daniel kissed her before they settled back down to watch the lights streaking across the starlit sky.

Jeannie smiled as John arrived on the bridge of the Star with drinks and cakes.

“I thought you might want some refreshments,” he told her as he took the seat beside her.

As Jeannie took a drink she noticed a bruise on John’s chin, “What happened to you?”

“Teyla, Ronon and Teal’c are ganging up on me now,” he winced, “I think I have bruises on bruises now.”

Jeannie chuckled.

“Glad you find it funny,” John pouted, “I’m in a lot of pain you know. You should be more sympathetic. I brought you cake.”

Jeannie pressed her lips together trying to stop laughing at the pathetic look on his face, finally she managed it and gave him a sympathetic look – or as well as she could manage, “You poor baby. Do you want me to call the doctor?”

“I think I’ll pass on the sympathy,” John groused.

“Aw,” Jeannie teased before she leaned in and gently kissed his bruised chin.

As she moved back John stopped her, his hand gently rested on her cheek before moving closer to her again. Jeannie caught her breath not moving in case it broke the spell and closed her eyes as John’s lips touched hers.

The kiss was gentle, nothing like the one they’d shared during the storm and unlike that kiss this didn’t end with John pushing her away. This time he pulled her closer not letting her go.
Chapter 55

Daniel grimaced as the alarm on his watch went off telling him he had to get up. He’d just got back to bed a few hours ago after Mel had decided he wasn’t sleeping after his last feed. Daniel cursed Teal’c and his point that SG1 weren’t really getting much exercise these days as they weren’t going off-world at the moment.

“Is he sleeping?” Sha’re mumbled as Daniel slid out of bed.

“Yeah,” Daniel breathed kissing her cheek, “Hopefully he’ll be out for another hour or so.”

Sha’re turned and looked up at him, “Tell Jack that we still need him to babysit.”

“I will,” he promised.

She gave a quiet sigh and drifted back to sleep as Daniel dragged himself to get dressed for his early morning run – continuing to curse Teal’c.

Daniel joined Jack, Teal’c and Laura at the gym and they started their run, ten minutes in they were joined by John and Ronon. Once they finished the circle of the city they returned to the gym and Daniel discovered why John had been whining about Ronon and Teal’c joining in with his training sessions with Teyla.

As he limped to breakfast Daniel grimaced as Jack clapped his shoulder, “Feeling out of shape?”


Jack nodded, “I think we’ve spent a little too much time sitting around the city. Training is more fun when I’m standing off to one side shouting orders.”

Daniel laughed as the two men wandered slower than usual to get some food.

Jeannie smiled as she saw Sha’re sitting trying to eat her breakfast whilst holding Mel who was on her lap wriggling about.

“Here,” she said, “I’ve eaten. I’ll hold him while you eat.”

Sha’re handed her bouncing bundle to Jeannie laughing as the little fingers managed to tangle in Jeannie’s curls.

“Ow, ow, ow,” Jeannie grimaced as she tried to remove the little fingers with needle sharp nails, “He’s got a good grip.”

Sha’re laughed as she watched her son fondly, “And that is why my hair is tied back almost all the time now.”

Finally extricating herself from the tiny fingers and sharp nails Jeannie settled Mel in her arms and let him grip one of her fingers bouncing it slightly smiling as he tried to pull the digit into his mouth.

“You seem very upbeat this morning,” Sha’re noted to her friend as she sipped her tea. Jeannie smiled, “Things have been going well.”
Sha’re’s amused stare made Jeannie squirm slightly.

“Stop it,” Jeannie frowned.

“Stop what?” Sha’re asked lightly, “Perhaps there is something you are hiding and do not want me to find out about?”

Jeannie grimaced at her friend.

Sha’re laughed, “Fine. I will not pry. When you want to tell me you will.”

Relief filled Jeannie when Daniel and Jack arrived and joined them; Sha’re’s attention moved from her and turned to teasing her husband and his friend.

To be honest Jeannie wasn’t sure if she wanted to speak about what had happened between her and John the night before until she was able to actually talk to John. After the meteor shower John had walked her to her room and kissed her once more before saying goodnight.

When Jeannie had lost Caleb she never thought she would get close to anyone ever again, in so many ways she was relieved that he’d pulled away after the kiss during the storm because the thought of losing someone else she loved terrified Jeannie.

Turning her attention back to the people at the table Jeannie laughed as Sha’re made fun of the two men sitting there. Checking her watch Jeannie winced.

“I have to get to a meeting,” she apologised; she gently kissed the little boy’s forehead before handing him back to his mother. Mel simply yawned happy as long as someone was cuddling him.

“I will see you later,” Sha’re smiled at her, “Maybe we can talk some more?”

Jeannie rolled her eyes at her friend before she left the mess and headed to the Star.

Rodney and Radek swore in unison.

“You would think something this simple wouldn’t have turned into an impossible task,” Rodney muttered as he scanned over his computer, “Do you have anything?”

“I don’t,” Radek frowned, he was only in the city for the meeting that afternoon and had been talked into working with Rodney – not that it really took much persuasion since he had been part of the team who found the room, “It is confusing. Everything we have shows that this should make sense but...” he trailed off and swore again, “I think we should start from the beginning.”

Rodney groaned, he’d been working on the Educational Complex simulation in the ‘holodeck’ for what felt like years. He hated that this wasn’t working; he hated even more the fact that he just couldn’t understand why it wasn’t working.

“Okay,” Rodney sighed, he tapped a few controls on the wall and the room reset back to its ‘blank canvas’ state. He removed all the data crystals and set them on the small table in front of the two men.

“Alright,” Radek noted starting tapping on the computer, “Basic setting.”
John walked through the corridors of the city heading to the Star to talk to Jeannie. He was a little apprehensive about how she’d react to what had happened between them the night before. He knew his own feelings but he still wasn’t sure of Jeannie’s. When they were trapped together during the storm she spoke briefly of how much she missed Caleb, how much she loved him and John wasn’t sure if she was ready to even contemplate moving on.

But he had to find out.

“Is that everything?” Jeannie asked from her position in the captain’s chair on the command deck of the Star surrounded by the team working on repairing the ship. As silence answered her she smiled, “Okay. Then let’s get back to work.”

As the crowd dispersed Jeannie turned to the controls on the arm of the chair she was sitting in and connected her computer to the systems again.

John walked softly across the room until he was standing just behind her, “Good morning,” he whispered into her ear smiling as she jumped.

“John,” Jeannie grimaced before a smile touched her lips, “Good morning to you too. You realise I’m working, right?”

“I was simply here to ask if you wanted to meet for lunch,” John gave her a grin.

Jeannie smiled back softly, “Sure but…”

“There had to be a ‘but’,” John groaned not able to hide his smile.

Jeannie pointed to the console in front of her, “You do some work while you’re here. The inertial dampeners are playing up.”

John snapped off a smart salute, “Yes, Ma’am,” he said before turning smartly and heading to the console. As he sat down he glanced back at her, “So that’s a yes on lunch, right?”

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Janet caught up with Jack as he headed to the Jackson family rooms for babysitting duty. Jack had asked her to join him to watch over Mel as he knew that as much as Sha’re trusted Jack it would make her feel better for Janet to be there as well.

“Hi,” Daniel greeted them as he answered the door chime, “Sha’re is getting Mel ready.”

Janet smiled as she saw the little boy dressed all in blue who was batting at the small rattle his mother was holding.

“Janet?” Sha’re asked surprised, “Is something wrong?”

Janet shook her head and took the child from Sha’re with a smile, “Jack asked me to join him and Mel for lunch today. We’re going to have a nice lunch, aren’t we sweetie?” she cooed to the little boy as she rested him against her shoulder.

Janet saw the quick look that flicked between Jack and Daniel, a quick conversation in the blink of an eye between two best friends who’d spent years relying upon one another.

Sha’re smiled at her friend, “That is good.”
“Okay,” Jack said as he drove the pushchair, designed and built by Siler, over to Janet, “I say it’s time for us to blow this joint.”

Janet gently placed the boy in the seat and strapped him in before adding a knitted blanket, gifted to the couple by Radek. She noticed Daniel stand behind Sha’re and wrap his arms around her waist, a comforting gesture but also one that would stop her from running after them when Jack and Janet took her son from the room.

“Kiss your Mommy and Daddy bye,” Jack said to the little boy, “And then it’s adventure time with Uncle Jack and Aunty Janet.”

Janet watched as Sha’re kissed her son quickly, waiting for Daniel to do the same before gripping his arm as she allowed Janet and Jack to walk out of the room with her baby.

Daniel felt Sha’re’s nails dig into his arm as they watched Jack and Janet walk out the room with Mel. They’d decided to do it this way so that Sha’re was in a place with all of Mel’s things as their friends cared for the boy.

“Okay,” Daniel moved her to the bed, “Are you alright?”

Sha’re nodded shakily.

“Hey, look at me,” Daniel turned her so that he was looking into her sad brown eyes, “Mel is with Jack and Janet. Two people we trust completely. He will be fine.”

“He will be,” Sha’re breathed dropping her head against his shoulder, “I do not know if I am.”

“Come here,” Daniel moved to lean back against the wall and pulled his wife so she was leaning back against his chest. Sha’re sank into the warmth of his arms and sighed, “I know how much it scares you. I know the nightmares you have about losing him but I promise he is safe.”

Sha’re pushed herself up and turned her head to kiss her husband, they lost themselves in each other for a while. When they parted Daniel pulled his wife close.

“It’s a pity we can’t make proper use of our time alone,” Daniel murmured, brushing his lips across her temple.

Sha’re chuckled snuggling against him, “Not until Janet says I am ready.”

Daniel slid down so they were lying together wrapping his wife in his arms as she turned to face him.

“We could always just get some sleep,” Sha’re suggested.

Daniel gave a soft snort of laughter, “Who needs to sleep?”

Sha’re kissed the tip of his nose, “You.”

“I actually get more sleep now than I did when I was studying,” Daniel told her, “When I was part of SG1 and when we were getting ready to come here. And sometimes more than certain nights on Abydos when someone kept me up all night because she wanted to be pleasured.”

Sha’re gave a mock frown, “And who would that be?” she laughed and cuddled close to him again, “How long has it been since they left?”
“Less than ten minutes,” Daniel told her.

Sha’re sighed and took a deep breath, “Then they will bring him back soon.”

“Yeah,” Daniel hugged her close again knowing that she’d be fine once this lunchtime was over and it would become easier as time went by for her to allow her son out of her sight.

Jack sat feeding Mel as he and Janet went over the basics of flying a Jumper. He pulled the bottle away from the boy for a few seconds receiving a cry of annoyance as he allowed the air back into it before returning the bottle to the infant’s mouth.

Jack had to admit he was the cutest kid. Daniel often described Mel as bright, Janet said alert while Jack simply called Mel nosey. And he was, every time he heard a voice the little head would move towards it.

“Getting broody?” Janet asked smiling at Jack gently rubbing the boy’s back now he’d finished eating.

Jack chuckled, “Happy to help and pass him back. What about you?”

Janet shrugged, “I used to think about having children, then I had Cassie and I never really thought about it again.”

As Mel burped loudly Jack chuckled and settled the sleepy child back into his arms, “It’s more fun being the doting aunt and uncle anyway. Right, Doc?”

Janet nodded, “I couldn’t agree with you more, Colonel.”

John offered Jeannie his hand to help her to her feet. She gave him a warm smile as they started walking very aware of the fact he didn’t let go of her hand. To her surprise he didn’t lead her to the mess hall but to the Jumper Bay and into ‘his’ Jumper.

“You set up lunch here?” Jeannie asked surprised to find a box sitting waiting for them.

John shrugged, “I wanted to talk to you alone and this was the best place I could think of. We could go somewhere else if you want.”

Jeannie sat on the blanket on the floor leaning against the bench, “So what’s for lunch?”

At her smile John took a seat at her side and opened the box pulling out sandwiches along with some fruit punch and some cakes.

“Wow,” Jeannie mused as she took a bite, “Make this yourself or did you have some help?”

John rolled his eyes, “I may have talked nicely to Sandy in the kitchen but I chose.”

Without thought Jeannie squeezed his hand as she laughed making him smile before she continued eating her lunch.

After several minutes John decided he had to talk to her now or he would never manage to get out the question.
“I wanted to ask you...” John started trailing off as she spun to look at him, her blue eyes intent.

“About?” Jeannie placed her drink down.

“When we were trapped in the cellar during the storm,” John started wishing she would know what he was saying and give him the answer he wanted but Jeannie was staying silent, “You told me you weren’t ready for another relationship after losing Caleb.”

“Yeah,” she whispered.

“Is that still true?”

Jeannie stared at him, taking a few breaths before she shook her head not trusting her voice just yet.

John reached out and gently rested his hand on her cheek, “I’ve been crazy about you pretty much from the day I met you. And I know I wasn’t ready before but when I thought I’d lost you, when I thought I would never get to see you again – I realised just what you mean to me.”

At his confession Jeannie leaned into his hand smiling warmly, John moved in closer and she closed her eyes as his lips touched hers. When they parted Jeannie sighed softly.

“John,” she whispered, smiling shyly as he continued to gently stroke her cheek, “I don’t want to rush this. When I lost Caleb I never thought I could care about anyone again and then you strolled in. John, I am so scared of getting hurt again.”

“I’m not going to hurt you,” John assured her, “I would never do anything to hurt you.”

“But we’re in the middle of what can only be called a war,” Jeannie reminded him, “And you’re going to be on the front line when we go to take on Carter.”

“Hey,” John kissed her again, “I know but Caleb was doing nothing at all. You can’t live your life waiting for the worst to happen. You’ve just got to live.”

Jeannie closed her eyes and nodded before wrapping her arms around him.

*********************************************

Sha’re sat in her usual seat in the conference room nervously tapping her fingers on the table, Daniel scanning through the information he had found watching her surreptitiously. It was their weekly ‘War Council’ meeting this afternoon, so Jack had decided that since Mel usually slept in the corner during these meetings then he would simply bring Mel with him rather than making an unnecessary trip to Daniel and Sha’re’s room.

“He’ll be fine,” Daniel said not looking up knowing his wife was glaring at him, “You need to relax some more.”

“I am perfectly relaxed, Dan’iel,” Sha’re told him sharply. He gave her a wry look and she sighed, “It has been over the hour we agreed on.”

“Sha’re,” Daniel moved and took her hands in his as he sat in facing her, “Jack won’t let anything happen to our son. You know that.”

She sighed, frowning at her husband before nodding. Daniel kissed her pulling back as the door opened to reveal Mel being pushed by Jack with Janet at his side.

Sha’re moved instantly to her baby boy, lifting the child out of his pram she held him close.
“Mamma missed you,” she kissed her son before turning to her friends, “Was he good?”

Janet beamed at her, “He was an angel. Jack and I will happily take him again.”

When Sha’re hesitated Daniel stepped forward and guided his wife to her seat.

“That sounds great,” Daniel told his friends.

The room filled up quickly after Jack and Janet arrived. Sha’re reluctantly placed her son in his pram again now he was asleep. Sha’re turned just as Jeannie and John walked into the room, catching Jeannie’s eye Sha’re smirked at her friend as she saw the change in their relationship instantly. She didn’t say anything though, wanting to tease her friend when they were alone. It would be a lot more fun.

Finally everyone was in their seat and Sha’re began the meeting.

“We’ve been working on it for weeks,” Rodney sighed in frustration, “But every time we get to the approximation of the Campus the system goes nuts.”

Radek nodded, “We have reset it several times now and nothing works.”

“What exactly are you trying to do?” Janet asked.

“It’s...” Rodney and Radek started together.

Radek motioned Rodney to continue.

“It’s a simulation of the Andurian Educational Complex,” he explained, “We’ve taken information from everyone who spent any time within it and tried to put together a representation we can use to plan an attack.”

“But for some reason the ‘holodeck’” Radek rolled his eyes at the name, “Refuses to create the representation we want.”

“Maybe you’re being too literal,” Janet said thoughtfully.

“What?” the two scientists asked in unison.

Janet chuckled, “Think about it. You’ve got several pieces of a puzzle that you’re trying to put into a picture. You’re trying to squeeze them together even if they don’t fit.”

“We need to programme the system to sort it for us,” Rodney clicked his fingers, “Janet, I could kiss you.”

“Maybe later when your fiancée isn’t sitting next to you,” Janet joked as a chuckle echoed around the room.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re turned to her husband, “I believe you have something for us, something good enough that you wanted to leave it till the end of the meeting.”
Daniel nodded, “My team have been going over the database. And one of them managed to find exactly what we need.”

“Daniel,” Jack said, “Get on with it. I have things to do.”

Daniel grinned at his friend, “I know how to shatter Carter’s human disguise.”

“What?” John stared at him, “Are you sure?”

Daniel nodded with a grin, “It’s simple. All we need is...” light surrounded the group and Daniel trailed off as they were suddenly sitting in a room filled with Asgard.

“Oh crap,” Jack murmured as several black eyes stared at them.
David Sheppard sighed in relief as the door opened to reveal his father, without a word he moved to him.

“Dad, you’re finally back,” David said, “What happened with the Asgard?”

Patrick chuckled and patted his son’s arm before turning to his escort, “Thank you, Juson. Tell Dr Carter that I hope she can take me up on my offer of dinner another time.”

The large Andurian that David somehow hadn’t seen nodded before he turned and left the room.

David winced relieved he hadn’t said anything more, “Sorry.”

Patrick clapped his son’s shoulder, “Don’t worry about it. You didn’t say anything this time, just be more careful unless you’re sure we’re completely alone.”

David nodded, “So?”

Patrick grinned at his eldest son, he’d been looking forward to giving David this news and had gone over and over in his head what to say but as he stood in front of his son Patrick could only smile softly.

“I found John.”

David paced as he waited for the other dinner guests to arrive, he still couldn’t believe that his brother was safe and well...and living in another galaxy - though if he thought about it David wasn’t that surprised. John had always been someone who reached for the stars, it made sense he would end up living amongst them.

“David,” Paul Davis greeted his friend, “What’s going on? Dinner?”

“I don’t know,” David replied with a shrug, “I think my dad’s got something up his sleeve he wants to share with the entire group.”

Paul chuckled, “You two have an interesting sense of humour,” he looked up as he heard the doorbell, “And I think the rest of the guests have arrived.”

David nodded and the two men wandered towards the dining room.

Elizabeth Weir stared as the car drew up in front of the house; Patrick had invited both her and Steven to dinner after their debriefing. He’d even managed to extend the invitation to Carter knowing she couldn’t accept and appear to be disappointed when she refused.

The mission to see the Asgard had been interesting, so much so that they’d been returned to Earth by another member of the council. Thor assured them that this was a good thing and it was very likely that the Asgard were ready to help. Elizabeth hoped so; she was getting tired of trying to pretend to work with Carter, of trying to pretend she didn’t know that this woman had orchestrated an accident that had killed a wonderful man she’d loved.
“Elizabeth,” Patrick greeted her with a smile, “Welcome.”

“Do I get a map?” Elizabeth asked with a chuckle, “This place is huge.”

Patrick chuckled, “I admit I got lost once or twice every so often when we first moved in but I mostly keep to the same few rooms nowadays. Come on in.”

Elizabeth took the arm he offered her as they walked through the corridor to the dining room, pictures lined the walls and Elizabeth couldn’t help but stare at a young John Sheppard who stood side by side with a boy who was definitely his brother.

“He hasn’t changed, has he?” Patrick said, smiling down at the photo, “David was ecstatic when I told him I’d seen John. I just hope they get to mend fences some time soon.”

Elizabeth nodded in agreement patting his arm comfortingly before changing the subject, “Is Steven here yet?”

“He and Paul were trading stories about someone who’d trained them both,” Patrick shrugged, “They seem to be getting along.”

“Then let’s start this party properly.”

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Daniel could see everyone looking confused as they were suddenly faced by at least ten Asgard that they could see but his attention was pulled away from the aliens in front of them at his wife’s cry of horror.

“Mel,” Sha’re’s fear filled voice echoed through the room, “Dan’iel, he is not here.”

Daniel caught her, soothing her softly as he turned the one who appeared to be in charge, “Please, our son is only a month old and he’s alone,” Daniel said sounding much calmer than he felt especially with Sha’re’s nails digging into his arm.

One of the Asgard around the room said something in their native language; the leader turned and replied sharply. They watched the back and forth for a few moments before the Asgard who had spoken up moved forward.

“I shall accompany you down to retrieve your son, Dr Jackson,” Daniel recognised Hermiod’s voice, “We will return within a few moments.”

Daniel nodded, Jack slipped his arms around Sha’re taking her from Daniel who stepped forward to Hermiod. The white light surrounded them and he found himself back in the conference room.

“Hey, buddy,” Daniel cooed to his son, who had been whimpering at the lack of attention he’d been receiving since he’d woken up. As he lifted Mel Daniel saw the small alien looking at the baby with interest.

“Are you ready?” Hermiod asked, reaching out touch the child’s tiny hands.

“Just need his bag,” Daniel grabbed Mel’s things and slipped it onto his shoulder before nodding.

Sha’re felt Jack rub her back in comfort as they waited for Daniel and Hermiod to return. Logically she knew that Mel had been in his pram, strapped in and would be perfectly safe for a few minutes
but she had no idea how long they would be here. Mel could end up in a dirty nappy for hours, he
wouldn’t be fed and the conference room was sound-proof meaning no one would hear him cry.

Scenarios flicked through her mind until the transporter light filled her vision once more. The
moment Daniel appeared he moved to his wife and handed their son to her.

“Oh baby,” she murmured as she held Mel close feeling Daniel’s arm wrap around her.

After assuring herself that her son was safe Sha’re turned to the group of aliens watching them, all
were staring fascinated at Mel.

“I believe you brought us here to talk,” Sha’re stated sharply, “Then talk.”

The leader of the Asgard tore his gaze away from Mel, “You have asked for our help. We are here to
decide if we will give you it.”

Sha’re was trying not to laugh as the small grey aliens all watched her change her son’s smelly diaper
before they began their meeting. Mel gurgled happily, kicking his legs as his mother’s gentle hands
cleaned him before fixing him in a clean diaper.

Sha’re looked over to where the leader of the Asgard stood, he’d introduced himself as Forseti, “You
are all very interested in my son.”

“We have no children,” he reminded her, “To us he is a sight many of us have not seen in far too
long.”

“He is who we fight for,” Sha’re told him, “Mel, and the other children on Atlantis deserve to be able
to live their lives free of the Andurians trying to destroy their species.”

Forseti tilted his head, “You are trying to persuade me to make a decision that is not mine to make
alone, Mrs Jackson.”

Sha’re lifted her gurgling son into her arms, “I am not trying to persuade you of anything. I am
merely pointing out the world my son is facing. We should join the meeting.”

Forseti led her to the meeting room where the ‘War Council’ sat along with several Asgard waiting.
Sha’re took her seat beside Daniel smiling as he slipped his finger into Mel’s tiny hand.

“I suggest we begin this meeting,” Sha’re said, taking charge as the others from Atlantis indicated her
to, “Why did you abduct us from the city?”

“We have examined the evidence brought to us on your behalf by Thor,” Forseti replied, “It was
decided that we must speak with you directly before making a decision.”

“What do you wish to know?” Sha’re asked.

“You claim that Dr Samantha Carter is not human,” Forseti noted, “Yet she has been on board
Asgard vessels before and always registered as a human.”

“She was disguised,” Daniel told them, “It’s what the Andurians do; it’s how they destroy other
worlds. There is a multitude of information in the Atlantis database that I can show you about them
and about how she hid her true nature.”

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re touched his arm to calm him, “We have the evidence gained from the Ancients,
and Dan’iel believes he knows how to disrupt any disguise she may be wearing.”
Forseti nodded, “We will discuss this and contact you again as soon as we have an answer.”
As they were transported back to the conference room Rodney let out an annoyed sigh, “Well that was a very quick meeting.

*******************************

Cassie herded her group out of the Puddle Jumper and over to where Halling and Teyla were waiting for them. They were going to learn about the history of the Athosian people today and Cassie was thankful it wasn’t raining yet.

“Everyone follow Teyla inside,” she called as she followed behind the last child, “Take a seat and no talking.”

Cassie smiled up at Halling as she reached him, “Thanks for this. You know it means I’ll be asking for your opinion on the report they all have to write for this?”

“I believe as Teyla lives on Atlantis it may be easier for her to assist you,” Halling said with barely the hint of a smile.

Cassie chuckled and followed the kids inside taking her seat at the side. Cassie hushed the chattering children as Teyla and Halling stood in front of them and began their talk.

“Teyla, that was fantastic,” Cassie enthused as the three of them watched the children running around the field along with several of the Athosian children playing a rather complex game of tag.

“I am pleased they found it informative,” Teyla replied with a smile.

“You also made it fun,” Cassie told her, “The kids thought you were amazing.”

Teyla sat beneath a nearby tree, “I must admit it was fun. You obviously enjoy working with the children.”

Cassie took a seat beside the Athosian woman, “I love it. When I was first rescued by SG1 at first I was going to be an astrophysicist, then an archaeologist and linguist and then a doctor. Finally as I started High School I realised how much I loved sharing knowledge with others, helping my friends with things they didn’t understand. When I was separated from my Mom Carter kept telling me I was special that I had great things to do that meant teaching was not in my future.”

“She was wrong,” Teyla reminded Cassie who had fallen into a melancholy silence.

Cassie nodded decisively, “Yes, she was.”

*******************************

Rodney and Radek watched as the hologramatic representation of the Andurian Educational Complex appear before them, each part of the building and its surroundings appearing one by one.

“I can’t believe it was this simple and we didn’t think of it,” Rodney sighed, checking his watch again.

“Perhaps that’s why,” Radek chuckled, “How long has it been?”
“Over two hours,” Rodney replied frustrated, “After everything we gave them how can they not believe us?”

Radek stayed silent not knowing what to say so he was relieved when the computer beeped letting them know the reconstruction was now completed. The two men glanced at one another hopefully.

“Let’s see what we’ve got,” Rodney said as they started forward into their recreation.

As they walked side by side Radek could feel Rodney’s steps falter a little, bad memories flooding him.

“This might actually be too good,” Rodney murmured.

Radek clapped his friend’s shoulder, “We should report to Sha’re that we have managed to create the Complex.”

Rodney nodded, needing to get out as he could feel a strange itch in his lower back where the implant had once been.

“Are you going to tell me?”

At Sha’re’s amused look Jeannie frowned at her friend as they sat in Sha’re’s office, “Tell you what?”

Sha’re laughed as she gently bounced her son, “About what is going on between you and John.”

Jeannie opened her mouth before snapping it shut at her friend’s amused look.

“I know what love looks like,” Sha’re reminded her friend, “I see it in my own eyes when I think of Dan’iel and right now I see it in every glance you share with John.”

“Sha’re, I don’t know what this is yet,” Jeannie told her, “I don’t know how I feel yet. You can’t possibly say you know.”

Sha’re smiled as she rubbed Mel’s back gently, “I remember when Dan’iel and I first kissed. We were hiding from Ra in a cave after we started the rebellion that freed my people and he just learned that we were presumed married. After he kissed me that first time we cuddled up together to sleep and I caught sight of my face in a polished surface. I looked the way you do.”

Jeannie shook her head, “I loved Caleb. I loved him so much that when he died...”

“You felt your world was falling down around you,” Sha’re finished for her, lifting Mel onto her shoulder so she could hug him, “I remember the feeling.”

“But Daniel didn’t die,” Jeannie reminded her.

“No,” Sha’re whispered, “But I spent two years wondering, not knowing what was happening to him.”

Jeannie wanted to scream at her friend but managed to keep her voice soft, “And you got him back. Caleb is gone.”

“I know. But you have found someone who would walk through fire for you,” Sha’re stated with certainty, “John loves you. Perhaps you should start from there and see how you feel.”
“You’re really annoying sometimes,” Jeannie grimaced at her friend.

Sha’re shrugged, “Dan’iel says that a great deal.”

Daniel and Jack stood on the west pier watching the sea lap against the side of the city.

“You okay?” Jack asked his friend who was brooding.

Daniel shook his head, “I’m worried about Sha’re, again. She was getting to that stage where she was almost ready to spend time away from Mel and then the Asgard do...that.”

Jack clapped his friend’s shoulder, “She’ll be fine, Danny.”

Daniel shook his head, “We’re going back to Earth soon, Jack. I have to leave them and I have to know that Sha’re is going to be okay.”

“Danny...”

“Jack,” Daniel cut off his friend, “We both know that we’re going to be on board the Star along with Teal’c. We might not have talked about it yet but Sha’re knows this too. Jack, she has nightmares someone takes him from us. I need to know she isn’t making herself sick by not letting anyone help her care for Mel.”

Jack frowned as his friend lapsed into silence, “Janet has mentioned there are a few people trained for this sort of thing, if you want. But remember after she was released from the Gould?”

Daniel nodded, remembering the relief and fear he felt at those moments as he watched his precious wife struggle to recover from what Ammonet had done to her.

“McKenzie talked to her and his advice was for her to talk to us,” Jack reminded him, “So, we’ll do that.”

“Like an intervention?”

Jack gave a shrug, “Like family.”

“Dan’iel, Jack,” Sha’re’s voice interrupted them, “The Asgard have contacted us. Please return to the conference room.”

********************************************************************************

Jeannie looked up from playing with Mel as John walked into the room. Sha’re’s words kept floating through her mind that John would walk through fire for her, that he loved her and the smile slid onto her face.

John smiled back and took a seat at her side, “You look very natural holding him.”

Jeannie felt heat colour her cheeks, “I love kids. There were none in our family when I was a kid but my best friend was the eldest of six. I used to help her babysit and it was great fun.”

John reached out and caught Mel’s waving hand with his thumb managing to entwine the rest of his fingers with Jeannie’s.

“Is it a good sign that this didn’t take very long?” Rodney asked as he and Radek walked in.
Jeannie felt her heart stop slightly as she saw her brother’s eyes fix on their hands, she wasn’t sure how he was going to react to the change in her relationship with John but she didn’t pull away. To her surprise Rodney gave a slight smile as he took the seat on her other side and handed the child the toy sitting on the table.

“Then again,” he continued without missing a beat, “They do talk pretty fast.”

“Look who’s talking,” John threw at him.

“Children,” Sha’re interrupted as she lifted Mel from Jeannie’s lap before settling in her own chair to feed him, “Try and behave while we have guests.”

Jeannie chuckled, surprised when John motioned her to one side. Jeannie let him move her to the opposite side of the room leaving Rodney talking to Sha’re.

“Is something wrong?” Jeannie asked.

“No,” John smiled, “I was just thinking that after this we could have dinner together.”

Jeannie decided to take Sha’re’s advice nodded, “That sounds great.”

“Good,” John leaned in and kissed her cheek.

“Alright,” Jack said as he and Daniel joined them, “Let them know we’re ready.”

Rodney touched the small communicator they’d been given by the Asgard and instantly the bright light filled the room.

“Welcome to Atlantis,” Sha’re greeted the alien sitting in the large throne like chair at the opposite side of the table to her.

“Thank you,” Forseti replied with a nod, “We have discussed at length the evidence you presented to us concerning the Andurian and their reasons for being on Earth.”

“And?” Jack asked impatiently.

“Assuming that you are correct that Dr Carter is not as she appears,” Forseti replied, “Then we will honour the Protected Planets Treaty.”

“What does that mean?” Daniel said intently, “Assuming we’re correct? How do we prove that to you from here? Or are you going to actually do something?”

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re rested her hand on his arm to calm him, “Forseti, can you explain what you intend to do?”

“The Asgard Council are sending a representative to Earth in the next few months,” he reminded them, “They have agreed that within the group of ships shall be your vessel. Once on Earth you must remove the disguise you insist Dr Carter wears.”

“She will fight back,” John said.

“Thor and Hermiod have agreed to remain here to continue making the arrangements as well as help you with the repairs to the vessel,” Forseti told them, “We will return here on our way to Earth.”
With that said the transporter light filled the room once more.
Chapter 57

Radek gave a grateful nod to his pilot as the Jumper hatch opened and he stepped into the late afternoon sun. Barely a second passed before he was tackled by a small ball of energy with hair flying.

“Radek, you’re back.”

“Do I know you?” Radek teased as the girl let him go and frowned.

“I’m Lille,” she told him.

Radek shook his head, “No, you can’t be. You’re too big to be my favourite little girl.”

Lille giggled, “Yes it’s me.”

Radek saw Tali standing to one side smiling as he crouched down and lifted Lille’s face so he could study her face, “Ahh, there you are. You’ve grown so much since I left.”

Lille crossed her arms across her chest, “That was only yesterday.”

Radek chuckled again, “You are growing all the time.”

Finally Tali walked over to him, “And we missed you,” she gave him a gentle kiss before turning to her daughter, “Let’s go home so you can show Radek what you learned today.”

Radek smiled, he wrapped his arm around the woman he loved whilst taking her daughter’s hand and started home.

Radek sat in the home he shared with Tali and Lille, he’d moved in just the week before and was still trying to get used to it. He loved Tali, they’d just seemed to click and could talk for hours but the thing that truly surprised him was how much he’d bonded with Lille. Radek didn’t like children; he hated his sister’s sticky brat, but Lille just made him smile every day.

“Was your meeting successful?” Tali asked as she made them something to eat.

“In many ways,” Radek told her, smiling as Lille pulled at his hand for his attention.

He quickly explained everything that had happened during his time in Atlantis.

“That is good,” Tali noted as she shooed her daughter from Radek’s lap, “If the Asgard are here and willing to help then you will free Earth.”

Radek sighed, “Where the Asgard are concerned there is nothing set in stone. O’Neill is pleased but Daniel noted that other than Thor, the Asgard are extremely fickle.”

“You need to think positively,” Tali reminded him sliding onto his lap and wrapping her arms around his neck, “And then you can finally introduce us to your family.”

Radek looked up at her with a smile, “I think I’m almost looking forward to that.”

**********************************************************************
Sha’re rubbed a hand over her face as she tried to concentrate on her final meeting of the day. She had to keep the council up to date with the latest developments concerning the Asgard but the events of the day had taken their toll on her. Daniel had taken Mel to their rooms to feed him and ready him for bed, Sha’re hoped she would get back to see him before he went to sleep.

“Alright,” Caroline stated bringing Sha’re’s concentration to her, “You need to go and get some rest.”

“I am fine,” Sha’re assured her, “We need to finish...”

“Nope,” Caroline cut her off, “Sha’re, you had a baby just over a month ago. You’re exhausted and to be honest I’m amazed you’ve managed to keep going this long. So, we’ve decided that for the next few weeks you’re on maternity leave.”

“But...”

“Sha’re,” Edward took over, “I will make sure you’re kept up to date with everything but you need to spend some time with your son.”

Sha’re looked around the table at the council members and sighed, “Alright. Thank you for this but considering what’s happened with the Asgard today then I am going to ask Jack to be their liaison with you.”

Edward nodded, “I’ll let him know. Now go and say goodnight to your son.”

Daniel was softly singing to Mel who was fed, washed and ready for his bed. He’d stopped off at the commissary and picked up some dinner for him and Sha’re for when she finished her meeting.

He was worried about his wife, especially after what the Asgard had pulled earlier that afternoon. Daniel sighed, wondering how this conversation would go and if he’d be sleeping on the couch after it.

As the door opened Daniel saw Sha’re’s smile light up as she saw her son still awake, although barely.

“I was worried that he would be asleep before I got here,” Sha’re said as she took Mel into her arms and took in a deep breath of her clean tired son, “Mamma is here to tuck you in.”

Daniel watched his wife with their son; he’d always known how good a parent she’d be. From the moment they’d married she was a mother without her child and all he had to do was give her that gift.

“He is asleep,” Sha’re whispered turning to catch him watching her.

Daniel reached out his hand to her, “Then come and get some dinner.”

They sat together in the small lounge they’d set apart eating in silence just happy to be together for the moment.

“You look tired,” Daniel said as they were clearing up, he waited for the rebuke but none came. Turning he found her sitting looking defeated.

“I am.”
Daniel moved to her side and gently stroked her cheek, Sha’re gave him a smile.

“The council have decided I am on maternity leave,” she explained, “And to be honest I think it is the best thing. I can be with Mel and I will be kept up to date on everything.”

Daniel kissed her, “I think it’s the best idea anyone’s had in a while.”

Sha’re nodded and to Daniel’s surprise started to cry.

“What’s wrong?”

Sha’re leaned against Daniel snuggling closer as he wrapped her in his arms, “I miss my father,” she whispered, “And I miss Skaara.”

“I know.”

“I just want to go home for a little while,” she closed her eyes.

Daniel gently kissed her forehead rocking her as he tried to think of way to make her feel better.

******************************************************************************

Jeannie stood outside the door to John’s room smoothing her top just before she touched the chime, when he’d invited her to have dinner with him she’d expected a quiet table in the corner of the commissary but after the meeting he’d kissed her cheek and told her to meet him here.

It had been an extraordinary day with the Asgard’s appearance and agreeing, in theory, to help - though that wasn’t the strangest part of the day for her. The strangest moment had to be after the meeting when John had disappeared. Jeannie found her brother walking at her side.

“Mer...”

“Do you care about him?” Rodney asked cutting her off before she could tell him it was none of his business.

“Of course I do.”

“Well he knows what I’ll do to him if he dares hurt you,” Rodney shrugged; he gave her a smile, “I want you to be happy, Jeannie. Even if it’s with the insane flyboy with more hair gel than brain cells.”

Jeannie chuckled to herself as she thought of her brother’s way of telling her he was happy for her jumping as the door swung open to reveal John.

“Hi,” Jeannie breathed, “Am I early?”

John smiled at her as his eyes quickly looked her up and down, “Perfect timing. Dinner is just about ready. Come on in.”

Jeannie licked her lips slightly nervously as she walked into John’s room, she’d been here before but never in this situation. She moved to the seat he held out for her, laughing softly as he placed dinner in front of her.

“You managed to get pizza?”
John shrugged, “I talked to someone who made me beg but you said you missed pizza so...”

Jeannie couldn’t stop smiling as he trailed off; it had been one of those conversations so long ago back on Earth when they’d been talking about favourite places to eat. There had been a pizzeria that Jeannie passed almost every night on her way back from the library and would always duck into on Saturday nights. She loved the pizza and hadn’t had any since the night before she’d been ‘kidnapped’ by John.

“I’m impressed,” she told him as he sat across from her.

John grinned, “Let’s hope you stay impressed once you taste it.”

They sat on John’s balcony after dinner, talking generally about everything. Jeannie was amazed how well the evening was going, she hadn’t been on a first date in a long time and no matter how long she’d spent with John it was different now.

Jeannie shivered slightly, smiling as John rested his arm around her shoulders and drew her close.

“Better?”

“Yeah,” she breathed, a little bolder she rested her head against his shoulder letting out a small sigh of relief that he didn’t say anything.

She felt John pull her closer; they just sat together watching the stars and enjoying each other’s company for a while.

Finally John reached out and touched her chin turning Jeannie to look at him. Slowly he moved closer and very gently kissed her. They parted for a moment before Jeannie moved closer, her lips finding his as she wrapped her arms around his neck, not letting go.

*****************************************************************************

Thor appeared from the bright white light onto the bridge of the Star to find Jack, John, Jeannie and Rodney waiting for him.

“Morning,” Jack greeted the small alien, “Welcome to our little ship.”

Thor looked around, moving to the closest console, “You are not yet ready to fly.”

The four humans shared an amused look.

“We’re working on it,” Jack told him, “We’re hoping you can lend us your expertise so we can get going in time.”

Thor tilted his head thoughtfully, he looked at the humans across from him, “Who will I be working with?”

“Me,” Jeannie smiled, “And I’m really looking forward to it.”

Thor nodded, “Then we should start.”

Jack winked at Jeannie before turning to Thor again, “Anything you need, just talk to Jeannie.”

As Jack left the bridge Thor turned to her, “One thing you need to do is speak with your contacts on
Earth. Speak to O’Neill regarding this.”

Rodney and John both frowned.

“We can’t actually do that,” Rodney told him, “Opening the Gate to Earth is something Sha’re refuses to allow.”

Thor tilted his head, “There is no need to open the Stargate. I can use my ship to contact Patrick Sheppard. Although it shall only be his son who can use it.”

“Really?” Rodney and Jeannie asked in unison.

John rolled his eyes at the chorus, “Why me?”

“The connection is created via your DNA profile,” Thor explained, “I can connect you to your father from the profile I have on file.”

“Why do you have my DNA on file?”

Thor tilted his head on confusion, “Every time I use the transport system it records the DNA. It is how I was able to confirm that Jeannie was Jeannie.”

“How about you just show us,” Rodney said.

Patrick Sheppard was sitting working when he heard his son call on him.

“Just a minute, John,” he said absently before stopping, dropping his pen he slowly looked up to find his youngest son standing there.

“Hi, Dad,” John grinned loving the stunned expression on the older man’s face.

“How,” Patrick stood and walked over to John, “How...” he reached out to touch John’s shoulder finding his hand swiping through.

“Thor is transmitting me here,” John explained, “Can’t stay too long as I haven’t talked to Sha’re about this yet but when he said he could let me say hi,” John shrugged.

“You couldn’t resist making your old man look stupid,” Patrick frowned before looking thoughtful, “Does this mean the Asgard are helping us?”

“It means they’re letting us prove we’re right,” John replied, “Not too sure about helping yet. I have to go but once Sha’re agrees I’ll call back.”

Patrick chuckled, “David was relieved to hear you’re safe, he’s looking forward to seeing you.”

“I’ll bet,” John chuckled, “See you later, Dad.”

With that he blinked out leaving Patrick sitting with a smile, there was a chance after all.

********************************************************************************

“Do have an itch at your lower back?” Daniel asked Rodney as they walked deeper into the Andurian Complex simulation.
Rodney nodded.

“This is incredible,” Sha’re whispered from behind them where she was walking with Janet who was carrying Mel.

“You’re not kidding,” Janet murmured, “If I didn’t know any better I’d swear we were on Earth.”

“Okay,” Rodney stopped them, “We can keep going as though we were walking through or,” he tapped a few commands and the world shimmered before they were standing in a conference room, “We can jump from place to place.”

“Excellent,” Sha’re smiled, “Dan’iel, is Jack ready to work with a team on the simulation?”

“Yeah,” he told her, “He has a group that worked in the place who we believe can work out the best ways to get to the strategic areas of the building.”

“See if they can work out what the rooms in the west side of the building are for,” Rodney told her, “I had no idea they were there but the computer has put them in.”

“Interesting,” Janet mused looking at the display Rodney had on his computer as she gently rubbed Mel’s back, the little boy was looking around at the new place he was in.

“I thought so too,” Rodney replied, “You see no one mentioned anything about labs, or offices or anything in this section but for the layout that we know there is a lot of empty rooms there.”

“Have you shown Jack how to use the system?” Sha’re asked.

Rodney nodded, “He’s getting his assistant...Bradley...Brandie...”

“Barbara,” Janet finished for him.

“She’s going to work the system,” Rodney said as if he’d not had trouble trying to remember the woman’s name.

Sha’re chuckled, she reached out to take her son back from Janet frowning as the other woman shook her head. Daniel quickly moved Sha’re to one side.

“Dan’iel?”

“I have something for you,” he smiled, “Just give me a few minutes.”

Intrigued Sha’re nodded and watched as Rodney handed Daniel the computer before he left the room with Janet and Mel.

“Dan’iel?” Sha’re demanded not happy that her son had been taken away.

“I can’t promise you the people you miss,” Daniel said, “But...” he touched a few buttons on the screen and the world around them turned to sand.

“Abydos,” Sha’re smiled shaking her head, “Oh, my love this is so sweet.”

Daniel placed the padd down and moved to her side, “I can’t bring your father here or Skaara but I thought you might like to take a walk by the pyramid like we would when we first married.”
Sha’re reached out and took his hand, “We could have taken Mel with us.”

“We could,” Daniel slid his arm around her waist as they started walking, “But I thought you needed a little time here just the two of us. Mel will be fine with Janet.”

Sha’re took a deep breath, “You are right.”

Daniel smiled in relief and they started towards the pyramid in the horizon. Sha’re dropped her head onto her husband’s shoulder letting herself pretend for a while that it was days after they’d married when her universe consisted solely of this planet and the man at her side.

******************************************************************************

The sound of the sticks hitting off one another echoed through the room as the two women moved back to a defensive stance. Teyla nodded and Laura moved forward again, attacking using the sequences Teyla had taught her over the past few months.

“You’ve been practicing,” Teyla noted as they finished their workout.

Laura shrugged, “I’m going to actually beat you one day. I’ve even got Ronon helping me.”

“We shall see.”

Laura gave a slight smile as she concentrated on replacing the equipment she’d been using. Teyla moved to her side concerned by how distracted her friend was.

“Is something wrong?” she asked.

Laura turned, “Why do you ask?”

“Because you looked like this a lot of the time before you and Rodney finally revealed your feelings to one another,” Teyla said, a slight smile touching her lips.

Laura sighed, turning she leaned against the wall, “You know the Asgard are here and that they’re kind of helping us.”

Teyla nodded, “Rumours have reached me. I believed this was supposed to be a good thing, why is it disturbing you?”

Laura sighed again, “To help Rodney, I had to fake my death.”

“I remember you telling me.”

“I just can’t get my parents out of my head,” Laura explained, “If we manage to save Earth and we’re able to return home, how do I suddenly appear in their life?”

Teyla rested her hand on Laura’s shoulder, “You’re their daughter. To know you’re alive, to know you’re safe and to know you’re happy will make them ecstatic.”

Laura pushed off the wall and started out but Teyla heard her final words float back.

“I hope so.”
Rain fell on the city of Atlantis, renamed over the past month as the City of the Zombies by more than a few people because of the way all the scientists and soldiers were staggering about. With the Asgard deadline looming they were working around the clock to make sure both they and the Star was ready for anything.

Rodney and Jeannie had started originally splitting the work on the ship between them but soon had to call Radek from the mainland to take over a third shift. Rodney was sure he hadn’t seen Laura for more than five minutes in the last few weeks as they met briefly, one going to sleep, one heading to work. Jeannie was seeing John a little more as he was working on the ship with her, while Radek only managed to speak with Tali once a week.

“Tell me the ship is almost ready,” Sha’re demanded at the weekly ‘War Council’ meeting, although her maternity leave was technically over she was only working on this, letting the rest of the Atlantis council run the city.

“We’re getting there,” Rodney told her rubbing his hands across his eyes, “With Thor and Hermiod we’re fixing it faster than we ever would have been able to on our own but it’s still taking time as we have to be able to understand everything in case something happens when we’re out there.”

Sha’re nodded her thanks to him for his report before turning to the only other person at the meeting, “Jack?”

“The teams are training harder than they ever have,” he reported tiredly, “I’ve got them going through drills at all times. They’re beginning to hate me. Cadman is going to start training her explosives team in a few days.”

“Teal’c mentioned that several of the Jaffa wish to help with the fight,” Sha’re noted, “Do you believe this is a good idea?”

“Earth isn’t their home,” Jack shrugged, “But they want to kick the Andurians ass as much as we do. They’re good at what they do and I’m folding them into the teams. The Tok’ra are mostly scientists despite their years of warfare on the Gould and the Athosians, well it’s not fair to bring them into our war.”

Sha’re nodded as she looked at the two men in the room with her, both appeared to be exhausted and she knew that there was no reason to keep them here any longer.

“I want you both to go and get a few hours sleep,” Sha’re told them, “I know how hard everyone is working, we can only hope that it will be worth it.”

Rodney nodded and silently slid out the room leaving Jack sitting. Sha’re smiled at her friend.

“Have we decided who’s going?” Jack asked.

Sha’re nodded, “Almost. I know Dan’iel shall be going, Jack. I agree with it no matter how much it scares me. The rest, well there are a few debates going on.”

“We’re going to have to work it out soon,” Jack reminded her.
Sha're sighed, “I know.”

Janet smiled at the little boy sitting on the bed in front of her as she finished cleaning the cut on his knee; he was about four and had fallen while playing with his imaginary friend.

“Now, how does that feel?” she asked him, “Better?”

The little boy nodded.

“And you’ll be more careful next time, Peter?”

Peter nodded once more.

Janet smiled and brought out a small piece of red fruit, they were about the size of a marble but very sweet and juicy so Janet had been using them as treats for her younger patients. Peter gobbled it up as his father smiled with amusement before thanking Janet and taking his son back home.

As Janet turned back to her office she was surprised to see Daniel walk in Mel held securely in his arms.

“Is something wrong?” she asked worriedly.

Daniel shook his head with a smile, “We’re just out for a walk while Sha’re is in her meeting.”

“And how is my favourite little boy?” Janet cooed to the two month old who was chewing on his finger as he looked around the new room.

Daniel passed his son to the doctor who gently tickled his chin.

“So, what’s wrong?” Janet asked Daniel, recognising the look as his ‘I’m puzzling over something’ face.

“It’s just...” he sighed, “What if all this doesn’t work?”

Janet stared at him a little stunned by the defeatist attitude.

“Think about it, Janet,” Daniel said, “We only have this one plan, and it hangs on so many things going our way. What if one doesn’t? What if we can’t persuade the Asgard that Carter is really Andurian, then that’s it.”

“Daniel, you have to stay positive,” Janet reminded him.

“I may have another solution,” Daniel told her before he took Mel back and left Janet wondering what was going on in that brain of his.
the only ones but they were the ones Laura was closest to and it was worrying.

As someone tapped her shoulder Laura spun, “Sha’re?”

The leader of the city smiled slightly, “I take it you did not hear me. I have been calling your name for a few minutes.”

“Sorry,” Laura sighed, “I was in a world of my own.”

Sha’re nodded, “I see. You look tired.”

“Everyone looks tired,” Laura replied wryly, “We need to do something to cheer them up.”

“What do you suggest?”

“We’ve been in the city almost a full year,” Laura said, “Why don’t we celebrate?”

Sha’re chewed on her lip thoughtfully, “It is a good idea. We need something to boost the spirits of those in the city. Caroline is good with these kind of things, I will mention it at the council meeting tomorrow.”

“I’m going to get some sleep,” Laura sighed unable to stop herself from yawning, “I’ll see you later.”

“Sleep well, Laura,” Sha’re said before the two women parted.

Sha’re mused over Laura’s suggestion as she walked back to her own room, there was an air of gloom throughout the city as though they had already been defeated. Sha’re knew that the Asgard’s help should have brought them joy and hope but for some reason it hadn’t.

As Sha’re reached the rooms she shared with her family, smiling as she opened the door and heard Daniel singing to Mel. Despite the amount of studying he was doing Daniel made sure to spend time with his son every day.

“Are you behaving yourselves?” Sha’re asked teasingly as she walked over to join them.

“Now that would be telling,” Daniel chuckled as he quickly kissed her before allowing Sha’re to take their son from him.

Sha’re hugged her warm, soft little boy close to her for a few moments enjoying the scent of him releasing him after a few moments.

“You look tired,” Sha’re said to her husband, “Everyone in the city looks so tired just now.”

“There’s kind of a big thing coming our way,” Daniel reminded her.

“I know,” Sha’re frowned at him, “But why is everyone acting as though we are already beaten?”

“Because we’re scared.”

“Dan’iel, we are the leaders of this city and if we act as though we are already defeated then everyone else will. Laura just reminded me that we have been in the city almost a year now,” Sha’re smiled, “We are going to celebrate this fact.”

“I don’t know if that’s a good idea considering what we’re facing,” Daniel frowned.
“Actually, it is the perfect idea,” Sha’re replied, “We need to remind everyone that we survived and that no matter what happens next we will continue to survive.”

Daniel kissed her, “I love you.”

Sha’re laughed at him, “I should hope so. Now, will you try to be more positive?”

Daniel nodded wrapping his arms around her tightly.

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Jeannie smiled as she entered John’s room, she’d come to get him so they could have dinner together before their shift to find him lying face down on his bed fast asleep. Part of her wanted to leave him so he could get some more well deserved sleep before she decided it was the best idea to wake him because if she didn’t then he wouldn’t get the chance to eat before they were due on the ship.

“John,” she called gently.

At the soft grunt she reached out and shook his shoulder, “John, wake up.”

“Sleeping,” the muffled voice came making her laugh.

“Come on, Major,” Jeannie shook him harder, “Get up or I toss cold water over you.”

John rolled onto his back and looked up at her through narrowed eyes, “You’re evil, you know that.”

“I’ve been told that on occasion,” Jeannie smiled; she patted his arm, “Move. I’m hungry.”

John dragged himself off the bed, pushing a hand through his hair. He wrapped his arm around Jeannie’s shoulder giving her a quick kiss before they headed for dinner.

“The problem we’ve got is finding a way to start the tunnel growth,” Jacob noted sipping his tea as the three men sat in a small corner of the mess.

“Would it not be a good idea to transport someone down to a safe location as soon as the vessel enters orbit,” Bra’tac suggested.

Jacob shook his head, “One of the measures she has in place is to track all transports during the Asgard visit to ensure no terrorist attacks. The first chance we’ll get to put our people on the ground is when the delegation beam down.”

“Then we need to contact Sheppard’s father,” Jack noted thoughtfully, “I know Sha’re doesn’t want us to tell him the plan too soon, you should have heard her rip John a new one for contacting his father without her permission.”

The three men chuckled.

“If we can get into the tunnels beneath the campus,” Jacob continued, “We’ll be able to take over the place faster. I just wish we were able to know how the security arrangements have changed since we left. We’re in the dark about too many things.”

“Very true,” Bra’tac nodded, “But, there is no way that she can know exactly what we are bringing with us.”
Jack tapped his fingers on the table, “That’s true; we have allies she has no way to know about.”

“There’s one more thing we have that she doesn’t know about,” Jacob reminded the two men indicating the couple that had walked in to the room, “We’ve made a family here, we’ve created bonds and she doesn’t understand that. That’s our strength.”

“That and a damn good ship,” Bra’tac grinned.

Jeannie spotted her brother in a corner of the room, sandwich held frozen towards his mouth while he went over results on his computer. Once they’d collected their food Jeannie moved John over to join him and the moment she was seated she pulled the computer away from him.

“Hey,” Rodney snapped.

Jeannie kept it out of his reach, “Meredith, you need to eat.”

“I am eating.”

“How much of your dinner has actually been eaten?” Jeannie asked pointedly as she motioned the sandwich and a half sitting on his plate as well as what he held in his hand.

Rodney let out a long sigh.

“Have dinner with us and work later,” Jeannie told her brother.

Rodney sighed again, “Fine.”

“Where’s Laura?” John asked as he started to eat.

“I’m hoping she’s sleeping,” Rodney replied, “When we spoke earlier she was almost dead on her feet.”

“You can see why people are calling it Zombie City,” John laughed.

The siblings chuckled.

“I just wish people weren’t wandering around so depressed,” Jeannie said, “Wonder if it’s slightly more cheerful on the mainland.”

“Well we won’t find out for a while,” Rodney noted sadly.

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“What?”

Sha’re smiled at the astonished faces of the Atlantis Council that faced her, “Everyone is exhausted, any hope there could be because of Thor and Hermiod’s help is being squashed by fear that everything we are doing is not enough. Therefore I feel it is a good idea that we have a holiday to celebrate the fact that we came to the city a year ago.”

“It’s a great idea,” Ferretti said, “This place was meant to be our salvation, why are we acting like we’ve lost? Sha’re, it’s a great idea.”

“I cannot take full credit,” Sha’re said, “Laura Cadman suggested the party. Teyla, I believe your
“people have a harvest festival coming soon. Perhaps we can merge the two?”

Teyla nodded, “I think that would be a well received idea. In fact I think you’re right that we need something to boost peoples’ spirits.”

“Caroline, I believe you would be the best person to organise this for us,” Sha’re turned to the woman sitting beside Ferretti, “Can you handle it?”

“No problem,” Caroline grinned at her, “I’ll even fix it so that everyone gets some time off their shifts to attend.”

“Thank you,” Sha’re smiled before looking expectantly at Philip, “Now, what is next on the agenda?”

Daniel absently rocked Mel’s cradle as he studied the database, his son was chewing on a rattle as he stared at the mobile above him. Daniel was worried that their plan wouldn’t work and he would leave Sha’re and Mel alone so he wanted a back-up plan just in case. It was strange, when Thor and Hermiod had come to the city Daniel had been filled with relief and hope but then he’d woken up in the middle of the night with this sudden fear that he’d be killed on Earth by Carter who would win.

The rest of that night had been spent alternately watching Sha’re and Mel in case either of them disappeared from his sight. Sha’re had woken up that morning smiling to find him watching her. She’d slipped her arms around his neck pulling him close until their son woke up demanding his breakfast. Daniel smiled at the memory.

He could easily recall when he’d thought he’d live alone after his break-up with Sarah, at that time she’d told him that although she cared for him Daniel didn’t know how to share his life and until he did he’d always chase away anyone who could care for him.

He could also recall when he’d fallen for Sha’re and Sarah’s words coming back to him as he realised he could lose this incredible woman who loved him without reservation by being selfish, finally the memory of losing her came back and Daniel looked down at his son for a few moments to remind himself that Sha’re was here and safe.

Managing to get his mind back on his work he continued looking through the information on the Furlings. He needed to know as much as possible if he was going to try and contact them.
Sha’re smiled as she looked around the large ballroom, for want of a better word, in complete awe. It had been decorated for what they were calling ‘Freedom Day’ tomorrow night.

“It looks wonderful,” Sha’re told Caroline who was standing directing her crew with authority.

“I always loved planning a party,” Caroline grinned, “Laura’s been invaluable, especially in helping bring about our surprise at the end.”

“I am intrigued,” Sha’re told the other woman.

Caroline grinned, “I’ve spoken to each department and the skeleton crew that are working will be brought food by my team and we’ll have all the music etc fixed so they can hear it. We have a kid’s room so they can dance and have some fun under the watchful eyes of a few volunteers before they’re having a mass sleepover in a nearby room.”

“You have done an amazing job,” Sha’re said.

“Wait until the morning after before we decide whether it’s an amazing job or not,” Caroline laughed, she sighed as her name was called, “I’d better go back to work. I’ll see you later.”

Sha’re watched the other woman as she hurried away before she checked her watch and sighed, it was time for her meeting.

An excited cheer rang out across the bridge of the Star; Jeannie grabbed John and hugged him tightly for a second before she turned to Radek to hug him too.

“Well done everyone,” Radek called, “We have all finished for today. As tomorrow is our ‘Freedom Day’ then everyone is not expected to work. Enjoy your day.”

As the bridge emptied of excited people John, Jeannie and Radek all collapsed into a chair.

“We did it,” Jeannie laughed giddily; “We actually got this ship fixed and ready to go up against the Andurians. Can you believe it?”

“Not even slightly,” Radek sighed.

John chuckled, “Who wants to tell Sha’re.”

“Oh,” Jeannie put up her hand theatrically, “My job. That’s my job.”

The two men laughed and motioned defeat making Jeannie grin. She tapped the panel in front of her and sighed.

“Meeting in ten minutes,” she reminded them, “We’d better go now.”

Sha’re sat going over reports from every department of Atlantis as she waited for everyone to arrive for the meeting. There was so much to do before they sent the team to Earth to try and prove that the Andurians had taken over the planet. Slowly everyone trickled into the room, Sha’re put away her
computer and turned to look at them. To her surprise Rodney, John and Jeannie were all grinning at her.

“I should probably ask you three for an update first,” Sha’re noted, “Or maybe we could go to Jack?”

Daniel chuckled as Sha’re gave him a smile.

“Please give us your update,” Sha’re said.

Jeannie stood; she’d been looking forward to saying this for so long and finally was able to, “The Star is now in full working order. We’re ready to go.”

Everyone stared at her in astonishment and it was Jack who found his voice first.

“The ship is ready?” he said, “You’ve worked out that little problem of no life support when we fire the weapons?”

“We finally managed to find the bug,” Rodney spoke up, “Thor and Hermiod have already gone over everything for us and agree we’re ready.”

“That is wonderful news,” Sha’re smiled, “And in perfect time for our celebration.”

“Okay,” Jack said, “We need to talk about getting people on the ground. John, your father is in charge of making the arrangements for the Asgard visit. We need to get the security arrangements. To make sure we stop Carter from doing anything once she realises what’s going on, we have to be in charge of the Educational Complex meaning we need time to take over.”

“I do not believe that revealing our plans so soon is a good idea,” Sha’re argued, “I know your father would do nothing to harm us, John but are we okay trusting him?”

“It’ll be him, my brother and Paul Davies,” John reminded her, “Who I know you know. Dad doesn’t trust anyone else either.”

Sha’re grimaced as she thought this over. She knew Patrick was trustworthy but there was always the possibility someone who worked for him wasn’t and would find about their plans. Looking at John she finally nodded.

“Alright, the day after tomorrow I will allow you to use the communications system,” she told him, “But I will be there at the same time.”

John nodded and smiled.

“Is there anything else?” Sha’re asked hoping to finish the meeting quickly.

Silence descended on them before Daniel spoke up.

“I have something,” he said softly.

Sha’re frowned at her husband.

“While trawling the database I discovered a few fragments relating to the Furlings,” Daniel explained, “I’ve been following them and,” he paused glancing at his wife who was waiting for him to finish with a blank expression before finishing, “I think I know how to contact them.”

“What?” Jack demanded leaning forward, “That’s great.”
“Yeah,” John added as Rodney, Jeannie and everyone except for Sha’re all looked at him interested.

Daniel licked his lips knowing his wife was definitely not happy with him right now.

“I have a Gate address that I’m sure will lead us to them. I think we should go and let them know exactly what their ‘kids’ are up to.”

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“You didn’t even think to discuss this with me in private first,” Sha’re snapped as she paced the room, “Was it a ploy to ensure I couldn’t argue against it.”

“No,” Daniel replied sharply, “Sha’re, this wasn’t me going behind your back. I worked this out before the meeting and decided that I wanted to let the others know of the possibility as soon as possible so the trip to the planet can be planned.”

“Why did you not come to me just before and say something?” she demanded.

Daniel sighed, “Because I know you. I know how you would react and I didn’t think everyone walking in on us arguing would look too good. Not to mention at no point in this entire proposal did I say I was going.”

“Of course you are,” she yelled, “You are the most qualified to find the Furlings not to mention you are the best diplomat we have and you know this.”

“Now you’re putting words in my mouth,” Daniel yelled back.

The room was filled by an insistent crying and Sha’re let out an annoyed sigh, “You have woken Mel.”

Daniel let out an annoyed huff as she headed into the other room to get their son. As much as he loved Sha’re she could just make him so angry sometimes. Deciding they needed to clear the air or this would turn into one of those fights that festered and made everyone miserable Daniel went into the bedroom and stood at the door watching Sha’re change their son.

“I’m afraid,” he said when she turned to see him there, “You and Mel are my world but I’ve had it ripped away so often and I can’t do it again. I want there to be another option in case the plan goes wrong. I want to know there is a back-up so I don’t lose you two and so I can come home to you.”

Sha’re’s dark brown eyes filled with sadness and hugged her son close to her; Daniel moved and sat at her side.

“I know I promised I would stay on Atlantis until it’s time to leave for Earth,” Daniel whispered, “But I need to do this. To protect you and Mel.”

“Why do you always have to be so reasonable?” Sha’re sighed.

Daniel chuckled and kissed her forehead, “Because you’re so hot-tempered, we balance each other out.”

Laura sighed happily as Rodney rubbed her shoulders, she felt like she hadn’t seen him in weeks and was astonished to stagger into their room finding him waiting for her with dinner made. After dessert he noticed how she was rolling her shoulders so sat behind her gently massaging away the stiffness.
“I heard a rumour,” she said wincing as his long fingers dug into the muscle, “That the ship is ready.”

“You heard right,” Rodney chuckled, “If the four of us weren’t so tired I think we would have conga’d through the city.”

Laura chuckled at the image, “I think you still should. We could get a good line going, I know a few Jaffa that would have fun with that.”

Rodney kissed the top of her head, “Now there’s an image that’ll stay with me for a long time.”

Laura sighed again, leaning back against him as he continued to massage her shoulders.

“I don’t want you to come to Earth,” Rodney said suddenly.

“Rodney,” Laura grimaced but he stopped her from moving.

“I said I don’t want you to come but I know you are,” he replied, “So I’m making you promise me something right now.”

“And what’s that?”

Rodney let out a long sigh, “That you won’t let anything happen to you. That when we win, and we’re going to win, that you will be safe.”

Laura smiled, “I will promise you, Rodney but I want you to remember one thing before I do.”

“What?”

She turned to look at him with a cheeky grin, “If I’m fine and I’m marrying you, you have to meet my family.”

Jack sat on the pier watching the Jumpers in the sky relieved that John wasn’t here; he was extremely twitchy when watching people fly the ships. Thankfully the other pilot was currently in his room more than likely unconscious as he’d been working along with Jeannie, Rodney and Radek almost constantly for the past few weeks. Jack checked his screen as he saw Jumper three arrive back from dropping Radek off on the mainland so he could see his family.

Jack smiled slightly as he thought how this group of lost souls had come together and created something so strong that he knew they could survive whatever was coming. They were family.

“You look lost in thought,” Janet said as she appeared at his side carrying two mugs, “Do you want some company?”

“As long as that’s not tea,” Jack grinned.

“It’s coffee,” she smiled, “Or what passes for coffee around here, made a little Irish.”

“Janet have I ever told you how much I love you?”

“Frequently,” she replied archly, “Though usually when trying to get out of a medical.”

Jack chuckled before looking over at her as she took the seat beside him, “Do you ever wonder about what life could have been like if certain things hadn’t happened?”
“You mean if you hadn’t been helping to hide me,” Janet whispered, “And Sara died because you weren’t there to protect her.”

“I don’t blame you,” Jack told her.

“No, you blame yourself,” Janet reminded him, she sighed and took his hand in hers, “Jack, you are a brilliant strategist but you and I both know there is no way you could have predicted Carter would do something like that.”

Jack took another drink of his coffee not answering her; he looked up as Janet touched his hand again.

“You aren’t alone,” she told him, “I know no one can replace Sara for you but you have friends who love you. Without you none of us would be here, Daniel and Sha’re wouldn’t be together or have Mel, Cassie would still be trapped on Earth – do you want me to go on?”

Jack’s lips quirked with a slight smile, “Maybe.”

Janet chuckled, “There’s the O’Neill charm.”

Silently Jack reached out and squeezed Janet’s hand before giving her a quick smile. Shaking her head Janet turned back to watching the Jumper’s with him in companionable silence.

Teyla and Ronon walked through the village watching the preparations for the festival tomorrow. Sha’re and Halling had worked out a way to combine the two celebrations and Teyla was looking forward to seeing how the Earthers partied.

John had told her about a few of the parties he’d been to in the past, as he spoke Teyla stared at him horrified as Daniel, Jeannie and Rodney were falling about laughing. It was Daniel who finally explained that John’s experiences were not the norm but it definitely gave them all an insight into the pilot’s past.

“Radek,” Teyla greeted the messy haired scientist, “It is good to see you back here. Are you on the mainland for long?”

Radek smiled, “I am home for now. We managed to complete repairs on the ship finally.”

“That is wonderful,” Teyla told him, “I am guessing you are looking for Tali and Lille?”

“You have guessed right,” Radek smiled, “Do you know where they are?”

Teyla motioned him to follow them as she and Ronon started towards the large building in the centre of the village. As they moved closer they could hear singing and Radek smiled as he spotted his girl in the centre. Her little face was beaming as she sang the song with her friends.

Radek spotted Tali in the audience; he quickly thanked Teyla and Ronon before moving through the crowd to join her. Teyla watched as Radek wrapped his arm around Tali hugging her close. When she’d learned of Tali’s relationship with Radek she was worried, Tali was such a sweet woman who had suffered so much heartache with the loss of her husband. Teyla knew many of those who had come to Atlantis wanted to go back to their home world the moment they could and she feared that Radek would be one of them.

But from what she’d seen, Radek definitely wasn’t.
Night fell in Atlantis.

The news that the Star was now a fully functioning ship had filtered through the city fast, the way good news did. Suddenly the place seemed to be filled with a buzz of excitement, a feeling of hope that winning back their home was possible and people started to become excited about the celebration planned for the next day.

As the city readied for tomorrow’s party Sha’re sat alone in her office. She was going over the list of volunteers to go to Earth to fight for their planet as she had to be the one to make the choice of who was to go and who was to stay. She was sitting staring at the second name from the top of the list, her husbands’.

Sha’re wanted to stop him from going, she wanted to keep him on the city with her and their son where she would know he was safe but she was also very aware of the fact Daniel would be needed to stop Carter.

With a sigh Sha’re placed her loves name on the list to go to Earth on the Star hoping that with that one act she wasn’t condemning him.
Sha’re smiled as she woke up feeling Daniel’s arm wrapped around her waist and the sun in her face. She thought back exactly one year to when she had woken the same way hoping that it wouldn’t be the last time she ever had Daniel’s arms around her.

“Hmm, morning,” Daniel sighed in her ear before Sha’re felt his lips brush her cheek.

“Good morning,” she turned to look at him, “Happy Freedom Day.”

Daniel chuckled, “The first annual Atlantis Freedom Day. This should be fun.”

Sha’re smiled slightly before she cuddled into him making Daniel frown slightly when she let out a long sigh, “What’s wrong?”

“I was just thinking of last year,” she whispered feeling Daniel hold her tighter, “How scared I was when we woke up that morning and how scared I am again.”

“Why?”

“Because you are once again placing yourself in danger,” Sha’re reminded him, “Firstly going to find the Furlings and then when you return to Earth.”

Daniel kissed her forehead softly, “I’m going to be fine. You don’t have to worry.”

“I do,” Sha’re reminded him, “I do not want to raise our son alone.”

Daniel kissed her properly this time, “I can’t promise that nothing is going to happen, Sha’re. But after everything we’ve gone through I’m not betting against us. So stop worrying for today and enjoy.”

Sha’re cuddled close to him listening for a few moments making sure there was silence coming from their son’s curtained off corner of the room. Assured he was still asleep Sha’re kissed her husband, sliding onto him to take his advice and enjoy the day.

Sha’re and Daniel walked through the corridors of the city with Mel in his mother’s arms heading to get some breakfast both amazed by the difference in everyone. There was an extraordinary feeling of hope in the air and everyone was smiling as they walked around the city. Sha’re chuckled as she overheard one excited little boy tell his father about how all the children were having a big party of their own tonight.

Nearby a group of Sheppard’s recruits were in the middle of a relay race being cheered on by a crowd as they tried to reach the end of the course using strange methods like hopping or walking on their hands. As they neared the end of the corridor they heard a cry of laughter and Sha’re smiled at her husband. The commissary was filled with laughter, Jack and Janet waved them over the moment they entered.

“Good morning,” Janet beamed as she reached out for the baby boy who started bouncing in Sha’re’s arms.

Sha’re passed Mel over to her smiling as Mel grabbed the necklace Janet was wearing and tried to
eat it. Janet absently took it away from him turning the boy on her lap so he could see everyone at the table. Daniel brought breakfast over for them and they sat chatting generally, no one wanting to talk about anything that could ruin the day.

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Jeannie chuckled to herself as she saw her brother shake his head in annoyance as he listened to Dr’s Weinberger and Dr Ahmed singing an out of key version of ‘Singing In The Rain’. She knew that they were faking the awfulness of it as she’d heard both of them sing, especially Esther who could also play piano while Fahd had been one of the lead tenors in his college where he’d met his wife – she had been killed in an Andurian faked terrorist attack.

“Okay,” Rodney finally yelled, “Go. Please go. I give in.”

They both gave a flourished bow while Jeannie tried to hide her laughter before they left the room to join in the celebrations.

“You lost the draw,” Rodney called after them as they left the lab, “Blame your friends who came up with idea of drawing lots.”

Jeannie continued to laugh, “You did promise only a few hours work.”

“I’m setting up entertainment for this day of idiocy,” Rodney reminded her.

“You’re setting it up for the celebration day,” Jeannie retorted, “A day we’re reminding ourselves that we’re free and safe and with people we love. Don’t mess it up by being a grump.”

“Don’t you have things to do?” Rodney demanded.

Jeannie shook her head, “Nope. John and Laura are both helping Jack so I thought I’d spend some of this day with you, for some reason I thought you might be happy to have me here.”

Rodney grimaced, “Of course I am. I just want to make sure this is ready in time, I promised Sha’re.”

“Have you finished?”

Rodney made a few more adjustments before turning to his sister and nodding; “Now I’m finished.”

“Great,” she slipped her arm through his, “Let’s go get lunch, Mer.”

The ‘holodeck’ had been turned into a large open grass land with trees in the distance and a waterfall just beyond them. It was filled, everyone trying to get the best seats for the afternoon’s entertainment.

“There’s plenty of room,” Laura called as she looked up from the console she was working on, “And everyone will see the same. Trust me.”

At her admonishment everyone settled down and continued to wait for the start of the entertainment.

“Is everything almost ready?” Sha’re asked, coming over to Laura as Daniel took Mel to find a space for them to sit.

“Rodney is putting the finishing touches to the link,” Laura smiled, “While Radek is making sure we don’t miss anything. The cameras for want of a better word have been positioned so it’ll seem like we’re right there.”
“I admit I was a little unsure when it was suggested,” Sha’re told her friend, “But once Jacob and Bra’tac took a hold of it then it became very interesting.”

“Interesting isn’t the word I was thinking of,” Laura chuckled, “Terrifying comes to mind, especially when they got Ferretti and Ronon involved in the planning.”

Sha’re laughed again, “I should take my seat, I do not want to miss this.”

Laura nodded. She looked over and saw Rodney and Jeannie walk in, they moved over to join her.

“Are we ready?” Rodney asked.

Laura nodded, “Just push the button.”

Rodney grinned at her, “Go grab a seat and I’ll be there in a minute.”

Laura and Jeannie headed over to sit near Daniel, Sha’re and Mel as Rodney made the final adjustments.

“It’s time,” Radek’s voice came over the radio.

Rodney grinned, hitting the button before quickly moving through the crowd to join his fiancé and sister.

The crowd cheered as the holodeck flickered and became the mainland where the teams were readying themselves for the relay race that had been organised.

Seven teams of four were all getting standing at the start line waiting for Halling to start the race.

When the holiday had been announced John had suggested trying to organise some kind of football game to give people an event to enjoy together. Then Jacob and Bra’tac had got a hold of the idea. They suggested putting together a relay race; their idea was that each team of four would consist of Earther, Tok’ra, Jaffa and Athosian.

To their surprise this was met enthusiastically by everyone and they soon pulled in Ferretti, Ronon and Halling to help them. Unfortunately it wasn’t possible to transport all those who wished to watch the race to the mainland so Rodney had been drafted in to find a way to help. Once he suggested using the ‘holodeck’ he assigned several people to help and it became a hotly anticipated part of Freedom Day.

Sha’re smiled as she snuggled close to her husband while they waited for the race to start. Mel was sitting in a seat Siler had made for them; it meant he could watch them without Sha’re or Daniel having to hold him all the time.

Halling started the race and the crowd began to cheer on the team they had chosen. The race consisted of several different events, each stranger and more fun than the last – including a five legged race which Sha’re wasn’t quite sure would work but Jeannie had ensured her it would be funny.

“This was a great idea,” Daniel murmured to her, “Look at everyone; they’re having fun and relaxing. They’re enjoying their life.”
Sha’re sighed softly, “We deserve a good day. All of us.”

“Hey,” Jeannie interrupted them, “Rya’c’s team is in the lead.”

The couple turned back to watching the race’s conclusion.

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Jeannie fixed her hair up before grimacing and letting it sit down again. She wasn’t really good at this.

A soft beep from the console on her wall made her sigh; she hoped it wasn’t her brother or John. She didn’t need either of them annoying her while she tried to get ready for dinner.

“Jeannie,” Sha’re’s face appeared, “Are you able to help me?”

She grimaced a little, “With what?”

“I am not sure how good what I am wearing looks,” Sha’re explained, “I need to make this speech in front of everyone and I do not want to look ridiculous.”

“Isn’t Daniel there?”

“He will tell me I look good no matter what,” Sha’re rolled her eyes, “Besides Dan’iel’s own taste in clothing is not wonderful.”

Jeannie laughed, “Do you want to come here? I can call Laura.”

Relief covered the other woman’s face, “Thank you. I will be there once Dan’iel is dressed so I do not have to bring Mel.”

“Okay,” Jeannie replied, quickly contacting her soon to be sister-in-law, “Laura, Sha’re’s having outfit issues. Can you come and help...both of us?”

“I’ll be there,” Laura grinned.

Sha’re hurried through the corridors to Jeannie’s room, she had contemplated calling Janet but remembered the doctor once telling her that she wasn’t very good with clothes so she turned to Jeannie.

“Calm down,” Laura said as she opened the door, “We are here to help.”

Sha’re smiled in relief, “Good. I do not want to look like I did not make an effort.”

“Well, you can help me too,” Jeannie told her, “Hair up, or hair down?”

“Down,” Laura told her as she sorted through the dresses Sha’re had brought with her, “I’ll straighten it, I’m curling mine.”

As the other two looked at her Laura sighed, “What?”

“I’m just trying to imagine it,” Jeannie chuckled, “Okay, let’s sort out Sha’re before we get to us. She’s the one who has to stand in front of everyone and talk.”
Sha’re sighed, “Why did I agree to this?”

“Because you’re in charge,” Jeannie replied, “And you’re good at making everyone feel good.”

Sha’re gave them a beaming smile, “So, which dress should I wear?”

“Have you seen John at all today?” Laura asked Jeannie as she fixed Sha’re’s hair.

Jeannie looked up from her make-up, “We had breakfast this morning before he left for the mainland to help with the race.”

“And how are things between you two?” Sha’re asked with a cheeky smile, “I do not see any hints that he has been staying here.”

Jeannie stared at her in astonishment as Laura choked back her laughter.

“He hasn’t,” Jeannie replied.

“So you use his room?” Laura bit her lip at the glare she was given.

Jeannie crossed her arms across her chest, “We’re taking this slow, because both of us have lost far too much.”

“That would make me move faster,” Sha’re whispered thoughtfully.

“Well from what I’ve been told you and Daniel got married the day you met,” Jeannie noted, “You couldn’t have moved any faster.”

Sha’re and Laura laughed.

“But you have seen my reward,” Sha’re reminded her.

Daniel paced the room wondering how much longer Sha’re was going to be. He didn’t understand why she was so worried about this; he thought she looked beautiful no matter what she wore.

“Hey,” he lifted his son out of his crib, “Your Mamma will be here soon and we’ll go join the party.”

The door opened and Daniel turned ready to ask his wife what had taken her so long, his voice failed him as he walked in.

“Is something wrong?” Sha’re asked with an arch smile.

Daniel shook his head, “You look...wow.”

Moving to her husband, Sha’re gave him a soft kiss before taking her son from him, “We should go. Dinner will be starting soon.”

As she started out Daniel grabbed Mel’s bag jogging to catch up with her, “You’re evil. You know that?”

Sha’re caught his chin with her finger, “I will make it up to you, Dan’iel.”

He chuckled and wrapped his arm around her shoulders, “I’ll hold you to that.”
Jeannie smoothed her skirt as the chime to her door sounded, as she opened the door Jeannie smiled finding John staring at her.

“Are we going?” she asked taking his arm.

John caught her around the waist and turned her to face him, “Not yet. Sorry I wasn’t able to spend today with you.”

She shrugged, “You wanted to help make today fun. And it was, it was such a great day. I’m looking forward to the party, so let’s go.”

John stopped her and gave her a quick kiss, “Now let’s go.”

Jeannie laughed softly and slipped her arm through his so they could head to the party. As they neared the ballroom they could hear soft music floating through, loud enough to be heard but soft enough that it didn’t overpower people’s conversation.

“Oh wow,” Jeannie murmured as she saw the way the room seemed to sparkle.

“How did they manage that?” John asked, he could see what appeared to be fairy lights but within the walls and ceiling giving the room a mystical quality.

“I’m betting Mer had something to do with it,” Jeannie chuckled; she saw her brother and Laura at their table and started walking over. This was going to be a good night.

Jack made faces at Mel who was giggling and trying to grab the toy being dangled by his uncle. Sha’re smiled as she watched this, at her other side Daniel was deep in conversation with William from the council and she was amazed how wonderful this evening had been.

Unfortunately the time for her speech was creeping closer and closer making her very nervous.

“Ladies and Gentlemen,” a voice made everyone look up to where Caroline stood, “We hope you enjoyed your dinner,” she had to pause as the room applauded, “Before we continue with the evening’s festivities we have asked that the Head of the Atlantis Council say a few words. So please if you would welcome Sha’re Jackson.”

Sha’re bit her lip slightly as everyone applauded, Daniel took her hand and gave her a quick kiss.

“Just be yourself,” he whispered before joining in the applause.

Nervously Sha’re stood, she had spent hours writing a speech to give but it slipped instantly from her mind. She glanced around quickly and saw her husband, her son, her friends and surrogate family all smiling encouragingly at her.

“One year ago today,” she started, her voice stronger than she thought it would be knowing that her voice was being transmitted to the similar party on the mainland, “Some of us escaped to a mythical city. A city we hoped would bring refuge from the beings who had invaded and enslaved our home. We found so much more. This city has become not only our home but our hope that we can remove those who have taken over Earth.”

“We were soon joined by new friends who helped us learn about this world before we were joined
by more friends. We are no longer several groups learning to live together, we are now a family. We may be split between the city and the mainland but we are a family. Many of us lost so much before we came to Atlantis. Here however,” She paused and reached out to Jack to take her son from him holding Mel close, “We have gained new friends and new loves. Personally, my husband and I have a beautiful baby boy we never thought we would get.”

She paused again and felt Daniel stand beside her, his arm wrapping around her waist. Sha’re turned and smiled at him before returning her attention to the room, “Today we celebrate our freedom but tomorrow we prepare to take back what was stolen from us.”

Jack stood on the balcony listening to the sounds of the party dying down. It had been a fantastic day, to celebrate the fact that they survived what Carter had done to them. He had been so proud to see Sha’re standing up and talk about what they’d gained.

Jack remembered so clearly the day they’d saved her from Ammonet, the way everything was so new to her and her wonder at this new world around her. He also remembered clearly the moment she was brought to their base after being rescued from Carter and knowing he was going to have to tell her that she’d lost not only Daniel but also her baby girl. Sha’re had been so fragile after that, or so he thought but the young woman was not as fragile as he thought. She had made it her mission at that time to make sure everyone that came to the base felt as though they had a place and that they were part of the group.

With one small speech she’d created a family and that family were going to win.
Warning – we're back with Sam so this is quite dark and also very disturbing so please read with care. There is a rape scene and some disturbing imagery so please read with care.

Sam rolled her eyes as she listened to the message left for her by Faxon, he was becoming more persistent than she normally would have allowed but just now, as her disguise strengthened, she had discovered that the disgusting human desires she had left behind once she had discovered her real self were returning. The Andurians had long ago stopped wasting their energies on such a useless activity for anything other than procreation, even then that was strictly controlled.

“He could be eliminated,” Teron, her assistant, suggested.

Sam shook her head, “We don’t have time to get someone new in the job and trained properly. Besides if he is attracted to me then there is less chance of another McKay incident.”

Teron nodded, “True.”

“Besides with the Asgard visit looming closer I have a new idea,” Sam told him, “We need to convince the annoying grey interferers that I am completely human. A romantic partner would achieve this.”

Teron tilted his head in thought, “True. He is due here in a few days and is staying for the next week. Do you think you can endure a human for that length of time?”

Sam let out a mirthless laugh, “From the day I learned my identity I was forced to live with them all the time. I can endure it.”

“Dr Carter,” Trig greeted her as she entered the lab, “I did not expect to see you today.”

“You said in your last report that this new test to impregnate the humans would incorporate the blood taken from the child,” Sam replied coolly, “Also I wanted to see your new technique for the implantation.”

Trig nodded, “Of course,” he motioned her towards the observation room, “I think you may enjoy this. We have decided that the artificial conception is not working so we’ve equipped a drone with the sperm and we’re going to have the woman implanted by sexual means.”

“Hmm,” Sam mused, “This will definitely be interesting. Will the subject be awake?”

Trig nodded again, “Of course. We believe the drugs will work better if the female is conscious.”

“Alright,” Sam smiled slightly which Trig politely ignored knowing what she was being put through for the impending Asgard visit, “Make sure you don’t gag her or stop her screaming. This is exactly the break I need from work.”
Trig turned to his computer, “We will be starting in just under ten minutes. I also have the child nearby in case I need more blood samples.”

Sam pulled out her mobile computer and started doing some work while she waited. About ten minutes later Trig told her they were ready to start. Sam leaned back in her chair watching as the girl, she couldn’t be more than eighteen, was brought in. She was fighting against the two guards but it was completely ineffectual and she was quickly strapped to the table. Her legs were pulled apart and kept in the position Trig believed to be the best for this procedure.

The girl screamed as the drone entered her, she was pleading for them to stop which made Sam smile. She’d checked the information they had on the subject as she waited and was pleased that Trig was using those who spoke out against the Andurians. This one however had been very vocal about Sam being a traitor and the words used to describe her were not flattering.

“She should be impregnated now,” Trig noted a few minutes later as the drone moved off the girl.

Sam leaned into the microphone as the girl’s head turned to stare at her through the window, “Humans have this silly belief that they can make sure they have completed this process by repeating the activity. Use another drone and do the procedure again.”

The girl shook her head, her eyes pleading for Sam to stop this.

“In fact,” Sam continued, “I believe that we should test her for pregnancy every hour and every time it is negative repeat the procedure.”

The girl screamed as Sam turned and headed back to her office, perhaps some humanity was not a bad thing – she enjoyed the vengeful streak.

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“Joe,” Sam smiled as he entered her office, “It’s wonderful as always to see you.”

Joe Faxon happily accepted the quick kiss Sam touched to his cheek; he loved when his work as the Human/Andurian Education Officer brought him here to the Educational Complex. From the moment he’d met her Joe was completely entranced by Dr Samantha Carter, the woman who had brought peace to the world.

“So to what do I owe the pleasure of your presence?” Sam teased as she offered him a seat, taking her own once more, “I was surprised to hear you were coming.”

“Our recent proposal to introduce the Andurian alphabet into the school system,” Joe said, “Well they’re hoping to start it next semester but I wanted to see how it worked and as this is the only place in the world where it is taught I came here.”

“So how long are you going to be here?” Sam asked, already well aware of this.

“I’m actually here for a few weeks,” Joe told her.

Sam gave him a smile, “That’s wonderful. I was hoping you would be, it’s been such a long time since we’ve talked.”

“Well,” Joe took the opening she gave him, “If you’re free tonight how about dinner?”

“I’d love to.”
Even in her human form Sam didn’t have that much experience with the opposite sex. She’d focused mostly on her studies and any relationships she’d had were serious. Since becoming her true self Sam’s biology had returned to its proper Andurian state meaning that when she allowed Joe to become intimate that evening she could not react the way a human would – even with the treatment she was being given to disguise herself.

Sam had however prepared and studied for this so she could ensure that Joe believed he was pleasuring her.

When Sha’re had been rescued Sam had taken the opportunity to record the bedroom activities between Daniel and the primitive plaything he pretended was able to match him intelligently enough to be his partner in life. Sam had lost even the small amount of respect she’d had for Daniel due to his intelligence when she saw how much energy he wasted on something and someone so pointless. It was however a good thing to have as she was able to study the primitive woman during this and was using that to let the man on top of her think she was enjoying every moment of this useless activity. Because she knew she needed him to be completely in love with her so that when the Asgard came they found a human with a romantic partner and they would finally leave them alone.

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Crying greeted Sam as she entered the nursery; one of the nurses came over to her as Wendy was trying to calm Daniel and Sha’re’s brat who was refusing to eat.

“Sorry, Dr Carter,” the new nurse said, “She’s not been well all day and is in a bit of a bad mood.”

Sam shrugged, “Well children have these days every so often.”

The nurse, who Sam had not even bothered learning her name as she would probably be replaced within the next few months, smiled and headed over to check on one of her charges.

“Wendy,” Sam moved over to the woman trying to feed the girl she’d come to check on, “I heard there was a problem during the night?”

Wendy nodded, frowning as the spoon she was holding out was pushed away, “BJ hasn’t been sleeping well lately. She’s teething but as we had a few new arrivals last night the noise was disturbing them.”

“That is unfortunate,” Sam noted, not quite sure what the woman wanted, “Do you have a solution for this?”

“Actually I do,” Wendy replied, “I want to put her in a room by herself since she’s not being put into stasis at the moment while the doctors test the new medication. There is a small room next door that’s only being used to store boxes which would be perfect. All we need is a cot and a monitor for when I’m in here.”

Sam seriously mused this over for a few minutes, “Are you sure you can handle having the child in a completely separate room?”

Wendy nodded, “There are two of us now so if BJ is fussy one of us can handle her while the other watches the rest of the kids.”

At the confidence in the young nurses’ voice Sam nodded, “I’ll have Teron set it up.”
“They’re adorable,” Joe said as Sam led him into the nursery later that day, “And they all sick?”

Sam nodded looking as sad as she slid her arm through his, “We unfortunately have to keep them in stasis as we seek cures. Our doctors do their best but sometimes the children are too sick to save. I just wish we could do more.”

Joe shook his head, “You obviously do so much, Sam. You can’t do any more than this. You shouldn’t beat yourself up.”

“Oh, you’re so sweet,” Sam smiled, while wanting to roll her eyes at how nauseatingly dumb he was.

Joe spotted Wendy as she brought Baby Jackson into the nursery. He moved towards the child smiling as she grabbed his finger and tried to eat it.

“Hello, sweetie,” Joe cooed to the child as he took her from Wendy, “Aren’t you beautiful?”

Wendy smiled at Sam who was trying to smile as well and not find a weapon to kill the man with.

“She is just beautiful,” Joe told her, “Why is she here?”

Wendy sighed, “Her parents were addicts and whatever they were using damaged her. The day she was born whoever had delivered her slashed her when they cut the cord. She still has a scar across her heart. It’s a shame, BJ is a sweet baby.”

“BJ, what’s that short for?” Joe asked.

Wendy gave a slight shrug, “It’s actually short for Baby Jackson. Because the children are so ill and may die at any moment we don’t name them. It’s too upsetting for everyone.”

Joe looked down at the girl in his arms, “That’s so sad.”

Wendy held out her arms for the child, “It is but we do our best to make their lives as good as possible. Although BJ is on new medication and she appears to be doing well so we have some hope for her.”

Joe gave the child a soft kiss on the top of her curls before passing her back to Wendy. He turned back to Sam and allowed her to lead him out.

“The work you do here is amazing, Sam,” he told her, “I’m overwhelmed by some of the things you do here.”

Sam squeezed his arm leading him out of the nursery, “Just wait until I show you the rest.”

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“Patrick,” Sam greeted the elder man as he entered the reception, “I’m so glad you were able to come.”

Patrick Sheppard gave her a smile, “It’s a good thing my son’s out of town meeting his in laws. Otherwise I would have had to sneak out in the garbage truck.”

Sam heard Joe chuckle from her side and she turned to him, “Patrick, I’m not sure if you know Joe Faxon.”
“I’ve heard about you,” Patrick smiled as he shook the other man’s hand, “Samantha has been talking about you a great deal at our last few meetings.”

Sam ducked her head, amazed that she actually managed to blush at that.

“That’s nice to know,” Joe grinned as he slipped his arm around Sam’s waist being careful not to wrinkle her dress.

Sam gave Joe a smile, wondering how long she could hit him before he passed out for a second before she turned back to Patrick, “Well, this evening is for a very good cause so I expect you to enjoy yourself, Patrick. We also have silent auction that I’m sure you’ll find something to interest you.”

“Now that is a good idea,” Patrick told her, “So I’ll leave you two kids alone.”

As Patrick headed into the crowd Joe turned to Sam, “Do you feel like a walk?”

“A walk?” Sam asked amused.

Joe nodded, “I want to show you something.”

Sam was trying very hard not take one of the guards guns and shoot the man at her side. She’d spent the past two months acting like she was in love with him and quite frankly it was making her ill.

However, thankfully he was leaving tomorrow to get his new programme out into schools which would mean she would have some time without having to pretend to be human constantly.

“This is a great idea,” Joe told her, “Raising funds for those poor kids.”

Sam forced out a laugh, “It was your idea.”

“That’s what I said, a great idea,” he kissed her.

Sam allowed him to kiss her for a few minutes before pulling back, “If this is such a wonderful party why are we out here?”

“I know I’m leaving tomorrow,” Joe said, “And I should probably wait until we know each other better but I don’t think I can wait until I come back.”

“Wait for what?” Sam asked.

Hoping she appeared confused since she knew exactly what he was talking about, she’d been the one to plant the idea in his sub-conscious one night.

Joe took a small red velvet box from his jacket pocket and dropped to one knee, “Samantha Carter,” he said opening the box to reveal a diamond ring, “You are known as the saviour of Earth and loved by all but I’m the only one who can say that I’m in love with you. Will you marry me?”

“Joe,” Sam gasped, she had been practicing her reactions and answers for a few weeks now so that she would be believable, “I never…I’m just so…” she took a deep breath, “What I mean to say is, yes.”

Joe bounced up and slipped the ring onto her finger drawing her close, “You’ve made me the happiest man alive.”
As he embraced her Sam wondered how long she would have to wait before she could make him the happiest man dead.
Chapter 62

Sha’re sat in large comfortable chair in the rooms she shared with her two men, smiling down at her son as he guzzled down his early morning feed. He had slept during most of the party and for a few hours afterwards, allowing his parents some time to be together before he woke up hungry.

Even before she met Daniel, Sha’re wanted to be a mother. From the day her first friend had a baby Sha’re had made every excuse she could to spend time holding that warm little bundle. When she and Daniel married Sha’re was sure they would have a child quickly, especially considering how much they practiced making one but sadly they hadn’t. Then all of a sudden they were ripped apart and Sha’re never dared to dream of this moment when she would have the child of her beloved husband held in her arms.

She loved this time alone with her baby, just watching him as he fed while he looked up at her with those trusting eyes. She loved the feel of his small fingers wrapped around hers with that amazing tight grip. Sha’re would always miss the children she had lost but for the time she spent just holding this warm bundle in her arms Sha’re felt whole again.

In the distance she could hear the sounds of people still enjoying parties of their own, glancing over towards their bed she saw her husband roll over still fast asleep before she returned her attention to her little boy while the sun rose slowly above the horizon.

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“Good morning, everyone,” Cassie greeted her class as she walked into the room.

“Good morning, Miss Frasier,” they chorused before sitting down.

Cassie smiled and stayed standing in front of them, “I know everyone is wondering why we have school this morning when most people are having a holiday. Well Sha’re has asked me if you can do something for her.”

Cassie smiled as the entire class leaned forward in anticipation; ever since the leader of Atlantis had come to talk to them they all adored her.

“Did everyone have a good time yesterday?” Cassie asked them.

Every head nodded as several said yes.

“Well, we all only had a lot of fun thanks to lots of people and Sha’re has asked that we make ‘Thank You’ cards for each person who made it possible,” Cassie explained, “Will you do this for Sha’re?”

“Yes,” chorused the class eagerly bringing out their crayons.

Cassie took a seat and smiled watching her class as they all worked hard on their cards. This was one way to keep them occupied for a few hours.

Cassie smiled as the final thank you card was set on her desk by little Mary, golden haired and with a bright smile, she was one of Cassie’s favourites.
“Miss Frasier,” Mary said, “Do you think the people will like our cards?”

“I think they’ll love them,” Cassie smiled, “Now, I’ll see you on Monday for class.”

As the little girl left Cassie noticed someone was standing outside the door, to her surprise it was Rya’c who stood there.

“Hi,” she greeted him, they were only barely acquainted. Having met on the Asgard ship on the journey to Atlantis Cassie lived in the city while he had joined the others on the mainland, “What can I do for the leader of our Freedom Day Champions?”

Rya’c grinned slightly, “I decided to stay in the city for a while to help and I was hoping you would be free for lunch?”

Cassie looked at him a little surprised, “Ah, I’d love to.”

Rya’c smiled at her and offered her his arm, even more stunned Cassie took it and they started towards the commissary. Cassie was surprised how easy it was to talk to him considering how stoic his father was. As they sat down to lunch Cassie caught a few people looking over at them but she was enjoying talking to Rya’c and didn’t care what anyone thought.

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“Okay,” Daniel told the group consisting of Rodney, John, Sha’ré, Jack, Jacob and Edward who were sitting around the table with him, “Since my initial work on this I’ve located three different planets that I believe we have the best chance to find the Furlings. I’ve gone over them and we’ll start with our best option then move on to our second best.”

“It seems straight forward enough,” Sha’ré said with a smile, “How are you going to complicate it?”

Daniel frowned at her before turning back to the others sitting there, “What I need is a team to come with me. So, who’s coming?”

“Unfortunately since Sha’ré isn’t letting me leave the city,” Jack noted, making everyone chuckle as he stuck his tongue out at her, “John will be leading the team. Rodney, since the ship is ready I assume you don’t mind giving the city over to Jeannie for a few days.”

Rodney nodded, “She can handle it.”

“Who else?” Sha’ré asked.

“Ronon and Teyla have both volunteered to come with us,” John told them.

“Well that’s five,” Jack noted.

“Seven,” Daniel argued.

Jack turned to Sha’ré who shrugged, “Danny, I know maths has never been your strong point but you, John, Rodney, Teyla and Ronon equals five.”

“Plus Teal’c and Laura makes seven,” Daniel reminded his friend smugly, “Just because you can’t come doesn’t mean they can’t. They’re still part of my team.”

Jack grimaced at his friend before turning to John and Jacob, “So, which group are we sending with trouble there?”
“Hey,” Daniel cried indignantly but was ignored.

“I have a team we can send,” Jacob mused, “They’ll be ready whenever you are, Daniel.”

Daniel let out a long sigh, “This afternoon. We leave this afternoon because the sooner we get out of here and find the Furlings, the sooner we can get back.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes as her brother continued talking at her as they walked towards the Gateroom. He was going on and on about what she needed to do while he was away.

“Mer,” she snapped finally, “Enough. I know what I’m doing and if there’s anything I need I’ll call Radek. Trust me we won’t let anyone blow up the city while you’re gone. Okay?”

“Fine,” he grumbled.

Jeannie chuckled and hugged his arm, “I’ll take care of the city besides it’ll give me a practice run for when you go to Earth.”

Rodney shrugged, “I suppose.”

As they turned the corner they found John and Laura walking along. Laura took Rodney’s arm and moved him away so John could talk to Jeannie.

“Hey,” Jeannie smiled at him, “Ready for your trip?”

“I’m just hoping Daniel is right and this doesn’t take too long,” John told her, “I heard a rumour its Dr Fredrickson’s birthday soon and I want cake.”

Jeannie laughed, she dropped her head for a second and John tilted her chin up so she would look at him.

“This won’t take long,” he promised her, “Daniel’s sure we’ll be back in a few days.”

“I know,” she shrugged, “I guess I just know that after this mission you’ll be going back to Earth and…”

As she trailed off John wrapped his arms around her, closing his eyes as she cuddled close to him. They stood in their embrace for several minutes before Jeannie pulled away. She quickly kissed him before starting him towards the Gateroom once more.

Daniel held his son as Sha’re looked over the information he had gathered for his trip for about the hundredth time. Mel was trying to chew on the handle to Daniel’s pack laughing every time Daniel moved it away from him.

“I’ll be careful,” Daniel told his wife, “You don’t have to worry.”

Sha’re didn’t say a word, she moved to the door of her office and called to Lisa. As Sha’re’s assistant appeared Sha’re took Mel from her husband.

“Can you take Mel for a few minutes please,” Sha’re asked as she handed the boy to Lisa, who grinned and took the child outside talking to him happily.
“I need my arms free and you need yours,” Sha’re told her husband before she hugged him tightly. Daniel held her resting his cheek against her dark curls crying out as she pinched him hard on the arm.

“Ow,” he frowned at her confused as he rubbed at his arm.

“You are to come home,” his wife told him sternly gripping his arms tightly, “You are not to decide that you need a few more days to look for the Furlings because if you do then when you do return you, Dan’iel Jackson will be sleeping on the balcony for a long, long time. Understand?”

As she finished speaking Sha’re rested her forehead against his chest.

“I understand completely,” Daniel tilted her up to look into his eyes, “And I promise.”

Sha’re kissed him, “Now go.”

Kissing her once more Daniel slipped out the door to join the others who were waiting for him.

“Dial the Gate,” Sha’re’s voice rang out clearly not showing the apprehension to the rest of the city she had shown him in private, as the wormhole opened Daniel glanced up at her and received a small nod and the order, “Be careful.”

Jack, Jacob, Bra’tac, Sha’re, Edward and Ferretti sat in the conference room with several lists in front of them.

“Thank you for each taking part of the list of volunteers,” Sha’re started the meeting, “We have all decided who from each list is a candidate for going to Earth now we have to combine these and decide who is going.”

“Dare I ask?”

“Yes,” Sha’re told Jack, “Dan’iel is on the list. I may not want him to be but I know if Dan’iel does not go to Earth then our chances of winning are less than if he is there.”

“Very good point,” Jacob squeezed her hand, “Alright, how about we start with everyone else on the lists as we already know Daniel is going.”

Three hours later Sha’re wanted to cry, this was not only frustrating but it was also very very depressing.

“Okay,” Jack yelled from where he sat with his forehead resting on the table, “We need a break. I have to get some cake before I go insane.”

“I will need to feed Mel soon,” Sha’re agreed, “How about we take a break for a few hours?”

As everyone agreed to meet up again after dinner Sha’re took Jack’s offered arm and they left the conference room.

“This is a horrible job,” Sha’re said as she and Jack sat in the corner of the mess having lunch, “Deciding who we send into the den of Gh’rari.”
“The what?” Jack asked as he gently bounced Mel on his knee.

“It is a poisonous creature,” Sha’re explained, “They live in the caves near the Oasis just outside Nagada. Dan’iel hated them.”

“I’ll bet and I know what you mean about this decision making,” Jack returned them to the original conversation, “The whole point of coming to Atlantis was to protect us.”

Sha’re sighed, “I know. There are times I believe that we should forget it but so many people here still have loved ones back on Earth and we made a promise to them to help. I will keep that promise.”

“I know,” Jack smiled at her, “And I know you want to go back to Abydos to see Kasuf, let him meet the little guy here.”

Sha’re nodded. “My father spent almost every day from the moment Dan’iel and I married hinting about a grandchild. I want him to meet Mel so he can shower all the love on him that he has been storing up for so long. He has no children left with…” Sha’re trailed off as thought of her younger brother.

“Hey,” Jack reached out and squeezed her hand, “We’ll get you back to see your father. What are your plans for this afternoon?”

“I am meeting with the other women who have recently had children,” Sha’re smiled knowing he was distracting her but grateful that he was, “It is actually a great deal of fun.”

Jack gently kissed the top of Mel’s head before passing the boy to his mother’s waiting arms, “I’ll see you later. I’ve got an appointment to keep myself.”

Sha’re smiled, “Tell Janet hello.”

“I will,” Jack replied, “As long as she doesn’t try to kill me again when landing the Jumper.”

Sha’re gently rested her sleeping son in his crib covering him with the soft blanket before she kissed his forehead and looked down at him. She was disturbed by the chime for the door; she quickly made sure Mel wasn’t disturbed before going to answer the door.

“Halling,” she greeted the Athosian leader in surprise, “What can I do for you?”

“I apologise for coming to your home but I am leaving for the mainland in an hour and needed to speak with you before I do,” he explained.

Sha’re motioned him to enter, “Please. Come in and you can say what you need to.”

As the man entered Sha’re moved to the small kitchen area to make them both some tea, Halling took a seat on the small couch at her invitation and waited for her to join him.

“So,” Sha’re said as she sat with her own tea, “What can I do for you, Halling?”

“My people and I have been talking about when you return to your home to liberate it,” he explained, “And we wish to help.”

Sha’re shook her head, “It is not your fight, Halling. I cannot allow any Athosian to place themselves in danger for us.”
Halling nodded, “I understand that but we need to help in some way.”

“You are,” Sha’re told him, “Your people have helped us so much, giving us a way to feed ourselves, guiding us through this galaxy so that we do not go to planets we would not be welcomed. All I ask is that you continue this.”

Halling nodded again, “For now we shall but the others do not like to feel useless as they watch their friends and loved ones prepare for a fight they are unable to participate in.”

Sha’re let out a soft sigh, “I know the feeling.”

**************************************************

Daniel moved away from the Stargate as he stepped out taking in the surroundings, as usual the view was filled with trees although the more distant ones were obscured by a thick fog. John and Rodney moved to the other side as Teal’c and Laura joined Daniel. Finally Ronon, Teyla and the team of five that Bra’tac handpicked to come with them arrived.

“Okay,” Daniel said, “There should be the ruins we’re looking for about five miles north-east of here. John, take point with me. T?”

“Of course,” Teal’c nodded as he moved to the back of the group along with Laura.

With Daniel leading the way the small team headed to what they hoped was a new ally and not a big fat nothing, or even worse – another enemy.

As the small group walked towards the ruins through the forest, that Daniel knew if he were here, Jack would be complaining about loudly. He listened to the random discussion John and Rodney were having about the Terminator movies, but kept himself focussed on reaching their destination. He knew they needed to find these aliens; soon they would be facing an enemy who unfortunately knew them well and could possibly predict their movements.

“Dr Jackson,” one of the soldiers called, “I think I saw something.”

Daniel turned to him trying to remember his name but couldn’t, “Where?”

“In the fog,” the younger man said with a frown, “Sorry, sir. I don’t know where it went.”

Daniel grimaced glancing at John who shrugged, “Has anyone else seen anything yet?” As everyone shook their heads Daniel frowned, “Alright, keep your eyes open and tell me the moment you see anything.”

As they started walking again Daniel moved back to Teal’c, “Well?”

“I have not seen anything,” Teal’c told him, “But there is something about this world. I can feel something.”

“Okay,” Daniel murmured, “Let me know the moment you do.”

“I shall,” Teal’c nodded.

Daniel grimaced as he moved to join John at the front of the group once more while a very bad feeling crept over him.
The ruins were not much to look at, only a few stones marking out what had once been a building of some kind. The fog had thickened considerably and they could only see just past the hedges surrounding the ruins. Daniel chewed his lip as he looked around, this seemed completely wrong in so many ways.

“Daniel?” Laura asked at his deep frown, “What’s wrong?”

“I’m just not sure,” Daniel told her, “There’s something about this place that seems really wrong.”

“Wrong?” Laura asked confused, “Wrong how?”

Daniel let out a long sigh as he looked around where his team was spread out, “It’s just a feeling, Laura. Unfortunately it’s a bad one.”

“Daniel,” Rodney called from the other side of the ruins, “Come here.”

Jogging over to him Daniel waited for the explanation for the yell.

“I’m getting energy readings.”

“Seriously?” Daniel asked in astonishment.

“Sir,” a voice called from behind them, Daniel spun to find Frisson standing with empty hands where his gun should have been.

“Daniel Jackson,” Teal’c’s voice made Daniel spin in staring as he saw the staff weapon was no longer in Teal’c’s hand, “We are under attack.”

“I think we’ve already been beaten,” Rodney replied as the group stood completely disarmed in the middle of ruins.

Daniel motioned everyone to group together in the centre as he watched the fog part and saw that they were surrounded. He watched the figure moving towards him and Daniel stared as in front of him stood a six foot cat with white fur that had black streaks through it.

Glancing round Daniel could see several more of the same creatures with different coloured fur and all their weapons piled behind them.

“Oh, we’re in trouble,” Daniel breathed.
Chapter 63

The squealing alarm echoed throughout the city and Sha’re picked her son up from his crib, trying to protect his delicate ears while he screamed upset by the loud noise that wouldn't stop.

“What is that?” she snapped over her radio at the control room as she tried to comfort her baby.

“We don’t know,” Peter replied, “I’m trying to switch it off.”

Sha’re frowned, “Is something happening?”

Before Peter could answer the alarm stopped and Sha’re sighed in relief, “Find out what happened,” she ordered as she turned back to trying to calm Mel.

As Sha’re finally managed to calm her son, the chime sounded on the room’s comm. system. Touching the panel she saw Jeannie’s apologetic face appear on the screen before her.

“What did you do?” Sha’re demanded harsher than she meant but the past half hour trying to soothe her screaming baby had shredded her nerves.

“We’re setting up several simulations for Bra’tac,” Jeannie explained hurriedly, “Unfortunately, one of my team got a bit mixed up and rather than fixing the program to sound the alarm…” she trailed off apologetically.

“Please ensure it doesn’t happen again,” Sha’re pushed a hand through her hair, “Our younger inhabitants especially did not like it.”

“Is Mel okay?” Jeannie asked biting her lip.

Sha’re nodded, “He is now. I apologise for snapping at you.”

“Do you want to meet for dinner?” Jeannie asked, “I’ll call Janet and we can chat.”

Sha’re let out a long sigh, “That sounds nice. I have to get back to work and so do you. Just make sure we do not have any more accidents.”

“I promise,” Jeannie shrugged, “And I’ll send out a city alert apologising.”

Jack scanned over the list in front of him before looking up at the others in the conference room, “Are we all agreed?”

Jacob, Bra’tac, Sha’re, Edward and Ferretti all nodded their agreement, it had been a hard few hours as they completed their task of choosing which members of the city were returning on the Star to Earth.

“Now what do we do?” Sha’re asked Jack.

“Now we sort through who needs some training and what our actual plan is,” Jack replied, “Which means you’re going to have to let John contact his father so we can find out what the state of play is on Earth.”

Sha’re nodded, “Once he returns from the mission to find the Furlings I will talk with him.”
Jack chuckled, “We’ll need to talk to Thor for that. He said that they’ll back in a few days.”

Sha’re nodded, “Bra’tac, I believe you have Jeannie working on some simulations for you?”

“We need those going back to Earth to be prepared for what they may face,” Bra’tac reminded her, “Jacob and I have some ideas for this which Jeannie is assisting with.”

Sha’re nodded before taking a breath, “I have been asked by Halling if we would allow some of the Athosians who have volunteered to assist in the fight.”

“It’s not their fight,” Edward said softly.

“It is,” Bra’tac argued.

Edward frowned at him confused, “How did you work that out?”

“They are family,” Bra’tac told him, “How many of those who came from Earth are now part of a family with an Athosian? Siler and Diayla, Radek and Tali, these are the examples that you are closest to, but there are many more examples.”

“He’s right,” Jacob noted, “We’re no longer different groups thrown together. Tok’ra, Jaffa, Earther, Athosian – we’re now all Lantean.”

Sha’re smiled and brought up another list, “This is the list Halling gave me, I suggest we look at it and make a decision.”

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Daniel could feel the other members of his team at his back as they stayed together watching the aliens move towards them.

“Are these the Furlings?” Frisson asked nervously.

Daniel shook his head, “I don’t think so. Everyone stay here.” Daniel flicked a look back at Ronon to make sure he obeyed; Daniel had discovered very quickly that the man’s loyalty to Sha’re meant he had a bodyguard he neither wanted nor needed.

Stepping forward Daniel kept his hands raised so they could see them, “My name is Daniel Jackson. We’re peaceful explorers.”

The leader moved forward, Daniel saw a long white tail with black streaks swing out from behind the black clad body.

“And yet you carry weapons?”

“For protection,” Daniel replied, he licked his lips, “Who are you?”

“I am Margee, matriarch of the Felin’ee,” she introduced herself proudly and Daniel heard a hiss of shock from someone behind him, “And you are trespassing.”

“We did not intend to,” Daniel replied, “As I said we’re just exploring.”

Margee tilted her head to him, “Your friend mentioned something you were looking for specifically.”

Daniel hesitated, he could see the others were surrounded and Margee’s people had already proven how fast they were so he took a chance.
“We’re from the city of Atlantis,” Daniel said, “And we’re trying to find a race of people called the Furlings.”

Margee chuckled, “No.”

“No?” Daniel asked confused.

“The correct pronunciation is F’rrrr’li’,” Margee told him, the name sounding more like a purr with a click at the end than a word.

Daniel shrugged, “Unfortunately I’m not able to pronounce that,” he looked back at his team and saw Teyla give him a quick nod before he turned back to Margee, “Can you help us?”

“You are hidden here,” Teyla noted as the team walked through the streets of the Felin’ee colony.

Margee nodded, “Our society is small and although we are consummate warriors, as you witnessed, we do not have the ability to fight vessels from above. We have been given the cloak by the F’rrrr’li’ to protect us.”

“There aren’t many in this galaxy who have the ability to detect the presence of your shield,” Rodney noted, he had his hand resting on Laura’s back as he could feel several people watching her along with Teyla.

“You must forgive my people,” Margee told him, “As I am sure you have already guessed our society is matriarchal, they are interested to see how both Teyla and Laura fit into your command structure.”

“We usually do what they tell us,” John replied before anyone else could.

Laura and Teyla rolled their eyes as Margee laughed, “I was sure of that.”

“Where exactly are we going?” Daniel spoke up suddenly, he’d been silent as they’d walked taking in the world around them but now he was getting edgy.

Margee turned to him, “To our guest quarters, this is where the others must wait as you and I go to make your application to the F’rrrr’li’.”

“Hold on,” John snapped, “Daniel isn’t going anywhere alone.”

“Sha’re would kill us,” Rodney murmured to Teal’c who nodded gravely.

Margee stopped walking and moved to Daniel, “The only way you shall be able to meet with them is if you and you alone come. Otherwise you should return to Atlantis now.”

Daniel let out a long sigh before nodding, “Okay.”

Daniel had been getting more and more nervous ever since Margee had agreed to take him to meet the Furlings while the rest of the team waited. The moment Daniel agreed Ronon had objected a lot, joined in quickly by John, Teyla and Rodney.

“The sooner we find the Furlings, the sooner we can get back to Atlantis,” Daniel argued, “And before you forget let me remind you of the pile of our weapons that ended behind the armed guards
when we were at the ruins.”

Daniel had left before any of them could think up a counter argument wondering just how slowly his wife was going to kill him for doing this. But then he reminded himself that he was doing this for her and for Mel no matter how angry she was with him Daniel knew he was right.

“Where exactly are we going?” Daniel asked his guide as they continued deeper into the colony.

Margee smiled at him, “To meet Hih. He is the representative of the F’rrrr’li’ here. This is an honour, Daniel Jackson. Hih only agreed to speak with you as your people have taken over a city that once belonged to friends of his.”

“We’re refugees,” Daniel retorted, “We went to the city of Atlantis in the hope that it would bring us safety. And I’m coming to the Furlings for their help to protect my wife, my son and over a hundred other people – I’m not looking for any honour or recriminations. I’m looking for help.”

The bright light surrounding Daniel faded and he found himself in a large room that reminded him of Thor’s ship. He turned to Margee who was still standing at his side.

“What now?”

“Hih will join us in a few moments,” Margee assured him, “You do not seem very surprised by your surroundings.”

Daniel shrugged, “Well I live in Atlantis and I’ve frequently travelled by Asgard Air. So, this isn’t exactly a surprise.”

Margee tilted her head to one side with what Daniel thought might be a smirk but he didn’t get the chance to explore it as another light appeared in the room. Daniel watched as it faded slowly into a tall figure and he let out a long breath as he came face to face with a Furling.

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“Are you alright?” Janet asked Sha’rē as the younger woman sat playing with her food.

Sha’rē looked up as though she just realised she wasn’t alone at the table, “Yes, no, almost.”

“Almost?” Jeannie asked with a small laugh.

Sha’rē let out a long sigh, “I just have a feeling that my husband is about to do something very stupid.”

“I used to get that feeling a lot about Daniel,” Janet said with amusement, “Almost every time he went through the Gate.”

Sha’rē let out a soft laugh, “It is just a feeling, Janet. I know it is silly but I always worry about Dan’iel when he is not in Atlantis.”

“You know he has Ronon watching over him as well as Teal’c,” Jeannie chuckled, “No matter how much he hates it.”

Sha’rē nodded with a smile, “We need to change the topic.”

“Agreed,” Janet grinned, “Guess what I found out earlier today?”
Cassie smiled as Jack appeared from round the corner deep in thought.

“Hey, kiddo,” Jack pulled her into a big hug happy for to see her, “You look in a very good mood.”

“I am,” she replied.

Jack rolled his eyes, “Tell me.”

“No.” Cassie laughed, grinning as he pulled her close to him, “I am not letting you get involved in something that doesn’t concern you.”

Jack stopped them walking and turned her to face him, “Cass, I have watched you grow from a frightened little girl into this amazing woman who stands before me, which means I am more than comfortable in interfering in your life. Plus I saw you and Rya’c having lunch earlier.”

Cassie frowned, “Rya’c and I have a lot in common. Not to mention as you pointed out I’m not a little girl anymore.”

Jack laughed, “You’ll always be in my eyes. So, is there anymore dinner dates planned?”

“None of your business,” Cassie cried slightly annoyed.

“It’s completely my business,” Jack said as he started them walking forward again, “I have to know if I can tease Rya’c or not.”

Cassie started to laugh and rested her head against him for a second, “I love you, Uncle Jack.”

“I should hope so.”

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“You are human,” Hih noted as Daniel studied the new occupant to the room.

Hih was the same height as Daniel; he looked slightly human though his features were softer than a humans the alien had opalescent skin which had a faint glow to it.

“Yes, I am.”

“Margee has also told me that you and your people have taken over the city of Atlantis.”

Daniel caught the darkness in the tone but remained very calm, “We colonised the city when we escaped from our home planet. A race called the Andurians has taken over it.”

Hih’s surprise gave Daniel a moment of satisfaction.

“You recognise the name I see,” he said, “We’ve persuaded the Asgard to let us prove this to them but I came here to ask for the help of the race whose technology they stole.”

“It is an impossibility that any of our technology could have been used by them,” Hih said, “We designed it specifically so that it could not be.”

“Well something went wrong,” Daniel retorted.

Hih tilted his head thoughtfully and started to pace the room, “How do I know that you are telling the
Daniel suggested.
Hih shook his head, “There is a much simpler way than that.”
Daniel frowned, “Which is?”
“My race is telepathic,” Hih explained, “If you consent I shall record your memories for the others. With this testimony we will be able to give you an answer to your request for help.”
Daniel grimaced, “Is it safe?”
“It is,” Margee assured him, “Hih will only scan your memories for the information.”
Daniel took a deep breath before he nodded, “Okay.”

Daniel sat in the chair he’d been led to nervously gripping the arms.
“You have stated that the Andurians have replaced one of your people with one of their own,” Hih said.
“No,” Daniel corrected, “She was never one of us, never human. She was planted by them as a sleeper until they could activate her.”
“I need you to recall from the moment you met…”
“Carter,” Daniel supplied the name darkly.
Hih nodded, “Please focus on when you met Carter. Your memories of this time and as you move through it I will record these for the council to view.”

Daniel nodded but as Hih activated the recorder Daniel’s mind slipped back further to how he became involved in the Stargate programme. As the memories flowed Daniel found he was gripping the arms of the chair tighter and tighter as he relieved the worst moments of his life thanks to a woman he’d once called friend.

As the light faded Daniel saw Hih and Margee watching him before he slipped into unconsciousness.

John paced the room they were in. They’d been waiting for almost two hours for Daniel to return and all of them were getting more edgy with each passing minute.
“He should be back by now,” Rodney noted from his seat by the window with Laura at his side.
“Daniel Jackson knows what he is doing,” Teal’c reminded them, “He will return once he has finished presenting our case to the Furlings. There is no need to worry.”
Ronon looked at him bemused, “You’re not worried?”
“I trust in his judgement,” Teal’c replied.
“The Felin’ee have given no indication that they have any hostile intent towards us,” Teyla spoke up from where she was sitting, “They have always been described in all the legends as warriors but also a people of great honour.”

“Then we wait some more,” John sighed, “Great.”

It was almost an hour later when the doors opened to the room they were sitting waiting in. Teal’c moved instantly as he spotted Daniel’s unconscious form being wheeled in on a gurney.

“What happened?” John demanded sharply as Laura quickly checked the unconscious man’s pulse.

“Daniel allowed Hih to record his memories of the Andurian occupation of your world,” Margee explained, “The process is quite exhausting. He will sleep for some time but he will be fine once he wakens.”

“We should get him back to Atlantis,” Laura said, “Just to be safe.”

Margee nodded, “Of course. I will escort you back to the Stargate. Once Hih and the F’rrrr’li council have reached a decision we shall contact you.”

“We will await your communication,” Teal’c said as he lifted his friend’s unconscious form.
Chapter 64

Radek sat staring at the screen in the small office he had created within the home he shared with Tali and Lille.

“What’s wrong?” Tali asked, coming up behind him and resting her hands on his shoulders.

Radek turned looking up at her, “I am returning to Earth on the Star.”

“Oh,” Tali moved away and took a seat, “I knew you had put your name on the list but I always hoped…”

“Tali, I still have family on Earth,” Radek reminded her as he sat at her side, wrapping his arm around her shoulders, “I need to help them.”

Tali smiled slightly giving him a gentle kiss, “I know. I just wish it was over. I don’t know what I would do if something happened to you.”

Radek hugged her close, “You would raise Lille.”

They sat in silence for several minutes before Tali moved to look at the screen and the email Radek had been staring at.

“I’ve to go to Atlantis in a few days to be briefed and trained,” Radek told her, “I won’t be able to come back to the mainland much,” before Tali could say anything he caught her hands, “I want you and Lille to come with me to stay on Atlantis until I leave.”

Tali hugged him tightly, “You know Lille will love that. And we will stay there until you return to the city.”

Jeannie sat reading the email again. She knew she would be receiving this one but it was still disappointing. Jeannie was almost completely sure that they would never let her leave the city after the last time she’d been away from Atlantis.

It probably wasn’t a good idea but Jeannie had snuck a look at John’s email and saw his email telling him he was going to Earth. It made sense; John was needed on the ship. He was their only way to make contact with Earth and one of the leaders. Jeannie decided to check Mer and Laura’s emails to see if she had to worry about anyone else. Instantly wishing she hadn’t Jeannie became aware of just how frightening the next few weeks were going to be for her.

“Are you ready?” a voice made her jump and turn to find Siler standing.

“Sorry,” Jeannie gave him a quick smile, “I think this should work this time.”

“I got the same email,” Siler told her, “It’s not a bad thing. They need some of us to keep this place running.”

“But Mer, Laura and John are going while I’m here,” she sighed.

Siler squeezed her shoulder, “It means you’re the expert on this place.”

Jeannie gave a soft chuckle and accepted his hand to pull her to her feet. With a smile they headed
“What happened?” Sha’re demanded as the team walked through the Gate and she saw her unconscious husband being carried by Teal’c.

“We will explain once we have taken Daniel Jackson to the infirmary,” Teal’c stated before turning and walking away.

Sha’re rubbed a hand over her face as Teyla touched her arm.

“We’ve been told he’s just sleeping,” Teyla said softly, “You have no need to worry.”

Sha’re clamped her mouth shut so she didn’t snap at the woman as she followed on. Jack appeared as they reached the infirmary and wrapped his arm around her as they waited while the team went through their post mission medical.

“Janet?” Sha’re asked as the doctor came over to them.

“He’s sleeping,” Janet confirmed, “Go and have the debriefing, I’ll call you once he’s awake and ready for you to yell at him.”

John sat watching the annoyance in their leader grow as Teal’c explained what had happened on the planet. He’d known Sha’re for several years but in all that time he’d never seen the expression she was wearing right now. Her lips were firmed into a tight thin line as her brown eyes grew darker.

“Teal’c,” Sha’re said sharply once the man finished speaking, “At what point have you ever left Dan’iel alone while off world?”

“He did insist,” Laura noted, “Not to mention if we’d tried to accompany him Margee would have sent us home without meeting the Furlings.”

“Sha’re, he found them,” Rodney took over, “And he gave them the information that will get their help. Once Daniel wakes up you can yell at him but frankly he reminded us we had no choice but to let him go with Margee alone. We all argued but in the end it was Daniel’s decision.”

Sha’re dropped her eyes and sighed, “Thank you all. You must all be tired.”

“John,” Jack said, “Hold on for a second.”

John nodded and dropped back into the seat as the others left.

Sha’re finally looked up at Jack, “I really hate him sometimes.”

“I know, kid,” Jack rubbed her shoulder affectionately.

She let out a long sigh and turned to John again, “We need to contact your father now. Once Thor and Hermiod return can you and Jack arrange this conference? I also need you to help training those we are sending to Earth on the Star.”

John nodded, “Sure. Sha’re, I know you’re mad at Daniel for this latest stunt but he did what he thought he had to.”
“That is Dan’iel’s excuse far too often,” Sha’re replied sharply, “Go and get something to eat, John. We can discuss the arrangements for speaking to your father tomorrow.”

Jeannie looked up from her computer as she heard voices coming towards her, seeing her brother, soon to be sister-in-law and boyfriend appear Jeannie bounced off her chair and over to them.

“Well?”

“We found the Furlings,” Rodney told her as he accepted her hug, “Daniel’s unconscious and may want to stay that way once his wife gets a hold of him, but I think we have a good chance of getting their help.”

“Oh, that’s great,” Jeannie sighed as John wrapped an arm around her shoulders.

“Are we heading for food soon?” Rodney demanded.

Jeannie sighed, “In a minute. Guy’s, the list came out. I know you’re all going to Earth so I need you all to promise me that you’ll be careful.”

“Hey,” Laura said, “We’ll be careful, I promise.”

“Come on,” John told them, “I’m starving and want to be as far away from the infirmary as possible when Daniel wakes up.”

Jeannie chuckled, “I want the full story.”

*********************************************

Janet checked on her patient relieved that he was merely sleeping and obviously dreaming. She’d watched this man in a hospital bed far too often, at least this time there were no physical injuries though there possibly would be once he woke up.

Janet headed into her office to finish some work, her shift was due to end in a few hours and she wanted things to be completed before she handed them over to Carson.

“Dr Fraiser,” Linda stuck her head round the door, “Sleeping beauty is waking up.”

Janet chuckled and hit her radio, “Jack, Sha’re, Daniel is waking up.”

Before allowing either of them to reply Janet headed across to the bed to find Daniel sitting up looking around confused.

“Well, well, well,” Janet smiled at him, “You must have needed a nap.”

Confusion creased Daniel’s brow, “What?”

“You’ve been unconscious for a few hours,” Janet told him, “The other’s brought you back from the planet while you were snoozing.”

He stared at her, “Okay, is this some kind of joke?”

Janet watched him look around the infirmary and moved over to him. She moved in front of him watching the way he kept looking past her at his surroundings.
“I’m going to ask you a few questions,” Janet said, “Name?”

“Daniel Jackson,” he replied sounding frustrated.

“Date of Birth?”

“July 7th,” Daniel sighed.

“Do you know where you are?” Janet continued.

Daniel glanced around the room and shrugged, “A pretty nice hospital?”

Janet grimaced slightly, “And who am I?”

“My doctor,” Daniel replied with a confused look.

“I’m Janet Fraiser. Can you tell me the last thing you remember before waking up here?” Janet worriedly bit the inside of her lip as she waited for his answer.

“The last thing I remember is finishing my notes,” Daniel replied with a frown, “I’m meant to be giving a talk concerning theories I have about the Pyramids.”

“You believe they’re older than they’re believed to be,” Janet completed for him.

Daniel nodded a little stunned that she knew this.

Janet heard footsteps and grimaced, “Daniel, I will be right back hopefully with an explanation but you need to rest for the moment.”

He nodded looking confused while Janet rushed to the door to catch Jack and Sha’re before they could get to Daniel. This was not going to be fun.

“He is awake?” Sha’re asked as she reached Janet.

Janet licked her lips making Jack frown.

“What’s wrong?” he demanded.

Janet let out a long sigh, “Daniel has amnesia.”

Sha’re looked at her confused before turning to Jack frowning in annoyance, “What is that?”

“It means Daniel’s memory is being blocked someway,” Janet explained.

“How much does he remember?” Jack got straight to the point.

Janet winced.

“Please tell me,” Sha’re whispered gripping Jack’s arm in fear.

“He told me his last memory is the night before he presented his theories,” Janet told them.

Jack let out a groan, “The night before Catherine recruited him into the program.”

“What does this mean, Janet?” Sha’re cried.
Janet wrapped her arm around the younger woman, “It means that Daniel doesn’t remember the Stargate, or meeting any of us.”

“He does not know me?”

“It’s possible,” Janet replied, “Sha’re, the mind is a tricky thing and some amnesia patients lose certain parts of their memory while regaining others. It’s also possible your presence may spark the missing memories but I needed you to understand and be aware of this before you see him.”

Sha’re nodded and started into the infirmary to see her husband.

Daniel sat on the hospital bed wondering which hospital he was in because it was nicer than any other he’d been in. The doctor had seemed a lot friendlier than he expected, especially as she also seemed confused that he didn’t know who she was. What really confused him was she’d known about his theories.

As he looked up Daniel saw a beautiful woman walking towards him with the doctor. Swallowing hard Daniel pushed his hand through his hair, frowning to find that it was now very short which confused him even more. He knew he would never cut his hair voluntarily but at the moment it was just one more mystery to add to the pile that was accumulating quickly.

“Daniel,” the doctor, Janet, said, “Do you recognise my companion?”

Daniel turned his full attention to the woman standing at the doctor’s side. She was beautiful with wide brown eyes that were filled with concern as she waited for him to speak, but as attractive as he found her Daniel didn’t recognise her at all.

“Sorry,” he shrugged, “Should I?”

The disappointment in the woman’s face made Daniel wince.

“Okay, Daniel,” Janet said as she gently sat the other woman on a seat, “The lecture you believe you were meant to present tomorrow actually happened about ten years ago.”

“What?”

“Let’s just say it didn’t go too well but it did bring you to the attention of a woman called Catherine Langford who brought you into translate a coverstone,” Janet started a quick explanation, “I’m not going to tell you everything as I want to see how much of your memory is sparked by meeting your friends and family. However this job meant you opened a device called the Stargate which allowed us to go to other planets. Unfortunately we trusted the wrong people and we’re now trying to liberate Earth from a group of aliens called the Andurians. You’re one of the leaders of the group and you recently went to try to make new allies where you let them scan your memories, which appears to have led to your current lack of memory.”

Daniel stared at her, “Who put you up to this?”

“It’s the truth, Daniel,” Janet assured him.

Daniel shook his head, “No.”

“Come with me,” Janet told him, “I want to show you something.”
Confused Daniel slid off the bed; he glanced quickly at the beautiful woman who was sitting there looking sad and felt incredibly guilty before he followed Janet to a balcony. He moved forward unconsciously to stare at the incredible city he saw before him.

“Oh my God,” he breathed.

Daniel spun to Janet who was standing watching him with a smile, “And the woman you asked if I recognised?”

“Her name is Sha’re,” Janet explained before smiling a bit more, “She’s your wife.”

Daniel looked up as he heard the door to the balcony he’d been sitting on for the past hour open. He was only slightly surprised to see the woman he’d been told he was married to step out.

“Can I join you?” Sha’re asked softly.

He shrugged, “I’ve a feeling you’re going to no matter what I say.”

“You do remember things then,” Sha’re teased softly before she settled gracefully beside him, “I wanted to apologise to you for the way Janet dropped the announcement of our marriage on you without thinking how it would affect you. I believe she was hoping it might jolt a memory.”

Daniel shrugged again.

“And I know you have more going through your mind than that,” Sha’re smiled, “I came here to answer any questions you may have.”

Daniel looked at her, struck again by the way she resembled his Egyptian Princess fantasy to a T.

“How did I end up married to someone like you?” Daniel asked, his hand unconsciously moving to touch her cheek but stopping before it made contact.

Sha’re gave him a smile, when they’d first met she would have taken that question differently but Sha’re was now very aware that her husband had never felt he deserved her love.

“You freed the people of my world from slavery,” Sha’re told him seeing the astonishment in his eyes as she casually told him she was not from Earth, “You saved my life and when the time came for you to return home, you chose to stay with me.”

“Do you love me?” Daniel didn’t want to offend her but it was something he needed to know.

“More than I ever knew was possible,” Sha’re told him sincerely.

Daniel dropped his head for a second, twisting the edge of his shirt with his fingers as he took a deep breath and looked back up at her.

“How…”

“We have been together long enough that I know you very well,” she replied, “In answer to your
question your words and your deeds, the way you hold me and kiss me have always assured me that you do love me.”

Daniel nodded but didn’t say anything else. They sat in silence for several minutes before Sha’re’s hand suddenly moved to her ear.

“Thank you, Lisa,” she said over what Daniel realised was a radio; “I will be there in a few minutes. Walk with him for now.”

As she finished Sha’re stood.

“Where are you going?” Daniel asked at her sudden movement.

Sha’re looked down on him, “Our son is due his dinner.”

“Our what?”

“I was going to wait until you had acclimatised yourself to the idea of our marriage before I told you about Mel,” she replied, “But he needs me now,” she paused for a second before offering him her hand, “Would you like to meet him?”

Sha’re smiled as she entered her room to find Lisa walking up and down with Mel who was whimpering softly. She quickly took her baby boy from her assistant.

“I am here,” she cooed to her son before looking up to see Daniel standing awkwardly in the doorway, “Come inside, the door will close if you do.”

Daniel did as he was told moving just inside as Lisa said goodbye and left them alone. As Sha’re walked to the couch Daniel followed her and took the time to look at the baby she held in her arms. The boy was an undeniably beautiful baby with the colouring of his mother; the mother who was gazing lovingly down on him but Daniel was astonished to be able to see a familiar expression on the child’s face, one he would occasionally see in the mirror.

To his surprise Sha’re unbuttoned her top and he turned his head in the pretence of looking around the room as he realised she was breast-feeding the boy. After a few seconds Daniel turned back and looked at the tableau before him, she was beautiful and obviously smart but Daniel had spent years making sure he didn’t end up in this very situation.

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re said as he started to step back from them, “What is wrong?”

“I can’t,” Daniel shook his head, “I’m sorry but I’m not the person you think I am. I can’t love you and I can’t be his father. I’m sorry.”

Before Sha’re could say another word Daniel fled the room leaving her holding Mel close as she tried to stop her tears.
“Sha’re is busy,” Edward pre-empted the question when the John looked confused to find him sitting in Sha’re’s office, “What can I do for you?”

“Wallace on the mainland thinks he’s found something,” John explained, “Since the team there are busy, I thought I could take Jeannie and Rodney to have a look.”

Edward frowned as he looked over the information John handed him, “Are you bored already, John? You guys just got back a few hours ago.”

John shrugged, “Jeannie and Rodney are geeking out about this in that weird half-sentence conversation way they do where no one else actually understands them.”

Edward shrugged, “Well, I see no issue with this. Just don’t start any explosions or anything like that.”

John nodded, “Don’t worry. I’ll take Cadman with us to keep Rodney under control.”

“So in other words,” Edward smiled slightly, “This is just an excuse for a family outing.”

John shrugged as he wandered out, “I have no idea what you mean.”

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Janet frowned as she reached Sha’re and Daniel’s room with Jack at her side to find Daniel only a few meters from the door sitting leaning against the wall staring blankly. They’d been in the Gateroom trying to re-establish contact with the planet when Sha’re had called her.

“I’ll take him,” Jack murmured, “You check on Sha’re.”

Janet nodded and gently touched the chime waiting until the door opened. When it did she glanced over to Jack, watching him approach the man lost in his own thoughts and giving him a quick nod.

“Sha’re,” Janet entered the room.

Janet frowned as she found the young woman sitting staring into space, her son held close to her as tears slipped along her cheeks.

“Here,” Janet said gently, “Why don’t I put Mel in his crib?”

“Oh,” Sha’re looked up surprised to find the woman she’d called was there before offering her son to her friend, “Please.”

Janet took the squirming infant into her arms, she checked to see if he needed changed before placing him into his crib. Turning back she saw Sha’re huddle into a tight ball on the couch.

“Hey,” Janet whispered taking the seat beside her friend, “Tell me.”

Sha’re looked up at Janet, “He does not remember. I knew I should not have told him about Mel, not yet. Not until he remembered some more.”

“Oh honey,” Janet wrapped her arm around Sha’re, “What exactly happened?”
“Dan’iel said he could not love me,” she whispered, “And he could not be a father to Mel. I do not… he…”

“Sh,” Janet soothed as Sha’re started to cry, “It’s going to be okay.”

“How?”

Janet took a deep breath and pushed Sha’re’s hair back from her face in a way she would do to Cassie when the girl was upset, “We both know that before Daniel met you he kept himself separate from the world. He didn’t believe that he would ever have a family and promised himself he would never put a child in the position he was left in. Sha’re, Daniel just needs some time.”

Sha’re sniffed, “You said yourself that his memory may never return.”

“I believe that Daniel will always love you,” Janet comforted her, “Even if he has to fall in love with you all over again.”

Sha’re rested her head against Janet’s shoulder staring into space as her friend gently rocked her.

“Is there a reason you’re taking up space in the hall?” Jack asked the moment he reached Daniel.

The other man looked up at him, “I don’t know how to get back to the infirmary.”

“Ah,” Jack nodded in realisation, “I’ll show you.”

Daniel pulled himself off the ground and turned waiting. After a second he rubbed his forehead, “I don’t know you,” he reminded Jack.

“Jack O’Neill,” Jack introduced himself, “And as a matter of fact you do know me.”

Daniel shrugged, “Okay.”

“Let’s go,” Jack smiled, clapping his friend on the shoulder, “If you want to know anything I can answer most of your questions.”

Daniel nodded, “Good. Cause I have a lot. Like how do I know you?” Jack gave him a confused look making Daniel chuckle, “If you can answer most of my questions then obviously you know me. So how?”

Jack clapped his shoulder, “Well, we met just after you presented your theories…”

Daniel took the mug Jack handed him with a slight nod as they sat in a small office near the back of the infirmary.

“Carson won’t mind,” Jack said as he ushered Daniel inside, “He’s on the mainland at the moment.”

Daniel watched the other man, Jack was waiting for the next question to come and Daniel knew what he wanted to ask but couldn’t find the words – which for him was quite a feat.

“Are you going to ask about her at any point today?”

Daniel sighed, “Am I that obvious?”
Jack grinned at him, “You may not remember your life with her but Sha’re has without a doubt always managed to get your attention. The first time you two met all she did was hand you water and you didn’t take your eyes off her for the rest of the day.”

Daniel dropped his eyes, “I know what I’m like in a relationship, and I know I don’t want a kid. How? Why would I…” he trailed off, “Jack, why would I do that to them?”

“Do what?” Jack asked with a chuckle, “Daniel, you two are a solid couple while that kid is adored by all and sundry. Even if something did happen to you two then there are tons of people who would care for that boy. What happened to you would never happen to him, I promise.”

Before Daniel could reply a beep sounded from one of the consoles, Jack leaned over and hit the button.

“O’Neill.”

“Edward is looking for you,” a woman said, “Meeting is in ten.”

“Thanks, Lisa,” Jack replied.

“I’ve also to let you know that Sheppard has taken Jeannie, Rodney and Laura to the mainland to check out some recent energy signals that have been detected,” Lisa continued.

“And people say I can’t sit still,” Jack rolled his eyes, “Tell the others I’ll be up in a few minutes.”

“Will do,” Lisa replied before the radio fell into silence.

Daniel waited wondering what his new ‘friend’ was going to suggest Daniel do now.

“I can either pass you onto someone else to answer your questions,” Jack answered the unasked question, “Or you can go back to your…” he trailed off at the panic that covered Daniel’s face all of a sudden, “How about we assign you a temporary room until you’re ready?”

Daniel nodded, “Okay. Am I allowed to walk around on my own?”

“Sure,” Jack replied, “But if you get lost ask someone or use this,” Jack tossed him a radio, “Put it in your ear and if you say who you want to talk to it’ll connect you to them.”

“This is bad,” Jacob noted as Janet filled them in on Daniel’s condition, “We need Daniel if we’re going to succeed in freeing Earth.”

“He has been training others,” Edward reminded them.

Bra’tac shook his head, “But he had knowledge of the complex that his trainees don’t have.”

“How is he coping with this?” Carolyn asked, “This has to be so confusing.”

Jack sighed, “He’s fine. The biggest confusion for Daniel right now is the fact he has friends, where his memory is right now that wasn’t the case. He has a temporary room for now and he’s going to explore. Hopefully the more he reads and studies the quicker his memory will return. This is all we can do right now since we can’t get a lock on the planet again. Teal’c has reminded me that they’re going to contact us so until they do we just have to go with this.”

Carolyn nodded, “That’s good. So who do we send in his place if his memory doesn’t return in
“Dixon and French,” Jack said instantly.

Janet tilted her head, “Why those two?”

“They’re the ones Daniel noted as the best in his appraisals,” Jack replied, he turned to Jacob, “I do actually read what I’m supposed to no matter what Sha’re thinks.”

“Martin Dixon,” Jacob pulled up the files, “Lesley French, they’re both good but there is no way they can replace Daniel.”

“Just now we don’t have him,” Jack reminded them, “So Jacob, you and Bra’tac will have to get them ready. People, we have a hellish few weeks coming up but if we can do this then we can win. It’s time to focus.”

Laura pinched the bridge of her nose as she felt a headache building, “What did you touch?”

“Nothing,” the offended chorus came from behind the solid wall.

Laura turned to Jeannie, “Do you believe them?”

“Not even slightly,” the other woman replied.

Laura let out a long sigh, “Rodney, is there anything near you that will help you open the door?”

“No,” came the sharp reply.

Laura forced a smile onto her face knowing it would come through in her voice, “Darling, try that again.”

The silence that followed made Jeannie and Laura smile at each, the grins widening as Rodney’s voice came again.

“I’m having another look.”

“John, use that over inflated gene of yours and try to open the door,” Jeannie added.

“Actually,” John said, “We’re going to look around a bit.”

“No!” both women yelled.

“What’s wrong?” Rodney asked annoyed, “There has to be something here and since we’re in here we may as well find out what.”

Jeannie rolled her eyes, “Mer, have you ever realised that you two are a walking target? Stay where you are until we can open the door then we’ll look around.”

John dropped onto the ground as Rodney continued looking around to see if he could find the door controls. They’d found the controls outside easily enough but when John and Rodney moved to look inside the door shut behind them suddenly.
“You know it’s more than likely the controls are deeper inside,” Rodney noted finally, “We should head further in.”

“You know what your fiancé and your sister will say to that,” John reminded him as he picked up a rock from the ground and threw it into the circle in the dirt that Rodney had made with his pacing. Rodney grimaced, “Good point. Laura and Jeannie can be evil when they put their minds to it and working together…” he shuddered at the thought.

John laughed, “Exactly.”

“But,” Rodney continued suddenly, “If we find something it might be worth it?”

At his friend’s hopeful look John sprung to his feet and grinned, “The doghouse can be fun when you’ve got company. Let’s go.”

“What do you think?” Jack asked as he and Janet sat in the conference room after everyone else had filed out.

“Well to be honest I’m not that worried about Daniel just now,” she told him, “He’s physically healthy and although he doesn’t remember the past decade Daniel is a very strong willed individual. He’s coping for now and when he does start to remember he has a good support system in place.”

“I feel a ‘but’ coming in,” Jack grimaced.

Janet nodded, “I’m worried about Sha’re.”

“Really?”

Janet nodded, “She’s trying to deal with a husband who doesn’t remember her, look after her son and she’s about to be responsible for sending a whole load of people including those she counts as her family to a dangerous fight. She may crack under the pressure.”

“Sha’re’s strong,” Jack reminded the doctor, “She’s dealt with things like this before.”

“But that was different,” Janet replied, “Daniel’s her rock, even when he was incarcerated by Carter she knew he loved her and now he doesn’t even know her. She’s afraid and I’m worried that this will be too much for her.”

Jack grimaced, “Is there anything we can do?”

“The only thing I can suggest is we encourage him to spend time with her,” Janet said, “And we look after her until Daniel either gets his memory back or he works out that she’s the love of his life.”

“Considering Daniel,” Jack noted, “That might take a while. You know how stubborn he can be when he’s being told to do something.”

Janet sighed, “Let’s hope not.”

Daniel stood on the balcony he’d found near the room he was given and stared out across the ocean. He’d never been a fan of the ocean, he preferred the sand when that was all you could see, but the fact that he was in a huge crystalline city that was floating on water, it was breathtaking.
Hearing a voice nearby he glanced back inside and Daniel spotted the woman he’d been told he was married to walking with the baby in a stroller. She was talking to him as he chewed on a toy and all Daniel could do was stare at them. He didn’t understand why he would let himself get into that situation. Without a doubt she was beautiful, but Daniel had learned a long time ago that letting someone into his heart only meant it hurt more when they left. It was a lesson he’d learnt several times in his life.

It was the reason he sabotaged any relationship he had, the few girlfriends he’d had could testify to that – especially Sarah. The thing that was really scaring him was the fact he did want to be close to Sha’re, he’d never been so strongly attracted to anyone in his life. As she turned Daniel dived back so she didn’t see him, he knew he’d already hurt her once today and he couldn’t bear to see that pain in her beautiful brown eyes again.

After a few seconds he looked back and winced as she was standing waiting for him.

“Ah, hi,” he managed.

“You do not need to hide from us,” Sha’re said softly, “I do not bite although I cannot say the same for Mel.”

Daniel couldn’t stop his smile. After a second he noticed the weariness in her eyes and he grimaced.

“I’m sorry,” Daniel said softly, “I know I hurt you earlier.”

Sha’re shook her head, “I understand. It took a talk with Janet but I do understand. I remember how hard you found it to open up to me when we first married. I hope you will regain your memories, Dan’iel but if you do not then I hope you will spend some time with us and get to know us once more. Mel needs his father.”

Daniel looked down at the little boy; he was playing with a rattle and gurgled happily at noises he was making with it.

“You may not recall him but he is your son,” Sha’re reminded him, “And he misses you.”

Daniel crouched down and gently touched the boy’s hand with his finger smiling as the little fist clasped around it.

“Hello, Mel,” Daniel said softly, smiling even more as the boy let out a giggle at Daniel’s voice.

Daniel gently stroked the boy’s cheek before he stood to look at the woman standing there. Sha’re stepped closer to him and pushing herself up very gently touched her lips to his, Daniel closed his eyes at the soft kiss. When Sha’re’s lips left his he looked at her and sighed.

“I don’t know how to do this,” Daniel told her sadly, “And I don’t want to hurt you.”

“You have never hurt me, Dan’iel,” Sha’re squeezed his hand, “I have work to do now, I hope you will meet me for dinner later.”

Daniel hesitated but the taste of her lips on his remained and he found himself nodding in agreement.

“I know you fear allowing someone into your heart, Dan’iel but as you can see you have already,” Sha’re smiled at his confused expression, “We will see you later.”
Edward looked up surprised when he saw Sha’re entering the office, “Sha’re, what are you doing here. I told you to take some time off.”

“I am here simply to check on some things,” Sha’re replied with a fond smile at the man, “It is just a few items that I wish to ensure I completed correctly. Mel and I will be here for only a few minutes.”

Edward smiled back at her, “Alright, but once you’ve finished you’re out of here. With what’s happened to Daniel you have more than enough on your plate just now.”

“I promise,” Sha’re replied; she motioned him to keep the seat behind the desk and drew the spare chair over to the small console on the other side of the room. She fixed Mel’s stroller at her side and gave him a new toy to play with while she worked.

They sat in silence for ten minutes with the only sound Mel as he played and laughed. Sha’re suddenly stopped working and turned to the man occupying her desk.

“Where is John this time?” Sha’re demanded, “We need him to speak with his father concerning the return to Earth.”

“He took Jeannie, Rodney and Laura to check out some energy readings on the mainland,” Edward explained, “They shouldn’t be too long.”

Sha’re shook her head, “This is typical of John.”

“I did agree to let him go with them,” Edward reminded her, “Besides it keeps him busy and out of our way until we let him actually talk to his father. You know how annoying John can be.”

Sha’re chuckled but before she could reply the Stargate activated.

“Incoming traveller,” Peter called from the control room, as Sha’re and Edward walked over to him he looked up at them, “There are no teams offworld just now.”

“Are we receiving a signal?” Sha’re asked as she shifted Mel in her arms.

Peter shook his head, “No…wait we are but it’s not one I recognise.”

Sha’re spun as the shield deactivated, “What are you doing?”

“It’s not me,” Peter replied.

“Reactivate the shield,” she looked around to find Lisa relieved to see her sitting at her desk and motioned the younger woman over to take the baby to get him to safety.

“I can’t,” Peter replied as the seventh chevron locked in place and the event horizon formed.

Sha’re moved forward, “Stand ready,” she ordered the guards.

As they readied their weapons the event horizon rippled and two cloaked figures emerged. Sha’re stared at them in surprise as the first looked up revealing features cat-like in appearance.

“My name is Margee,” their first visitor announced, “And I must speak to whoever is in charge.”
Sha’re stepped forward with anger in her eyes, “What did you do to my husband?”

Margee looked shocked at the hostility suddenly facing her.

“Sha’re,” Edward caught the young woman’s arm and moved her back, “Let me take the lead in this.”

She turned to him and the anger faded slightly as she nodded. Edward motioned one of the guards to keep her back before he returned his attention to their guests.

“I’m Edward Montgomery,” he introduced himself; “You are Margee, Matriarch of the Felin’ee. Our team spoke of you from their recent visit to your planet.”

Margee nodded before turning slightly to her companion who removed their hood, “This is Hih, the liaison of the F’rrr’li. We need to speak with you concerning Daniel Jackson.” She glanced over to where Sha’re stood, “His mate will need to join us for this.”

Edward nodded and motioned them towards the conference room, he moved to the soldier closest to him, “Call Jack, Janet and Teal’c to join us.”

He then caught Sha’re’s arm so that he could be sure she didn’t begin interrogating their guests before he could get there.

Sha’re took the seat to the right of her normal one as Edward took her usual seat. It was a reminder that she was not in charge of this meeting and an order to stay silent, although she knew he wasn’t sure she was going to obey.

Margee and Hih took their seats and Margee turned to Sha’re.

“You are the mate of Daniel Jackson,” she stated.

Sha’re nodded staying silent though so she did not say something she shouldn’t.

Margee however smiled, “I knew that before you even spoke, your scent enveloped him and his lingers on you.”

Sha’re stared at Margee relieved that the doors slid open allowing Jack, Janet and Teal’c into the room.

“Margee,” Teal’c greeted her with a small bow, “We have been trying to contact you.”

“Our Stargate was locked down,” Margee explained as the other three took their seats, “Our shield is being upgraded so travel was restricted until this has been completed.”

“Now that’s sorted out,” Jack jumped in as he slid into the seat at Sha’re’s side, “Can you tell us exactly what you did to Daniel?”

Sha’re fixed her eyes on Margee surprised as Hih stood.

“Dr Jackson agreed to allow us to scan his memories,” the Furling began.
“Scan not take,” Sha’re snapped before anyone could stop her, “He does not remember his friends, he does not remember me. You took his son from him.”

Hih looked down at her, “It was not our intention. This is not a side-effect of the memory scan.”

“Then what happened?” Sha’re pleaded, “How was his memory removed?”

Hih moved to her side, “Your mate allowed us to scan his memories. The others believed that we should not help you as Dr Jackson’s memories could have been falsified, however as we were reviewing these we came across a memory that convinced us that your people were speaking the truth.”

“What was that?” Jack asked trying to move Hih back to talking to them all.

“Dr Jackson had an implant in his lower back at some point,” Hih reminded them, “The technology used within this is something only we possess. Although this has been removed there is a legacy of it that you were unaware of.”

Sha’re let out a soft gasp but it was Jack who asked, “What is it?”

“The implant can also be used to wipe memories also,” Hih explained.

“Bitch,” Janet snapped suddenly making everyone turn to her in surprise, “Think about it. She did it in purpose. If she could remove Daniel’s memories of the Stargate and what she did then she could get him to do what she wanted. Find Atlantis.”

“But why did she never use this?” Sha’re asked, “If she had a way to get his knowledge then why would she not do that.”

“She enjoyed the torture,” Teal’c spoke up grimly.

“But she had Dan’iel in her power for two years,” Sha’re reminded them, “Why would she wait so long? And what about Rodney?”

“I may be able to answer that question,” Hih said, “Is Dr Jackson susceptible to hypnosis?”

“No,” Janet replied for them, “The one time we managed it was only because Sha’re was the one directing him. I’m not sure about Rodney however.”

Hih nodded, “If he fought against any attempt to hypnotise him then Dr Jackson’s memories would not be touched. However this time he allowed us to scan his mind, freely giving us those memories.”

“But he allowed Thor, the Asgard, to read his memories also,” Sha’re told them.

“Asgard technology would not have activated the device,” Hih replied.

Sha’re closed her eyes for a second, “Can you reverse it? Can you give him back his memories?”

“No.”

Sha’re covered her eyes trying to compose herself, surprised as a hand touched her shoulder. Looking up she found Hih crouching at her side, “His memories are not truly gone, they are locked away. I can remove the block so that they will return easier.”

Relief filled Sha’re and she nodded gratefully.
“I hope you two have found something interesting that will keep you busy when you’re sleeping on the balcony,” Jeannie snapped over her radio as she and Laura stood with Carson who was trying to open the door, she turned away from the other so she had the semblance of privacy, “And just because we aren’t sleeping together yet, John don’t think I can’t make you sleep on a balcony.”

“We thought there might be a way to open the door further in,” John replied, “Trust me, being trapped in a cave is not my idea of a fun afternoon.”

Jeannie glanced over to where Carson and Laura were still studying the controls along with a team from the village, “So, have you found anything?”

“Honey,” John chuckled, “When you see what we’ve found you will be glad we came wandering in.”

“I’d better,” Jeannie retorted smiling slightly to herself.

“Tell her we’ll need to get a team together to start going over everything,” Rodney called suddenly.

“Going over what?” Jeannie asked suspiciously.

The pause made Jeannie sure that John was grinning in that annoying way he did when he knew the answer neither she nor her brother did, “The Fighters we just found.”

“You’re still in the doghouse,” Laura noted as she and Jeannie joined Rodney and John looking at their new find. They’d finally managed to open the door again with Carson’s assistance and they’d ensured it would remain open while Carson returned to the village to gather a group to help look over their new discovery.

“This is incredible,” Jeannie breathed as she looked at the vessels similar to the Jumpers but made for one person, “You’d think they would have been in the same place as the Star.”

“There appears to be a blocked entrance at the other end of the room,” Rodney told her, “It’s possible they were originally connected and the corridor is now gone.”

“We’d better contact the city and let them know what we’ve found,” Laura stated, “Otherwise, me and Jeannie being mad at you two will not compare to Sha’re angry at you.”

“She’s right,” John sighed and hit his radio, “Sheppard to Control.”

“Sheppard,” Peter Grodin greeted him, “What have you done this time?”

John chuckled slightly, “I take a lot of offense at that. We’ve actually made a discovery that the council will want to know about as fast as possible.”

A pause followed making John frown.

“John, Sha’re’s ordered Rodney to come back to the city,” Peter told them.

Rodney grimaced annoyed and touched his radio to join the conversation, “Peter, tell her we’ve found something that we need to start working on…”

“Rodney,” Sha’re’s sharp voice came, “Return to the city now. This is an order, not a debate.”
Rodney, John, Jeannie and Laura looked at one another worriedly as the radio fell silent before Rodney sighed.

“Jeannie, call Radek and get a team working on these,” he told her, “John, we’d better get back.”

“Mer,” Jeannie called to him, “Let us know everything’s okay.”

He nodded and quickly squeezed her hand; he then gave his fiancé a quick kiss before following John out of the cavern and back to the Jumper.

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Daniel sat in the small room he’d been given thinking over everything that had happened. He’d somehow lost ten years of his life, ten years in which he’d broken every rule he’d laid out for himself when he lost his parents. He suddenly seemed to have friends, a wife, a child and Daniel had no idea how he felt about it.

Daniel pushed himself to a stand and started to pace as he thought. Jack and the other people who were telling him they were friends seemed genuine enough, not to mention Daniel did feel a strange connection to them. Then there was Sha’re, his alleged wife and the thoughts he was having about her were definitely not PG rated. Especially after the soft kiss they’d shared.

“And I have a son,” Daniel said to the room, “What do I do? I can’t let him grow up without a father but how can I be a father when I don’t even know his mother?”

At this he started thinking of the kiss Sha’re had given him and Daniel groaned, “I’m gonna need a cold shower soon.”

Rubbing the bridge of his nose he was grateful as the soft chime echoed through the room, relieved Daniel opened the door to meet the largest man he’d ever seen standing there, a football player with the emblem of Apophis etched in gold on his forehead.

“Daniel Jackson,” the man said, “You are required in the Conference room.”

“Dan’iel,” Sha’re greeted him with a smile as he walked through the door, “There are some people here that can help you.”

“Okay,” Daniel said doubtfully, his eyes widening as he saw the creature that looked like a cat and another that looked almost human but not quite. He turned shocked as Sha’re took his hand and led him to a chair. Daniel slowly sank into the seat not sure if he was relieved or not that Sha’re continued to hold his hand.

“Dan’iel, this is Margee and Hih,” Sha’re introduced their guests to him, “Your memory was lost whilst visiting their world. They have come to help you regain it.”

Daniel looked at them confused, “How?”

The one introduced as Hih stood, his skin seemed to sparkle in the light and he moved as though he was simply floating, “You once were held prisoner using a device we call a Clamp. It affected both your ability to walk and sleep, there is another use this device has and that is to block certain memories. When you allowed us to scan your memories we accidentally activated it and this is the reason your memories are gone.”
“Can you give me them back?”

“What I will do is remove the block,” Hih explained, “This means your memories shall begin to return to you. I understand this must frustrate you, Daniel Jackson but any other way would be harmful.”

“But it is possible,” Daniel demanded, standing and pulling his hand away from Sha’re.

Sha’re stood and caught his arm, “I will not allow you to do something so dangerous.”

“This is my decision,” Daniel retorted.

“It is not,” Sha’re replied sharply.

Daniel clenched his fists, “You say you’re my wife but I don’t know you and I’m not…”

“I am not saying this as your wife,” Sha’re cut him off, “I am saying this as the leader of this city and your knowledge is too valuable for you to throw your mind away doing something so dangerous.”

Daniel sat again more than a little stunned at the woman standing before him with dark eyes flashing.

“Meet your wife, Danny,” Jack chuckled from nearby.

“Do whatever you need to;” Daniel said to Hih, “I want to know about my life.”

Hih brought out what Daniel thought looked like a pen and after manipulating a few controls gently touched it to Daniel’s temple.

“Your memories will not return all at once and it shall take some time before they do but I promise that they will return soon,” Hih said, “I will warn you however that it is possible the darker memories from your past may be the first you recall.”

Daniel grimaced, “Okay.”

“You need not worry,” Sha’re said softly, “We will be here to help you through these. Thank you for this, Hih.”

The Furling nodded, “Once the other member of your city who had the clamp implanted returns we shall help deactivate the memory block for him also.”

“And what about the rest?” Jack asked, “Will you help us defeat the Andurians?”

Hih nodded, “We shall assist but in our way. I will return in time with details of how.”

*********************************************

Sha’re gently stroked her son’s back as she walked the floor with him trying to get him to sleep. Daniel was coming for dinner soon and as much as she wanted him to spend time with his son she knew he needed to be able to ask her questions. Rodney had arrived not long after Hih had removed the block from Daniel and once they’d explained everything to the horrified scientist Hih repeated the procedure. Hih and Margee had then returned to their home with the promise of returning soon with details of how the Furlings would help.

Finally sure that Mel was slumbering Sha’re moved to his crib and gently placed him down. Covering her son with his blankets Sha’re gently stroked his forehead, he looked so much like his father just now and she hoped that soon Daniel would recall.
The chime sounding through the room announced Daniel was here, Sha’re took a deep breath before answering the door.

“Hi,” Daniel said softly.

Sha’re smiled, “Come inside. I have dinner waiting for us.”

“I have to admit I did expect dinner to be in the common area,” Daniel said as he walked into the room he was meant to share with her and a baby.

“I believed this would be a good idea,” Sha’re replied, “Here you can ask me anything you wish and there is no one to overhear my answers.”

Daniel shrugged, he followed her to the table she had sitting waiting for them and took his seat. Sha’re placed dinner on the table before taking her seat across from him.

“So, have you recalled anything yet?” Sha’re asked watching him carefully.

Daniel shook his head, “No.”

“Do you have any questions for me?” Sha’re tilted her head slightly.

Daniel took a deep breath, “How long have we been together? Looking at Mel I’m guessing just over a year.”

“A year?” Sha’re asked confused, “Dan’iel, do you believe that the only reason we are together is because we share Mel?”

Daniel stared at her, “Sha’re, look at yourself. You’re gorgeous and from what I saw in the conference room incredibly smart. Why would you possibly marry me?”

Sha’re chuckled, “Dan’iel, we have been married for almost ten years now. Mel is a recent addition to our family.”

“Ten years,” Daniel mused softly, “And you’re still married to me?”

Sha’re smiled for a second before sadness touched her eyes, “A great deal has happened over the past ten years and there have been times we were torn apart. You will remember it soon but I have never regretted being your wife. Even if you do annoy me at times.”

“This has to be the horrible for you,” Daniel said as he stood looking out across the water, “I’m sorry.”

Sha’re moved to his side and looked up at him, “I should have recorded that so when you do have your memory back you can never deny you apologised to me for doing something so stupid.”

Daniel chuckled as he looked down to where she stood; slowly he reached out and gently stroked her cheek.

“Tell me how we met,” he asked suddenly.

Sha’re took his hand, “You may need to sit for this. After you told your theories you were hired by a woman called Catherine Langford, she introduced you to the Stargate and you managed to decipher it. This led you to my world and we met when I was ordered by my father to give you water…”
Daniel stared at her as she described their first meeting and how they’d married. He frowned when she finished.

“I…” he started not quite sure where to go with that sentence, “What is actually surprising me is the fact my theories were right.”

Sha’re laughed, “You are responsible for many amazing discoveries, including the city we live in now.”

Daniel stared at Sha’re for a few seconds before he moved, catching her lips with his own Daniel kissed her. This was completely different to the soft tentative kiss they’d shared earlier in the day, Sha’re’s arms wrapped around his neck as he deepened the kiss pulling her closer.

Sha’re let out a soft sigh as they parted smiling as she looked into Daniel’s deep blue eyes.

“I should go,” Daniel whispered, “As much as I want to continue this I don’t think it’s a good idea until my memory returns.”

“You are still a gentleman, my love,” Sha’re told him, “Still the same man who blushed when I undressed before him that first night on Abydos.”

“You missed that bit out of the story,” Daniel told her.

Sha’re laughed, “I thought you might like to recall that yourself.”

“I wish I could,” Daniel smiled sadly at her before he stood, “I should go. I’m guessing Mel still gets you up at night so you should get as much sleep as possible.”

Sha’re walked him to the door, “Will you meet us for breakfast?”

“I’d like that,” Daniel said, “I wish I wasn’t putting you through this, Sha’re but until I remember I can’t let anything happen.”

“I know,” Sha’re breathed; she cupped his cheek stretching up to kiss him again, “Goodnight, my Dan’iel.”

Daniel slowly turned and walked out of the room, as the door closed behind him Daniel rested his head against the wall and groaned.

Why hadn’t his memories returned yet?
Chapter 67

“Okay,” Jeannie said as her brother arrived back in the cavern, “We’ve partially powered up one of the ships. As far as I can tell from the preliminary tests I’ve done it works exactly like the Jumper except it’s for one person only.”

“Excellent,” Rodney said as he scanned over the computer tablet she handed him.

“So?” Jeannie asked.

“What?”

Jeannie rolled her eyes, “Why were you summoned back to Atlantis, Mer?”

“I’ll tell you later,” Rodney waved her away as he started towards the team working.

As her brother walked away Jeannie rolled her eyes, smiling as John appeared with Jack.

“What did you guys find this time?” Jack asked with a gleeful smile.

Jeannie chuckled, “Come and see. You boys are going to get a few new toys to play with.”

“Do you know why we didn’t find this when we found the Star?” Jack asked.

Jeannie nodded as they continued walking, “The Star was sitting in a chamber that was closed off from the rest of the complex. I had Jefferson go back and check that chamber; the entrance to the corridor was blocked by a rock fall. We’ve not moved any deeper into the complex yet, we wanted to get permission first not to mention I’m still going through the computer to see what else is in here. You never know.”

“Good point,” Jack chuckled.

Jeannie checked her watch, “I’m going to talk to Mer about sorting out a team to work on this. But considering the time it is we should probably think about letting everyone head for the evening.”

Jack laughed, “I’d like to see you persuade Rodney to let everyone go.”

Jeannie simply smirked as she walked away towards the rest of the scientists.

“You know we have a problem,” John noted as he sat on the ground behind where Jeannie and Rodney were squeezed into the cockpit of the fighter.


“How do we get these things out of here?” John asked, “We can’t exactly transport them out, flying them isn’t really an option as we haven’t found a hatch.”

“It’s a good point,” Rodney mused, tapping his fingers against the bulkhead, “Add that to the list of things we need to do.”

“Yes, sir,” Jeannie sighed.
“We’re also going to need someone who reads fluent Lantean,” Rodney added, “Who else can I get since Daniel is… not as useful as he was.”

“Tactful, McKay,” John murmured from his seat.

Rodney rolled his eyes as he turned back to his work, sighing as Jeannie yawned, “Am I keeping you up?”

“Yes,” Jeannie and John answered in unison.

Rodney glared at them but didn’t get a chance to retort as Jack walked over to the group.

“Okay, I need you back in Atlantis so you can speak to the council tomorrow morning,” Jack told them, “And no, McKay, you can’t stay here and come back in the morning. Cadman asked me to make sure you came back to the city. Apparently you need some sleep.”

Rodney grimaced but he switched off his computer and motioned Jeannie out of the ship before following on.

*********************************************

Daniel sighed in relief as the strange women all hurried out of the tent, he grimaced slightly at the smell of their ‘cleaning’. Hearing someone else near him Daniel sighed. Looking up he saw a woman enter dressed in red, her face hidden by red lace. He watched in astonishment as she removed the veil and Sha’re was revealed. Daniel stared at the woman he’d been told was his wife, jumping to his feet as she slid the dress from her shoulders. A voice coming behind him made Daniel turn to find a much younger looking Jack standing behind him with some kind of bomb.

“Dan’iel,” the cry made him spin, where to his horror he saw Sha’re’s body jerk as she was shot before she fell to the ground. Daniel dropped to her side finding that he couldn’t move his arms.

“How do you like your new room?” a blonde-haired woman asked as she walked in to the cell Daniel now sat in, his arm was chained to the wall, “You’ll forgive me that it doesn’t have much in the way of decoration but you always did say you needed less clutter in your apartment.”

Daniel stared at her confused and angry.

“No witty comeback, Daniel,” she goaded, “That’s so unlike you. It’s usually a chore to get you to shut up.”

“What do you want?” Daniel demanded, knowing he should know this woman but he couldn’t work out how.

“Daniel, I just thought you’d want to know where your darling Sha’re is,” she laughed, she pressed a button on the wall and a screen appeared, “She came down with a fatal case of stabbing, so did the brat she carried. It looks like all the time you spent looking for her was pointless.”

Daniel stared at the picture on the wall, Sha’re laying there dead and anger filled him. He turned, “You…”

Daniel gasped as he woke up; he sat up taking harsh gasps as he looked around the room he was in making sure it wasn’t the prison cell. After a few seconds to catch his breath Daniel jumped up and pulled on the clothes sitting around before he ran out of the room.
He didn’t even think that it was the middle of the night as he reached the door to the room and started knocking. The door slid open finally to reveal a confused looking Sha’re.

“Dan’iel?” she asked worriedly, gasping slightly in shock when he hugged her, “Dan’iel, what is wrong?”

As he pulled back from her she took his hand and moved him inside so the door would close before leading him to the couch.

“Tell me.”

Daniel stared at her, he was so confused. He’d just watched her die twice and now here she sat at his side completely healthy wearing a shirt and nothing else, he absently noted it had to be one of his.

“Dan’iel,” she said again a little more forcefully to get his attention, “What brought you here in the middle of the night?”

He frowned, “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have woken you.”

“You did not,” she assured him, “I just fed Mel. Now, tell me what brought you here to me?”

Daniel pushed his hand through his hair, “It was just a dream but…” he took a deep breath, “I saw someone shoot you and then I was in a cell with a woman who was gloating she’d stabbed you and killed Mel.”

Sha’re winced and reached out to take his hand.

“I know it was just a stupid dream but…” Daniel trailed off frowning at the sadness in her eyes, “What?”

“That was not a dream,” Sha’re explained softly, “From what you have said these are your memories beginning to emerge.”

“But…” Daniel stared at her, “You died. Twice?”

“The first memory is from when we first met,” Sha’re explained, “Do you remember the story of how we met?”

“Vaguely,” Daniel whispered.

“We fought the Goa’uld Ra who my people believed to be a god,” Sha’re reminded him, “During our rebellion I was killed by a Jaffa. You took me to Ra’s ship and his sarcophagus which revived me.”


Sha’re squeezed his hand, “We were told that Carter had turned against us and returned to Earth so you could help. When she took you so you would find this city for her she…she stabbed me in my stomach. Carson was able to make her believe I was dead and they took me to the base…”

“And Mel?” Daniel asked worriedly.

Tears filled Sha’re’s eyes, “Dan’iel, I was not carrying Mel at that time. This was almost five years ago.”

“What?” Daniel stared at her in horror, “The baby?”
“Carson tried but could not save her,” Sha’re explained trying hard to keep her own composure as she told her husband about the devastating loss that haunted them both, “I named her Lily and the plant that sits on the balcony comes from the bush I planted with Carson in her memory.”

Daniel stared at her for a few seconds before he shut his eyes trying to focus as a gamut of emotions raged through him. He stood suddenly and moved across the room to Mel’s crib, looking down on the sleeping child whose mouth moved as though he were still feeding. Daniel reached down and gently stroked the baby’s soft cheek. When Sha’re moved to his side he turned to her.

“We’ve been through a lot,” he stated.

“Yes.”

Daniel glanced back down at the baby, “But we have this little boy.”

“Yes.”

He pushed his hand through his hair again before turning to look at her, “I should go.”

“Do you want to?” Sha’re asked.

“Not really,” Daniel confessed, “But I don’t think I should stay.”

Sha’re laughed softly as she took his hand and led him across the room to sit on the bed, “Well, I think it might be better if you stay here. In case you have another bad dream you need me to soothe.”

Daniel chuckled, “Are you sure?”

Sha’re touched her lips to his in a soft kiss, her arms wrapped around his neck deepening the kiss while Daniel lay her back against the pillows. As they kissed Daniel gently explored the soft body below him, enjoying the connection he somehow had with this beautiful woman. They parted and Daniel looked down at her, she shifted slightly so he would move off her and as he lay at her side Sha’re cuddled into him.

“Go to sleep,” Sha’re told him as she pulled the covers over them, “Mel will be up soon.”

As Sha’re closed her eyes to sleep Daniel decided not to disturb her so just shut his eyes and settled into the warmth.

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“Good morning,” Jeannie practically sang as John’s door opened, “Are you coming for breakfast?”

“Why are you so cheery?” John demanded with a grimace.

Jeannie chuckled, “Because I have new toys to play with.”

Jeannie chuckled, “Because I have new toys to play with.”

“I was hoping you were going to say because you get to spend time with me,” John gave a mock pout.

“Just be happy you didn’t end up sleeping on the balcony,” Jeannie jabbed him in the ribs with her elbow.

John wrapped his arm around her shoulder and started them walking towards the mess.

“What are the odds Rodney will already be here?” John asked with a chuckle.
“I’m not taking that bet,” Jeannie replied, “Then again Laura is quite persuasive and if she thinks he hasn’t had enough rest she won’t let him out.”

“It’s amazing how different she is now,” John noted, “I remember the day I met her, Laura was pretty messed up.”

“I think we were all badly messed up back on Earth,” Jeannie reminded him.

They grabbed some food and took a seat; John tore a piece off his roll.

“When do you think the council will let me take one of the fighters out on a test?” he asked.

Jeannie laughed, “I’m impressed, that took you ten minutes.”

“I’m the epitome of restraint,” he replied with a grin.

Jeannie grinned, “From what we got yesterday we still don’t know how to get the fighters out of there. I’m guessing there might be something within the database but I’m not precisely sure what.”

“We could ask Thor?”

“Not the best plan,” she replied, “We need to be able to do it ourselves, John. There are probably other things within this base that we’ll need when you’re all on your way to Earth. I’m sure there’s something in there, I just need some time to find it.”

“You will,” he assured her, “You will.”

“I’m amazed you’re still here,” Laura said as she walked out of the bathroom to find her fiancé sitting on the bed.

“Going over the statistics for the fighters before I meet with the council,” Rodney explained, “It’s easier to do it here than in the mess or a lab. People annoy me in both places.”

Laura smiled to herself, “And you think I won’t annoy you.”

“You don’t annoy me,” Rodney said before looking up at her with a grin, “Too much anyway.”

Laura smirked slightly, “I could always distract you instead?”

Rodney groaned softly, “Laura, please don’t. I need to make sure this is ready before my meeting and I can’t if you decide to distract me.”

Laura leaned over and kissed him softly, “No problem. Just let me know the moment you want distracting.”

“I will,” Rodney murmured as he smiled at her before returning to his work.

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Sha’re opened her eyes and smiled as she saw her husband’s peaceful face across from her. She’d lied earlier when she told him she was only awake because she’d just fed Mel, she’d actually fed him the hour before but hadn’t managed to get any sleep all night. Not until Daniel had lay beside her. It had only been one day since he had lost his memory but the fact he did not know who she was was worse than the nights he spent away from her while offworld.
Hearing the soft snuffle from her son Sha’re slid away from Daniel, smiling as he sighed in his sleep before settling down. Sha’re padded across the room to the crib and checked her baby boy, he was still fast asleep with a similar look of peace on his face.

Assured she had time for a shower Sha’re found a clean dress for the day before she set out Mel’s clothes. Checking one last time that both her men were sleeping she headed into the bathroom to get ready for her day.

Daniel stretched as he woke up; enjoying the warmth he was in before the memory of where he was returned. Sitting up quickly Daniel looked at the empty space beside him, he was partially relieved Sha’re wasn’t lying at his side. Daniel had never been affected like this by any woman he’d known and he was beginning to feel that the more time he spent with her the more he would become even more comfortable – he wasn’t sure yet if that was a good or bad thing.

“Good morning, Dan’iel,” Sha’re’s voice made him turn to find her walking out of the bathroom, a towel wrapped around her long hair, “Did you sleep well?”

“Yeah,” he smiled slightly.

“Good. I told you it was best you stay here,” she told him as she headed past him to get her son. Lifting their baby boy out of his crib she smiled at him, “Good morning, my darling. Are you hungry?”

Daniel watched Sha’re as she cooed to the child, the connection they shared was so wonderful to watch.

“You should have your shower,” Sha’re’s voice caught him by surprise; “Your clothes are in the cupboard closest to the bathroom. I only packed you a few things yesterday so there is plenty for you to choose from. I should have Mel ready by the time you are then we can go for breakfast.”

“Sure,” Daniel nodded; with a quick glance back at the family he had always wanted he headed to get ready for the day.

“So, what do we do after breakfast?” Daniel asked as they walked slowly through the corridors with Mel in his stroller.

“Well I have a council meeting,” Sha’re told him, “You could join me if you want but you do not in your normal life.”

“Then maybe not,” Daniel smiled, “What about Mel? Do you take him or does someone look after him?”

“Lisa, my assistant has agreed to take him for the time,” Sha’re replied, “She loves him.”

Daniel licked his lips, “I could take him.”

Sha’re stopped walking and turned to him with surprise in her eyes.

“He is my son,” Daniel felt a little defensive at her shock, “I want to get to know him. It’s not that surprising.”
“No,” Sha’re laughed before she gave him an impulsive hug, “It is wonderful that you want to. You were not so receptive yesterday.”

Daniel sighed, “I know but I just lost ten years of my life and discovered a wife then a son I had no idea about. Would you have reacted better?”

Giving him a smile Sha’re nodded, “You are correct, my Dan’iel. I do not think I would,” Sha’re tilted her head to one side before she placed a hand on his cheek and gently kissed him, “I am sorry I pushed you so hard. I just need you so much, my husband.”

Daniel stared at her, “Really?”

“Yes,” she shook her head, “Dan’iel, you are the one person in this world I can be myself with. You are my strength, my safety and I love you more than I can possibly say.”

“Wow,” Daniel breathed, “Considering my history and my ability to ruin relationships I seem to have done well when I’m with you.”

Sha’re chuckled, “Because we are meant to be. Now we should get breakfast. I need something to eat before my meeting or I will fall asleep and Rodney will take that as an agreement to do whatever he wants.”

Daniel rested his arm around her, a little nervously but as they walked through the corridor he relaxed and decided he was going to let down his walls for this woman.
“Morning,” Jack greeted Sha’rē as she entered the conference room.

“Good morning, Jack,” she replied sliding into her usual seat, “You look very serious.”

Jack let out a long sigh, “I’ve just spoken with Thor. The Asgard will be here to escort us to Earth in two weeks.”

“So soon?”

Jack nodded.

“I was hoping for more time,” Sha’rē frowned, “Especially as Dan’iel is recovering his memory,” at Jack’s confused look she shook her head, “I may not want him to go, especially now but I know that you will need him.”

“Have you seen him this morning?” Jack asked.

Sha’rē smiled, “He had breakfast with us and he is watching Mel while we have this meeting.”

“That’s great,” Jack told her, “I knew he’d realise you guys are the centre of his life pretty quickly.”

“He remembered my death at the hands of Ra’s Jaffa,” Sha’rē said sadly, “And then when Carter told him she had killed both myself and Lilly. He came to me in the middle of the night very frightened by what he thought were dreams.”

“He came to you,” Jack said, “No one else, he went to you. Sha’rē, two weeks may be enough time for his memory to come back, we have a back-up plan if it isn’t.”

Sha’rē nodded relieved as the rest of the council arrived along with Rodney, Jeannie and John.

“Good morning,” Sha’rē started the meeting the moment everyone had taken their seats, “As you are aware, yesterday our resident trouble-makers John and Rodney found a cache of Fighters. I was hoping we would have enough time to go through our new find however Jack has just informed me that we now have two weeks until the Asgard arrive. Therefore we need to accelerate our plans.”

Jeannie nodded as Sha’rē motioned to her, “The fighters are in a self-contained area of what we now believe to be a much larger complex. Mer and I have gone over one of the fighters and we’re convinced that it’s flown exactly the same as the Jumper. We need to do a test flight but until we work out how to get it out of the bay we’re only guessing.”

“Any ideas on how to get it out of the bay?” Jack asked.

Rodney shrugged, “Not yet. As soon as we get back it’s the first thing I’ll work on.”

“Good,” Sha’rē replied, “However, if you are unable to by the end of the day we need to speak to Thor and request his help.”

“Of course,” Jeannie said.

Sha’rē smiled slightly at the other woman before turning back to the council, “Next, John it is time
for you to speak to your father so we can align our plans with theirs, which is our next job. Jeannie, I need Rodney here for this can you head to the mainland first and work on the fighters.”

Jeannie nodded and started out as the people around the table began making plans to retrieve their home.

“‘You are extremely cute,’” Daniel murmured as he sat with Mel in his arms just letting the boy hold his finger. The baby was very alert; Daniel decided and filled with life as he kicked his legs while happily playing with Daniel’s fingers.

When Sha’re had brought them back to the room, she had quickly shown him where everything was for the boy in the room before she had kissed the child, clearly showing the devotion she had for him in her eyes. Sha’re had then looked at Daniel but this time he’d moved pressing a soft kiss on her lips. He was beginning to enjoy feeling that he belonged to this woman. Leaning back Daniel found a lullaby slipping from his lips without thought amazed at the way Mel seemed to become happier as Daniel sang.

“How can you be mine?” Daniel whispered realising that he should put the now sleeping child in his crib. As he rested the boy down Daniel smiled totally in love with this child wishing he could remember the day he became a father.

“‘Dan’iel!!’”

“I’m here,” he soothed the woman laying there in the throes of labour, “I’m here and now the baby’s here so you have to push.”

Sha’re cried out and Daniel found himself holding a newborn baby in his arms, “It’s a boy,” he said before sighing, “It’s a boy.”

“Daniel.”

He turned to find Jack standing behind him; the cave had disappeared and become an office. Daniel looked down and found the child was gone.

“Are you okay?” Jack asked softly.

Daniel shook his head, “I keep thinking about Sha’re. What that bastard did to her and then I end up heading into that horrible thought that he got her pregnant when I never could. How selfish am I?”

“Danny, you’ve got to stop torturing yourself,” Jack reminded him, “You’re doing everything you can to find her.”

“I wanted to keep him,” Daniel told his friend, “I wanted to keep the baby so much.”

Jack rested his hand on Daniel’s shoulder.

“Dan’iel.”

He turned and found Sha’re in front of him her arms open to accept a bundle from Jack, Daniel caught his wife lowering her to sit as she unwrapped the cloth and Daniel saw what he thought was
“Dan’iel?”

Daniel woke up with a start surprised to find Sha’re standing over him.

“Hey,” he sighed, his dreams had confused him completely, “Is everything okay?”

She nodded, “Was Mel good?”

“He’s a good kid,” Daniel said surprised as she curled up beside him on the couch, “He has to get that from you, I remember my Mom once saying I was a nightmare as a baby.”

Sha’re chuckled, “Jack insists that Mel is lulling us into a false sense of security. But I believe he feels so secure with us he rarely finds he must fuss.”

“Can I ask you something?”

“Of course.”

Daniel sighed, “This woman, Carter, she was once a friend of mine?”

“Yes,” Sha’re whispered.

“But now she’s the enemy?” Daniel could see the sadness in her eyes.

Sha’re slipped her hand into his, “It hurt you. You and Samantha were as close as siblings while you looked for me.”

“Looked for you?”

“That is another story,” Sha’re cut him off, “One best left for another time. Just now we need to work on getting your memories back that concern the Andurian Educational Complex as well as your ability to speak both their language as well as Ancient.”

“Why?”

Sha’re sighed, “Because we have only two weeks before the Asgard arrive here to escort us back to Earth. And they need you on that ship.”

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“Jeannie,” Radek waved her over as she entered the cavern, “Look at this.”

Moving through the groups of scientists and soldiers she smiled at the man waiting for her, “Tell me you found something?”

“Not to open the bay yet,” Radek replied, “But I think I may have found something Jack and John will like. There is a programme that when activated will bind all the fighters together into one ship.”

“Just imagine the fight they’ll have over who’ll be the one to fly it,” Jeannie chuckled before picking up the computer tablet sitting on the table, “Okay, I’d better get to work. I’m expecting all of you back, so I’m going to make sure I give you everything you need.”
Radek chuckled before he glanced around to make sure no one was listening, “Jeannie, will you do something for me?”

“Sure.”

“When I am away will you watch over Tali and Lille?” he asked softly.

Jeannie impulsively hugged him, “Of course I will. Tali’s my friend anyway. You have nothing to worry about. I’ll need all the friends I can get too.”

John drummed his fingers on the rail as he waited. Finally Jack appeared and motioned him into the briefing room.

“All right,” the older man said to him, “We’ve gone over everything and we’ve got what we need you to tell your father. Also a list of things we need you to ask him.”

John nodded, he was nervous about doing this but not sure why. He couldn’t quite work out if he didn’t want to get his father involved more than he already was or if it was the fact he’d not talked to him in a long time as Sha’re decreed he wasn’t allowed to.

“John,” Jack pulled him out of his thoughts, “We need this to win. Your father and his people are our ace in the hole.”

“I know, Jack,” John sighed, “I just want him and David to be safe.”

Jack clapped him on the shoulder knowing he had no words of comfort to give the other man and all he could say was, “Thor’s waiting for you.”

Rodney frowned as he stared at the schematics in front of him again. At his side Fiona Meadows, a nurse who had spent several months working at the Educational Complex was staring at the same bit he was.

“I remember there were several doors that were marked as private near the infirmary,” she told him, “But I had no idea they took up this much room.”

“Were they locked at all times?” Rodney asked as he tapped a few controls and the room shimmered around them to place them in front of the doors they were discussing.

“Yes,” Fiona replied as she walked along in front of them, “They had keypads attached that had the Andurian alphabet.”

“So only the Zombies went in and out,” Rodney murmured, “Okay, let’s see how good this system is.” He tapped a few more controls and the doors opened allowing them through, “This can’t be right.”

“What?”

“These rooms are massive,” Rodney explained, “And from the readings we managed to take when we were on Earth it looks like this was some kind of lab. But what kind of lab?”

“Rodney,” Fiona said looking at him horrified, “I saw them take people in there every so often and the one time I asked…”
“They said the person died,” he finished for her.

“Precisely.”

“So this is where they kept their human guinea pigs,” he frowned before pulling up the schematics on his tablet once more and changing the symbol on it.

Fiona looked at him confused, “What does that mean?”

“It means there are people in there we need to save.”

Patrick sat at his desk and quickly swept the room for any listening devices before he nodded to his son to close the door then take a seat.

“Have you heard from Paul?” Patrick asked his son.

David shook his head, “He said he’ll be out of touch until he’s finished contacting all the ex-SGC members he can find. Is there any word from John yet?”

“Now you have to admit,” an unexpected voice made them turn to where the prodigal son stood, “That was timing.”

“John,” Patrick smiled warmly at his youngest son, “I expected a call long before this.”

“Sha’re didn’t want to give you too much information too early,” John shrugged, “She also nearly grounded me for contacting you without her permission.”

“Sent you to your room?” David couldn’t resist teasing.

John laughed, “Banned me from my Jumper and trust me she could have pulled it off.”

“Can’t wait to meet her,” David chuckled.

John’s image flickered for a second and as it stabilised he rolled his eyes, “I’ve been reminded I have a job to do here and to stop chatting.”

“Sha’re?” Patrick asked.

“She’s got other things on her plate just now,” John replied, “Nope, O’Neill is standing to one side giving orders.”

“Jack O’Neill?” David asked with a stunned look, he’d been told so many stories by Paul Davies about the real leader of SG1.

John nodded before he produced a computer tablet, “I’ve got things I need to tell you and a ton of questions so we better get started.”

Jack stood at one side watching Thor as he ensured that the link between John and his family didn’t disconnect at an inopportune moment. He knew if he was in John’s position he wouldn’t be happy about putting loved ones in danger but this was necessary for them to win.

He couldn’t believe they now only had two weeks before the Asgard arrived which meant they had
only three weeks until they showed up to kick the Andurians off their home planet. It had been a long five years since the mission when they’d first met the Zombies, Jack looked around the room he was standing in reflecting how different life had become because the computer had spat out that address at the time to send SG1 there in the rotation. They weren’t even supposed to be the next team to be assigned a mission but Lieutenant Simons of SG6 had broken his arm the night before benching them until they could get a replacement.

He knew in some ways the last five years had been good for them all. Friendships had been made that under normal circumstance would never had happened and Jack had had the pleasure of watching Sha’re blossom from scared victim to compelling leader. He was thrown out of his musings as John passed him the computer tablet.

John stared at his father and brother for a few seconds, “I have to go. We don’t want to leave the link on for too long.”

“Of course,” Patrick said softly as David nodded in understanding.

John glanced to one side holding up his hand asking for a few moments longer, “I know what we’ve asked you to do could be dangerous and I can’t ask you to do that then tell you I don’t want you to be in danger.”

“John…” David started only to be cut off by his brother.

“So I’m just going to remind you both that I want to find you both here when I get to Earth,” John told them, “I want to meet my future sister-in-law.”

“We’ll see you soon,” Patrick told his youngest son just as the image blinked out.

The two men sat quietly for several minutes as they took in everything they’d just been told. Finally Patrick took a deep breath and turned to his eldest son, “Let’s get to work.”

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Jack dropped into the seat in the commissary giving his friend a nod as a mug of coffee was passed over to him.

“How’s your day going, T?”

Teal’c smiled slightly, “Bra’tac is putting the teams heading to Earth though rigorous training. I have not had to do so many exercises since I was first put under his tutelage.”

Jack laughed, “Everyone seems to be cracking the whip,” he took a drink of coffee before looking up at his friend seriously, “What do you think?”

Teal’c tilted his head thoughtfully, “We have a chance, O’Neill but we may lose good people.”

“We already have,” Jack reminded his friend before letting out a long sigh, “I just hope Daniel’s memory is intact enough for him to come with us. We need him.”

“Indeed.”

Jack drank some more coffee before smiling as he spotted a young couple sitting in the corner talking.
“What exactly are R’yac’s intentions towards Cassie?” Jack asked with a smirk.

Teal’c chuckled, “I am unsure but he does know that you are basically Cassandra’s father. So there is a great deal of fun you can have.”

Jack was about to answer when the comm. system came to life and Lisa’s voice echoed through the room.

“Council members report to the briefing room,” she said repeating it twice more before silence reigned for a few seconds until people returned to their conversations.

Jack drained the rest of his mug before he and Teal’c headed out to find out what was happening.

Sha’re appeared just after Jack and Teal’c quickly moving to her normal seat. She stood behind it and looked at their guest.

“Margee,” she said softly, “It is good to see you again. I assume the Furlings have made a decision concerning whether or not to help us remove the Andurians from our home.”

Jack winced slightly at the sharp tone from the young woman but he did understand how stressed she was at this moment in time.

“Hih has persuaded the others that you should be allowed to prove that it is the Andurians in charge of your planet,” Margee told them, “Once they have this proof then they will take steps.”

“We are heading to Earth soon,” Sha’re told her, “How are we going to prove this to them when they are in a different galaxy?”

“I have been assigned the position of accompanying your team to your home planet,” Margee explained, “I will confirm whether or not you are correct about the woman you call Carter or not then I will contact the Furlings.”

Sha’re glanced at Jack who nodded before she turned back to Margee, “Then you have a spot on the Star. The ship leaves in two weeks.”
14 Days Till Asgard Arrive:

“I don’t know what it says,” Daniel snapped frustrated pushing the offending piece of paper away from him. He rubbed his hand across his eyes letting out a long sigh before he glanced up at the woman standing there, “You haven’t said anything.”

“Because you know you are being childish,” Sha’re replied unsympathetically, “Dan’iel, we have only two weeks to regain your memory so that you can be on the Star when they head to Earth. You cannot stay here.”

Daniel looked up at her with a hopefully cute smile, “I’m being banished?”

When she didn’t even crack a slight smile he winced, Daniel had learned very quickly that his wife’s dark brown eyes told him exactly what she was thinking and right now she was not finding him funny.

“Sha’re?”

“Listen to me,” Sha’re sat across from him and took his hands, “I know this is a huge responsibility we are placing on you, I know that this is terrifying but you are the only person in this city who has the capabilities to do this.”

Sha’re reached out and rested her hand on his cheek before giving him a gentle kiss, “Trust me that Jack, Teal’c and everyone else will need you as well as what you know. I believe in you and I know that you may not believe in yourself. I know the doubts that plague you but if you ever feel that you cannot do something all you have to do is look into my eyes and I will show you how brilliant you are.”

Daniel shook his head, “Maybe I just need some sleep.”

“And where are you sleeping tonight?” Sha’re asked with a smirk.

Daniel felt a blush creep up his neck as he actually hadn’t thought about that. He had for some reason just assumed that he’d stay in the room he’d been told was their home.

“I thought I’d sleep in the room I was given,” he murmured.

“Really,” Sha’re chuckled, “Because I am sure you slept much better in your home with your family last night.”

Daniel pushed his hand through his hair, “Sha’re, I still don’t remember about being with you.”

“I know but do you really want to go to that lonely room?”

Daniel stared at the coy smile she was giving him, “You always get your way, don’t you?”

Sha’re kissed the tip of his nose before walking out of the room leaving him staring after her.

13 Days Till Asgard Arrive:

Jeannie winced as she watched the team try to force the roof of the hanger open. They’d found it in the schematics late last night and had spent the three hours since they’d arrived this morning trying to
open it so they could get the fighters to the Star. Once they had the time they would try to fix it but right now that wasn’t a priority.

“How are we doing?” Danson asked Jeannie.

“We need it open a little more,” she told him, “Can you do it?”

She heard Danson let out a groan before he replied, “We will.”

Jeannie smiled slightly before she glanced over to where her brother was working.

“Mer,” she jogged over to join him, “How’re you coming?”

Rodney shrugged, “I’m transferring as much as I can to work on during the journey but other than that not too bad. Have they almost got the roof open? The creaking is wearing a bit thin.”

Jeannie chuckled, “Jack wants an update in an hour. Are you coming?”

“Yeah,” he rested his hand on her arm, “Are you okay?”

Jeannie blinked at the sudden change of topic, “What?”

“I know this can’t be easy for you,” Rodney said without looking at her, “Making plans to send us to Earth when you’re not going.”

Jeannie moved and hugged her brother tightly, “I love you, Mer. And as hard as this is to make preparations to send you, Laura and John into the lions’ den, I will do everything in my power to make sure I get all three of you back.”

Rodney kissed the top of her head, “Don’t worry I intend to be around to annoy you for a long time to come.”

11 Days Till Asgard Arrive:

Janet sat in her office going over the lists Sha’re needed for the team staying behind in the city. Janet wasn’t sure she wanted to leave the sanctuary of the city and even less sure she wanted to take Cassie along, but Daniel’s plan to expose Carter needed Janet’s daughter.

“Janet,” Jennifer appeared, “The first of the Star’s crew are here.”

“I’ll be there in a few minutes,” Janet replied, “There’s enough work for all of us.”

Jennifer gave her a quick smile before disappearing. Janet knew the next few weeks were going to be busy, especially as they had to ensure every member of the team travelling to Earth was healthy. All they needed after all their planning was for someone to have an illness that would disable them before they had a chance to try to regain their home.

Taking a deep breath Janet headed out to the main infirmary smiling in greeting at the first of her many patients who was sitting waiting.

Daniel stood staring at the building in front of him, still trying to get his head around the fact that this was a holographic projection. Glancing to one side he saw Sha’r’e talking with the man who’d been introduced as Rodney though Daniel had heard a woman call him Mer. For a few moments Daniel watched the beautiful woman he’d woken up beside for the past few days. It was odd but all the time
he spent with her made him feel more and more uncomfortable at how comfortable he felt. Sha’re was extremely affectionate touching him without thought, occasionally brushing his lips with hers and at night she would cuddle close sighing his name softly in her sleep. Daniel’s sleep unfortunately was anything but restful at the moment; dreams kept invading bringing memories of horrible things he’d seen and people he’d lost during the missing time in his mind. It was getting to the point he was afraid to close his eyes and he was wishing he could remember something about the life he’d lost that wasn’t connected to a sad or scary memory.

“Are you ready?” Sha’re appeared at his side.

“What am I doing here?” Daniel asked confused.

“This,” Rodney appeared at his side making him jump slightly, “Is the Andurian Educational Complex. We both spent time here when Carter held us captive. We’re hoping that by using what you gave us to make this recreation we can jump start your memory more than the dreams you’ve been having have done.”

Daniel frowned but remained silent as the other man manipulated the controls and the world around them changed.

7 Days Till Asgard Arrive:

“You’re all dead,” Jack stated with a groan before sighing, “John, reset the simulation and we’ll try this one more time.”

“Having fun?” Janet asked as she sat into the seat beside Jack in the small office he was using.

Jack rolled his eyes, “We’re trying to train our pilots in a few tactical manoeuvres with the new fighters. Unfortunately because the ships are smaller than the Jumpers we trained them on then it’s…”

“Hellish?” Janet suggested.

Jack nodded, “Are you here for a reason or because you missed my charming company?”

“You’re due your medical,” Janet told him, “And since you’ve managed to dodge both Jennifer and Carson, I came. You have an appointment with me after lunch at one o’clock, be there or you will regret it.”

“Napoleonic Power monger,” Jack murmured the moment he was sure she was out of hearing range.

“I heard that,” the call floated back to him making him wince.

Radek sat watching Lille as she played. He was watching her while Tali was helping Katie Brown and her team with some of the plants they’d brought over from the mainland. Tali was an avid gardener and knew the medicinal properties of many of the plants so it was natural that she and Katie struck up a friendship. He was glad that she had something to focus on, it was now only a week until he left with the others to hopefully remove the Andurians from Earth and as time came closer he was becoming more and more afraid of never seeing his girls again. Radek shook his head; he also knew that as much as he didn’t want to leave them he would never forgive himself if he left his sister and her son without trying to help.

“Radek,” Lille called running over to him, “Come and play with me.”
Smiling at the beautiful girl he loved as his own Radek took her hand and let himself be led away from his desk.

**5 Days Till Asgard Arrive:**

Sha’re opened her eyes frowning as she realised she was alone. She sighed sadly. Daniel was remembering a great deal of the ten years which thankfully included his knowledge of the Andurian language. Unfortunately he still did not remember marrying her which meant he was still keeping the distance between them. Sha’re listened to the stillness of the room for a moment ensuring that her baby boy was still asleep before she realised she could hear something else.

Sitting up she let her eyes become accustomed to the darkness and frowned as she saw the man sitting in the corner hunched over with his head on his knees. Sliding out of bed Sha’re moved over to his side and sat beside him.

“It is the middle of the night,” she said, “Why are you here and not sleeping?”

Daniel rubbed his forehead, “Another dream.”

Sha’re reached out and gently rubbed his arm, “I am sorry but you need to sleep. Especially as Mel will be up soon.”

“I’m so sick of this,” Daniel snapped, “I want to close my eyes and sleep without remembering hideous things.”

“Dan’iel…”

“I keep remembering things that make me wonder if it’s my life or a movie,” he told her, “What’s worse is I keep remembering losing you or thinking you were dead and I still don’t remember being married to you.”

“Yet you still sleep beside me each night,” Sha’re replied.

Daniel dropped his head again, “I’m a horrible person.”

“No, my Dan’iel,” she soothed, “You are not. You are the sweetest man I have ever known,” Sha’re reached out and cupped his cheek placing a gentle kiss on his lips, “And I love you.”

“I can’t,” Daniel pulled back, “Not until I remember…”

“How do you feel for me now?” Sha’re cut him off with a slight annoyance.

“What?”

“It does not matter what you used to feel,” she told him, “It matters what you feel now.”

Daniel stared at her.

“How do you feel for me?” Sha’re asked again.

“I love you,” Daniel confessed staring into her dark brown eyes.

Sha’re smiled and moved closer to him again, “Then nothing else matters,” she kissed him again only deeper this time. As they parted Sha’re stood and offered him her hand, “Come back to bed.”

Daniel took her hand and as he stood pulled her to him. Sha’re smiled as he kissed her again, this
time it became serious and Sha’re moved him to their bed.

1 Day Until Asgard Arrive:

Jeannie sat on the balcony near her lab enjoying the sun. Sha’re had told everyone to take today to be with their loved ones before the Asgard arrived so she was waiting for John to arrive with the promised picnic lunch. She was dreading tomorrow, she remembered how much it hurt to lose Caleb and the knowledge that tomorrow she was letting her brother, soon to be sister-in-law/best friend and the man she loved go into a severely dangerous situation was making her wonder if she should have let anyone so close again.

“Hey,” John said as he appeared at her side suddenly, “You okay?”

“Ask me that again when you all come home,” Jeannie told him.

John wrapped his arms around her tightly; he let out a long sigh as he rocked her slightly, “I’m sorry.”

“About what?” Jeannie asked with a soft sigh.

“I shouldn’t have told you I felt for you before this,” John told her, “It was selfish.”

Jeannie started to laugh as she pulled away from him, “You’re an idiot. John, just because you hadn’t told me how you felt didn’t mean I didn’t love you. I was going to be scared for all three of you no matter what you said.”

John leaned in and kissed her, “I’ll be careful.”

“Damn right,” Jeannie told him before standing and motioning him to do the same, “Come on, lunch can wait.”

“Wait for what?” John asked confused.

Jeannie laughed and kissed him, “Guess,” she whispered before taking his hand to lead him through the corridors of the city.

Mel giggled as Jack danced the small toy that Janet thought looked like a deformed mouse in front of him.

“Hey, Doc,” Jack greeted her as she took a seat at the table, “Joining us for lunch?”

Janet nodded, “Well I heard that my favourite boy was going to be here so I wanted to see him.”

“Thanks,” Jack laughed.

“You know how much I enjoy your company, Jack,” Janet batted her eyelashes at him making him laugh again.

Mel let out another squeal as he managed to catch the toy, instantly putting it into his mouth to chew it for a moment before throwing it away.

“I’m surprised Daniel and Sha’re let him out of their sight,” Janet noted as she retrieved the toy for the boy who had decided that sucking on his hand was now the thing to do.
Jack shrugged, “They need some time alone together before tomorrow.”

Janet smiled to herself, “You’re quite the closet romantic aren’t you, Colonel?”

“No idea what you mean,” Jack replied innocently.

Janet chuckled thinking over all the times she’d noticed how Jack would make sure the young couple weren’t disturbed or had an hour without interruption. Janet knew that when Sara died something inside Jack died as well. Organising the resistance and then trying to rescue Daniel had been what he needed to survive that loss, Janet wondered if Jack realised how Sara’s death had saved so many of them.

“They deserve some time alone without this little one,” Jack pulled Janet out of her musings, “Besides I want to spend time with Mel before we go. Favourite uncle and all.”

Janet smiled and simply watched as Jack played with the little boy he adored knowing he was thinking about another one he’d lost.

Laura sat picking at her food as Rodney finished talking with one of the lab techs about something; she wasn’t sure what and frankly didn’t care. It hadn’t really bothered her much until last night when she realised that it was getting close. Laura had managed to put to the back of her mind the fact she’d faked her death, that her family thought she was dead and that she was going to suddenly appear in their lives once more.

Laura didn’t know how she was going to deal with their anger towards her for what she’d done to them.

“Hey,” Rodney touched her shoulder making her jump slightly, “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” Laura said quickly.

“Right,” he drew the word out, “I want to help.”

Laura sighed and moved to hug him. She would never have imagined how much comfort she would be able to get from this man when they first met. Perplexed by her strange behaviour Rodney simply hugged her waiting for her to tell him what was wrong.

“They think I’m dead,” Laura whispered, “My family think I’m dead and I…I just keep thinking that one day soon they’re going to wake up and find out I faked it.”

“You did that to save my life,” Rodney reminded her, “And you’re going to be back to save the world,” he gently cupped her cheek, “They’ll be ecstatic to see you again and won’t care about anything other than the fact you’re alive.”

Laura kissed him chuckling, “Who knew you could be so sweet.”

“I have my moments,” Rodney shrugged, he squeezed her again, “I’m just annoyed we’re not sharing a room on the Star.”

“Well they don’t have the room to accommodate a couple,” Laura leaned against him, “But I’m sure we can find an empty room every so often. It’ll be fun.”

“That’s easy for you to say,” Rodney snorted, “I’m sharing with Sheppard.”
Daniel held his wife close to him as she cuddled against his bare chest wrapped in the thin sheet. She was trying to be as calm as possible about the fact they were leaving tomorrow but Daniel could tell she wasn’t as calm about it as she was able to project to the rest of the city. As he softly kissed the top of her head he thought about how ironic it was that the one thing he had been reluctant to do until he knew Sha’re better was the one thing that brought back his memories of her. She’d been almost insufferably pleased with herself when he told her this.

“You are thinking too much again,” Sha’re said as she shifted in his arms so she could look at him.

“You know the only way I stop,” Daniel smiled at her, happy to accept the soft kiss she gave him.

“I am afraid,” Sha’re whispered, “I seem to find you then lose you so many times that I fear we may have run out of luck.”

Daniel kissed her forehead, “Trust me.”

“I do,” Sha’re told him, she hugged him tightly for a few moments before looking up at him, “Will you do something for me?”

“You know I’d do anything for you,” Daniel breathed gently stroking her arm.

“When we win,” Sha’re said, “I need you to go and see Father before you come home. I need you to tell him that we are safe and about Mel. Let him know he is a grandfather at last.”

Daniel drew a finger along her nose, placing it on her lips, “I promise.”

Sha’re gave him a soft kiss before she cuddled against him for a few moments.

“Come on,” Daniel said, “We should get dressed and save Jack from our boy. I want to spend some time with him tonight too.”

Sha’re nodded and slipped away from him to find her clothes. Daniel watched her hoping that he would get to spend another day with her like this again.
The sun was shining as he walked through the city streets, heading to a meeting that he hoped would be the last of its kind. The street was filled with the usual people wandering round to work or home or play with the odd Andurian making their appearance looking as benign as they wanted everyone to believe. With his hands stuffed in his pockets and the slight shuffle walk he had no one really noticed him as he moved through the dusty streets.

Sliding his way through the doorway of the library Pete Shanahan hoped that this time next week their world would be free.

“Are we sure they’re coming?” someone asked.

Pete watched the man, known only as Davis, who was taking the meeting. He raised his head slightly so he could see who had called out.

“I know Jack O’Neill,” Davis called back, “And if he says he’s coming then he is coming. If you want to be free again, if you want your children to grow up in a world where they can have their own kids, then this is the only way it will happen.”

“What’s the plan?” Pete spoke up.

Davis turned to him, “I can’t give specifics just yet. We can’t be too careful and you all know the reason why. We know how to contact you and we will, with instructions before the day but until then you have to act as normal.”

There were a few murmurs of dissatisfaction moving through the crowd so Pete spoke up again.

“We’ll be ready,” Pete spoke up resting his hand on the shoulder of the man beside him trying to convey camaraderie, “All of us, so we can get our real lives back.”

Davis looked a little stunned as this was greeted by cheers and nods at Pete’s statement before he nodded to them and left.

“Thanks.”

Pete jumped as Davis appeared beside him on his way out of the library, “They’re scared and the fact
you can’t give them details makes them nervous.”

“I can only give them so much,” Davis replied, “It’s all I know at the moment.”

Pete frowned slightly at this revelation.

“I’m just a soldier,” Davis told him, “I take my orders from someone else, Detective. But what I can tell you is he has been in contact with O’Neill’s people and they are on their way here. They’ll be in Earth’s orbit very soon.”

Pete nodded, “It’s good to know. I knew her brother, I was one of the first people there when he and his family were killed and I saw the smirk on her face when she knew that Mark, Kat and the kids were dead.”

Davis said nothing for several minutes, watching the sadness slide across the other man’s face.

“I worked with the SGC,” Davis said, “I knew her when she was a member of SG1 and I trusted her. The day I discovered evidence that told me she was the one responsible for the death of General George Hammond was the day I began fighting against her.”

Without another word Davis headed back inside the building leaving Pete standing alone.

Patrick sat going over the details of the reception for the Asgard visit. Once he’d finished this he’d have to work on the other plans he had for kicking the aliens off their world. He wanted it to be over; he wanted to know that both his sons were safe and well. He wanted to close his eyes at night without the worry that Carter would find out he was her enemy.

“Patrick,” Paul said as he walked in and dropped onto a seat, “Everyone has been given their instructions. Dr Carter will happy with everything I’m sure.”

He paused waiting until Patrick nodded that they weren’t able to be heard.

“They’re not happy with the lack of information we’re able to give just now,” Paul switched topics, “A couple of the others weren’t too sure about it but a Detective Shanahan spoke up and reminded them why we had to keep things so secret.”

“Good,” Patrick sighed, “I just want this to be over so I can have my son back and know that both of them can start giving me grandchildren finally.”

Paul chuckled, “I’d better go. I’ve got other things to do. Not long to go.”

Patrick watched the younger man leave and hoped they all made it through.

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Daniel sat watching the lights of hyperspace completely fascinated by the light show before him. He looked up as a mug of coffee was set before him.

“Thanks,” he said as Jack took the seat beside him.

“What are you thinking about?” Jack asked straight to the point as he leaned back and watched the lights go by.

“Sha’re.”
Jack chuckled, “Of course.”

Daniel tilted his head giving his friend a quick smile, “How many people get to fall for the love of their life twice?”

“Only you, Daniel,” Jack clapped him on the shoulder.

Daniel took a long drink of his coffee leaning back in his chair, “I’m worried about her. She shows this strong face to everyone but me and I don’t know how she’ll cope if she doesn’t have that release.”

“Jeannie is there,” Jack reminded his friend, “And Tali, they’ve become friends. She won’t be alone.”

“When I remember what life was like before I met her,” Daniel said, “Something I got a taste of recently. I can’t believe how lucky I am and how different life is.”

Looking over at his friend Daniel smiled slightly, “Who’d have thought all those years ago we’d be flying in a spaceship to free the Earth from aliens?”

Jack gave a soft shrug, “Honestly?”

“Jack!”

“Of course I didn’t,” he chuckled, “But if anyone can do it we can. You just have to look at what we’ve done in the past few years, Daniel. We’re going to win this.”

John wandered into the mess, seeing Laura quickly kiss Rodney before she headed in the opposite direction. John moved to join his friend and dropped into the seat beside him.

“It’s not enough that I have to share a room with you,” Rodney said, “Now you’re here to annoy me at lunch too.”

“It isn’t my fault we’ve been forced to share a room,” John told him as he leaned back in the chair, “Trust me, you’re no picnic to live with. Has anyone told you that you talk in your sleep? I’m surprised Laura hasn’t strangled you yet?”

Rodney rolled his eyes, “Look, flyboy. I have never heard anyone snore like you. It’s like trying to sleep in the same room as a buzz-saw.”

“So,” John chuckled as he quickly changed the subject, “What’s Laura up to? She’s finished her shift for the day.”

“Margee is giving her some training,” Rodney replied, a slight frown creasing his brow, “The Cat woman seems quite interested in her for some reason.”

John chuckled again, “I’m betting it’s not that she’s got some bizarre interest in Laura, it’s just Laura has this ability to make friends with almost anyone. You have to have noticed this before.”

Rodney shrugged, “It never really occurred to me.”

“She managed to befriend you,” John smirked before darting away to talk to Teal’c as Rodney turned on him.
"We’re about an hour away from where they’ll be able to detect the signal," Daniel said to Sha’re, “I wanted to let you know that we’re ready to do this. How’re things in Atlantis?"

Sha’re smiled at him, “We are all going about our business as usual. Mel is missing you.”

“I’m missing him too,” Daniel replied, he reached out to touch her cheek stopping just short so his hand didn’t go through the hologram he was seeing, “And you. Jack is not the best room-mate to have.”

Sha’re laughed, “I thought you would be used to it after all the missions you went on together.”

Daniel sighed, knowing they were trying to keep things light. Glancing over to where the Asgard working the controls sat Daniel let out a long breath.

“Hermiod is reminding me I have to finish soon,” Daniel told her, “We’re about to cross the line where this transmission will be picked up by the Andurians. The only one I could talk to secretly is Mel and I don’t think he’d be able to pass on the message.”

Sha’re laughed softly, “Be careful, my love. And once you have won…”

“We’ll call,” he promised, “I love you.”

“I love you too,” Sha’re smiled at him as the Asgard terminated the signal.

As she faded away Daniel sighed and turned to Hermiod, “Thank you.”

The Asgard nodded as Daniel headed away.

*********************************************

“Your mind is like a hand,” Margee told the young woman sitting there, “Imagine your hand stretching out and use it to pick up the cup.”

Cassie took a deep breath looking at her mother and Laura who were sitting with her. Rolling her shoulders she sat up a little straighter and focussed on the green cup sitting on the table across from her. She knew that she was integral to the plan to remove Carter’s disguise and although she seemed to be able to move things she didn’t have enough control over her ability. Margee’s people were telepathic and when she learned of Cassie’s gift had offered to train the young woman a little more. The past three days had been more productive than the months training with Jack had thanks to Margee’s own abilities.

Cassie smothered the urge to squeal with delight as the cup moved towards her without the usual shudder that had accompanied everything she’d ever moved with her mind.

“Well done,” Margee told her, “Now, for Dr Jackson’s plan to work you need to be able to disrupt the connection Dr Carter will be using to ensure her disguise. You will not be able to see it so we shall work on that next.”

Cassie nodded, “Sounds great.”

“Okay,” Jack said as he, Daniel and John sat in the small room he was using as an office, “Once we’ve showed her for what she is then she’s going to shut down all transporters. Daniel, I want you
in the main building and find whatever is in the block we have no info on. John, you Rodney and Laura have to get the transporters up and running as fast as you can.”

“My father is going to be there when we reveal her,” John reminded Jack, “I need to make sure he’s safe.”

Jack frowned before nodding. “Sure. As soon as you’ve got him to safety you join the other two.”

John nodded looking relieved.

The three men fell into silence for a few minutes as they contemplated the job ahead of them, of what they’d lost and what they still had to lose if this didn’t go as planned.

“Enough,” Daniel spoke up first, “We’ve not lost and we’re not going to. We need to be the upbeat ones for everyone else so both of you remember that annoying bravado thing you both do when you pretend you know what you’re doing and do that.”

John and Jack looked at one another before the latter turned to his best friend, “You’re meant to be a linguist, Danny. Couldn’t you have found a better way to put that?”

“It’s been a long day,” Daniel retorted before he stood, “Who wants food?”

They stood on the bridge of the ship staring out at the sphere before them, they were home.

Earth sat in the main window, looking peaceful until the Andurian satellite appeared reminding them why they were looking down upon their homeworld in this ship. In two hours they were about to begin the fight to win it back. Jack looked around at the others standing there with him. Daniel had the slight smile on his face letting Jack know he was thinking about Sha’rè, Teal’c was just to one side the blank look on his face giving no idea of what he was thinking about, Rodney had his arm wrapped around his fiancé’s waist while Laura leaned against his shoulder and finally John was at Jack’s side arms crossed eyes filled with determination.

This was his team to lead the fight and with them, Jack knew they were going to win.
The sun was shining brightly as the finishing touches were being put in place for the Asgard visit. Sam checked the tablet she was carrying checking the seating arrangement pleased that there was no problems. Nothing could go wrong today, she needed it to be perfect because once the Asgard agreed that there was no need for them on Earth and turn their attention away from the planet, then Sam could accelerate her plans.

“You know,” a familiar voice made her look up, “Giving yourself an ulcer isn’t going to help you later today.”

“Joe,” Sam forced a bright smile on her face as the human she was pretending to be engaged to stood before her, “What are you doing here so early?”

Joe hugged her quickly, “I’m here to make sure you don’t give yourself an ulcer before this afternoon.”

Sam gave him a bright smile as she flipped through her mind how she wanted to kill him. Her favourite at the moment was to stab him through the heart while she was astride him in bed, just so she could see the look of surprise in his eyes.

“I promise I am simply checking a few details, I have a quick meeting with the Andurian council then I was going to have some lunch,” Sam told him, “You could join me.”

“Lunch?” he asked before waggling his eyebrows suggestively, “Or lunch?”

Sam rolled her eyes as playfully as she could and made him start walking towards the main building.

Patrick stood looking at the chairs set out in front of the podium where the Asgard would join them. He knew where his seat was, on the right next to Elizabeth Weir. David wasn’t happy about this arrangement but Patrick had finally persuaded him that it would be just as dangerous working with Paul to help their teams take down the strongholds within the city. They needed to take over the Complex and the surrounding city, once they had then it would be much easier to stop the patrol ships, allowing O’Neill and his people the freedom of the space around the planet.

It would be over one way or another this time tomorrow Patrick knew, and he just hoped that they won so he could have both his sons home safe with him even if it was only for a night.

Checking his watch he saw there was barely an hour to go so he forced on a smile and headed to the small tent where everyone was gathering for a drink before the Asgard arrived.
Elizabeth smiled in relief as Patrick arrived, saving her from a conversation with one of the Andurian scientists. She excused herself and moved to the man allowing him to get her a drink.

“How are you today?” Patrick asked cordially.

Elizabeth nodded, “Feeling very well and looking forward to today’s festivities.”

Patrick smiled, “As am I. I hear Steven isn’t coming.”

“Actually he’s now able to make it,” Elizabeth told him, their conversation cool and polite so they didn’t accidentally let anyone know anything about what was coming.

“Patrick, Elizabeth,” Carter’s voice made them both turn and they gave her identical bright smiles, “I am so glad you are both here after all the work you’ve put into the negotiations.”

“Well it’s going to be a memorable day,” Elizabeth said before she could stop herself.

“Joe,” Patrick said quickly to the man standing with Carter, “If we get a chance later we need to continue our discussion.”

“Discussion?” Carter asked confused.

“Baseball,” Joe chuckled hugging her to him, “Just baseball, Sam which you called a colossal waste of time and energy.”

“So I did,” she replied before turning back to Elizabeth, “When they start talking about that we need to find the bar and enjoy ourselves.”

“Looking forward to it,” Elizabeth forced out.

Daniel stood looking out on the planet below him thinking back to a time when he never would have thought he’d ever see a view like this. Then after that fateful disastrous lecture he ended up on another planet by simply translating a coverstone where he met the most amazing woman. Daniel would never forget his first meeting with Sha’re - how she glanced up at him with large shy eyes and, no matter how much she would deny it saying she would never do anything so improper around a stranger, gave him a soft welcoming smile. He let his memories slide through his mind, happy he could do that after those horrible few weeks of not being able to, thinking about their first kiss then the night they spent together before defeating Ra and the night after.

“What are you thinking about?”

Daniel turned to find Jack standing behind him, “You’ve got to stop asking me that.”

Jack chuckled as he moved to his side, “We’re going to have to be ready in a few minutes. Just wanted to make sure you know what you’re doing?”

“So you?” Daniel retorted, “I mean your plan is a little…”

“A little what?”
“Over-dramatic.”

Jack punched his friend’s arm, “Distraction my friend, it’s all about keeping the enemy off balance.”

“Yeah, right,” Daniel smiled softly before turning back to look out on the planet below, “It looks so peaceful doesn’t it.”

“Yeah,” Jack agreed moving to his side.

They stood together side by side for several minutes in silence each gathering their thoughts and steadying themselves for what was to come. They turned to one another and nodded. It was time.

*****************************************************

“Welcome to the Andurian Educational Complex,” Sam stated as she stood at the podium in front of the crowd, “Today we are welcoming a delegation from the Asgard who I have been proud to call my friends since the second year of the Stargate operations.”

She paused at the smattering of applause that rippled through the audience smiling benevolently.

“Through that doorway I was privileged to be part of the team who made first contact with our dear friends the Andurians,” she continued, “The past few years have changed this world, placing us further out into the stars than we ever dared believe. Our purpose today is to allow our Andurian friends to take the next step in guiding the human race into the mysteries of the Universe.”

Touching the panel on the podium she alerted the Asgard that they were ready. As the bright light surrounded them Sam smiled to herself, she just had to get through this afternoon and she could return to normal, get rid of the annoying fiancé and finally set in motion the plans she had for this miserable planet and its pathetic inhabitants.

“Greetings,” the grey alien stated with an inclined head, the voice identifying him as Thor.

“Welcome to Earth, Thor,” Sam greeted him, “It is wonderful to see you. The Andurian ambassadors are eager to begin…”

“I bet they are,” a familiar sarcastic voice called out from nearby.

Everyone started talking at once as Sam stared out across the audience to the small platform holding the sound equipment where Jack O’Neill stood with a smirk on his lips.

Jack looked across the space between him and the woman he’d once trusted as his second in command, he saw John shoving the Andurian standing near his father out of the road before he moved Patrick Sheppard and Elizabeth Weir to safety.

“Isn’t it interesting how they’re your Andurian friends,” Jack continued, as the guards were held in place, “And not your own people.”

He watched Sam’s eyes narrow before a smile touched her lips, “Colonel…Jack, this delusional hatred you have for the Andurians is something I can’t understand. We can help you if you let us.”


“Jack, you can ask Thor to check,” Sam replied calmly as she called for more guards, “I am completely human.”
Jack felt the presence behind him take a deep breath, “How about we bet on that.”

Stepping out of the way he saw the astonishment on her face as Cassie appeared beside Jack, “How about we play a little game I like to call ‘Let’s strip away the disguise.’”

Cassie slipped her hand into Jack’s as she reached out in her mind to throw the switch on the small device that was holding Carter’s disguise in place.

Sam frowned as she felt a sharp pain at the base of her neck, she winced but when it passed she looked back at the irritation watching her.

“Thor,” Jack called, “How’s she reading now?”

“Dr Carter is human,” Thor replied softly.

Sam managed not to smile smugly as his plans began to unravel; her guards were moving slowly so they would be able to grab Jack with minimum of fuss.

“Colonel,” Sam said in a soft soothing tone, “Let us help you.”

Jack stared at her for several moments; Sam kept her gaze steady with him willing him to attack so they could kill him in the guise of self-defence.

“You know what, Carter,” Jack replied with a smirk, “How about I help you show the Asgard your true colours.”

Before Sam could reply pain shot through her, she doubled over and heard the small beep of whatever Thor was holding in his hand.

“The pain you’re feeling,” Jack’s voice came, “That’s your Andurian physiology reasserting itself in response to the radiation Daniel discovered along with McKay. According to Doc Fraiser it must hurt like hell.”

Sam glared at him before snarling, “Kill them all.”

Jack shoved Cassie back towards Rya’c who was waiting for her so he could get her to safety as the Andurian forces headed to them. From within the audience the people Patrick had waiting appeared to protect the innocents who had gathered to see the alien visitors. Jack started towards the stage but seeing him approaching Carter activated her transporter.

“Damn it,” Jack snapped as the woman disappeared along with the man standing at her side, he touched his radio, “McKay, get the shield down now.”

********************************************************************************

Daniel walked slowly through the building with Yates and Brin’c they were heading towards the large area that their holograph could only show as an empty space.

“Carter has just been exposed,” Radek told him from the ship, “Be careful, she transported away before locking down the system. Rodney is trying to shut down the shield.”

“Thanks for the heads up,” Daniel told him just as they reached the door, “Brin’c, want to try your
Daniel and Yates ducked as Brin’c aimed his staff weapon at the door, the explosion was louder than they thought it would be and instantly guards appeared. Daniel nodded to the two men and they fired.

Wendy desperately tried to think of a way to protect the babies she cared for. She’d been watching the live feed of the Asgard visit and the events that unfolded in front of her terrified the young nurse.

“Come here, BJ,” she reached down and picked up the six month old girl who was crawling around the small cordoned off play area, “Okay, we need to get you all out of here.”

Wendy looked around the room where she had ten other children in stasis and knew she had no way to get them all out. BJ squirmed in Wendy’s arms as she heard shouts and gunshots echoing through the air, panic filled her and she had no idea what she was going to do. Shaking herself Wendy was about to try and get all the babies into the safety of the small room that had BJ’s cot but her time ran out almost as soon as she managed to form the idea. The door opened and three men appeared, all had weapons and Wendy hugged BJ close. The leader rested his gun against his leg holding up his hand to calm her, he was about to say something but as he saw BJ his mouth dropped open in shock.

Daniel saw the young woman in front of him hugging a baby close obviously afraid of them. Around the room were several small stasis pods that Daniel could see that each had a child within it. As he lowered his gun to assure her they weren’t the enemy Daniel saw the face of the child held in the young woman’s arms. The dark curls, the pink bow mouth and the big brown eyes were so familiar that it took his breath away.

“It can’t be,” Daniel breathed walking towards them.

“Stay back,” the young woman tried to turn away but was hampered by the wall behind her, “She’s just a baby.”

“We’re not going to hurt you,” Daniel said softly, “If you care for these kids then you need to listen to me. What’s your name?”

“Wendy,” she whispered licking her lips nervously.

Daniel smiled slightly, “I’m Daniel. This is Yates and Brin’c. The Andurians are not our friends and we need to get these kids somewhere safe.”

Wendy swallowed, “How do I know you’re here to help them?”

Daniel frowned wanting to see the child she held better so he could see if what he’d thought originally was true.

“Why are these kids here?” Daniel demanded.

Wendy kept the little girl close to her as she moved to one of the empty cots; she picked up the tablet sitting there and handed it to Daniel.

“You probably won’t understand any of it,” Wendy said, “But all these children have terminal illnesses, we keep them in stasis as we try to cure them.”
Daniel glanced down at the tablet and his throat felt as though it was about to close as he read through the baby’s file.

“Is this for the baby you’re holding?” Daniel asked softly, willing himself to stay calm.

Wendy nodded, “Yes, BJ has been ill but she’s doing well now.”

“Actually that’s not what this says,” Daniel stated through gritted teeth as he put his gun away.

“What?” Wendy frowned, “You can read this?”

“Yes,” Daniel replied as he moved and lifted the child from her before she could protest and holding her close as she grabbed at his nose, “And those notes say that this little girl is my daughter.”
Sha’re sat on the balcony rocking Mel as she watched clouds roll by. She knew that it was happening now, the people she loved were fighting to free everyone on the world her loving husband was born on and the only thing she could do was wait and hope.

“Sha’re?”

“Please join me,” she smiled as Edward hovered beside her, “I could use the distraction.”

Edward pulled over the seat and looked out across the horizon, “What are you thinking about?”

“My brother,” she replied sadly, “I have been wondering about him a lot recently. Once the Andurians have been chased from Earth I have been thinking that perhaps the Goa’uld that was within him will come out of hiding and we can free him.”

Edward reached out and caught her free hand squeezing it in comfort, “You’ve never told me about him?”

Sha’re’s smile became wider, “He was so annoying…”

*********************************************

“Lock the transporter system down and someone tell me how they got here?” Sam demanded as she materialised within the Andurian command centre.

“There appears to be a second ship with the Asgard of Ancient design,” Mathil, one of the techs confirmed, “It was hidden from our sensors until a few moments ago.”

“Sam,” Joe’s voice made her turn to where he stood looking confused, “What’s going on?”

Rolling her eyes she grabbed a gun from one of the guards and shot the man in the centre of his forehead, she smiled slightly amused at the astonished look in his face before she dropped the engagement ring onto his dead body.

“Our engagement just came to an end,” she replied before motioning the guards to get rid of the body.

“Dr,” Mathil called to her, “We have several people moving through the educational complex and several more groups at our main installations.”

“Send teams there and kill them all,” Sam ordered, “Destroy the ships in orbit as well. It looks like the Asgard are going to have a small accident. We can send a letter of apology later.”

As the tech started getting the teams out Sam frowned, this was not the way the days was meant to go.

“They’ve launched fighters of their own,” another voice reported sharply, “We’ve lost several ships already.”

“Call the council,” Sam snapped, anger surged through her that this was happening and she knew what she needed to do.

“Samantha?” Ithin asked appearing before her.
“O’Neill and his band have returned,” Sam explained, “I want permission to activate protocol 13.”

Ithin nodded, “Permission granted. Show them what we will do if they do not surrender.”

Sam smiled to herself as she tried to decide which country she would obliterate to make O’Neill understand that he could never win.

Sam frowned slightly; she needed to get to her office at the Educational Complex to activate the protocol. Unfortunately with the transporters locked down there was no easy way there.

“Dr Carter,” one of the techs called, “We have an incursion in the shield control building.”

“Kill them,” she replied, “If there’s any survivors put them in holding until I can get there.”

Turning back to the screen she checked which shuttles were available to her. She hoped O’Neill made an appearance to stop her. This time she would stand over him making sure he actually died, hopefully with Daniel watching helplessly.

“Check the Educational Complex,” Sam ordered suddenly, “Find Daniel Jackson now.”

Sam smiled to herself as she knew exactly what she needed to get O’Neill where she could finally get rid of him. It just so happened it would also get her Atlantis as well.

********************************************************************************

Paul winced as he checked his watch for what had to be the hundredth time, at his side Pete chuckled softly.

“We still have a few minutes,” the cop reminded him, “Calm down.”

Paul rolled his eyes, “I am calm, trust me if I wasn’t you’d be listening to me sing country songs.”

“I’d almost want to make you nervous to find out how bad that is,” Pete grinned; he sobered quickly as he heard the beginning of the speech at the Educational Complex realising that this was about to start.

A bright light appeared beside them and it faded into several people. At the front was a familiar man and a woman with red hair.

“Dr McKay,” Paul greeted him, “It’s good to see you again.”

“You too,” McKay nodded, “This is Laura Cadman, Jones, Tel’ct, Finley and Fresnel.”

Paul greeted them all with a quick nod at the three men and two women before turning to his team and quickly introduced everyone.

“Alright,” Laura took over, “We need to be in place now. We have to get the shield down as fast as possible.”

“Then let’s go,” Paul lead the way.

Laura felt Rodney at her side as they moved towards the power station; they needed to get the shield
down. She knew the schematics of this place better than she knew the rooms she and Rodney shared in Atlantis, so she was certain what they needed to do to make sure once the shield was down it couldn’t be brought back up. Leading the group through the building they had so far managed to avoid any Andurians, glancing to her side she gently squeezed her fiancé’s hand. She knew he was worried, the last time he’d spent anytime near the Andurians he was being tortured. Jack had offered to let him stay on the Star and help from there but Rodney wasn’t letting Laura go into a dangerous situation without him especially when his expertise was needed.

“Wait,” Laura whispered urgently stopping them as several Andurian guards appeared from nowhere walking past the group as they plastered themselves against the walls.

“We’re getting yelled at to get the shields down,” Rodney murmured.

“I’d rather not get us all killed doing it,” Laura hissed back at him. She counted slowly before motioning them all to follow her, “Rodney, hand me the bag.”

Taking the explosives from her fiancé Laura started forward to begin placing them when Tel’ct called out a warning and the next thing Laura knew they were in the middle of a fire-fight and had no way to bring down the shield.

Jack herded the civilians to safety as John and the team fought back against the aliens trying to kill them. Thor was protecting several children with a personal shield around the ‘throne’ that he’d beamed down on. He knew Daniel was inside the Complex with his team while Rodney and Laura were trying to take down the shield. Everything was in motion now so all Jack could do was let things run, try to make sure everyone came out of this intact and hope.

Radek watched the ships as they flooded from the Andurian ships into the space surrounding the planet. The die had been cast now and they had no choice but to go forward with their plan.

"Launching fighters," Teal’c’s baritone echoed through the bridge, the annoyance that he was unable to help in the aerial fight or the one happening on Earth evident, "Any word from Rodney?"

At the question directed to him Radek turned and shook his head, "But they have not had much time since beaming in. They will do it."

"Until they do we are without our best pilot and those on Earth are trapped without the back-up they should have."

Radek sighed, "Trust Rodney. He knows what he's doing."

He heard a sharp intake of breath before the call from Daniel came asking for an update, Radek knew he was going to have to repeat the same message to every member of the team until Rodney and Laura completed their task.

“Come on,” Radek murmured, wincing as the Star was struck and shook, “Minimum damage,” he reported to Teal’c as he gripped the console, “Hurry up Rodney.”

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Daniel kept a hold on his long lost daughter as he tried to decide what his next move was. He needed to get his baby to safety along with the others and the nurse.
“Radek, are the shields down yet?” he called up to the Star.

“Not yet,” the reply came sharply, “I’m waiting for Rodney’s signal but he’s taking his time.”

Daniel let out a sigh, “Okay. Listen to me I have a young woman here whose caring for about twelve babies. Most are in stasis tubes and the moment you can I want them beamed up to safety.”

He saw Wendy stare at him a little worried at what he was saying.

“Of course,” Radek replied before cutting communications.

Daniel pulled his daughter close and gently kissed her, “Your mom is going to be so happy to see you and you’ve got a little brother to play with. I promise I’ll do my best to take you home.”

With a sigh he handed her back to Wendy before turning, “Brin’c, stay with them and keep them safe.”

The Jaffa nodded solemnly taking up position at the doorway as Daniel turned to Wendy.

“You care for all these kids,” he told her, “Just do your job and Brin’c will be here to protect you all.”

“Wait,” Wendy called as he motioned Yates to head out again, when Daniel turned back to her she shrugged, “What’s her real name?”

“Lily,” Daniel smiled proudly as he looked at the child chewing on her hand, “Lily Jackson.”

Daniel and Yates continued further into the unknown area of the Complex wondering what they would find next. Daniel was reeling a little from finding his daughter but knew he had to focus otherwise they’d never survive this.

“Daniel,” Yates called, “I think I hear some voices coming from down the corridor.”

Nodding Daniel followed the other man along the corridor, relieved that there were no guards here but also a little confused that there weren’t. He was desperately hoping that Rodney would get the shield down so Lily and the other kids would be pulled to safety.

Reaching the door Daniel and Yates took up position, Daniel silently counted and they burst through the door stopping in amazement at what greeted them this time.

“Tell me you’re the rescue party,” a heavily pregnant young woman holding what looked like a chair leg demanded.

******************************************************************************

Rodney dropped to the ground and rolled under the nearest console. Quickly he attached the bomb fixing it as his fiancée had shown him hoping she was okay as she did the same thing at another part of the building.

“Rodney,” Radek’s voice came through his radio, “You need to hurry up. We need John up here.”

“I know,” Rodney snapped back, “But it’s not exactly a walk in the park down here. Give us a few minutes.”
“Good luck,” Radek said before he cut communication.

Rodney crawled to the next console and attached the final bomb, all they had to do was get to a safe distance and the shield would be down. As he started back to the others the gunshot echoed in his ears and Rodney slammed against the wall before he even realised he’d been hit.

“Rodney!!”

At Laura’s cry Rodney became aware of the fire fight happening between where he was and the rest of his team. Dragging himself to a corner Rodney pulled the parts he needed and started fitting together the detonator.

“Rodney,” Laura’s worried voice came in his ear, “We’re going to get you out.”

Rodney closed his eyes; he knew they had no chance to do that especially as they needed to get the shield down now.

“Get out of here,” Rodney ordered, “I’m taking the shield down.”

Laura was desperately trying to find a way to get to her fiancé but the Andurians had them separated too well. Tel’ct had placed herself so that Laura couldn’t run to him.

“Rodney,” she called over the radio as she saw him pull out the parts for the detonator, “We’re going to get you out.”

“Get out of here,” his sharp response made her wince, “I’m taking the shield down.”

Laura shook her head, “I’m not leaving you here.”

“If we don’t get this shield down everything we’ve done is pointless,” he said softly, “Laura, trust me. I know what I’m doing.”

Laura let out a long breath before nodding, “I love you.”

“Love you too,” Rodney whispered, “So trust me and run.”

Anguished at what she was doing Laura caught Paul’s arm, “We have to go. He’s going to destroy the shield.”

Paul opened his mouth but didn’t reply as he could see how hard this was and nodded.

“Move,” Paul ordered his team and Laura rounded up her team. They ran, Laura felt Tel’ct hold her arm to make sure Laura couldn’t go back. All of a sudden the explosion rocked the world throwing them all to the ground.

Laura touched her radio,” Radek, the shield is destroyed,” she reported her voice flat as she tried to process what had just happened.

“He knows,” Rodney replied.

John nodded quickly to his father just before the transporter light surrounded him and he arrived on the Star.
“Teal’c,” he called up to the bridge, “I’m at my ship. Let Donner know I’ll be joining them soon.”

“Good,” Teal’c replied shortly, “Keep in contact.”

Climbing into the fighter John started the engines and opened his radio to the other fighters.

“Sheppard on line,” he told them.

“You took your time,” Donner replied, “We’ve lost Waller and Trent but everyone else are holding out.”

“Execute plan Sheppard Delta 5,” John ordered, “I’ll be there in thirty seconds.”

As he launched the Jumper John took a deep breath and headed out into the fire fight.

Rodney leaned against the wall of the ship gritting his teeth against the pain as Garshaw cleaned the bullet wound on his shoulder before she was able to heal it.

“I’ll head down and join Laura’s team,” Radek told the other man.

“No,” Rodney argued before hissing in pain, “I know where I’m going in the Complex you don’t.”

“You can tell me where to go,” Radek argued back.

Rodney winced in pain again as Garshaw finally finished, “I’ll be fine in a minute. Besides trying to guide you when I can’t see the place won’t work.”

Radek shook his head but he turned back to his console and touched the radio.

“Laura, Rodney will be rejoining you soon,” he told her, “Head to the Educational Complex and he’ll meet you there.”

“Is he okay?” Laura’s voice was a little shaky which Radek didn’t blame her for.

Radek glanced down at Rodney who gave him a look Radek interpreted rightly as ‘make her worry and I’ll kill you’ before he touched the radio again, “He’s okay.”

Radek was about to argue with his friend again but another hit threw them to one side and before Radek was even upright Rodney was heading to the transporter control. Within seconds he was off the ship and back on Earth.
Chapter 73

Lara Ford held the table leg hoping that the men in front of her were here to help; her weapon wasn’t going to do much good if they weren’t. All six of them were heavily pregnant with the creatures Carter had put in them and none of them would be able to run fast enough to get away from them.

“My name is Daniel Jackson,” the leader told them, “We’re here to help. I promise.”

Slowly lowering the table leg Lara let out a sigh, “Good. The last thing we need is someone here to hurt us some more.”

Daniel moved into the room and Lara watched as he looked around taking in the five girls she was protecting.

“Okay,” he said softly before touching his radio, “Radek, I have six pregnant women here. As soon as the shield is down take them up along with the kids.”

“Hold on,” a man with an accent she couldn’t place said.

Daniel turned back to Lara, “In a few minutes, hopefully, we’re going to transport you to a ship. You’ll be safer there until this is over.”

Lara nodded, “Thank you.”

“Daniel,” the other man’s voice came again, “We’re ready to beam them up. Thor is going to look after both them and the babies.”

Lara sighed in relief.

“I’ll see you later,” Daniel told her just before the world dissolved into a white light.

Daniel watched as the six women disappeared relieved to know that the transporters were working again which meant his daughter was safe. Turning to the others he sighed.

“Time to go,” Daniel told the team with his before touching his radio again, “Watson, how’re you doing?”

“We’ve cleared the rest of this place,” the reply came, “We’ve got all the civilians out. You can head for the office. O’Neill and Teal’c will meet you there.”

“Thanks, Jane,” Daniel replied before turning to his team, “Head for the rendezvous point. I’ll see you later.”

Yates clapped Daniel on the shoulder, “Be careful.”

“You too.”

Wendy gently rocked the little girl who was a little upset at the sudden change of location after the bright light. All the babies were with her and she spun to find a small grey being moving towards her.
“You are safe,” the alien said as her eyes widened in amazement, “I am Thor and this is an Asgard vessel. Until Dr Jackson confirms it is safe for you to be returned you will remain here.”

“Okay,” was all Wendy managed to say distracted as BJ…Lily began to cry.

“She looks like her mother,” Thor noted making Wendy stare at him a little stunned.

Before Wendy could ask the bright light filled the room again and six women, all pregnant appeared with them. One was standing holding a chair leg at her side; her dark hair was pulled back tightly from her face showing the strain of everything in her almond coloured eyes.

Wendy put Lily into the cot that had been brought up with them before she moved to check on the new arrivals. She watched the small grey alien move to one of them and used something to scan her.

“The foetus is not human,” Thor noted.

“We know,” the leader of the pregnant woman replied darkly, “From what we can determine whatever they’ve put inside us is some kind of hybrid they need.”

“You will not survive the birth,” the alien told them, “I can remove the children now. And we will keep them if you do not wish them.”

“We don’t want them,” the leader said quickly, “These aren’t our children. They’re things that have been forced onto us.”

“Very well,” Thor replied.

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“Rodney,” Laura hugged him tightly the moment he appeared slapping his shoulder without letting go, “You scared the hell out of me.”

Rolling his eyes Rodney hugged her back, “I told you I knew what I was doing.”

They parted and Rodney turned to the others, “Okay, we need to get beneath the Complex and neutralise the computer system that the Andurians need for their protocol 13. There are going to be several prisoners– get them to safety. Laura and I will take care of the computer. Follow me.”

Taking deep breaths trying to stop the bad memories from flooding him Rodney led his team towards the place he’d been kept hostage for several months.

“What exactly is this protocol?” Paul asked as he moved to Rodney’s side, “And why haven’t we heard anything about this until now?”

“Best way to describe it,” Rodney said as they moved carefully towards the Complex, “Is a doomsday device. I only know about it because when I worked for her the computer needed upgraded. Guess who did that?”

“Are you sure you can deactivate it?” Paul asked, “In the past few years she has to have made some changes in case?”

“Which is why Laura is coming,” Rodney replied with a quick grin, “If I can’t disable it, she can.”

At the confused look Laura chuckled.

“Boom.”
Jack checked his watch before turning to Cassie who was helping people they’d brought down into the Tok’ra caves.

“I have to go now,” he said, “Margee has called the Furlings but we don’t have the time to wait for them if McKay can’t stop the Protocol.”

“Jack, I know what she did to you,” Cassie said softly, “To all of us. Just don’t do something you regret.”

Jack snorted, “Trust me, I won’t be regretting anything about what we do today.”

“Be careful,” Cassie told him, “Mom will kill you if…”

As she trailed off Jack hugged her tightly, “We’ll be fine. Cass, we have to do this. So trust us.”

She nodded and handed him the zat, “Be careful.”

Jack grinned at her before touching the controller sitting on his wrist, Cassie saw him wink at her quickly before he disappeared leaving her to help with the civilians and casualties. She turned as a hand rested on her shoulder, smiling to find Rya’c standing there. He’d been her shadow since they’d beamed down.

“They know what they’re doing,” he reminded her.

Cassie leaned back against him closing her eyes for a moment, “We hope.”

“Danny,” Jack’s voice sounded in his ear, “How close are you?”

“I’ll be there in a few minutes,” Daniel replied as he moved slowly through the corridors, “You guys?”

“I am ten minutes out,” Teal’c replied.

Jack’s snort made Daniel smile, “I’ve got to deal with a few fans before I get there.”

“Be careful,” Daniel told him, “You haven’t survived this long to be shot now.”

As Daniel pulled himself back round the corner when he saw three guards he took a deep breath before diving round and firing before they were able to react to his presence.

“Danny?” Jack’s concerned voice came in his ear.

“I’m fine,” he replied, “Hurry up. I don’t want to talk to her alone for long.”

“We are on our way, Daniel Jackson,” Teal’c promised.

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Sam was annoyed that O’Neill’s band of misfits had managed to knock out the shield but at least it meant she was able to get to her office within the Educational Complex without having to use a shuttle. As she activated the computer she glanced to the monitor showing the corridors outside and smiled as she saw Daniel moving towards her location.
“Perfect,” she chuckled; she had a gift for him that would completely throw Daniel and she was sure he wouldn’t come alone.

Watching him she started the programme for the Protocol, entering the first level password she stopped for a few seconds to muse which country she would decimate.

France was an option but she decided against it as there were far too many Andurian assets there, Greenland or New Zealand were her next thoughts but finally she settled on Italy. There was nothing useful about it and the thought of completely destroying the country whose army once occupied a large part of the world appealed to her.

Entering her choice Sam completed the second and third level passwords. She then moved to the other side of her desk waiting for her guests to arrive.

Daniel walked slowly towards Sam’s office, zat held ready but as he opened the door a familiar voice whispered his name.

“What the hell?” Daniel murmured as he step inside carefully, gritting his teeth as he realised what was happening. The first thing he saw was Sha’re frozen on the screen head thrown back in the throes of passion.

“I thought you’d like to see her again,” Sam said as she sat on the desk, “And it means I can ask.”

“Ask what?” Daniel said angrily as he stepped slowly to stand across from her.

Sam laughed darkly, “About your little sex toy. Your mind is incredible for a human and yet the amount of energy you wasted on a woman who thought your pen was magic,” she smirked at her double entendre, “Surely you could get have found a woman here to waste your time on.”

“It’s called love,” Daniel snarled at her.

Sam chuckled, “Of course, love. How could I forget when they spend so much time writing and singing about it? But all that time you wasted searching for her turned out to be completely useless – didn’t it?”

Daniel gripped his zat, he had to make sure he didn’t reveal Sha’re was still alive until he knew there was nothing Sam could do.

“Really?”

Sam leaned back, “Do you know what she did when I slid the knife into her stomach?”

Daniel could feel pain radiating along his jaw as he gritted his teeth even harder but he managed to remain silent.

“She whimpered,” Sam continued, “Begged for her life and if the doctors weren’t so incompetent she might have actually lived. Not the amazing force of nature you always described, was she?”

“You know nothing,” Daniel told her.

Sam let out a slow breath, “Really? I’m sure there’s something I know that you don’t.”

To Daniel’s relief a new voice joined the conversation, “And we know so much more than you.”
Sam slid off the desk and stood glaring at the man who walked in, “O’Neill.”

Triumph filled Sam as the second of her targets walked right into her office. This was going to be so much easier than she anticipated.

“I think we can get rid of the movie,” Jack noted nodding to the screen that still showed Sha’re.

“I disagree,” Sam replied, “Surely Daniel will want the ‘love of his life’ to be present in some way when he dies.”

She smiled as she saw Daniel tense slightly, Sha’re was his biggest weakness and Sam knew how to use her against him. She’d done it often back in the days before they’d found her. It had always amused Sam how easy he was to manipulate with even the thought of a crumb of information on his toy. She remembered the day she’d faced him from a cell, the day Jolinar had been within her and she told him she knew where Sha’re was. It kept her amused for days while she pretended to lie sad and pathetic after the death of the creature – the look on his face when she said it, the look on his face when she pretended she didn’t remember. It made her laugh even more that Jolinar had known exactly where Sha’re was hidden. Sam had spent the next few weeks just twisting that knife every so often with the slightest word.

“All we need now is Teal’c to complete our little family reunion,” Sam said, “And once he’s here I’ll show you exactly why you’ve lost.”

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John swung the fighter grimacing as he narrowly missed hitting one of the Andurian ship. The small ships they were sending against them were dropping in number as the minutes passed.

“John,” Radek’s voice came, “We’ve got a problem.”

“Not exactly the time to tell me,” John snapped back as he saw several of the small enemy ships coming towards him.

“Sorry but it can’t wait,” Radek retorted, “They’ve called reinforcements in. We have one more Andurian Mother Ship coming in.”

“Okay,” John grimaced, “Time for plan B.”

He heard a soft chuckle from the other man, “I have been looking forward to seeing this.”

John rolled his eyes, “This is Sheppard, let’s spring our little surprise.”

“Team one ready,” came over the radio followed quickly by, “Team two ready.”

John started the sequence to connect the ships, “Team three, four?”

“Ready.”

“Ready.”

“Let’s do this,” John grinned to himself.
Laura could see the tightening of Rodney’s jaw as they moved further through the underground prison he’d spent so long within. Paul, Pete and the rest of their team had already split off from them helping the prisoners held here. She heard Rodney murmur a name every so often in sadness as they passed them but he kept his focus on their destination.

“Rodney,” she rested her hand on his arm, “You okay?”

“I’m fine,” he murmured back, “The system is behind the next door. There will be guards.”

Laura smiled at him, “That’s why you brought me, remember?”

Rodney grinned back and squeezed her hand, “Let’s go.”

Readying herself Laura gripped her gun, “On three.”

She counted silently before moving; Rodney watched with a slight smile as his fiancée quickly and efficiently took out four Andurian guards. He had to remember to remind her how much he loved her after this.

“Rodney,” Laura ordered sharply making him move to where she was waiting for him.

Pulling out his computer Rodney hacked into the lock, the door swung open and Rodney nodded to her.

They were in.
Chapter 74

Margee stood beside Hih as she reported what was happening on Earth to the Council on the screen before her. She was hoping the Council would believe the testimony she was giving because she had in the short time spent with the Tauri come to like them a great deal.

The ones she had spoken with on the journey to Earth, although reluctant to speak much about what had happened to them at the hands of the Andurians were more than happy to talk about Atlantis and their loved ones.

“They are fighting for their home now,” Margee told them, “You need to make your decision now.”

Hih placed his hand on Margee’s arm to pull her back.

“I have seen the evidence provided by the Tauri,” he told the Council, “Thor, High Commander of the Asgard has confirmed that Samantha Carter is Andurian. We have a duty to rein our children in.”

The Council turned to one another, communicating telepathically and making their decision. Finally Kei’It, the leader of the Council for the session stood, “We are agreed. We shall stop our Andurian children from their pursuit of domination.”

Relief filled Margee as the screen went blank. Her new friends now had the backing they required to free their homeworld.

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Rodney moved to the computer as Laura took up position at the door to protect him from any attack. Quickly he hooked up his laptop to the system, frowning that the passwords had been changed.

Rodney began hacking.

He remembered the day he’d been asked to update the systems, it was back when he’d actually believed in Carter and it horrified him what he might have done if he hadn’t went after Miko that day.

“Well?” Laura asked nervously.

Rodney glanced round seeing that she was standing at the door ready to protect him.

“I’m almost there,” he replied.

“Well, hurry up,” Laura called back, “I’ve got a feeling she’s about to hit the button soon.”

“Is Teal’c there yet?”

“Nope.”

“She’ll wait for him,” Rodney told her, “Doing it with the three members of SG1 there unable to stop her blowing up a country is her style.”

Daniel was desperately trying to ignore the image of Sha’re that was all around the room, he knew Carter had put it there to throw him and it did. He needed to stay focussed on here and now, to not think about his wife back in Atlantis with their son or the daughter they thought lost who was in
relative safety upon Thor’s ship.

“This is getting boring,” Sam mused, “Where is Teal’c? Waiting for an engraved invitation?”

“He’ll be here,” Jack replied with a smirk, “Are you in a rush for any reason?”

Sam laughed darkly, “Of course not but I was hoping he’d be here for this little trick,” she turned to the younger of the two men and pulled out a device he was familiar with, “Do you recognise this?”

“I don’t have the thing in my back anymore,” Daniel reminded her, “Neither does Rodney.”

“I know,” she said mockingly, “But there is one more little thing it did that removing it won’t stop.”

“Really?”

Sam smirked at them, “Goodbye, Daniel.”

When she hit the button Daniel winced, he folded over covering his face with his hands before standing up and looking at her, “Was that supposed to do something?”

Anger filled her eyes and she slammed her hand against the desk, but before she could say anything Teal’c walked in.

“Well,” she ground out, “The gangs all here. How about we say goodbye to the Italians?”

With a smirk she touched the computer to show she was in charge here and now.

Jack and Daniel moved to either side of Teal’c so they were facing Carter across the desk as she tried to destroy the country once more but again nothing happened.

“We removed it from Rodney too,” Daniel noted making Jack smile slightly, “And he has disabled the Protocol.”

“So,” Jack took over from his friend, “Why don’t you give up now because you have nothing left. The reports I have show that you’ve lost already. Your forces are almost gone, the humans working for you have realised they’re on the wrong side and have gone home.”

“I don’t lose,” Sam snarled at him, “This is my world.”

“This is our world,” Daniel replied.

Sam started to laugh again, “Did you really think I would go away? Did you think the Andurians will give up this world because you bring a ship and a rag tag group of rebels?” she let out a snort of amusement, “This isn’t Star Wars. The Andurians will just come and subjugate this pathetic planet. This way people had the illusion of freedom, now…now you’ve condemned them to hell.”

Silence filled the room for a few minutes before Jack spoke up again, “Actually, we didn’t bring one ship.”

“Really?” Sam mocked, “Are you counting the little ships that made one big one? Fine I’ll give you two ships.”

“Actually, we brought the Furlings,” Jack told her, “Who are at this precise moment in time making sure the Andurians cause no more trouble.”
Janet clearly remembered their first night on Atlantis. She and Daniel stood on the balcony of the central tower taking a break from the chaos of settling in, staring in amazement at the view before them. She would never forget how he’d put his arm around her shoulders and smiled.

“This is a brand new start for us, Janet,” he said softly, “We’ve got a whole new world in front of us.”

As she stood now on the bridge of the Star watching the people who had come together as a family fight against the creatures that had tried to take everything from them.

“John,” she called over the radio, “I’m reading several more ships coming.”

“Big? Small?” John called back, “Give me something to work with here.”

Janet chuckled, “Small. They look like they’re the support troops from Mars.”

“Let me know if anything else pops up,” he replied.

“I’m watching over you,” Janet promised.

John watched the Andurian Mothership in front of him as it lost power falling into darkness.

“We still have ships coming,” Green called over the radio.

“I know,” John replied as he spun the connected shuttles round, “Ready to disconnect in three… two…one. Release,”

John smiled to himself as his team split in one easy movement; it had taken Jack a lot of drilling to get them to be able to do that and he could see that the Andurians had definitely not been expecting them to do that.

He knew all they were really doing now was protecting their two ships until the Furlings stopped the Andurians and the original SG1 stopped Carter. He just wished they would hurry up.

Suddenly the stars above him seemed to disappear and John’s eyes widened as he realised a new ship had arrived and it was massive.

“Janet,” he called over his radio, “Tell me you’re seeing this?”

To his surprise she chuckled over the line, “Oh yeah,” she replied, “It’s the Furlings and they’re not happy with their kids.”

John grinned and watched as the large ship swallowed up the Andurian Mothership before all the fighters disappeared in a white light.

“All ships return to the Star,” John ordered, his job was over he just hoped the battle on the ground was finished as well.

Sam felt her blood burn with anger, annoyed that remnants of the human disguise still lingered in her at this moment. This wasn’t the way it was supposed to be happening, Daniel was supposed to have
no memory, Rodney was supposed to have no memory and she would have subdued this ridiculous ‘rebellion’ O’Neill had put together. Still with the three men in the room with her she could at least kill them properly this time.

Suddenly the room began to shake and Daniel smirked at her.

“That’s the F’rrrr’li,’” he said in that annoying smug tone he sometimes got, especially when he’d just been proven right after a fight.

“They’re here because you’ve been bad little boys and girls,” Jack took over with a similar smug grin on his face.

Before Sam could reply the view screen suddenly came on and the Andurian council appeared, cries and shouting could be heard in the background and Ithin glared at her.

“This is your fault,” he snarled, “You promised us the humans were an easy target, now you have brought destruction upon us.”

“I…”

Ithin cut her off, “You’ve always known the penalty for failure, Samantha.”

Panic filled her, “I can turn this around. I…” before she could finish her sentence Sam started to choke as the poison took hold.

“We have lost everything because of your ineptitude,” he continued, “And you shall pay for your failure.”

Daniel watched as the woman who had tortured him, hurt his wife in so many ways, and had forced so many people to flee to another galaxy to be safe as she choked and gasped for air. As she fell to the ground at Jack’s feet Daniel’s mind flicked back to the day Sha’re had first been taken by Apophis. After the doctor had checked him out Daniel had found a seat and just sat staring into space when a mug of coffee and a sandwich was placed in front of him on a stool. Sam Carter had been his friend, his confidant and had helped him survive the military structure for those first few months when he was lost in the fresh loss of his wife.

Crouching down Daniel took her hand.

“You,” she snarled managing to sneer through the pain, “This is your fault.”

Daniel shook his head, “You made your own mess.”

She managed to laugh, although it sounded more like she was gargling with grit, “At least…I…die knowing…knowing what you…never will.”

Daniel leaned forward, “If you mean my daughter. She’s safe and I’m taking her home to her mother and brother.”

“Wha…”

“Sha’re’s alive,” Daniel told her, aware of Jack and Teal’c kneeling down so the three of them were leaning over the woman who had once been their teammate, “She’s in Atlantis with our son. Teal’c has his family back. Janet and Cassie are together and Jack has been spending a lot of time with
them. We have everything, you have nothing. And the people you sold us out to just killed you.”

Looking at Jack and Teal’c who were watching blankly Daniel turned back to her, “We won.”

Sam glared at him before her body shook and with one last gasp she was gone.

Jack watched as Daniel closed the eyes of the woman lying dead on the floor before them. Accepting Teal’c’s help off the ground Jack touched his radio checking the status of the rest of his people.

“Danny?” Jack called to him.

Daniel looked up at his friend sadness in his eyes.

“We could never have saved her,” Jack reminded him, “And if we did she would never be the Sam Carter we knew back when this began. That Carter didn’t exist for a long time and we still have a lot of work to do.”

Pulling himself to his feet Daniel refocused, “We need to bury her.”

“The Furlings are taking all the Andurians,” Jack told him.

Daniel frowned for a second before he nodded, “Okay. As long as there’s no way she is violated. No matter what she did I won’t let that happen.”

Jack rested his hand on his friend’s shoulder just before the body before them disappeared, it was over.

They’d won.
Sha’re sat going through reports as she absently moved the small stroller containing her son back and forth with her foot. She was doing her best to focus on anything but what was happening on Earth right now. There had to be some news soon, she hoped there would because she couldn’t take this waiting much longer.

Sha’re jumped as Lisa knocked on the door before nodding, “Come in.”

Lisa gave a quick smile down at the nearly sleeping little boy, “Just to let you know your two o’clock has been cancelled.”

Sha’re shook her head slightly, “People seem to be avoiding me at the moment.”

“I think everyone is on edge,” Lisa replied taking the spare seat, “And we all know how hard this is for you.”

Sha’re dropped her eyes for a second thinking of not only her beloved husband, dear friends but she’d also sent many citizens of the beautiful city that had saved them into a fight.

“I’m going to get back to work,” Lisa told her, “You’ve got some free time, you should take Mel for a walk.”

“You’re right,” Sha’re replied decisively before looking down at her baby boy who was fighting sleep, “Come on, baby.”

As she walked out of her office Sha’re thought how much she hated that people kept cancelling meetings because they didn’t want to overwhelm her just now but she needed the distraction. Until she knew what had happened she needed to be able to focus on something.

Every so often the horrible thought would enter her mind that she’d lost Daniel again but she reminded herself that she was sure that if something did happen to him then she would know.

“Your father will call soon,” Sha’re whispered to her sleeping child before saying it again to try and convince herself, “He will call soon.”

“Sha’re.”
Sha’re jumped a little as Lisa’s voice came through her earpiece, she wasn’t sure how long she’d been sitting here as Mel slept, only knowing that Jeannie had joined her a short time after she’d sat down. They hadn’t spoken and hadn’t moved since then.

“Yes?” Sha’re replied hoping this wasn’t an emergency; she really couldn’t take that just now.

“Daniel’s calling,” the excited voice of her assistant made her gasp.

“Say that again,” Sha’re demanded as Jeannie looked at her confused.

“The Gate just dialled and Daniel is on the other side of the radio,” Lisa confirmed, “Waiting to talk to you.”

Sha’re bounced up shifting her son to her shoulder before grabbing her friend’s arm with her free hand, “We’re on our way.”

“Hey,” Jeannie called as she was dragged along, “What’s wrong?”

“Daniel,” Sha’re cried with a smile, “He is on the radio.”

Jeannie pulled her friend to a halt, “Okay, give me Mel.”

“What?”

“Before he gets shaken awake give him to me and I’ll follow on,” Jeannie told her before taking the small bundle from Sha’re, “Go.”

With a smile Sha’re ran towards the Gateroom.

Lisa motioned Sha’re over to the console when she burst into the room where she suddenly saw her husband smiling back at her.

“Hey,” he greeted with a grin.

“Daniel,” she breathed, relief filling her at seeing him looking whole and healthy, “What happened?”

“We won,” Daniel told her solemnly before adding quickly, “We’re working on a list of the casualties, I’ll bring it with me tomorrow.”

“Tomorrow?” Sha’re asked aware that Jeannie had finally arrived with her son, she gave a brief nod of thanks as he was passed back into her arms still fast asleep.

“We’re taking care of a few things first,” Daniel told her, “Then I have to go see your father as I promised.”

“Thank you,” she sighed before moving Mel slightly so Daniel could see him, “He misses you.”

Daniel smiled at the peaceful face of his son, “I miss him too.”

“What about the others?” Jeannie interrupted anxious for news from her loved ones.

“John will be coming back with me,” Daniel assured her, “He’s catching up with his family just now. Rodney and Laura are staying on earth for the moment – they’re meeting Laura’s family. I’m
thinking of bribing Caldwell to record it.”

“I’ll chip in,” Jeannie chuckled.

Daniel laughed as well, “I’ll bring back information on any casualties and the information concerning when the Star is coming back as well as anything else the council needs. But I have to go. I’m getting signalled my time is up.” he stared at his wife holding his son for a moment before pressing two fingers to his lips and holding it up to the camera, “Love you and I’ll see you soon.”

“I love you too,” Sha’re replied repeating the gesture before the Stargate shut down and the screen went blank.

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Jack chuckled as the Stargate shut down, “You didn’t tell her?”

“Yeah, I’m going to tell her I found our daughter and she has to wait a day to hold her,” Daniel rolled his eyes at his friend before moving over to the stroller sitting at Jack’s side, “Hey, sweetie let’s go see your grandfather.”

“And you’re taking her to Abydos with you?” Jack asked.

Daniel nodded as he lifted Lily into his arms smiling as she giggled, “I’m not letting her out of my sight. Besides I want to let Kasuf meet her since he won’t get to meet Mel for a while.”

Turning to the technician sitting at the Gate Jack nodded telling him to start the sequence. Daniel wrapped a blanket around his daughter to keep her warm when going through the Gate before turning to his friend, “I’ll see you tomorrow morning,” he said clapping his friend on the shoulder before walking through to see his father-in-law.

Jack watched as the Gate closed down before sighing, he had another meeting to go to.

“Did they get away okay?” Janet asked as she joined Jack when he left the Gateroom.

Jack nodded, “And Sha’re is aware we won. Though with all these meetings I’m beginning to think that it might have been better if we’d found some other way to do it.”

Janet patted his arm in mock sympathy, “It’s a hard life being in charge.”

“I’m not…”

“Sha’re isn’t here,” Janet reminded him as they entered the meeting room where the next hour was going to be spent, “And you’re the one in charge of our team.”

“How did John and Jacob get to miss this?” Jack demanded.

Janet chuckled as she slid into her seat, “Just luck.”

Jack sat beside her, reaching out he squeezed her hand, “Have you thought any about where you’re going to stay?”

“Atlantis is home,” Janet told him, “And I can’t wait to get back. And we all know you’ll be there too.”
Jack shrugged, “It’s not like there’s anything left for me here. My family are on Atlantis, besides I think they’re going to try and put me in charge of something here. Not a chance in hell am I being put in charge of anything.”

Janet nodded in agreement as the other members of the meeting began to file in.

*********************************************

Rodney felt Laura bouncing nervously at his side as they waited. Steven was bringing her family and Laura was trying so hard not to run. She had known that she would have to face them sooner or later but as the time came closer her fear was becoming more and more overwhelming.

“They’re going to be happy to see you,” Rodney reminded her as he pulled her to him, “Trust me.”

Laura nodded, her face resting against his shoulder.

“You know that’s the shoulder I was shot through?” Rodney asked chuckling as she jerked back.

“Bastard,” she muttered, smiling that he’d managed to distract her for a few moments.

Rodney hugged her frowning as the warning Laura’s family were outside came through his earpiece.

“It’s time,” he whispered wrapping his arm around her tightly as they watched the door open.

Laura watched the door open, feeling Rodney’s arm protectively around her as she came face to face with her mother and father.

“Laura?” her mother cried in amazement turning to her father.

“Steven?” her father demanded of his friend.

“Greg, April,” Steven stated softly, “It’s Laura. I’m sorry I didn’t tell you before but it was for your own safety.”

Slipping out from under Rodney’s arm Laura moved forward slowly towards them.

“Mom,” Laura whispered wishing they’d move to her or talk to her but they seemed frozen, “Dad.”

Suddenly April Cadman stepped forward and wrapped her arms around her daughter joined quickly by Greg. Laura realised that they were both crying. After several minutes they parted and Laura found herself staring into her mother’s eyes.

“I’m sorry,” she whispered, “But I…I…” her voice cracked and Rodney moved to her side resting his hand on her shoulder.

“Laura did it to protect you,” Rodney stated softly, “And she saved my life in the process.”

As everyone turned to look at him Laura smiled slightly seeing Rodney take the slightest step back uncomfortable at being under so much scrutiny.

“Mom, Dad, this is Dr Rodney McKay,” Laura introduced him, “My fiancé and as he said, the reason I faked my death.”

“How about we sit down and hear the full story,” Greg took charge resting his arm around his wife.
Relief filled Laura and she took the seat beside Rodney as her parents took a seat on the other couch barely noticing as Steven left the room though she did see the smile on his face.

**************************************************

John sat in the conservatory of the house he’d grown up in, David and Patrick in the other seats as they chatted.

It was so bizarre.

John had spent years trying to get away from here, and in the time before he did the three of them could barely be in the same room without an argument. Now they were sitting around discussing anything and everything they could think of.

“When are you going back to Atlantis?” David asked finally.

John shrugged, “Tomorrow. I’m returning with Daniel so we can start organising those who want to come back to Earth either for a visit or for good. We’ve also got a long list of people who want to come to the city.”

“We’re on that list,” Patrick told him.

“And my future sister-in-law?” John asked his brother.

David laughed, “And I can meet Jeannie.”

“Well I’ll put a good word in with Sha’re about getting you to Atlantis,” John told them with an amused smile before tilting his head thoughtfully, “Actually, now we’re in contact with Earth we’re going to need some backing.”

“You want to be the Sheppard Industries liaison?” Patrick asked stunned.

John shrugged, “It could be a good job.”

Patrick chuckled, “We’ll look into it.”

Before they could continue John’s radio beeped, he moved away from his father and brother for a second talking quickly.

“Daniel’s back,” John told them, “I’ve got to head to the ship to go over everything.”

Patrick moved and hugged his son, “I’m proud of you.”

John basked in the affection from his father for a second before activating his transponder; he gave a quick wave as the bright light surrounded him taking him back to the Star.

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Sha’re watched the Stargate dial as she held Mel tightly to her, Jeannie at her side. As the Gate burst open the shield was activated.

“Daniel’s code has come through,” Peter announced.

“Remove the shield,” Sha’re said with a soft sigh.

There was a pause and then Daniel’s voice came through the radio, “Sha’re, are you holding Mel.”
“Of course I am,” she replied a little bemused sharing a confused look with Jeannie.

“I need you to have your hands free,” Daniel told her, “Give him to Lisa.”

Sha’re chuckled softly at her husband before handing her son to her assistant who appeared at her side quickly.

“My arms are now free,” Sha’re told him with an amused smile.

The wormhole rippled before Daniel and John appeared, both women took a step forward before they stopped as they saw the baby girl Daniel was carrying close to him.

“Dan’iel?” Sha’re gasped, her hand flying to her mouth as she stared at the child in astonishment.

Daniel grinned as he moved to his wife, “Sha’re, I want you to meet your daughter.”

“Lily?” her amazed whisper echoed through the suddenly silent room.

Daniel passed Lily to her mother then quickly replaced his daughter with his son before gently touching Sha’re’s arm and moving them all up to the conference room.

As the Atlantis first family moved away from the Gateroom John reached out and pulled Jeannie into a tight embrace before they followed on.

Sha’re sat staring at her daughter, checking her as she drank the bottle of milk Daniel produced from the bag he’d brought with him.

“Thor checked Lily,” Daniel told her softly as he cuddled Mel, “She’s completely healthy and there’s nothing we need to worry about.”

“I just…” she trailed off before managing to focus, “Tell me everything that happened and what needs to happen next.”

Daniel shook his head, “In a minute.”

Confused Sha’re watched Daniel hand Mel to John before he took Lily from her and passed her to Jeannie.

“Dan’iel?” Sha’re stood to face him, she didn’t get a chance to ask him what he was doing as she found herself wrapped in her husband’s arms receiving a deep passionate hello kiss.

When they parted Daniel grinned at her, “Okay, it’s a long story.”

Taking their seats and their children back, Daniel began the story of what happened on Earth.

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“This is Sha’re Jackson,” the strong voice of the city’s leader echoed through the city and across the mainland, “As many of you are aware we received word that the Andurians have been removed from Earth. The planet that many of our citizens call home has now been freed. We lost people, our friends and family during this fight for freedom. A list of those killed or injured will be available soon. I can only offer my sympathies to the relatives of those who lost their lives. The days that follow will be filled with decisions for all of us. There will be those amongst us who wish to return to Earth for good, some will wish to visit and others may have families wishing to join them here.
Please know that although these options are available it will take time before everything will be organised and I ask for your patience. No matter what happens from now on we will always be held together by the trials we have suffered at the hands of the Andurians these past few years. I wish also to thank you for all your hard work and dedication in freeing Earth. We have our future back and I encourage everyone to focus on that.”

Turning off the PA system Sha’re lifted her son from his crib walking to join Daniel and Lily on the balcony. Sitting at her husband’s side she smiled as Daniel’s arm slid around her waist and as Sha’re rested her head against her husband’s shoulder the family sat together watching the fireworks as the people of Atlantis celebrated.

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