

Daughter of the Gods:  
Every New Beginning



Stargate SG-1  
Fanfiction

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a/k/a  
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**DAUGHTER OF THE GODS #1**  
**EVERY NEW BEGINNING**  
**Dark & Adult**  
**Stargate SG-1 Based FanFiction**



**BY**  
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**Moon Mistress Publishing USA**

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**Dedicated To:**  
**Daniel Jackson—For what should have been**

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## Chapter One

Daniel's pale eyes rolled open, the first thing they noticed (as they always did) was that there was not a single ray of daylight anywhere. To begin each new day in utter darkness was always depressing.

*Damn cot.* That didn't help his disposition any, no not all. You'd think someone could manage to bring him an actual bed with an actual mattress. Every morning he woke, Daniel was reminded that he was not getting any younger. The screaming ache in his lower back told him so with a fine

How-do-you-do? each time he rolled his athletic frame from the damnable folding torture chamber. Very slowly, Daniel stood up to his full height and turned his torso first to the left and then to the right, repeating the pattern slowly and with more intensity, as he tried to loosen the kinks which were most painful in his left side near the kidney area. The first pops of the day were heard and the pain began to lessen slightly. Slender fingers reached toward the ceiling as the muscles in his back howled that they did not want to cooperate with this daily ritual any longer, they wanted a bed. A B-E-D; bed! Daniel ignored the railing and bent at the waist as he reached to touch his toes, drawing in a large breath as he went.

"What I wouldn't give for a massage." He mumbled as he stood in his quarters touching his toes wearing nothing but his light blue boxers. "A hot bath and a nice long massage." Daniel let his mind wander off to some darkened candle-lit room where sweet smelling incense burned and a woman's hands kneaded his tired muscles with the most exquisitely painful touch he had ever felt. Starting at the nape of his neck, she worked the muscles there and in his aching shoulders, rolling his skin beneath her fingers as she went. Daniel could feel soft wisps of her hair against his naked flesh. In his (almost) daily fantasy, she never spoke to him nor did he see her face. Somehow he knew she was a young and pretty woman for whom, at this moment in time, there was nothing but him.

*A nice little fantasy if there ever was one.*

With the waking grumblings in his groin beginning, Daniel ceased his stretching routine put his black T-Shirt, (the one with Fuck Authority on it) and his military issue sweat pants (olive drab of course). Slowly he made his way from his quarters down three levels to the base work-out area. Every morning the same thing, Daniel would spend the first hour of his morning working with free weights and then going into his own cardio-vascular routine. He wasn't much for working out but around here it seemed to be a requirement and since Daniel was a civilian he did his best to fit in wherever he could. The instructor was supposed to be there to watch him and make sure he didn't hurt himself or anything like that, but like every other morning, good old Lieutenant James was still snoozing the day away, no doubt he was still wrapped in the arms of one of his inferior officers. Daniel went through his morning routine without any particular fuss. With his daily work-out completed, Daniel made his way to the mess hall. What an appropriately titled place! Not only was it a mess but the food was as well. This morning's specialty, runny scrambled eggs, half-cooked bacon and burnt toast.

*Yummy.*

As the food was unceremoniously dropped onto the tray with the separate compartments, Daniel glanced across the room until his eyes found what they were looking for. When he saw Daniel looking at him, Jack raised his hand and motioned for Daniel to come to his table when he was finished being served his morning gruel. Daniel took his place at the table with Jack and his other team mates. "Jesus, this looks like shit." He moaned and pushed the tray away.

"Yep," Jack agreed as he shoved a forkful of half-cooked scrambled eggs into his mouth. "Tastes like it too." Jaws moving up and down, Jack turned toward Daniel and motioned with his fork. "Nice shirt."

"Good morning to you too."

Jack smiled as he took another bite.

"Are you ready for today, Daniel?" Sam asked as she sipped her coffee. Bright blue eyes stared at Daniel over the top of her cup. "It's put up or shut up time, you know."

"I'm aware." He replied in an uneasy tone. Silently he reminded himself that while today had begun as every other day had begun for the last five years, it was not going to end that way. The silver chain around his neck began to feel tight and Daniel fingered it out of his collar, it was a nervous habit he supposed, like pushing his glasses up on the bridge of his nose when he was annoyed with someone.

"Do you still believe your device will work?" Teal'c intoned from his side of the table.

"Yes." There was no uneasiness or lapse in his voice this time. "It will work." Not wanting to think about the project too much, god knew he'd done enough of that over the last six weeks, he turned his attention to Jack and changed the subject. "Do you think there's any possible way that I could get, you know, a bed?" Daniel rubbed the mid-section of his back with a closed fist to emphasize his point.

Jack laughed as he put down his coffee mug. "Well, ya know your maw and me," he pointed at Sam with his fork, "we sort of expected you'd move out by now. You're old enough to be away from us. We think you should get a place of your own. The cot was sort of our way of letting you know that. Why'd it take you so long to catch on?"

"Why not?" Teal'c asked. "I, myself, have been thinking about asking General Hammond if this would be acceptable to him. Are you not tired of waking to darkness, Dr. Jackson? I am."

Upon his return from his Ascension, a time and place that he couldn't really remember anymore, he found that his friends had packed up all his belongings and turned in the lease on his apartment which left him with no where to stay but the base, at least temporarily. Daniel hadn't been all that eager to find a place of his own, everything he needed was right here. It wasn't that he didn't want to live in a home of his own but rather that he had become accustomed to living a simpler life than he had before Ohma had come and taken him away to that place of Ascension. At least, that's what he told himself when he was alone and in the dark.

Dr. Daniel Jackson had not been doing so well in life when the good old USAF approached him eight years ago. *Geez, had it been eight years already?* Daniel smiled a little bit to himself. No, at that time, he was a very young overly educated man who kept insisting that the world change everything they thought true because they were wrong and he was right. While, luckily for him, that did turn out to be true, in the end that didn't put a roof over his head. Lately, Daniel was content to let the USAF do that for him.

All in all, he had no reason to have a place of his own at this point in his life, not when so much of

that life revolved around the Stargate and his adventures to other worlds. But; "Yes, I do miss the sun." He agreed. To this comment Teal'c nodded his bald black head and gave a slight smile. "Everything I need is here. All I want is a bed. A real one. With a metal frame, wood head board, and thick fluffy mattress."

"Looks like our boy is staying home for a while longer, Paw." Sam sighed as she pushed away what was left on her own tray and took the last drink of coffee from her cup.

"Eh, that figures." Jack replied with good-natured disgust in his voice. "Fine, in that case, I'll see what I can do." He ran a hand through his head of short graying hair.

A young ensign came up to the table where the team known as SG-1 sat talking and not enjoying their breakfast, he whispered something into the Colonel's ear.

"Well, that's it then." Jack rose. "General wants to see us." He turned his gaze directly to Daniel. "It's go time." Jack turned as if to leave and then turned back to look at Daniel, "Oh and ah, Daniel," he opened his palms and held them out to him, "change your shirt, huh?"

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The sun was beginning to make its way past the horizon.

Another day had come and gone.

Six weeks ago SG3 had come through the Stargate, landed on this ecru planet and then been stranded here. It wasn't a bad place. It had its good points. It was warm, almost all the time; it was warm, even at night. There was fresh water to be had, though admittedly not an overabundance of it, animals to be hunted. Vegetation was low and Lt. Colonel Andrews imagined that was because of the poor quality of the soil. Almost every living thing on this planet was a carnivore, even a good majority of the plant life ate bugs, as such, the team as always very careful where they stepped when they went away from the campsite. Some of those darn bugger plants were pretty big, step on one of them and it would clamp down on your ankle with a vengeance.

For the most part they had stayed hidden here in the caves which overlooked the city they had come to call Oz. (They might have called it the Emerald City if the planet was so gosh-darn brown. Everywhere they looked their eyes were almost constantly met with one shade or brown or another from deep dark chocolate to light ecru. ) Twice a day two of the men on the team known as SG3 would take the walk from their hiding place in the caves to the Stargate. There they hang around for a few hours waiting to see if it opened and of course it never did. They would punch the symbols on the console panel and their end of the Stargate would open right on cue, they would send their signal through for someone to open the other side and no signal would be returned. Their way home was blocked at the point where the welcome to earth sign should hang.

Over the course of six weeks, in silence, they watched the people below them as they went about their daily tasks and lived out their rather normal lives. The great walled city of Oz (as SG3 had come to call it) was, by some standards, a bustling metropolis. Though they hadn't ventured into the walls of the Keep below the hillside, they had ventured outside the caves and into the smaller villages to the south and east of their present location. They weren't places like Oz, there weren't

any strong holds in the villages, no grand stone Keep watching over the people in Hicksville here. But nice enough little places with honest enough people living in them.

There was one particular woman living down there in Oz who had struck all their fancies. In keeping with the theme, the men of SG3 had dubbed her "Dorothy". She looked like Judy Garland in the Wizard of Oz to some extent and in the right light, if you were lucky enough to catch her in a moment when she stepped out onto her balcony; she looked as though all she wanted was go back to Kansas; to go home.

This morning she had been out on her balcony. Andrews saw her through his long range binoculars. Mostly she ventured as far as the threshold between the doorway and the balcony itself but this morning she had walked straight out of her room and into the great outdoors. Almost never did they see her outside in the courtyard and then she was always escorted by a tall, broad deeply dark-skinned man whom the team had come to call the Wizard. Blood wanted to call him the Lion on account of his long braided hair; he thought it looked like a mane. The Wizard was probably more apt, from the looks of things one would be hard pressed to call the Wiz anything but the King of Oz. The Wizard's actual name was Kanan, they knew that for sure from their excursions into the villages which lay behind their hideout.

Nor did Dorothy ever venture beyond the gates which surrounded Oz. In fact, she never did so much as come near them at any time. It was only on this balcony did she appear alone from time to time. One would have had to have been blind not to notice her among all of the other inhabitants of this planet. Everyone else here had skin tone which ranged from deep rich black to a sort of burnt olive tone. All had dark hair and dark eyes.

Not her. No, her skin was the color of vanilla icing. It looked just soft and sweet. She had long locks of fire which cascaded from the very top of her head to her waist.

To pass the time the men would make up stories about her as they sat around the firelight deep in the night. For the most part they were the typical fantasies any bored man might make up regarding such a woman; a princess locked away in a tower, maybe she was a powerful sorceress who kept the Wizard informed of the doings of his enemies. Maybe she was his whore. That had been Carlisle contribution to the conversation. Andrews believed that just the mention of it had made each one of them hard at the same time. He knew his dick had stood at attention. What a fine whore she would make.

There was a rustling in the bushes outside the Cave, Carlisle was back. "Anything?"

"No, sir. Not a damn thing."

"We'll try again in 12 hours."

"Yes, sir." Carlisle took a seat beside the young Lieutenant Andrews. "She out there?"

"Nope, was earlier but she's gone now." Andrews handed over the binocs so Carlisle could get a peek. "They're doing something down there, been at it all day." Andrews stretched his back and

had a look around. "Where are the rest of you?"

"Anderson's staking out something to eat, fish probably. I'm gettin' sick of fish."

"Uh. Me too." Andrews agreed. He had an increasingly sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach. "And Corporal Blood? Where is he?"

"And ah, well," Carlisle stuttered as he continued to stare through the long range glasses, "well, sir, Blood went off to check out Oz a little bit more."

"What?"

"I tried to stop him. I'm sure he won't get into any trouble."

"Oh, Christ. He's not going to stop until he gets up close to her is he?" Andrews rose and dusted the dirt from his fatigues. "Well, go on, go after him. Jesus, Carlisle if you or he does anything to give us away, I'll have you both shot."

"Yes, sir." Carlisle snapped a salute and ran off in search of Corporal Blood.

"And be quick about it!" The commanding officer snapped. "It'll be dark soon." Andrews wouldn't be so upset if the good, yet inexperienced, Corporal Blood had gone wandering into one of the villages. There wasn't much trouble to get into there. However, Corporal Michael Blood had been the member of the team most affected by Carlisle's fantasy that Dorothy was some type of royal concubine. Andrews had heard him beating and mumbling "Dorothy" several times in the last six months late at night while they were all tucked into their cave. For Christ sake! Couldn't he choose to get his dick wet with one of the girls in the village? Why did it have to be Dorothy?

It had taken him the better part of the afternoon but Corporal Blood had made his way down the steep hillside where the caves were tucked and onto the flatlands below. The day had been dry and dusty as was every other day since their arrival. The sun, which had shone brightly, was now going down. Soon a purple/brown sunset would dazzle over head. To his taste, and the tastes of his teammates, it was still warm. Yet even at this far distance he could see the people of this world were tightly wrapped in moderate to heavy clothing. They were all cold. Michael wondered how that could be, but obviously it was true just the same. He was perfectly warm and happy and they were cold.

A few weeks back Michael had snuck into the village to the east of their campsite and stolen clothing which was drying on someone's line. Now he took the time to remove the stolen articles of clothing from his backpack and to put them on. Surely, this was no Tommy Hilfiger design, only a simple cloth coat with a simple cloth head wrap and shirt. The coat was long enough to hide his green fatigues, his shirt he stuffed into the backpack which he then stuffed under a rock as he continued his journey toward Oz.

Looking down at himself as he walked he thought he should blend in fairly well with the locals down there. Luckily, he would not have to try and keep his face or hands covered. Being of Greek

descent on his mother's side, his skin had a nice dark olive complexion and his eyes were black as coal. He shouldn't give off any sign that he did not belong in this part of town. As long as he tried not to interact with any of them too much and for criminey-sake, don't try and speak to one of them! Michael was unaware of just what language the people here did speak but it certainly wasn't good old American English.

Lieutenant Andrews would have a shit-fit if he knew that Mikey was off on his own. By now, Carlisle had probably filled Andrews in on what was happening. That didn't matter, in another hour or so he would be crossing through the gates of the courtyard. No one could catch him after he went inside. Hastening his pace, he told himself that he'd better hurry along anyway. The gates to the keep ahead of him closed at dark and they did not open again until after the first light of day once again crept through a darkened sky.

## Chapter Two

After having worked well into the small hours of the morning once again, Dr. Daniel Jackson retired to his quarters beneath Cheyenne Mountain and to the lumpy torture chamber he jokingly called a bed. His lower back cried out for a mattress and he swore to himself that he would buy a proper bed just as soon as they came back from P456X tomorrow afternoon, after all he really did deserve it for pulling their butts out of the fire on this one. For the last six weeks the Stargate had sat silent in the Gate Room, useful as nothing more than a really big paper weight but tonight he, along with Samantha Carter and Dr. Harold O'Gara (not one of Daniel's favorite people by any means) had finally been able to get it working once again. They had not, however, been able to contact the members of SG3 and so tomorrow morning SG1 would go through the Gate in an attempt to retrieve them.

A tired and worn out Daniel Jackson laid himself down on the uncomfortable bed and soon fell into the warm black clutches of Morpheus. Floating in the blackness of the sleeping mind, Daniel began to sense a presence in his dream. Almost as if on cue, a small light appeared some distance away from where he stood. It was not the light of an electric bulb or the light of a fire; at first it was no brighter than a single candle which might have been placed in a window on a cold dark night to beckon a lover home. As it grew brighter, Daniel realized that he was moving toward it. He had not commanded his legs to move and they were not, he was floating in the darkened emptiness of his own mind, floating toward the ever growing glow. The light that at first had been more no than a single candle now grew greater than a thousand suns, Daniel raised his hand to shield his eyes as he turned his head away from it.

"Look at me," a voice inside his mind said. Daniel lowered his hand and turned to face the voice coming from the glowing ball of amber before him. To his surprise there stood a woman he had never seen before. Tall and slender was she, with full rounded hips and ample breasts. Long locks of golden sunlight streamed from the top of her head and cascaded around her waist. Eyes like Mediterranean Sea stared not at but through him. Daniel realized that the woman was not engulfed in the amber light, she was the light.

"Who are you?" He asked in a voice that was small even to his own ears. But to his query she only stood there and smiled a warm kind smile at him. Slender arms reached out to touch either side of his face and draw him nearer to her. Passionate dark red lips descended to bestow a whispered kiss upon his forehead. Something stirred inside of him. One of her hands dropped from his cheek to touch the place where his heart hid inside his chest. Daniel stared at her, captured by her like a butterfly in a net, his heart racing and pulse pounding. Dropping his gaze from hers, he looked down at the hand resting in the midst of his chest, it too was glowing. Something was coming from her or through her, and it was making its way inside of him, settling somewhere deep in his mind and his heart.

"Sa'Tan, Daniel." She said to him.

His sleeping mind turned the strange word over and over. "Satan?" He mumbled for a reason he did not understand. Daniel watched as her full lips parted and she laughed and shook her head, long blonde hair spilled golden rays of sunshine all around her. Before she spoke again, Daniel realized it had been him who had misunderstood.

"Sa'Tan." (Sah-Taaahn) She repeated. "Sa'Tai Callestah. Sa'Tan, Daniel." The hand which rested upon his cheek now softly caressed his skin. Once more her lips parted and her head descended, Daniel felt the warmth of her tongue as it slid into his mouth and ever so gently, down his throat. The sweet taste of honey mingled with cantaloupe juice filled him. "Sa'Tan" she repeated in a whisper which was strong but just barely audible.

She was gone. The dream faded away and Daniel slept comfortably for the next few hours. In the morning Daniel awoke with the oddest feeling, it was as though something marvelous had happened to him in his sleep only he couldn't remember what it had been. Perhaps some great revelation had come to him as he slept. He didn't know, but he did know that if he could remember he knew he would be very excited about whatever it was. Way in the back of his mind a single word echoed and danced.

Sa'Tan

What was that? He didn't know, but when they returned from P456X later today, he would do some digging and in an attempt to find out. There was something else, was there a certain smell to the air this morning? Strange. The air in the base was drawn in from the outside, circulated through no one knew just how many filters before it reached the lungs of the bases' inhabitants. There was never any smell in the air, most especially not one that did not have the scent of either burnt food, grease, sweat or some type of chemical compound. The latter occurring only if one was either in the infirmary or in one of the research labs. No this scent was different from all of those. What was it? Whatever it was, it was heady and rich with a slightly sweet underlying hint of rosemary and perhaps sage. Two spices which had certainly never found their way into the mess hall. Opening his mouth to give out a small yawn, Daniel realized that his lips were sticky. He ran his tongue along them; the sweet taste of honey filled his mouth instantly. Suddenly, he remembered her, the woman he had seen in his dream the night before. Daniel remembered the warmth of her tongue inside his mouth and her beautifully soothing and familiar face.

Daniel reached over and flicked on the radio by the bathroom sink, it was just a cheap little radio that didn't pick up many (if any) stations this deep under the Earth. Today Van Morrison came through the speakers loud and clear; he was singing that it was a fan-tab-u-lous night to make romance 'neath the cover of October skies. Humming along with the tune, Daniel covered his face in lather and put the blade to his cheek.

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Dr. Daniel Jackson was not the only person who had a long and strange night that evening. Corporal Michael Blood had also spent a sleepless night inside the gates of Oz. Blood hadn't stopped to think of where he would sleep when he took off on his little escapade and now he was sorry about that. Being a stranger to all those around him he had not dared to find a proper bed, a cottage or home where some kindly stranger would take in a man on the road alone at night. No, he had slept in a corner of the courtyard on a pile of not very sweet-smelling hay which he was now

picking out of his dark hair.

All around him were the sounds of people hurrying and scurrying about their days' business and he poked his head over the foul smelling stack to have a little look-see. Just as they had yesterday, people were putting together small kiosks and a group of them were working on the finishing touches on some type of platform which they had built in the center of the court yard. Women were busily chatting in their native tongue while they hung ornamental decorations made from materials of various types. Some of the decorations they were hanging looked almost like Christmas balls. They were made of clear rounded glass and filled with different colored liquids. Other decorations were small dolls whose clothes appeared to be made of discarded rags and their bodies of corn husks. Still more of them were nothing more than rocks which had been painted with a background color (most were black or purple or yellow or pale blue) and had some sort of symbols then drawn upon them.

Corporal Michael Blood was no Rhodes Scholar like Dr. Daniel Jackson was but even he could tell the citizens of Oz were getting ready for one hell of a party.

*A party. Lucky me. Lucky, lucky, me.* Blood rose to his feet and dusted off the last of the hay. In no time at all he was walking among them, browsing their handmade goods, sampling their hand made confections and home stilled booze. All the while his eyes scanned the crowd looking for Dorothy. Surely she would be here today, out among the celebrants. Maybe she would even be alone. Maybe he would be able to get up close to her and talk to her. Blood had enough of his wits about him to dismiss that idea. Whatever language they spoke it wasn't English and he spent a good deal of his time pointing to his throat and giving a slight frown whenever someone wanted to strike up a conversation with him. All of them seemed to understand this almost universal signal for, I can't talk. In return of this gesture they either gave a slight frown of sympathy or just nodded their heads to show that they understood his predicament. Those who sympathized with his false plight were apt to give him a bit of food or drink. To his amazement, some of them even pressed small amounts of what passed for money into his palm. For a small moment he found himself thinking of all the pan-handlers he'd ever come across in his life time. Usually they hung around the lower-end of New York City where he was originally from. His father would always tell him not to give the bums one red cent. His mother, on the other hand, almost always stopped to drop a shiny quarter or two into the cup held in the grimy hand. He wondered how many times his sainted mother had been ripped off doing that and just how many times his cold-hearted father might have been wrong.

All the while his eyes kept turning to the balcony hoping to catch some glimpse of her. Dorothy did not make an appearance on the balcony this morning. However, to Blood's surprise, delight and almost horror, she did make an appearance elsewhere during the festival.

## Chapter Three

Major Carter said excitedly, "I've got them!"

Over the loud speaker came the voice of Lt. Colonel Andrews. "Good to hear from you guys. Thought you'd forgotten about us." He said. "Any chance we can come home now?"

"Roger that." General Hammond said with a relieved smile. "We'll shut her down and you open her up on your end. We'll be waiting for you."

There was what seemed to be a long period of silence on Andrews' end. "We'd love to sir, but we have a small problem."

"Oh, what's that?" Hammond inquired.

"Well, sir, geez, I don't know how to tell you this but Corporal Blood's gone missing. He's gone down into the town, Oz we call it. He left yesterday and hasn't come back. I sent Carlisle after him but I haven't heard from him either."

"Damn."

"What was that, sir? I couldn't quite hear you."

"Stay there. SG1 will come to you. Out." General Hammond turned his attention away from the loud speaker and toward the four members of SG1. "You heard the man. We've got two team members missing. Now, we have no reason to think the inhabitants of P456X are hostile so there's no reason to go in with guns blazing. Just go, find them and bring them back. Understood?"

"Understood." Colonel O'Neill returned with a salute. "We'll bring 'em home, General, don't worry about that."

Stepping through the Gate never failed to amaze every member of SG1. One minute you were standing with your feet planted firmly on good old Mother Earth and the next, well, the next you just weren't. In the second or two that took to get from Earth to P456X, one was falling at the speed of light through a blue/purplish haze. Although they would each report a strong feeling of disconnectedness not just from each other but also from themselves, their individual experiences during that second or two were vastly different.

Sam always got the sensation of being wrapped tightly in a warm blanket. Jack felt a burning sensation, not on his skin, not exactly. No, what burned was some place deep in the pit of his stomach, a place where food would never reach. Daniel always felt as though he should be cold, he

should be wet. He waited for those two sensations each time he traveled the wormhole to a new and interesting world but it never came. Teal'c, who had ridden this ride more times than his compatriots had, did not really notice the second or two which passed by any more.

Falling, falling, down further and further, stuck on some wild astral roller coaster ride.

And then....

Feet planted firmly on the sod of P456X.

No one was wet. No one was cold. That burning sensation in Jack's stomach disappeared at once, as did Sam's blanket. Teal'c stood stone-faced, as was his usual expression. Two members of SG 3 came forward from the thicket of trees and greeted SG1. Without much ceremony, SG 3 led SG1 first to the caves where they had been living these past six weeks and then down the hillside toward the town.

"We have to hurry, it's getting dark. They close the gates when night falls. No one gets in or out." Lt. Col. Andrews reported to Colonel O'Neill. "Looks like there's some big to-do going on in Oz tonight."

"To-do?" Daniel inquired from behind as they made their way down the steep sandy hill. "Who are they?"

"Sorry, Dr. Jackson." Andrews muttered. "Didn't have time to relate to you what we've found." He stopped in his tracks for a moment, turned to Daniel and smiled, "You are going to love this."

"Am I?" Daniel asked with anticipatory surprise. Of course, Daniel had seen the strong hold once they reached the caves. One would have had to be blind to miss it. To Daniel the place SG 3 had come to call Oz looked more like an ancient Celtic town. There were thatched huts and wooded houses within the walled fortress; he saw them from the ridge when Andrews was kind enough to allow him to use the binoculars. It was the castles' keep itself that interested Daniel most. It stood roughly three stories high, its thick stone walls covered the back quarter of the courtyard and serving as an inner fortress. Three large turrets jutted out from the center at the roof. To him it looked like something straight out of King Arthur. Camelot, perhaps.

The inhabitants of this land were certainly not of upper European descent and that struck Daniel as very odd. Within the walled city of Oz, Daniel could see bonfires burning in the evening light. From his place on the hillside, he could clearly see that there were six separate fires, five of which were burning in the shape of a five-pointed star. The sixth and biggest fire burned directly in the center of the star. No, not a star, but a pentacle, Daniel thought to himself as he watched the fires burn against the purple haze of the coming night. Some type of religious ceremony or rite was going on down in Oz tonight.

"Yep." Andrews agreed and then turned his back to the rest of them as he led them closer to Oz. A little further down the hill and Andrews stopped again. "All right, look, you've probably all noticed the skin tone of most of those people." He stopped talking, as he was afraid that his words were in

some way racist.

"Yeah, I noticed." Jack agreed quickly. "We don't exactly blend in with the locals. What about Blood and Carlisle, they blend?"

"Blood's olive skinned but Carlisle's about as white as they come."

Jack turned to Daniel, the resident Cultural Expert, for his advice on the situation. "What do you suggest?"

"Let's go." There had been no thought given to his reply. The expression on his face told Jack that Daniel had no idea of why the question was asked of him and that Daniel was too excited to care. After all they hadn't had any problems on any of the other planets they had visited. "I'm sure they've seen a white person at some point. It's not like they're going to kill us for it." The words fell at a slow pace and Daniel continued to stare toward the walled city. It seemed that he could not turn away from it. Something was down there and he was eager to get to it

"Yeah, I guess not. Oh and Dr. Jackson, they have seen a white person before. They got one down there but they don't let her out very much." Andrews looked Daniel straight in the eye. "Not to mention the fact that there's, like, what, five maybe six hundred of them gathered down there for whatever it is they're doing. Do you still think we should just march right in?" Andrews motioned down at his own and then the rest of their military attire.

Daniel was still staring toward the town of Oz, which was now about a mile and a half away. Jack looked up at him waiting for him to answer. The blank expression on Daniel's face told him that no answer was coming. Nope, Daniel was not currently among them. He was in fact off in a world of his own. The blank stare said so. Jack doubted if Daniel had even heard what Andrews had said. Wanting to get his men out of Oz and the entire team home, he held up his own sub-machine gun "We got these, I'm sure we'll all play nice." Colonel O'Neill pushed past Lt. Colonel Andrews and began leading them toward town once more.

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Corporal Blood spent most of the day wandering around among the townspeople, sampling food and wine and generally enjoying the festivities. Smiling people, dressed in what Blood assumed was their "Sunday best"; they danced to drum driven music as they sloshed wooden mugs full of alcohol together and spit a good measure of it into any of several bonfires that were burning in every direction. Although all appeared to be having a good time, to him it seemed as though the women of Oz were secondary citizens. Clad in skirts that hung to their ankles, each wearing a kerchief upon her head that was either white or blue, the women gathered in small packs here and there throughout the courtyard. Their faces hardened by years under the hot sun of this planet.

When the sun had sunk almost completely over the horizon, Kanan the King strolled into the courtyard from behind the double fortress that was his front door. The door to the castle keep was very special indeed; the inner door made of a thick wood that might have been mahogany was reinforced with hardened steel crossbars. Before that stood a wrought iron gate adorned with wolves heads and bear claws. Before that rather ominous looking gate stood two heavily armed guards. It was very clear that anyone going through those gates would invited inside, probably part

of the Royal Court or something. In any case, they would not be just any peasant or serf. No, to get through there one had to have an invitation or be a member of, what he supposed was, the King's Court and Council.

The brawny dark-skinned leader of the world known as Tiberia strode past the wooden door, past the gates and the guards, all in the courtyard turned to gaze upon him and to bow or curtsy as he passed by them. He was a ruggedly handsome man who was regally dressed for this occasion in a suit of battle-hardened black leather and heavy chain mail. Thick waist length hair was wound in braids no wider than a small finger hung and swung from side to side as he walked by greeting his people and smiling as he went. Blood saw a reason for that broad white toothy grin, as behind Kanan the King walked a parade of about twenty scantily clad women. In one long and flirty procession they made their way through the winding courtyard where Kanan the King continued to do his politicking and up to the parade stand (Blood though that is what it was) which had been erected in front of the bon fire burning hotly in the center of the brownish/green courtyard.

With a large waving hand, Kanan the King, bid the women that followed him, all with flowers in their hair, to climb the steps onto the platform. Blood made his way through the crowd, which was hurriedly gathering at the base of it, he looked around just long enough to notice that only the men were making their way to the platform and to the front of the crowd. The women were gathered and visibly chatting with each other but they were hanging out in back. Whatever this was, Blood got the distinct feeling that the women of Oz were not going to be part of it. Not the townswomen anyway.

The women on the platform were clad in the same flimsy cloth, only the color of which varied. A long gauze strip of blue, purple or gold wrapped across their bosoms--most of which were more than merely ample-- and wound around their waists, hips and thighs. This makeshift dress ended just below the curve of each woman's buttocks. They danced around and around while the drum beat in the background. They laughed. They smiled. They teased the men in the crowd as they neared the front of the platform and skittered away just before they could be touched. Around and around in a hypnotic dance, hips gyrated and full firm buttocks danced. Breasts, some firm and some not, heaved and bounced to the present and increasing drumbeat. In the crowd, the men cheered, clapped and whistled their approval at the spectacle.

Kanan the King raised a hand and caught the eye of each member of his harem, the women stopped dancing. The drum ceased its beating. Kanan's hand descended and his gaze shifted to the direction in which he had come. The crowd parted and gave a wide berth.

With green eyes forward and her heart in her throat a small white skinned auburn haired woman, known to the members of SG3 as Dorothy, began to make her way down the path which her Lord and Master and lain for her. As she walked at a slow and deliberate pace, she made eye contact only with her Master. The rest of what was happening around her, in large part, went unnoticed. There was only Kanan standing by the platform with his hand held out to her and nothing else. Briefly, the warmth of his hand graced hers as she ascended the steps and took her own place on the raised area. Dorothy stood out from the crowd not only because of the pale color of her skin, but also by the clothing she was wearing. While the other women flitted around in skimpy gauze, Dorothy wore a full-length gown of dark green velvet that covered her neck to toes. Dorothy's goods were private eyes only.

With purpose in his steps, Naganti Kanan crossed in front of the crowd and addressed them in their own language. "Tonight is Yehwe. Tonight we celebrate our labors and the rewards they have given us." His thick fists rose into the air above his head in a triumphant gesture where they were greeted by thunderous applause from the men below him. "I am Kanan, your King. I have labored hard over this land to insure the safety and prosperity of you, my people." He stopped and surveyed the crowd before him. If you were to ask each man afterward, they would have told you that their king had looked them straight in the eye at that moment. Such was the power and presence of Naganti Kanan. "These are my rewards!" The mahogany fist turned into a magician's hand wave as he showed off the women behind him. "On this night, I share them with you." More applause. More whistles. More cheering. Each man more excited than the one next to him. Kanan walked down the line of women one by one holding a hand over each woman's head as he did so. One by one, he picked a man from the crowd to spend the night with the chosen woman of his harem.

Corporal Blood stood and stared in disbelief as the King's women were auctioned off for the night. What luck! This was indeed his chance, when Dorothy came up for bid, he would raise his hand. If he had to, he would make that gesture toward his throat if he were asked to speak. Yes, he would raise his hand for her.

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Off to the west in the not-too-far distance the people who had come to this land to rescue two teammates stopped in their tracks. As if looking to a god for answers without asking the question all eyes turned to Daniel and the drums from below rolled over the hillsides echoing through the caves and canyons beyond. "What?" The query was met only by the raise of Colonel O'Neill's eyebrow and insistently set jaw.

"What are they doing?" Andrews repeated.

"Celebrating." Though they were not far away, Daniel raised the binoculars to his eyes and watched as Kanan's women were auctioned off to most deserving men for the night. There she was, just as Andrews had said earlier, a woman as white as stars in the night sky. "Jesus." He muttered without thinking.

"That's Dorothy." Andrews returned he did not need the glasses to pick her out not even at this distance. Another thing he did not need was Dr. Jackson to tell him what was about to happen to her. Bile turned in his stomach. Damn fish.

"Dorothy?" Daniel inquired as he stared at her through the long-range glasses. No, that was not her name. Her name was... Kelly? Was that her name?

Daniel dropped the long range spectacles and swiped at his eyes. Daniel shook his head for a moment to clear it of the sudden feeling of having been stuffed half full with cotton balls. Why would he know her name? That was ridiculous. Still, in the back of his mind, he was sure of one thing; her name was not Dorothy. Raising the binocs to his eyes once more, Daniel slipped back into his role of cultural expert and tried to decipher just what they were doing down in the town of Oz tonight. Soft whisperings of language carried themselves to him on the wind, they sounded like some form of Native American but he could not be sure.

The clothing they wore did not lead Dr. Jackson to believe that the inhabitants of Oz were the descendants of any Native American tribe. Each man in the town below appeared to be wearing a headdress that closely resembled a turban. The clothing which followed was loose fitting to allow air through but now a second layer had been added, a slightly heavier one made probably of wool rather than linen. No, if he had to make a guess, Daniel would have said the inhabitants of Oz were of Middle Eastern to African descent. Such an odd conglomeration of cultures, it did not make any sense to him. "We have to get through the gates before the sun goes down." Daniel took the lead as he began walking toward Oz at a more hurried pace.

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One by one the women in Kansans' stable went off into the night with men they had probably never met, off to do whatever those men wished for the night. The woman SG1 had come to call Dorothy had heard her share of stories of what went on after the men and women were out of sight and she wanted no part of it. Dorothy fixed her emerald eyes upon Kanan's every move, never blinking, never turning away from him, no matter where he was standing or what he was saying. Her eyes always forward, always focused on him. The rest of what was happening here did not matter for in her mind it did not exist. This night, this festival, would come and go, just as it did every year and had for the last twenty-five years of her life.

Unlike the other women, Dorothy would always be spared the touch of the filthy outstretched hands that groped toward her. Always did she stand just out of their reach, Naganti Kanan made sure that her position was always two full arm-lengths from the front of the platform. Never would they touch her. Nevertheless, always, always, would they plead and want. Always would they look and whisper. Always would the drum beat echo inside her head.

Always would she...

That did not matter.

That did not exist.

The last of the sun's rays fell over the echoing hillside as six darkened figures slipped through the gates of Oz.

With a resounding thud, the drums stopped and Kanan raised his thick arms. "Here, before you, here we have the last of my rewards. What man among you steps forward to claim my Cha'Dech for this night?" Though his words were inviting his tone, like the tight set of his jaw, was daring. Kanan waited to see if any of his people would defy their King. Never had they done so before, he had no reason to believe any of them would now.

The roaring, cheering crowd suddenly became deathly silent. No whistles. No applause. No cheers.

Corporal Blood stepped through and raised his hand.

With that simple movement, everything around Dorothy, Naganti Kanan's prized Cha'Dech, shattered. Pieces of her world flew in every direction, they broke apart and tumbled end over end in mid-air. Her eyes closed tightly at the sight of the raised hand, her knees buckled beneath her and threatened to betray her as she grasped for the heavy hand of her Lord.

"They're gonna kill you, man." A familiar voice hissed from behind him. Blood turned around to stare into the face of Carlisle. "What the fuck did'ja do that for?" It was too late. The crowd around them was already parting, standing aside so that Blood, save for Carlisle, stood alone in the center of an empty circle. "Shit." A strong voice came from the other direction. Blood turned to face the owner of that voice, it was Kanan of course and Blood could not understand a single word the King was saying. With a wavering hand he motioned toward his throat and then his mouth, a small revelation came to him, he also pointed to his ears.

*Look, I'm mute and deaf.*

While his voice remained cool, Kanan's eyes burned. "B'ok tar hesta Cha'Dech?" ("You claim my concubine?") A thick finger pointed at Blood then at Dorothy, finally the large hand waved beckoned to the deaf and mute man. "Shani bei. " ("Come forward.")

*This is a good time to back out. Just make motions to indicate that you were misunderstood, you made an error. They won't kill you. They'll probably have a good laugh and then a strong drink or two.*

Corporal Blood nodded his dark-haired head before he could stop himself. Why did it seem that so often Rationality took a long hike just when you needed it most?

Still the dark-skinned man standing on the platform, smiled, but his blazing eyes stared straight through to Blood's very soul. All around was eerily silent, Blood wished that he could take back his once raised hand. If only there was something, anything, which would turn all of the gaping eyes away from him. Before he was aware of what was happening, hands grasped him roughly by the shoulders and began shoving him toward the platform where the object of his desire stood waiting for him. Dorothy would not look at him. One step and then another. There were hands pushing him forward but no one spoke. To Blood it seemed this world had suddenly been stuck in a time warp; everything was lingering longer than it should. Standing at the stairs to the raised platform now, his eyes locked upon Dorothy who had her own eyes fixed solidly upon her King.

Tossing his long locks back over his shoulder and walking forward in a hurried pace, Kanan grabbed hold on Blood's hand and yanked him onto the podium. With a distinguishing eye, he looked the newcomer up and down. "B'ok tar hesta Cha'Dech?"

The language was so strange, Blood could not understand a single word but he was certain that Kanan the King, was asking him if he wanted Dorothy. Blood raised his hands slightly and shrugged his shoulders; he pointed to his throat and frowned, pointed to his ear and frowned. Not knowing exactly what he was doing he raised his eyes and looked directly at Kanan, with two pronged fingers Blood pointed to his own eyes and then at the crowd, he shook his head and lowered his hands. Unsure to say the least, Blood hoped that he had conveyed the idea that he was

deaf and dumb, that he had not seen when the other men had lowered their hands.

Kanan stood before Blood and looked his over with a stern eye. It was clear the man could not speak nor could he hear, he may well be an idiot. "Jadge nangonan, e'uken nyne n'kan?" (My People, does anyone here call this man friend?) "E'uken en se?" (Anyone at all?) The crowd before him was silent, no man or woman stood to defend the newcomer. "E'uken kedesi nyne?" (Does anyone even know this man?) Again, there was only silence. Snapping out his hand, Kanan ripped the turban from the man's head and the scarf away from his face. "E'uken desesi nyne?" Roughly, he turned Blood on his heels to face the crowd below. In the crowd, a sea of heads began to shake and low murmurs were heard. It was clear that no one knew who the daring man was.

"Sage'kotek!"(Outsider!)

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"This doesn't look good." Daniel intoned, as they stood huddled behind one of the thatched roof huts. "I don't know how to get him out of there." To this comment, he felt the butt of Jack' gun in his ribs. "No, I don't think that's wise. We need something a bit more subtle."

Andrews cleared his throat. "I don't know what's going on here, but I can tell you one thing, no one touches her. She's not even allowed outside, especially not without him." He nodded toward where Kanan was standing. "Dorothy is the Kings' property and Blood knows it. What the hell was he trying to do?"

For the moment, all they could do was stand and watch. Something that made Colonel O'Neill very uneasy, he did not like the idea of a member of his team being in any type of danger. However, so far, Blood seemed to be holding his own. "I want a closer look."

"They are going to kill him!" Carlisle hissed from behind the group. "We have to get him down from there."

"Where the fuck have you been?" Lt. Col. Andrews demanded to know. "I told you to go after him!"

"It's a long story." Yeah, it was. Carlisle had gone dashing after Blood just as Andrews had told him to do but he had reached the gates past dark. The sun went down quickly here and rather than face the prospect of climbing those hills back to the cave in pitch black and possibly breaking a leg or something, Carlisle had spent the previous night outside the wall. When morning arrived and the gates opened, he had tried to go inside but realized that he was still in uniform. It had taken the better part of the day to go around unseen stealing clothing from barren lines....no one was doing laundry today!....finding Blood within the crowd had not been any picnic either. "I'm tellin' you, they're gonna rip his throat out."

"Zhi Sage'kotek!" (Seize the outsider!) "B'Ton, yi aptzi nin!" (Take the bastard to the dungeon!)

To Michael Blood it seemed as though hundreds of hands reached for him. He found himself being shoved off the platform and into their waiting groping fingers. Pushing, pulling, and tugging his hair, his clothes, his arms and legs. Everyone yelling in a language he did not understand. Angry eyes glared as angrier words spilled from tight lips. "Let me go!" He cried.

"Ka gito!" (He speaks!) Cried one man.

Blood did not need to understand the words to know what that man had said; his cover was blown. He had opened his big fat mouth and blown his cover and now all of these groping, biting, angry hands were going to throttle him to death. They would rip him limb from limb leaving his bleeding corpse to rot in the dirt-ridden courtyard. Moreover, for what? For WHAT? So he could have the chance to get his dick wet with that stupid bitch?

Dorothy, the Cha'Dech was also rudely ushered from the platform by her Lord and Master. She was taken through the great hall and to the great stairs where she was handed off to one of the royal guards and, brusquely led up the large stone staircase. She was shoved through the door of her Master's chambers where she collapsed to her knees by the side of his bed. The locking of the door behind her was deafening. Part of her was very glad to be back in her Master's chambers, with the locked door between her and the man who had raised his hand.

The white man who had raised his hand. The white man who had tried to imply that he was both deaf and dumb but who had then spoken in a language that she had thought she would never hear again. A language from so long ago and so far off remembered that she was unsure of whether or not she understood what he had said. Nevertheless, she had. Let me go, he had said let me go and this meant he wanted the hands to drop from his body and the entire swelling of the crowd to leave him.

Was it even possible, after all these years were it even possible? Had the stranger come through the N'kte? Had someone finally come for her?

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Unwilling to bulldoze his way through a crowd of unarmed people with guns blazing; Colonel O'Neill decided they needed a different course of action. "Did you understand anything they said?" His eyes turned to Daniel.

"No, not really. I think it's some form of Native American...."

"Do they look like Indians to you?" O'Neill shot.

"No, they don't." Daniel kept his tone light and quiet. "Nonetheless, it still sounds like it. Given a little time I'm sure I can decipher enough of it to communicate with them."

"So what do you suggest?" O'Neill's tone was highly annoyed; he loathed it when Daniel took the 'high road'. He was always certain that Daniel did it just to annoy him. In five years he had yet to see the civilian cultural specialist lose his temper.

Light blue eyes looked around at their compatriots, all of whom were looking to him for the answer. "We have to go after him."

"Yeah, I agree, sir." Sam said as she stood ready with gun in hand. To this came a strong second from Andrews, Carlisle and Anderson, each with his own gun in hand.

"Not quite like that. We can,"

"Talk his way out of there? Is that what you're going to say?" O'Neill thought that Daniel must not have been looking at the crowds' angry face as they hauled Blood off to god only knew where.

"Well, can we try that before we blow them to kingdom come?"

To this suggestion, O'Neill grunted and motioned the small platoon forward. As he began to take his place in the lead of the group, O'Neill felt something sharp and pointed pressed into the base of his neck. With great care he turned his head to see several members of what undoubtedly was the Royal Guard. They had come and surrounded the team while they wasted time chatting about what their next move would be. The fellow currently holding a large sword between O'Neill's shoulder blades looked to be about twenty-five or so, he was extremely tall, towering of the smaller O'Neill by at least a full foot. As O'Neill looked around, now that he was up close and personal, he noticed how tall all of them appeared to be. Amazon tribe for men.

"Da'me nin". The guard with the sword to Col. O'Neill's neck said and held out his hand.

"I think he wants the gun." Daniel interpreted quietly.

"Da'me nin!"

Closing his hazel eyes and giving out a rather large sigh, O'Neill handed over the gun and directed his team to do the same.

"Maen!" The point of the blade pressed further between O'Neill's shoulder blades and the group began to walk forward. The guard's eyes never left their captives but they talked in low whispers as they made their way toward the keep. Though their voices were low one word or phrase, he did not know which, kept coming to Daniel's ears 'Cok'Mon.' It was densely dispersed with the other words they were saying and though he could not but sure, Dr. Jackson thought it meant 'White Men'. The royal guards were wondering where said White Men had come from.

## Chapter Four

It was not long before the group of captives was entering the Great Hall of Kanan's keep. With his keen eye Daniel kept making note of all everything that was Gaelic or Celtic in this place. To him he might as well be standing in Dunvegan Castle on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. Tartan tapestries hung from every wall in brilliant red, green, blue and gold. Heavy furniture graced the room; the chairs alone must have weighed well over a hundred pounds each. Daniel wondered how anyone managed to slide them around the room since they appeared so heavy.

Colonel O'Neill was his usual cheeky self, smiling, nodding and saying 'How-do-you-do?' to everyone they passed on their way to the King. All around him eyes widened and mouths gaped open at the sight of them. Finally they were lead into what appeared to be Kanan's Throne Room. A large ornately carved wooded chair was the focal point of this room, its seat and back covered with red velvet, above which hung a large rendition of the King's Family Crest. Sitting on the throne was the same man they had seen giving his women away earlier in the night. Surrounding him was a group of fifteen or so men, all of whom had been engaged in heavy conversation (probably concerning the first white man they had encountered that night), startled they looked up at the sound of the guard's voice.

"Ginan kani Cok'Mon odank!" (We found these white men wandering in the town) The guard who had stood by Col. O'Neill's side announced to Kanan who sat upon his throne.

Kanan turned from his council and beheld several white men now waiting in for his attention. Yehwe was a night known to be full of mischief and magick; it seemed the festival would live up to its reputation tonight. "Madwan? E'gni hamesh?" (What do you want? Where do you come from?) Kanan asked in a voice that not betray the coolness in his eyes.

O'Neill shot Daniel a harsh look. "Looks like you're on, Daniel."

With more apprehension than usual, Daniel began the task of making first contact and communication with people from a new world. He began much as he always did, speaking in a very slow calm, almost hypnotic voice, "I'm Daniel." Daniel held out the palm of his hands and waited a moment but Kanan did not respond. The dark eyes of the man grew wide at the sound of Daniel's words. Using only his eyes, Daniel, looked around to see that the men were talking to each other in hushed whispers. "We have come for our friend. You," Daniel pointed to Kanan, "you took him away." Daniel put his hands together as though they had been bound, he motioned toward the dark man on the throne once again. Although his eyes seemed to grow larger with each word Daniel spoke, there did not seem to be any recognition in them. Daniel dropped his hands and then pointed toward the window behind him and the courtyard beyond. "Out there. Our friend," he bound his hands together again, "on the podium" he made a sort of box shape with his hands, "you took him...."

"Mowtot!" Kanan bolted from the seat upon which he had been sitting. "B'yon ye, Cha'Dech, nin."

Daniel began to speak again but the man held up a large hand to silence him, he realized that the leader of this world was not speaking to him. "N'om!" One of the guards immediately left the room off on whatever errand Kanan the King had presently sent him on. Now the man's eyes were definitely upon Daniel and his friends, "Ciptu." The large black hand motioned toward the long table and chairs behind the group. "Ciptu."

"Sit?" Daniel asked and bent his knees slightly as though he were going to seat himself.

"Ciptu." Kanan repeated and nodded. "Pama."

"I think he wants us to sit and wait until the guard returns." Daniel said over his shoulder. They made their way to the chairs just behind them, eyes on everyone in the room as once, light smiles on their faces, and they sat in the heavy wooden chairs. "Ciptu." Daniel said looking at Kanan and watched as the large man nodded his head.

"So, what are we waiting for?" Sam asked through a smile so fake she thought it might freeze on her face.

"I don't know. Guess we'll find out soon enough."

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The lock on the outside of Naganti Kanan's chamber door slid back with a loud ca-chunk. The woman the men had called Dorothy looked up to see J'Quinn, Kanan's Captain of the Guard, making his way through the doorway. "Cok'Mon nes odank, nin gak, Naganti Kanan." (White men are here, you must speak for Master Kanan)

So, they had discovered that the new comer was a white man and Naganti Kanan wanted her to talk to him on his behalf. Why? Why didn't Naganti Kanan just kill him and be done with it? Tiberian law expressly stated that she as Cha'Dech was never to speak to, never to touch or be touched any man other than her Lord and Master, Naganti Kanan, unless he gave permission and he hardly ever did unless it struck his fancy to do so. What was so important about one white man? "Co." Kanan's Cha'Dech waved her hand to shoo the guard away. "Gak bwe co, Naganti Kanan." (No. I will not speak for Master Kanan)

A black hand snatched out roughly and grasped her by the forearm, instantly the burning sensation appeared where his skin met her own. "Maen! Byan!" His fingers clasped tighter to her skin. (Now! Don't argue!)

She stumbled backwards away from his burning touch. "Ka'Nok re!" She cried out as she wrangled herself away from his grip. (Do not touch me!)

A large finger shook itself in front of her nose, hard eyes glared at her. "Byan." (Don't argue) His voice threatened in a low command.

Without further resistance, she followed the guard from Kanan's chamber back down the great staircase and into the great hall. As she made her way down the long passageway, she began to wonder if she could still make the talk? Never did they speak in any language that was familiar to

her here. Not since she was no taller than a biyuk had she heard her own native speak. So long, so long, so long ago. For the first time in a very long time an oddly familiar feeling began to rise deep within the pit of her belly. She recognized it as being hope and tried to kill it.

The woman who had been the last item up for bid in this evening's auction walked with through the door of the Great Hall with her head bowed low, auburn hair covered her face and her gait was slow and unsure. Slowly she pushed her hair back to look at the strangers who had invaded her Master's home and brought her here. White skin flushed crimson and then drained of all color as she looked around to behold not one single white man, certainly not the man who had come to claim her, but five white men, one black man that she recognized as being Jaffa, and one white woman sitting near the great table in Kanan's great hall.

Without thinking, the Cha'Dech looked down at her own hands and then up at Daniel's face, down and up, down and up went her eyes, with a drunkards pace she continued to make her way toward Naganti Kanan. Daniel watched carefully as the leader of this world rose to his feet upon seeing her and motioned for the rest of the team to do the same. Without speaking, she took her customary place on the steps that lead to Kanan's throne, two stairs down and to the left of where he sat. Slowly her eyes turned upward once again to meet those of the white people across the room from her.

Taking a deep breath, she raised her head to stare into the eyes of the man across the room from her, the one standing in front of the others. The one with the pale blue eyes. There was a sharp pain in her heart as her mouth dropped open in a small O and then closed quickly as she looked away from him. Those eyes were still with her. She knew those eyes.

"Ha ben esta, Cha'Dech." Kanan said in a low voice as he slithered forward in his chair and looked her directly in the eyes. "Co gak Shankuk, nin gak Cok'Mon." His dark eyes stared through her. "Gak kweman Cok'Mon."

With her head spinning and her knees weak, she struggled to convert the Shankukan language into what she remembered as English. So many years it had been since she had heard her own language. Remembering was a very slow and painful process and her voice did not attempt to hide that fact. "Does the woman speak your words?"

"Yes, she speaks English...Cok'Mon." Daniel replied.

"Hei, cok'won nen'de cas gake Cok'Mon." The Cha'Dech stopped for a second as she groped for the words and a dull thud began to ache behind her eyes.

Kanan appeared pensive as he eased himself forward on the throne. A large ebony finger raised itself and pointed at Sam. "Nin gak cok'wo keshan'abe?"

"Does she speak for all of you?"

Daniel looked over at Jack, "I think he wants to know if she's the leader."

"Tell him no." O'Neill replied. "I am."

"No, she does not speak for us. I am Daniel. This," he put his hand toward Jack "is O'Neill, he is the leader. Her name is Sam."

"Co cok'wo, Sam, gak keshan. Nen'de cas," she paused as she replayed the word inside her head hoping to speak it correctly, "Dan-yo." she paused again and watched from the corner of her eye as Daniel nodded his head, "Nen'de cas,", once more she paused as she tried to wrap her tongue around the strange name. "Ooh-Nel es Naganti."

"Naganti O-Nel co gak? "

"Why does your king, O-Nel, not speak?"

"Ah, that's O'Neill. O-Ne-al. Two l's." Jack corrected. "Not O-Nel."

"Yes, O'Neill. " Daniel repeated with slight appall as he pushed his glasses up on the bridge of his nose. "I speak for the group. With O'Neill's permission." He made a rounding motion that encompassed the members of his group and then held it hands out toward Jack.

The words were returning slowly to her mind as her eyes freely took in the sight of the white people standing in front of her. How long had she waited to speak words like this? Communication had been strictly limited to speaking only with those women who served under her and to Kanan in his own words in his own way. If she dared to raise her eyes or so much as part her lips to those before her, her Master would remind her of the place she kept in his palace with a swift hand. It was that image of that hand which held her firm in her place as Cha'Dech, and stopped her from reaching out to the newcomers.

But those eyes were staring at her, every second she looked into them she became more and more certain of who he was. Those eyes. That voice. It had to be. That sharp pain returned to her heart and she bit her lower lip against it while she continued with her task, doing her best to cast the thoughts and the hope they brought aside. "Dan-yo gak naday Naganti O-Neal."

"Hei, Dan-yo. Nin gak Cok'dech. Nin gak, Cha'Dech."

"Good, Dan-yo. Then we will speak through..." for the first time she faltered on purpose and then continued forward replacing his words with her own "our women." The meanings of the words Kanan had chosen those that she had spoken were similar, they would do. However, it was possible that a little something might be lost in the translation. The decision that she would speak with the white woman made, the Cha'Dech now cast her eyes upon Sam and no one else. However, that was all right. The Cha'Dech had better vision than any of them realized, while her stare seemed to be concentrated on Samantha, her attention was still solidly fixed on Daniel.

Easing his powerful frame back into the comfort of the chair, Kanan spoke once more. "Nin Naganti Kanan, Naganti Tiberia."

"I am Kanan, Lord and Master, ruler of Tiberia."

"Madwan? E'gni hamesh?"

"What do you want?" There was a low thumping beginning in the back of her mind as something warm began to crawl around inside of her. That damn nagging sensation of hope, she stuffed it down as best she could. "Who is your tribe?"

"Repeat what she says and then what I tell you," Daniel whispered to Sam, "ok?"

"Why? You can see she speaks quite well."

"Just do it, Sam. Don't give me a hard time, got it? Don't look at him, look at her."

"Whatever you say." She shifted her weight from one foot to the other. "What do you want? Who is your tribe?"

"We have come for Corporal Blood, the man you took away. He is our friend." All stood silent for a moment, Daniel nudged Sam. "Do it," he hissed.

"This is ridiculous," she muttered but continued with his wishes. "We have come for Corporal Blood, the guy you took away. He's a friend of ours." Not exactly what Daniel had said but like the King's woman, Sam thought it was close enough.

Cha'Dech interpreted for her King. "Co, kazyen kew. Nin n'kan Cok'Mon."

"Hei. E'gni hamesh?" Kanan queried.

"Who is your tribe?"

Sam echoed the question.

Daniel thought for a moment, searching for a satisfactory answer to the question. "Our tribe is far away. We come from far away. We meant no disrespect."

Once again, Sam stood and echoed Daniel's words before Calla spoke. "This is getting absolutely stupid. Obviously she knows what you're saying, why do I have to keep repeating it?" She asked through clenched lips.

"Because I have a penis and you don't," he returned in the same tone, "isn't that obvious? She is not allowed to speak directly to me, not if we can use you anyway. She isn't even looking at me anymore. Andrews, you were right, she does belong to him. So, why the hell would he put up there like that with the other women?" Daniel turned his ears back to the words the woman, Cha'Dech, he supposed that was her name, were speaking.

"Ginan nepe noc. Ginan nape agu. Ginan," once again she stopped as the word failed her. What

was 'disrespect'?

From his place across the room Daniel seemed to sense the word that she was struggling with, for no apparent reason he said in a quiet tone; "Harm. We meant no harm."

"Ginan co katum." Too excited by the fact that she was remembering her own language, she did not wait for Major Carter to echo Daniel's words. There were questions she wanted to ask. Things she wanted to know. From behind her there was a low but audible growl emanating from the throat of her master. The woman looked down at her feet. "Nache Naganti Kanan." ( I am sorry Master Kanan)

"Ginan gak ty yaytay." (We will speak of this later) Master Kanan hissed over her shoulder.

Suddenly the large room seemed to be only two feet by two feet square. The Cha'Dech had made a mistake that was clear to Daniel, she had over stepped the bounds Naganti Kanan had laid down for her. The look in the large man's eyes as he loomed over her shoulder warned of the thin ice she was walking on. On his forehead, Daniel felt a light bead of sweat begin to break. The chain around his neck had begun to chafe him. The silver chain was slick with his own sweat; he fingered it out of his collar and let the silver medallion, the symbol of his birth sign, sparkled against the black t-shirt.

"Ares." The word slipped from her lips as soon as the sparkling silver met her eye. The white man speaking for the group of white people wore the symbol of Ares about his neck. She raised her eyes to look directly into his.

The amulet around the neck of the one called Dan-yo did not escape Kanan's attention. He laid a heavy hand upon her shoulder. "Nin, wasa yeti? Odank?"

With her Master's hand pushing down upon her tender shoulder the woman began to speak again, "How did you get here? To this town?" As she spoke, something worse than her eyes raised to catch sight of the glittering silver laying around the neck of the man with the pale blue eyes. That horribly nasty feeling of hope deep in the pit of her stomach rose once again. This time, no matter how hard she tried, it could not be denied.

Daniel looked around to the people on his side of the room before answering, all eyes seemed to agree that he should tell the truth and so he did. "We came through the Stargate." With his hands he attempted to make the shape of a large circle. "The Stargate." Once again he pointed to the window and to the land beyond. "Past the caves, out there,....." The eyes of the Cha'Dech were heavy upon him, they seemed to bore a hole straight through his chest.

Maybe it was the feeling of Hope that was rising ever higher inside her or maybe it was the softness she saw in the eyes of the one called Dan-yo, either way it did not matter, "You came through N'kte?" The words were out of her mouth before she could even consider taking them back. Without warning the heavy hand that lay heavy on her shoulder pushed her forward, she tumbled down the three steps that had previously walked up.

"Hey!" Col. O'Neill shouted, "don't do that."

Kanan did not appear to hear the Colonel as he knelt over her and planted one knee firmly between her shoulder blades, giving her right arm a ruthless backwards jerk. The other hand snatched out harshly to grasp the nape of her neck, the woman on the floor let out a small cry of pain. "Nasana Cha'Dech." (Be careful Cha'Dech) It was a dark tone that sent a shiver through her body it caused her to shake beneath him. Kanan smiled as set his eyes on Daniel once again.

"Let her go." Dr. Jackson demanded in a low timbre. There was no verbal response from Naganti Kanan but in his cold-fire stare Daniel saw the glare of a man who was daring him to step up to the plate. "I said let her go."

"Mazhena, Naganti Kanan." There was no mistaking the pleading in her voice. "Nye'kwi. Nin dup etum.... Nagonon...." (Forgive me, Master Kanan. I am tired and my head hurts....So long....) "Nin co Cok'Mon gak...." again her voice trailed off for a moment, "nagonon." (It has been a long time since I made the white man speak.)

"Nasana."(Be careful) His voice was threatening, as were his eyes when he turned them upon Daniel and the symbol around his neck. They had said nothing about the woman; it was possible the symbol meant something different on the world from which the Cok'Mon came. "Kon y'git," Kanan waited a moment for her to make the white speak but she did not, "Gak, Cha'Dech." Kanan applied more pressure to her shoulder.

The force of his arm was crushing not only her ill-treated shoulder but also the air out of her lungs. She gasped for breath as she tried to speak. "It is late,"

"Weka nin gak p'buk. Ginan gak wabuk. Agu dup, Ginan d'uk te yan eh ny'kwe."

"To late to speak more tonight. We will speak more tomorrow." The weight of his body leaning into hers eased off but Kanan did not let her up. The feeling of hope was still there and now there was tomorrow to get through. The rest of this night would not be any cakewalk either. It was all too much to deal with now, too much to try to cope with while retaining her proper place. Maybe she would do better tomorrow. She finished her Master's words. "Such a long journey, you must be tired and hungry." Kanan's grip released her.

The large black hand descended before her eyes, she took it in her own and allowed Kanan to help her rise. "Mowtok, baginin. Wabuk. Wisane ginan."

"Take them to...." she stopped and searched for the word, "rooms." The question was clear in her voice. "beds. "still questioning herself. "until tomorrow. Feed them."

Col. O'Neill spoke now. "If it's all the same to you, we'd rather just take our friend and go."

"I don't think you should be turning down his hospitality." Daniel warned.

"Hospitality? Is that what you call this?"

"I'm just saying that we could find ourselves in a cell next to Blood rather than in a bed where we might be free to sort of, you know, roam around a bit." Four guards stepped forward. "Your call, Jack."

"Fine." Jack' lips were tight. With a sigh and a fake smile, he motioned toward the guards that they would go with them.

From her place at Kanan's side, she watched silently as the white people who had come through the N'kte were lead up the great staircase and to the rooms in Kanan's keep in which they would to spend the night.

Before returning to his room, Kanan ordered her to bring food up to the strangers. When she protested that she was tired and did not wish to spend further time with the white people (oh what a lie! She was certain he would see it on her face!) he struck her full across the jaw and repeated his demand. All of his other women were off with their lucky consorts for the night, there were very few people left in the keep to serve the Cok'Mon on this night. Kanan insisted she fulfill her duties and feed them.

"Wisane et Cok'Mon." (Make food for the white men.) "Byan nin bagan k'shew." (Come to my bed when you are finished).

Tears streaming down her alabaster cheeks, she retreated from him and into the large kitchen to fix food for the newcomers. This is a test, she thought as she worked. The guards will be there, she must not speak to them. She was only to prepare the food and bring it to them. She knew that she would not be able to hold to that, not even under penalty of punishment and Kanan knew it as well. It was why he was sending her to them. Wasn't it?

She knew not what the white men would eat, and so she just put together a conglomeration of what was now leftover from the Yehwe festival that had been so rudely interrupted earlier in the evening. Pulling the long sleeves of her dress down over her wrists and making sure all of her buttons were done up, she ascended the great stair case with a silver tray full of food and a guard on either side of her. As she made her way down the corridor she noticed that there were guards posted outside of the room where the white men a white woman and a Jaffa were waiting.

The small procession stopped and one of the guards opened the heavy oak door. The woman stepped inside to see the fire burning brightly in the hearth. The men rose when she entered but the woman remained seated. *Try not to look at any of them, especially not the one with the familiar eyes.* She placed the tray laden with food onto the table and made her way to leave.

"Wait," Daniel said quietly. She froze in her tracks but did not turn to look at him. "What is it?" To her it was a very strange question, clearly she had laid food before them, couldn't he see that it was something to eat? With her back to him, she shook her head and made her way toward the door once more. "How did you get here?" Daniel asked as he took a step in her direction while keeping an eye on the guards. "You don't belong here, do you?"

To this she did turn to look at him, the one called Dan-yo. She covered her mouth and her ears, once again shook her head, and thought; *I am not to talk or listen to you.*

*Why not?* Daniel thought but did not say. He watched in surprise as the green eyes of Naganti Kanan's Cha'Dech grew wide. A spark ignited inside his mind, something strange and warm began to move around in there. *Do you hear me?*

*I hear you.* Her eyes dropped from Daniel's and down to the silver chain around his neck.

Light blue eyes followed her line of sight, Daniel's hand reached up to his neck to touch the silver chain that he wore. Her eyelids fluttered as he covered the symbol with his hand.

"Maen, Cha'Dech." Said one of the guards inside the room. "Naganti Kanan howah." (Now, Cha'Dech, your master waits for you.)

The woman turned her to face to look at the guard who had spoken to her and when she did the light of the fire fell upon the left side of her face revealing a fresh cut below her eye. Daniel reached out a hand to stop her from leaving with them

"Ka'nok re!" She shouted at him as she jumped away from Daniel's touch. Without further words or ceremony, she left the room.

Daniel knew she would be back before the night was over.

## Chapter Five

Naganti Kanan paced his chambers as he waited for the Cha'Dech to return to him. Large strides of heavy legs moved at a rabbit's pace as he rubbed his face and flicked his braids behind his shoulder. She should have returned by now. As the thought went through his mind, the main door to the chamber opened and she stepped inside. "Took you long enough." He scolded in his own language. "Did she speak to them?" The latter was directed to the guard who had brought her to him.

"Co." The guard said strongly. It was a lie but a small one, to his ears at least, she had not spoken except to tell the one called Dan-yo not to touch her. The guard saw no reason for Kanan to know that small detail.

"Go." The powerfully built man waved a substantial hand in the air dismissing his underling for the night. The guard quietly shut the door to the Master's chambers as he exited. "They have not come for you. When morning comes, they will regain the companionship of their friend, they will take him with them through the N'kte and you will stay with me." Large dark fingers reached out to caress the green velvet dress that encased her small frame; nimbly they began to undo the buttons which held it closed around her. "They will not give you a second thought. They will walk through the N'kte and not even Dan-yo will look back at you as he goes." Frightened green eyes stared up into their Master's dark ones, "I saw how he looked at you." Kanan's lip curled into a snarl. "You will see. They will all leave and you will stay." The nimble fingers that had been so deftly, almost gently, undoing the buttons of her dress suddenly seized it by the collar and ripped it apart. Ivory buttons flew across the room. "You will see." Swiftly he picked her up off her feet and tossed her onto his bed. "I know what you think, I saw the symbol. Ares will not come for you." One thick ebony hand between her linen breasts, holding her firm to where she lay, the other ripped the belt from waist. "Never will he come back here. Always, you are mine." Kanan grasped her wrists firmly and held them together while he bound them with the belt, as always she offered no resistance. No, she knew better than to defy him now, although part of him wished that she would, it would make his entering her that much sweeter. Kanan took the free end of the belt and secured it tightly to the bedpost at the top of the bed. "Come on, Cha'Dech, fight me. You know how much I love it when you fight." Kanan whispered in a voice which dared her defiance. Her slender white body trembled and shook beneath his thick black hand. "Go on; tell me that I'm wrong."

With everything she had she wanted to scream at him that he was wrong! They had come for her! He would see, tomorrow he would know! Tomorrow. But tonight she nothing more than the receptacle for her Master's spew. Not like every night, she reminded herself as she lay quite still. Master Kanan had not partaken of her in some time; long ago he had learned that one of the best ways to punish her was simply to leave her alone. Besides, he had all of those other women to soothe his aches and fill his wants, there was no need to limit himself to this one no matter what title had been bestowed upon her.

Kanan crawled onto the bed with fire in his eyes and his groin, he was fully erect as he swung a thick leg over her head and parted her lips with his fingers.

Her Master was long and hard, his flesh hot against the back of her throat. Still laying quiet, still laying quite quite still, she worked the flat of her tongue along his hardness and suckled her lips around it. Air in her lungs was scared as put his full weight upon her slender chest, she fought for more of it, just to breathe. Still she lay quiet and allowed him to take her the way he wanted. The act was always repulsive to her, the way his hands groped her body and pulled at her hair. It had been so long since he had entered her. Did she want him? No. Never did she want his touch. Did she need him? Yes. Always did she need his touch and the deposit he would leave inside of her. Whether he dropped it down her throat or inside her cunt made little difference, just so long as he dropped it. Kanan's hips thrust his hard cock in and out of her mouth and down her throat; she gave the first sign of resistance by choking involuntarily. Kanan's eyes gleamed as she fought against the feeling rising at the back of her throat and swallowed before her stomach could heave. "Always mine." He whispered again as his balls pressed to her chin. "Mine." A rough hand snatched out to grab a handful of auburn hair at the back of her head, bringing it forward to meet his thrusts. A small sound escaped her. It could have been 'no' but she was smart enough never to say such a thing to him, especially not a moment such as this. Her small hands clenched into fists as they resisted the leather that bound them and then bit into the soft flesh of her wrists. The fire in his belly grew and he withdrew from her mouth. Turning her harshly onto her stomach, raising her lower back, and hips into the air he entered her in one quick thrust. The woman let out a coarse cry. Again, he thought it could have been 'no' and he leaned in close to her in case she should utter it again.

The pain in her extremities was agonizing. Her Master was not a small man in stature or size. One hand planted roughly upon her hip, the other between her shoulder blades, pushing her face down, into the mattress and again it became so hard to breathe. He had pulled her as near to the end of the bed as he could so that he could stand while he fucked her, the leather which bit into her wrists would give no grace. As she shut her eyes and tried to shut down her mind to what was happening to her another cry escaped her though she tried to hard to bit it back from her lips.

"Do you refuse me?" His voice threatened from behind her.

She shook her head in response and admonished herself for being so stupid. She must not say it again or he would hear her! The lightning bolt that thundered through her back door quickly diminished any hope she had that her response would cause his thrusts to ease.

"Never refuse me." Kanan sunk deep into the walls of her ass.

Tears streaming down her face, hot spent breath hitching her lungs, her head stuffed so far down into the clutches of the pillow she thought she would never see daylight again; she uttered the cry once more as Kanan dropped off his deposit.

It was 'no' or 'co' or even 'stop'. It was

Dan-yo.

When Naganti Kanan was done with her, the Cha'Dech lay in her customary place on the floor next to her Master's bed with her eyes open long into the night listening to him breathe and then as he

began to snore. Once he was finished with his thrusting and sweating, Kanan always slept like a rock at the bottom of the ocean. She lay there wondering if the pain in her back would allow her to rise and if what he had given her would be enough. Stealthily, she rose upon legs that felt like rubber and gathered the sheet around her naked body. Stopping to take one look back, just to be sure he was really sleeping and satisfied that he was, she quietly opened the glass door to the balcony and let herself out onto the terrace. As she breathed in the night air, she became certain that all around her were deep in the clutches of Morpheus for the night. No one would come. No one would see. No one would know, except maybe...

The Cha'Dech closed her eyes and opened her mind, praying with all her heart that her suffering had not been in vein. Looking for the power and strength inside herself first, she began to search for the mind of the man who wore Ares' symbol about his neck.

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"Dan-yo?"

In his sleep, someone was calling to him, he was too comfortable to want to listen to that voice. One hand absently reached out and wiped the drool away from his chin as he slept. "Dan-yo? Do you hear me, Dan-yo?" The soft voice whispered again.

"Yes," He muttered inside the dream as his eyes opened. Inside his dream, Daniel sat up, looked around, and did not see his bunkmates. There was only him, alone in the oversized bedroom with the oversized fireplace burning brightly into the night. In his mind, he could feel her, the Cha'Dech; she was standing just on the other side of the door. Quietly, he padded barefoot to the door, he reached out to touch the smooth wood.

With only her mind to guide her through his sleeping mind, Calla began to search through his heart looking for any sign that he recognized her.

In his sleep soaked mind, a bright amber light appeared next to him, as he stood with one hand resting on the door. Daniel raised the other hand to shield his eyes from the dazzling amber glare, when he dropped it again Sha're stood next to him. Rather, she hovered about a foot off the ground, her eyes sparkling and glowing as she gazed upon him. Daniel was sure that she was not real but it did not stop him from reaching out to her. The amber light from which her image emanated folded in upon itself like an old black and white TV set that has been shut off for the night. Sha're disappeared and Daniel was alone in the room once more.

Out on Kanan's balcony, Calla clutched the sheet around her naked body as the cold wind blew down from the hillside. The ghostly image of Dan-yo's wife danced before Calla's eyes. She was tall with dark skin, hair and eyes that shone like polished mahogany. The love Daniel held for her was strong and vibrant in his heart and his mind. His heart was already full. It was clear to Calla that Fate had closed her Circle too late. There was no sense in pursuing this any further. Calla began to back away from Daniel's mind.

The strong sensation of fear and regret came to Daniel through the hand that rested upon the thick wood. The image of Sha're had changed her mind about coming to him in this very intimate way and now she was on the verge of running from him. Daniel did not want that. Since he had first seen her through the binoculars, when he was still making his way down the hillside and she had

seemed so very far away, Daniel wanted to be close to her. He wanted to touch her. With an overwhelming sense of déjà vu running through his sleeping mind, Daniel found himself willing to grasp at anything which would cause her stay on the other side of the door or, better yet, which would bid her come inside the room where he was. "Cha'Dech, are you still there? Stay with me." Daniel's hand closed around the doorknob. "Don't go." A small and pitiful sigh echoed through his mind. At the sound, his arms ached to hold her. Without realizing it, the image of him holding her conjured itself so strongly that it was sent from his mind to hers.

"Ka'nok re, Dan-yo!" She whispered in the same pitiful tone from the other side of the door. For just one moment, she lost herself in the affectionate image he sent to her and escaped into the idea of being wrapped up warm and safe in his arms. In her vision his touch did not burn her nor was it demanding of her but rather it was graceful and very much welcomed by her. Within the few moments she was lost in thought, Daniel had found the strength within himself to open the door that stood between them. Calla's eyes flashed wide with alarm and she skittered away from the opening door just as Daniel took his first step into the corridor. How had he opened the door that stood between them? She not allowed nor even foreseen that.

"Sha're," he said in a soft voice as he stared into her eyes, "her name is Sha're."

"Your wife, Dan-yo?"

"Yes." Daniel took another step into the hall. "Sha're," the sound of her name on his lips was sad and full of longing, "she's dead, Calla. Gone."

Although she knew she should not take comfort in his misery, her heart both broke for him and rose for her. The connection they shared brightened and grew stronger.

"I am Calla." To Daniel's ears, she sounded small and shy, almost as though she were ashamed to say her own name. Her eyes told him that she did not like the sound of Cha'Dech as it rolled off his lips. "Tomorrow you will leave here with your friend, Master Kanan has said this is true. Be careful how you answer his questions tomorrow or he may change his mind. Understand, Dan-yo?"

Yes, Calla, that was her name, not Kelly as he had thought when he first saw her. However, Calla didn't seem quite right either, perhaps it was short for something. Caught up inside the Connection she had made for him, Daniel didn't stop to wonder why he should know who she was. "No, I don't understand. And my name is Dan-yell." He corrected her softly. "Say it, Dan-yell." The tip of his tongue poked out from between his lips to emphasize the 'l' sound in his name, the woman before him let out another small sigh but this one was not fearful nor pitiful but of a different nature altogether. "Cal-la. Daniel." Without realizing what he was doing, Daniel began to talk in that soft hypnotic tone. It was something he had picked up during a weekend seminar on hypnotism a few years back before he had joined up with the USAF and it had served him well over the years.

"Dan-ill?"

He shook his head. "Daniel."

Calla watched as his tongue poked out from his mouth once again and involuntarily, she licked the top of his lips in return and gave out a small sigh. "Dan-yell." This time her warm moist tongue parted her full lips as she whispered his name. "Daniel."

"Good. Don't be afraid," he said softly as his eyes darted about the corridor. "Come inside." Daniel reached to touch her and she backed further away from his touch. The imprint of Kanan's large hand upon her cheek had begun to bruise; three sturdy fingers stared back at him from her jaw line to just under her left eye. "I'm not going to hurt you." Calla did not come closer to him, she only stood there, just out of his reach, shaking her head and looking at him with deep suspicion. It was now that he noticed she was clad only in a bed sheet which she had wrapped around herself like a serape. "Where are your clothes?" There was gooseflesh rising all over her smooth white skin. "You're freezing. Calla, come inside by the fire, where it's warm." Daniel held out what he hoped was a non-threatening hand to her.

"Ka'nok re." She whispered.

"What does it mean? Ka'nok re?" Daniel smiled a little at her.

"Don't touch me." Calla's eyes dropped from his. Maybe here in this dream state it would be all right to allow him to touch her, certainly it could not do any harm. After all, Daniel had no power here and they were not really standing in this hall, alone. Calla raised her eyes to his while she once again searched him for some sign of recognition, and found none. Calla took one small step back from him, he countered with a step forward.

"Cha'Dech?" He asked.

"No." Never had she said the meaning of that word in her own language and never did she want to. Daniel did not need a vocalized explanation, the image she sent him more than sufficed as a definition of the horrid word. She watched as the smile faded from his lips and his hand dropped back to his side. In that moment, the hope she had felt earlier dropped away with the falling of his hand, they had not come for her. Calla began to bring down the veil inside her mind, wanting now to shut that part of herself off from the man before her, the connection from her to him began to stagger. Daniel had grown and taken a wife, there was no place for her in his life. Why would Fate send him to her now when it was far too late?

*Ares?*

No words came from her lips this time; there was only the thought as it went through her mind. There was, however, an undeniable pleading in her thought and reverberated through Daniel's sleeping mind. One small hand raised itself to point at the medallion around his neck. "No, I am not Ares."

"Ares," she whispered in a voice which was full of hope and something that sounded like guilt at the same time. "Please."

Daniel shook his head. "No. It's the symbol of Ares, you're right" Daniel fingered the medallion,

rubbing it back and forth on the silver chain, "I'm not Ares. I am a man, not a God." Once again the full and bright image of Sha're came to him mind but this time it did not come to him because Calla picked it out of his heart for her to look at, no this time it came from him. Meeting Calla was so like the way Sha're had first come to him, he did not mean to scare her.

The connection from her mind to his was not just staggering now, it was breaking down completely and she was the one dismantling it. "Stay with me," he pleaded.

"Co," captured by the eyes that stared at her, she tried to back away from him. On Naganti Kanan's balcony, Calla slumped to the cold stone floor while the sheet fell away from her and she lay shivering under the light of the near full moon. Daniel was strong and unafraid, Calla lay helplessly caught in her own trap.

"Hei," Daniel countered. "Stay with me. Talk to me. Why do you think I'm Ares?" He enticed as he took two more steps toward her and watched as Calla pressed herself against the far wall. "More importantly, why do you want me to be him?" A brilliant flash of fear went through her eyes and another connection was made inside Daniel Jackson's sleeping mind. Some dark inner force moved about inside of him making Daniel feel like a fish on a hook, as though he had been tricked and then captured. Arms that seemed to have a mind of their own landed one on either side of her on the wall behind her, pinning her where she stood. "You're out of room. You've no where left to run." The voice that had been light and hypnotic turned deep and dark but kept its mysticism. "What happens if I touch you, Calla? What will you do? Run to Kanan?" Light blue eyes lit up with devilish thoughts as he stood there and studied her up and down. "I don't think so." A wide obnoxious smile crossed his full lips.

"Please, do not." The eyes that earlier she had thought so soft, the ones she had seen before in a long world and a long ago time, when they were both much younger than they were today. Those beautiful eyes. The ones she had allowed her heart to believe she could come to trust, now glazed over as they gazed upon her and were replaced by the same look her Master had just before he struck or took her. Calla realized she was no longer in control of the mind of the one called Daniel, no, Daniel was running the show now and he had been for a while now. Calla tried to break the connection to him completely and could not. "I can take you to your friend." Her words were hurried and she hoped they were what he wanted to hear. "I can show you that he is unharmed."

"That would be very nice of you. But tell me, what else can you do, Calla?"

Callas' tongue flicked out and licked her dry lips. "Daniel, do not touch me." She begged hastily. "Please."

No, of course not. Of course he should not touch her if she did not want to be touched. What was he doing? Threatening her? How he allowed this to go so far? The connection that had come to his mind from somewhere outside of her now shut down with a howl that resonated through his entire being. Daniel took his hands from the wall and took two steps back from her. "Go back to his bed before Kanan finds you missing." With great effort, he turned from her and went back into his room closing the door as he went. Daniel fell against the door as soon as it was shut, shaky fingers reached for the bolt and slid it home. His sleeping mind led him back to the phantom bed where he slept the rest of the night.

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On the balcony of Kanan's chambers, under the light of the full moon and witness of the stars, Callas' eyes opened and she drew in a large breath. Hope both rose and fell inside of her. Daniel's eyes, they were so kind. His mind had been so open to her, more than she could have ever hoped. Surely, he had not meant to be menacing, surely he did not intend to harm her. Calla looked back inside at the giant who lay sleeping in the middle of his bed. Surely, Daniel would not.

No, nothing was sure. Nothing was right. Nothing except the fact that Daniel was not Ares and he had not been sent by Him either. Perhaps, Daniel was not who she thought him to be at all--the one from so long ago. Hope fell again and this time her heart fell with it. Would she never get out of here? Would her Father never come to claim her and bring her home? Would He never forgive her?

Some day, yes maybe that could be so.

Not today.

Callas' eyes wandered off, down the portico to the balcony door where the white men now slept, strong and powerful as he may be, and as much as she may desire it, Daniel and his friends were probably not the ones she had been waiting for. They could do nothing for her and the only thing she could do for them on the morrow was to help them answer Naganti Kanan correctly and see them safely off on their way home. Wherever that really was.

## Chapter Six

At first light, there was a knock upon the door to where the members of SG1 and SG3, had been brought to a few moments before. A dark-skinned woman made her way inside with a fresh plate of food. Two women followed her, each carrying a tray of laden with food. “Naganti Kanan et Cok'Mon se gak. Eisen Cha'Dech et be dokum.” The first woman said as the others laid their trays down upon the table. They left, closing the door behind them.

“What did she say?” Sam asked as she began to look over what they had brought for breakfast. The dinner the Cha'Dech had brought them last night was very tasty and Major Carter was ready for her morning meal.

“I’m not sure, Kanan will talk to us soon and something about Calla.” When he awoke this morning Daniel understood that she had not come to in the night after all, not in the traditional sense anyway. Nonetheless, she had been with him and she had spoken to him. A slight smile crossed his lips as the memory of Sha’res image came to him. A memory that Daniel held close to his heart and which Calla had picked from his mind as though it were some strangely interesting artifact that he might have dug up. If only in his mind, Kanan’s Cha'Dech had been here last night. Daniel wondered where Naganti Kanan had been during that time.

“Who?” Teal’c asked as he too came forward to look over the tray of food.

“Dorothy.” Corporal Blood asked from behind the group. “That’s her name, isn’t it? Calla.”

“I thought her name was Cha'Dech.” Jack stated as picked up something and smelled like a pancake.

“That’s her,” It was Daniel’s turn to stop and look for the right word, the one he used seemed ironic to him. Many people spent a lifetime trying to get one and she would probably do just about anything to get rid of the one she had. “It’s her title.” He finished.

“And you would know that how?” Col. O’Neill asked as he finished the pancake. Tasty little breakfast morsel, not too bad really.

"I saw her last night." Daniel admitted as laced up his boots and tried not to look anyone in particular.

“She came to this room last night?” Teal’c asked in his deep voice. “Strange, I did not hear her.”

“Yeah, when we were sweatin' it out in the Great Hall last night, I noticed that she seems to have taken a shine to our boy here.” Jack held his hands out toward Daniel and smiled a mock smile. “Can’t get a woman at home but man, he is fucking Romeo when we're off the planet!”

“Shut up.” Daniel shot.

“Oooh,” Jack returned and shook his body a little. “I’m frightened.”

Although neither of them was aware of the other’s predicament, each of them was suffering from a raging hard-on. The type that not only made your dick stand straight up and your legs weak, but that also wove its way into your thoughts, filling your mind with the ideas that it had for your body, seeing if the two of you couldn’t agree on one unspoken deed or another. They were not the only two men in the room feeling that way.

Daniel tossed the plate down onto the table. “We’re going home. All of us. Today.” He turned and shot Jack a nasty look over his shoulder. “And I won’t fuck it up.”

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Once more, they returned to the throne room in the keep and were lead to the same spot where they had stood the night before. Kanan lounged upon the heavy chair with his legs swung over one arm and his head perched on top of his fist. Daniel turned to Sam when Calla entered the room.

“Just like yesterday, repeat what she says and what I say. With any luck, we’ll all be home by lunch.”

“Got it.” Major Carter agreed.

Calla took the place where she had stood the day before, facing Major Carter and with her back to her Master. This morning the gown she wore was made of black velvet, it had long bat-wing sleeves that hung past her wrists in sort of a V shape. It made her look like some type of elvish royalty. The soft cloth draped past slender hips and covered her feet. She stood here in the Great Hall once again to speak on behalf of her Master.

Kanan leaned forward in the chair as he spoke. “Maen, ginan bagenan et wisane hojche yesta sanne et nyan kogon hamesh....”

Callas’ unsteady voice echoed his words in English. “Now that you have rested and eaten there is but one question left to ask and you and your friend will return to your clan...”

Major Carter stood across the room and repeated Callas’ words.

Suddenly Calla felt the breath of her Master hot on the back of her neck. “Dan-yo, Ginan gak tar hesta nyan.”

“Daniel...” Calla pronounced the word the way he taught her to the night before.

“Dan-yell?” Naganti Kanan asked from behind her in a suspicious tone.

Silently standing on his designated spot across the room from them, Daniel watched as Kanan’s eyes blazed at the woman in front of him. *Yeah, and how did she know that, huh, Kanan?* Callas’ eyes shifted left to look at him while the thought crossed through his mind. To his own eyes, it was clear that she had heard him just now. She *had* been with him last night, dream or not, she had been

there. Moreover, so had he.

“Hei, Naganti Kanan, Daniel.” Calla cast her eyes firmly at the floor while she spoke to her Master. She admonished herself for not saying his name had she been saying it, Dan-yo. There was no need to turn and face him, she could feel the heat of his anger radiating through his stare on her back. It seemed a very long time passed as she stood there waiting for him to say something but he did not, this was something else they would discuss once Daniel and his friends had gone. Calla continued her translation; “You say you have come for your friend.”

Inside Daniel was nothing more than a bunch of jumbled nerves but outwardly, he remained calm as he waited for Sam’s repetition of Calla’s interpretation. “Yes, we have.”

Major Carter’s voice. “Yes, we have.”

Calla now, “Hei, ginan.”

“Ginan gak ginan ye’te N’kte.”

“You say you have come through the....” Calla stopped as she searched for their word for the portal. “...the Stargate.”

Sam.

“Yes.” Daniel answered.

Sam.

“Hei.”

One of his hands landed squarely upon her shoulder. He stared past her and into the eyes of the one now called Dan-yel. “B’tok tar hesta, Cha’Dech, Dan-yel?” A large ebony hand reached out and snatched a hold of tresses made of silken fire.

Daniel’s body stiffened as he recognized the question that Kanan had asked of Corporal Blood the night before. Although he already knew it, Daniel stood silent and waited for Calla’s translation before answering.

Calla stood silently shaking beneath his touch. She knew the question would come, of course she did. Still that did not make it any less painful or make her feel less ashamed of who and what she was. Why did her Lord insist upon this, why didn’t he just let them go? Kanan understood that they had not come for her; why did he demand that Daniel say it? Inside her mind she cackled as though a lunatic had temporarily been let loose. The answer was as simple as it was spiteful, Naganti Kanan wanted her to hear it, he needed to dash all hope inside of her.

The hand on her shoulder gave her a firm shove forward. “Maen. Gin nap, Cha’Dech. ” (Now, ask them Cha’Dech.)

With her eyes locked upon Daniel's she searched for the words of her Master in their language...her language. The words were there, they were right there; of course they were, just as they had been last night. Again, she shoved them away from her mind. She did not want to say the words in her own language. If she did so, she feared it would make this unrelenting nightmare even more real.

"Cha'Dech." Kanan's tone was dark as the hand that had shoved her forward now landed on the nape of her neck and gave a harsh squeeze as he done the night before.

"I told you once, don't do that." Col. O'Neill shouted from his place across the room. "Don't make me tell you again."

Calla sucked in a large breath and focused her eyes on the medallion around Daniel's neck. "Have you come for the King's Whore, Daniel? Do you claim her as your own?" Emerald eyes turned upwards to meet Daniel's pale blue ones; Calla sucked in and let out a small breath as she waited for him to answer. His mind was open now, as it had been last night, there was enough strength left inside of her that she felt certain she could reach into it, punch the right buttons on the control panel and make him say 'yes' to Kanan's question. It would not be hard, not at all, because part of him already wanted to say it. The word danced on the tip of his tongue and lingered in his eyes, Calla found herself using her ability to push it back and away from his throat rather than pulling it forward. Fate really had closed her Circle too late and the boy before her was no longer a boy but a man, he was all dressed up and not just playing soldier now, he was a soldier, strong and brave. Wouldn't her Father be so proud of him now? A sad smile crossed her lips at the thought. Too late. It was all just too late.

If Daniel had truly not come here for her, and she was fairly positive that he had not, then she must keep her place. More than that, she would not allow him to challenge Kanan for her. Last night she had decided that Daniel would return to his home and live a long and happy life. For a few moments afterward, Major Carter's voice seem to be hanging in the air, Daniel just stood there, Calla's eyes did not turn away from him but she wasn't looking at him either, she was looking through him waiting for him to answer her. With guilt heavy in his heart, Daniel uttered a single word. "No." He listened as Sam repeated it.

"Co. "Calla said in an almost simpering tone. There was no need for her to turn around for her to know that her Master was smiling widely from behind her.

"Hasho," he whispered directly into her ear. (I told you.) "B'tok nin n'kan Cok'Mon."

"Take your friend." Calla repeated.

"Kogan. Maen!"

"Go away from here. Now! "

"Well, just bring him up and we'll be on our way." Col. O'Neill chimed in a happy voice. He felt the chill as Daniel's eyes turn on him. "What? We're getting what we came for, she's not our

problem.”

“You can’t just leave her here.” Daniel spat.

“Why the hell not?” Colonel O’Neill returned.

Kanan was speaking again. “Mowtat, B’yan ye, n’yan.”

“Bring the friend here.”

“Ciptu.”

“Sit down.”

“Pama n’yan.”

“Wait for your friend.”

The hand that held a death grip on the nape of her neck now eased off and then completely released its grip. “Mowtat, b’yan ye Cha’Dech.”

“Co.” Calla pleaded in a small voice as she rose. “Do not send me away.” She spoke in English for the benefit of those around her. Eyes full of tears and head spinning as though she were riding some horridly evil Tilt-a-whirl, Calla managed to rise to her feet. She stood there staring at the charm around Daniel’s neck and then at his fair skin, lastly she stared down at her white skin. “Please,”

“Nasana.” Kanan snarled loudly as his eyes scanned his property and the man across the room from her. He knew what Calla wanted, and even though he truly had no need of her any longer, Naganti Kanan would not give in to her request. “Coz’henan nin tash tope. Coz-henan!” (Never will I let you go. Never!) “Nin retak ginan Dan-yel!” (You defy me with the way you look at Daniel!) Though the anger still burned bright, Naganti Kanan dropped his voice to a tight whisper. “Cha’Dech ye nin hesta dame. Maen!” (Seize the whore and bring her to my chamber. Now!)

Calla moved quickly as she scrambled to get away from the royal guards who were now descending up here but it was too late “Ka’nok re!” She cried as their hands descended and her skin began to burn. It was only a light burning sensation where they grabbed the cloth that covered her. Where skin met skin, the sensation was one of pure fire.

“Let her go!” Daniel shouted and reached for a side arm he no longer had. What looked like steam was rising from her bare flesh where the men’s hands were grabbing her. Soon the reason she had pleaded with him not to touch her became apparent, that was not steam rising from her skin, it was smoke. The rising stench of burning flesh began to fill the air in the throne room. “Co! Naganti Kanan! Co! Maen!”

“You picked that up quick.” Jack remarked as he held his ground but was ready to strike at the larger man across the room if it became necessary.

“Yeah, well, it’s one of the things you pay me for, remember?” Daniel shot. "Co!" He shouted again.

“Endo! Shyiot bagin, ye nin hesta dame Cha‘Dech!” (Silence or I will kill them.) “Cok’Mon, kogan! Maen!” (White men! Leave! Now!)

“No.” Bucking and kicking for all she was worth, the world spinning over around and through her, Calla repeated the first part of her Master’s words, “do not harm them!” Her skin was burning as though someone had placed her naked body into an open flame. Calla screamed for help and found none. The only saving grace she had was that the burning affected the guards as well and so, they could not hold onto her bare skin for long.

In the throne room, above the sound of screaming was the loud clash the main door being thrown wide open and the alarming cry of; “Gesh’tah! Gesh’tah!” was heard echoing through the stonewalls of the Keep. All heads in the room turned to look toward the top of the stairs and Naganti Kanan. “Gesh’tah! Gesh’tah!” The voice continued to scream as its owner ran through the Keep sounding the alarm. The ground beneath their feet trembled and shook as an explosion went off somewhere in the distance.

The royal guards took their hands from the Cha’Dech; Calla fell to the floor with a small thud. “Kogan! N’kte! Kogan!” She commanded in Daniel’s direction as she brought herself to rise and hurried to make her way up to her Lord and Master, leaving all thoughts of her own escape behind. She was satisfied; Daniel’s way home was open to him.

*Where are our weapons?* Daniel thought in Callas’ direction. He probably would not be able to stop her from leaving this room with the good king and in this moment, he was not inclined to try. They were under fire. They needed weapons. *We can help you.*

Calla turned back to look at Daniel as she slipped her hand inside that of her Master. *Weapon?*

*Guns. Bang-Bang.* Quickly he conjured up an image of his side arm.

Calla cast her eyes and head toward a small door next to Kanan’s throne. *There. Your friend as well. Go. Gesh’tah! Go Daniel! Run!* Another explosion went off in the distance; the ground gave a great heave. Naganti Kanan grabbed Calla by the forearm and led her through a door at the far end of the room. Suddenly there was no one left in Naganti Kanan's Throne Room but the members of SG1 and SG3.

“Down there.” Daniel shouted and pointed toward the door.

“Anyone got any fire at all?” Col O’Neill demanded. Nothing. “Now, let’s go people.” Followed by the rest of the team, O’Neill scrambled to his feet. Running for the door next to the throne, they soon found themselves away from the smoke and chaos and in a darkened stairway. Groping with their hands along the walls the troop made its way down to the dungeon under the castle keep.

“Doesn’t anyone have a flashlight?” Andrews asked as they continued their descent. None replied. They had been stripped of everything which had looked like a weapon.

Soon there was a glimmer of light at the bottom of the stairway; from the look of it, Daniel guessed there was some type of torch burning down there. As they came around the last corner, he saw that he was right. The dungeon of Kanan’s keep was as dark and dank as he had imagined it to be. Four square barred cells lined one wall. Large rings with chains attached hung from the ceiling. Whips in various sizes were hanging along one wall along with several assorted objects which appeared to have only one purpose; to torture the prisoners housed here.

“Holy, Jesus! Am I glad to see you guys!” Blood said excitedly from behind the bars. “Get me out of here.”

“Easy big fella,” O’Neill told him, “we’re working on it. Any idea where the weapons are?”

“In there.” He looked toward a large cabinet in the far corner of the dungeon.

A large ring of keys hung from a nail next to the cabinet, Daniel dashed toward it, opened the cabinet and tossed the ring to Sam who was waiting by the cell door to let Blood out of his cage. “Come and get ‘em boys,” he called as he began tossing the automatic weapons to each member of the team. He found his own sidearm, a Glock 9mm and tucked it into the belt of his khakis.

It was not long before they heard the tumultuous sound of Kanan’s guards hauling ass on their way down the winding staircase. “Any ideas on how to get out of here?” Her eyes turned in the direction of a second stairway but there were noises coming from that direction now. “Shit!” Col. O’Neill took the baseball style cap from his head, shook it and then replaced it. “All right, lock and load, people.” His order was made even more immediate by the crashing sound of metal against metal as everyone, including Daniel, cocked their weapons. They were going to have to make a run for the Stargate.

Another of those explosions went off in the distance; they were coming closer to the castle keep. The impact of the last one caused not just the ground at their feet but the walls around them to shake. Past the jail cell was a small barred window, Colonel O’Neill holding the gun tightly in his hands made his way over to it to see what he could see. The hillside where Lt. Colonel Andrews and his team had spent six weeks was a pile of rubble; large boulders tumbled down what was left of the hill heading toward the hard stonewalls of the keep.

“Do you see a way through?” Sam was asking as she peered over the colonel’s shoulder to get her own gander out the window.

“What if whoever they are, they came through the Stargate like we did?” Private Anderson asked. “What if we can’t get back?”

Those were two questions no one in the room wanted to ponder. Yep, there they were just hanging in the air for everyone to turn over and have a real good look. O’Neill looked back over his shoulder to answer the private and caught sight of Daniel making a dash for the stairs. “Grab him!”

“I’m not leaving here without her, Jack.” Daniel protested as Andrews and Carlisle grabbed his military issued olive drab jacket.

“Yes, you are.” Daniel opened his mouth to speak again and O’Neill pointed the gun at him. “Goddamn it, Daniel! Just shut up! She made her choice, or didn’t you notice? We’re gettin’ outta here.” The ground beneath them gave a huge heave and the walls of the dungeon began to crumble as an explosive round went off in the courtyard. Dirt and silt tumbled down from the ceiling and the walls. Jack raised his hand to wipe it away from his eyes as he coughed a good portion of it from his lungs. “Don’t give me any shit about it.”

“Fine.” Daniel muttered through a clenched jaw as shook the private’s hands from his body. “Any ideas on how to get out of here?”

“That way.” O’Neill pointed the gun toward the stairway they had first come down. One by one, they made their way back up the twisting dark staircase as mortars went off around them. The walls of the old keep heaved and shook, they let out long low cries and deep crashing sounds as portions of it fell to the ground giving way to the strength of the encroaching army.

They emerged through the door to the throne room to see that the large stain glass window, which Daniel had pointed to so often the night before, had been blow completely out of its pane. Bits and pieces of colored glass lay scattered across the heavy chair upon which Kanan had sat his large frame. The ceiling had begun to bow, it would not be long before the whole thing came crashing down upon their heads. Weapons at the ready and feet flying, the team made their way through the room, out into the great hall and through the wide oak doors to the inner courtyard.

Bedlam. Sheer chaos and bedlam. People were running screaming in every direction. Children cried. Smoke rose from the blood soaked ground. The first thing to strike O’Neill’s eye was that no one was armed. Not one of the men here possessed so much as a pocket knife with which to defend himself or his family. Off in the distance, he saw a group of guards running for the open main gate. Whether they would close it or run through it, he did not know. However, he did know those doors were their only way out of here.

Col. O’Neill led his team around screaming women, wounded children and shell-shocked men. They hid behind huts and carts as they scurried toward the still open door. None of the townsfolk noticed them. Not one of them gave a crap. No one tried to stop them, not even the guards who were running in formation toward the door. Mortars were exploding all around, the air filled with smoke and the stench of sulphur. Arrows flew over their heads from above as they made their way through the outer courtyard. The team instinctively aimed their guns upward to see guards on the walls shooting at the Gesh’Tah on the other side. No one was aiming at them. There was no reason to shoot them. They were only defending their territory from a greater invader than themselves. The air around them filled with an odd blue shimmer, which seemed to come from everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Growing, teeming, spreading ever outward from its unseen source it crawled across the landscape from behind them. A warm chill was felt as its energy passed first through and then past the members of SG1 and SG3. Time slowed, if just for an instant, it slowed. People were running to escape the chaos of the falling bombs, running for the safety of the castle’s walls, looked as though they were Steve Austin the Six Million Dollar Man running at his top

speed of 65mph. You know, how they always slowed that part down, way down, because otherwise they reasoned that Steve Austin would be running so fast the human eye might not see him, so you had to make him go very slow to give him the illusion of speed. Yeah, their break neck pace, suddenly broke into a snail's pace.

Everywhere the shimmering blue mist spread to, as the bombs fell upon it, they broke apart in mid-air and fell harmless to the ground below. O'Neill looked up and behind himself once again. The archers were perched on the walls and towers of the castle keep but there was something else up there as well. In the middle of the highest tower stood the point from which the blue mist emanated. Moreover, the person from whom it came. The sun cast the figure only in darkest shadow. Only the point of light, which met at the deepest point of shadow, could be made out clearly.

"Calla." Daniel whispered.

"I'll be damned." O'Neill returned. "She's clearing a path, let's get out of here." Staying within the bounds of the light, SG1 and SG3 made a swift retreat toward the Gate. They followed the line to and through the gates to the town of Oz where it cut itself about at fifty feet. "Can we go through it?"

"I don't know." Looking around at his feet, he found a stick lying in the tall grass. Daniel picked it up and poked at the line where the mist ended. The stick slid through without problem and it returned to him in the same shape in which he had sent it through. "I guess." Raising his eyebrows and giving his glasses a final push on the bridge of his nose; he stepped across the blue line.

"Daniel?" O'Neill demanded.

"Yeah, ok. Come through."

Each made his way through the blue line and scurried for the hillside. Out here, the mortars were real; they exploded loud and deadly in every direction as the Gesh'Tah made their way toward the town of Oz. It was not long before the unseen enemy made its first appearance to human eyes.

A small battalion of Gesh'Tah had been steadily making their way down the hillside, firing off a canon as they went. "What the fuck is that?" O'Neill asked Daniel as the team took cover beneath a thick grove of trees. The creatures that were walking at a slow and steady pace passed them without seeing them. They looked like overgrown lizards who had somehow managed to mate with human beings. Walking on two legs, which looked like the hind legs of monitor lizard, and possessing a scaly trunk which was more human than reptile, face more like a snake than a man, something, which might have passed for hair, mingled with raised scales at the backs of their necks. In their hiding place in the thicket, they watched as alien soldiers stopped every few yards to fire the canon and continue forward.

Beyond them, down the hill, stood the town of Oz encased in a brilliant shimmering blue light. From their perch on the hill, they could make out her shape and even envision the peaceful look on her face as Calla stood atop the tower reigning protection down upon those below her.

“Maybe we shoulda taken her with us after all.” Sam whispered in the Colonel’s ear. “That’s worth the trouble, don’cha think?”

“Hell yeah I do. Too late now.” O’Neill began to rise but quickly sat back down as the Gesh’Tah troop stopped once again. They did not reload their cannon this time; it seemed they had realized their firepower was not of any use now. In their own language, they argued over what they should do about the blue mist that seemed to be shielding the town below them. It was not long before they agreed on the source of the mist and they should take it out. O’Neill watched as one of them drew what could only be a long-range weapon from the pack on his back. The barrel of the weapon was long and sleek, it looked almost like a regular high-powered long-range rifle but this thing did not shoot any ordinary rounds. The alien soldier raised it to his eye and drew Calla into his sites. Instinct taking over his body, Colonel O’Neill drew a bead on the back of the Gesh’Tah with the long ranged weapon and fired.  
Thunk.

The bullet entered his back and exploded through his chest. The Gesh’Tah fell to the ground with a thud.

Laser fire reigned through the thicket of trees in which they hid. A sharp yellow streak of light blew Anderson’s head wide open; his body fell through the protective green cover and into the open.

“Go!” O’Neill shouted as his team as he motioned for them to run toward the rear of the thicket. The Gesh’Tah were making their way toward them, they caught up with them just to seem the last of them run through the rear end of the thicket and into the deep forest. Sam and Daniel took cover behind the nearest large boulder while O’Neill, Carlisle, Blood Teal’c, and Andrews ran toward another thicket. Laser fire hit the far side of the rock blow off larger and larger chunks, it would not be long before the four thousand pound boulder was nothing but a pile of pebbles. Sam rose up on her haunches to have a peek over the top of the rock, she could see legs coming toward them and fired in that direction. She laid down cover fire while they retreated toward the second thicket. Gesh’Tah soldiers emerged from the cover of trees unharmed by Sam’s gunfire. They sniffed the air with their noses and their tongues and headed off toward the trees.

“They’re coming.” Andrews warned from his hiding place behind a large rowan tree.

Four Gesh’Tah came into sight as they pushed tree branches aside. SG1 and SG 3 opened fired, killing all four where they stood. When it was over, O’Neill walked over to inspect his kill.

“They’re gonna know we’re here.”

“I don’t think they missed that, sir.” Blood agreed.

Low on ammunition and not knowing how many enemy his men were about to face, Colonel O’Neill found himself wishing they were still back in Oz; back behind that lovely blue mist. There was no way they could get back through the mist, not now that they were on the outside of it. Going back that way was probably suicide. The direction from which the Gesh’Tah had approached did not escape the colonel’s mind either. They had come from the Stargate. Going in

that direction did not really seem to have an upside. “Any suggestions?”

“We have to keep going for the Stargate.” Andrews stated. “It’s the only way.”

“We could go back down there.” Daniel countered.

“You think we can get back inside?” Sam shook her head. “I think we’ll get killed.”

“Me too.” The colonel agreed.

Knowing he was outnumbered once again, Daniel capitulated. “Let’s keep going to the Stargate.” Unable to believe the words that his ears heard his own mouth speaking, he turned the town again. Calla was still standing on that highest tower, the blue mist still spilled forward from her up stretched hands. *I don’t want to leave you behind.* The thought danced through his mind as he watched her. A ripple appeared in the blue mist, no more than a gentle wave really, but it was there. *I don’t want to leave you behind.* The ripple appeared a second time. Down there, casting her spell so far away from him, Daniel realized that Calla’s mind was still open to him; she could still hear him. *Let us in and I will take you away from here.* There was no reply only the ripple that darkened in color as it made its way toward the blue line. *I swear, Calla, let us in and I will take you away from here.*

This time when the ripple appeared, he heard her voice carried to him on the wave. It was just one single word and Daniel supposed that was all she could manage to send him at the moment.

*Hurry.*

“She will let us in. We have to down there before anymore of...of .....those things come over that rise.”

“How do I know that?” O’Neill demanded.

“She told me.” Daniel admitted. “Just now, she told me.”

“You better be right about this, Danny-boy.” The decision made, O’Neill lead them back down the hill and toward the town of Oz. “Keep an eye out.” He ordered.

The last was a moot point, the trees were moving all around them, the birds flying from their perches to soar high into the sky. Gesh'Tah soldiers were making their way to the team’s position as they tried to run for cover and the safety of Oz. Weapons fire echoed through the hillside as they sprinted toward the town. O’Neill kept one eye on the gates to the town and wondered why they were not closing them? What good were gates if you didn’t use them? Kanan’s men flooded through the open doors to stand ready at the border of the blue line.

A group of Gesh'Tah came out from behind a large boulder and fired their laser weapons at the group. Lt. Col. Andrews raised his weapon to return fire and was hit in the chest; he collapsed dead into a pile of old leaves. Col. O’Neill raised his weapon, squeezed off one round, and laid waste the Gesh'Tah who had taken down his teammate and continued running down the slope.

Major Samantha Carter turned hot on her heels just in time to see the group, before she could squeeze the trigger, one Gesh'Tah fired, blowing a hole big enough to read a newspaper through into Carlisle's chest. Sam raised the weapon, fired the semi-automatic weapon and took out two more members of the alien troop. Three left that she could see. Major Carter raised the gun to fire again and lost her footing on the slippery hillside; she tumbled downward ten feet or more head over heels, keeping a tight hold on the gun as she went. Gunfire hit the ground all around her as she tumbled repeatedly.

"Son of a bitch." Col. O'Neill spat raising his own weapon he returned fire, the side of one Gesh'Tah head ripped open spewing forth a purple substance that he supposed was blood. Another one bit the dust. "Get up! Get up!" He screamed at Carter as he rushed to where she lay.

"My leg!" Major Carter cried out and got her first look of the large stick that now protruded through the calf muscle.

"Come on!" O'Neill did not stop, he just held out his hand as he ran, scooping her back onto her feet. He wrapped one arm around her waist and bore her weight, not there was much of that, as they continued their downward path. "Run you bastards!" He shouted after Daniel, Teal'c and Corporal Blood.

"O'Neill! Get down!" Teal'c shouted as he turned to look back at his commanding officer. Almost as though that strange slow motion thing was kicking in again, Teal'c watched as Jack hit the dirt with Sam in his arms. O'Neill's tight cut graying hair flew upward as he wrapped her in his arms and threw their weight forward. Sam's red lips parted in surprised, her blue eyes grew wide. Teal'c shouldered the weapon he carried and fired past their heads as they continued toward the ground. The Gesh'Tah with the raised weapon who was running right behind them stopped as the bullet affected with his chest. Surprise on his face he slowly sank to his lizard-like knees, grabbing his chest as he went.

One Gesh'Tah left.

Teal'c's sensitive ears picked up the sound of voices. More soldiers were making their way through the forest in their direction. On swift legs he ran to where O'Neill and Carter lay with their faces in the dirt, he put one around Carter and the two men brought her down the hill.

Running as fast as he could, his heart pumping like a run away freight train inside his chest, Daniel came to a complete stop with the town of Oz less than five hundred yards away. Gesh'Tah soldiers had already made their way this far, they were running for the shield and bouncing off it like super balls. They fell to the ground dead, their faces melted beyond recognition.

*Hurry.*

"What the hell are you waiting for?" Col. O'Neill shouted as the three of them made their way past Daniel. The high whizzing sound of an incoming mortar shell filled the air around them. Daniel did not need any further encouragement to follow the troop down the hill. Even with the image of melted faces in his mind, Daniel walked straight through the blue line when they reached Oz with

no hesitation.

O'Neill handed Carter off to Teal'c as they approached the blue line; he swung around to take one last unguarded look back at the aliens who were attacking this world and counted somewhere around thirty of them now running at full charge toward the town. The colonel raised his weapon, fired on fully automatic and took out five more before he threw himself through the line. Standing on the safety of the other side, he took the gun down from his shoulder and watched as their laser fire bounced from the blue shield to disperse harmlessly in the air. With his military eye, he watched and he waited to see if more of them would emerge from the trees but they did not. This was not a full on assault but a scout party of sorts.

Arrows and small weapons fire was shot through the shield all around him. Looking quickly left and then right, he saw the ladder that lead to the top of the main front wall and the guards standing on it. O'Neill dashed for the ladder, followed quickly by Teal'c and Blood. The three men stood atop the wall and fired at the raiding aliens until all laid dead in their tracks.

"There. That ought to do it." Col. O'Neill proclaimed as he ceased firing and took a good look around. The trees did not move. No other lizard-creature came forward. "Take that!" He raised a clenched fist into the air.

"Jack." O'Neill turned in the direction of Daniel's voice, which was coming from the ground below him. Jack saw Daniel holding Sam on the ground, the large stick protruding rudely through her white skin. "She's losing a lot of blood." It was true; the ground around her leg was beginning to pool with the red liquid.

The blue shield, which Calla had provided as protection during the battle, now began to fold in upon itself. "Bring her to me." She called from atop the tower as she drew her hands into her body, the last of the blue light fading, retreating inside of her body.

Sam was now unconscious and the men had to carry her back across the courtyard and through the doors into the great hall where they laid her upon the huge oak table and waited for Calla to return to them. To Colonel O'Neill that time to seemed to encompass all eternity as he sat by Sam's side, running his hand through her hair. "It's gonna be ok," he murmured to her, "it's gonna be ok."

An exhausted looking Calla dashed and then stumbled into the Great Hall unaccompanied by Kanan's royal guards and the Master himself was nowhere in sight for the moment. Not taking any notice of Daniel who rose when she came into the room, she walked to the table and stood over the wounded woman assessing her condition.

"Can you help her?" O'Neill asked as he cleared his throat. Callas' eyes cast in his direction for an instant but she did not speak to him.

Instead, Calla began to rub her hands together in a slow motion and soon an amber glow appeared between her hands. Tentatively she reached out, took firm grasp of the stick protruding from the woman's leg and pulled it backwards out of the wound. Blood splattered over Callas' face and dress, she did not blink nor raise a hand to shield her face from it. Hands still hesitant, she reached out once more, her hands glowing with amber light, she laid them upon the gaping wound. To

touch the skin of the white woman.

Healing energy the color of the rising sun coursed from Callas' hands and into Major Carter's body. The gaping wound began to close and the blood vessels below to repair themselves. Within a few moments, Calla removed her hands to reveal the smooth white skin of the soldier woman's calf. No trace of a scar remained.

Soon after Major Carter's sapphire eyes fluttered opened.

"I told ya it would be ok." O'Neill smirked as he tussled the top of her head. "Thank you." He said as he looked up at Calla.

Calla smiled down at the place where O'Neill sat holding onto Sam's hand. "Daniel, go now."

Caught by surprise, he uttered one word, "No." To Daniel's it seemed that she had not even noticed his presence in the room. "I told you I would take you with me, I will."

Raised voices were calling, crying, shouting for her to come to them. J'Quin burst through the door, his uniform soaked with blood. "Byan, Cha'Dech! Naganti Kanan seque."

"What?" Daniel asked as he reached out for Calla and watched as she stepped away from his touch. "What is it?"

"Master Kanan is badly injured." She informed him in a hurried tone as tried to push past him. "I have to help him."

"Let him die." The words and strength of his tone surprised even his own ears. Daniel reached out and grabbed the sleeve of her dress.

"No." She whispered with horror and shock. "I need him."

"For what?" Daniel let go of her as he raised his hands high in the air, his gaze caught sight of her as she flinched away from him. "To hit you? Is that what you need him to do? Let him die."

"No," she said in a stronger voice this time and left Daniel's side to go off with J'Quin to Kanan's chamber.

## Chapter Seven

Upon entering the room, she saw the frame of her Master large and strong stretched out upon his bed. The sheet that covered his chest was soaked with blood. With a careful hand, she pulled it away from his body to reveal a laser strike just below his heart. Daniel's words rolled around and around in her head. She should let him die. She would let him die, if she could. Kanan's eyes tumbled open and fell upon her distant stare. Standing there, over him, looking down upon him (for once) wounded and frail, his breathing shallow, she watched as blood spewed forth from his mouth as he coughed. With a strength she did not know she possessed until that very moment, she stared down at into the face of her Master and said, "Naganti Kanan, hanna nin yeswe et se yowhen." (Master Kanan, let me go and I will heal you.)

"Co," The pained look on his face turned into a knowing snarl. "Nin aswanz, gin aswanz." (I die you die.)

"Hei. Set un yese ginan aswanz, coh'dan." (Yes. Then we will die as we have lived, together.) Her voice was strong and her eyes did not betray her. In this moment, Calla was willing to end it all right here and now if he did not let her go.

"Cha'Dech!" He hissed at her and coughed once more spraying forth bright red spittle that splattered upon his sheets.

"Nin, insete Naganti Kanan, wunan et grede. Nin hannah." (I have served you long and well. Let me go.) Calla whispered to her dying Master.

Kanan reached for her hand and then looked past her to the white men standing in the doorway to his chamber. "Co. Ney se, nin waytak ginan." (No, you are bonded to me.) "Wotok gin, Cha'Dech? Wotok waytak?" (Who will care for you, whore? Who will you bond to?) "Cok'Mon." (A white man?) "Dan-yell?" His voice turned dark and knowing as his dark eyes locked to Daniel's light ones. "Co wotok gin, Dan-yell et Cha'Dech." (No, Daniel will not bond himself to a mere whore. He will not care for you.)

"Naganti Kanan wotok re maen." (Master Kanan does not care for me now.) Her eyes teased him as she rubbed her hands together before his eyes creating strands of amber energy between her fingertips. "Naganti Kanan, hanna nin yeswe et se yowhen."

"What are they saying?" Colonel O'Neill whispered to Daniel as they stood in the door.

"Well, I'm not sure but I think she's telling him that if he lets her go, she'll save his life. He's not too hot on that idea."

Pain ripped through the large man's chest, he could feel his very life essence slipping away from him. It was unbelievable to him that she would betray him at this time when he needed her most of all. She would pick now to barter for her life. It was true; Calla had reached the end of her rope.

She would rather let Naganti Kanan die and then buried with him rather than to go on living in his castles keep. “Gak Cok’Mon, Cha’Dech. Cok’Mon, wotok Wyatt, Cha’Dech?”

Calla did not turn to look at the men behind her. “Co. Naganti Kanan Cok’Mon gak. Gak.” (No. Master Kanan speak the white man’s words. Speak.) “Naganti Kanan homa trey. ) (Master Kanan is running out of time.)

Now it was Kanan’s turn to have his head spinning out of control while he lay with his life’s blood draining from his frame. “White men,” his throat struggled with the words, “is there one of you will bond the whore to himself?”

*I need him.* Callas’ words echoed through Daniel’s head and now he thought, to some extent he understood what she meant. Rough and crude as he was, Daniel could see that Naganti Kanan’s touch did not burn Callas’ skin as the others did. For a reason he did not know yet but would find out later, Daniel knew that Kanan would not let her leave this place without unless she was bonded to another man. “I will.” Daniel said in a strong voice as he took a step forward. “I will take her.” With her back to Daniel, Calla smiled down into the dying face of her Master. “Hasho.” (I told you) She whispered defiant triumph. “Gak.” She insisted.

“Big resability. You take, Dan-yell?”

Resability? What was that? Daniel thought for a moment. “Responsibility?” He asked. “It is a big responsibility?”

“Hei.” Kanan agreed. “You take?”

“Yes.”

“You under-st-an-d?” Kanan coughed once more, the hole in his chest opened wide to reveal his internal organs. “You take, free.....fr....free-ly? You rit-uu-all?” No, he did not understand at all but that was all right for now. “Yes, I understand.” There was something more he was supposed to say, he could feel it rolling around in his head and poking him in the gut. Suddenly it came to him. “I will claim Calla,” Daniel emphasized the use of her name rather than her title of Cha’Dech, “as my own. I will undergo the ritual.”

“Naganti Kanan, hanna nin yeswe et se yowhen. Cok’Mon, Daniel waytok.” (Let me go and I will heal you. The white man, Daniel, will bond with me.)

Wanting to live with or without her and knowing he was beat, Kanan gave in. “Hei.” Kanan nodded his head. “Hei, Calla.”

“Ginan kogan? Kume.” (You will let us go. Promise this.)

“Kume. Yowhen nin, et se waytok arit, Dan-yell.” (I promise. Heal me and I will allow the ritual to bond you to Daniel.)

“Hei.” Calla repeated to Kanan.

“Hei, Calla.” His failing eyes cast away from her and toward J’Quin who stood at the foot of his bed. “B‘yan et se mordish.” (Send for the priests.)

At his words, freedom was finally within her grasp. Calla rubbed the palms of her hands together until that amber energy built up between them and then she laid them upon his chest. Amber light surged from her and into her dying Master, within seconds the wound, which had threatened to take his life, vanished with no sign that it had ever been there at all. Exhausted, Calla collapsed to the floor upon which she slept. Guards rushed to her side but were cast away by the female attendants in the room. The women quickly set to their work and it was obvious to the members of SG1 and Corporal Blood, the lone member of SG 3, that this was something at which they were very adept. Two women stripped the bloody sheet from Kanan’s body while two others stripped the clothes from the woman on the floor. This latter was done with no ceremony and without regard for the men in the room. It was then that Callas’ wounds were revealed. There was a gaping gash upon her leg, just where Sam’s had been not twenty minutes before and a larger hole between her breasts. With deft arms, the women scooped her up before Daniel could ask what was happening to her. They hesitated for a moment as they looked down upon the bed where their Master lay, his eyes rolled towards them and he gave a slight nod. Calla was laid next to him, skin to skin, Kanan not without great effort, swept one large around her to cradle her body to his own. Before his eyes could close again, Kanan turned to look at the man who would replace him as Callas’ Master. “Big re-spon-sa-bil-it-ty.”

Daniel and the rest of the team were ushered out of the room as the women covered the two naked people on the bed with a clean heavy blanket.

“What the hell are you doing?” Jack spat as they walked down the hall back to the chambers they had slept in the night before. He did not wait for Daniel to answer him. “I’ll tell you what you’re doing, you’re thinking with your dick, that’s what you’re doing.”

“So what if I am?” Daniel shot back. “It’s not like *I* have anyone back home. No wife, no girlfriend, not even a dog....”

“She’s not a fucking pet, Daniel!” Jack interjected angrily. “She gonna stay in your quarters?” Jack clasped his hands together and smiled like a girl while he batted his eyes. “How cozy.” Colonel O’Neill snapped his fingers in front of Daniel’s eyes. “C’mon, damn it! Use that lovely brain of yours and think!”

“I promised her that I would take her away from here if she helped us. She doesn’t belong here.” Daniel stressed. “I’m just living up to my word, Jack. So what if I take her away from here?”

“I dunno, Daniel. Don’t get me wrong, she’s beautiful and all but I guess you just never struck me as the type of man who really wanted his own concubine.” His tone, like his eyes, accused his friend of hiding something deeper. For a moment, Colonel O’Neill thought about ending this whole fiasco right here and now by telling Daniel that he would not allow the Cha’Dech to return through the Stargate with them.

“That’s not what I want from her. “ Not exactly the truth but close enough, Daniel imaged as he stood in the hall arguing with Jack.

“Oh, please! “

“She’s more than that.”

“Yeah, I saw.”

“Are you telling me that she won’t be of any ‘military value’ back home? That the boys in the lab wouldn’t love to get a gander at what she can do?” He thumbed his finger back in the direction that they come from.

“What?!” Jack removed his cap and shook it at Daniel unable to believe what he had just heard. For a moment, Colonel O’Neill thought about ending this whole fiasco right here and now by telling Daniel that he would not allow the Cha’Dech to return through the Stargate with them. There was something in Daniel’s eyes, to Jack it looked like desperation. “Is that what you want for her? For O’Gara and his boys to get their hands on her?”

“I’m telling you....”

“And I’m tellin’ you, you don’t know what you’re getting into!” Jack shot in an exasperated tone. “You don’t even know what this ritual of theirs is!”

“Stop it! Both of you!” Major Carter said from behind them. “I can’t believe you two! Two high school football stars fighting over the head cheerleader. It’s ridiculous!” She shook her blond head while her blue eyes admonished both of them. “The testosterone level in here is really just too much.” Sam left the two men where they were standing in the corridor and made her way back to the room she had slept in the night before.

“Hei, Dan-yo?” One of the guards called to him and Daniel looked up to see the man standing at the end of the hall waiting for him. “Maen.”

“You speak English?” Daniel asked as he remembered the surprisingly understandable words that had come from Kanan’s mouth. The puzzled look on the guards face was not encouraging. “Nin gak Cok’Mon?” He asked.

“Co.” The guard returned. “Naganti Kanan gak Cok’Mon yetehew.” He held his fingers about a half inch apart.

Daniel understood him to say that he did not speak English and Kanan only spoke a few words of it. It was probably just enough to ask the questions he had posed and possibly enough to take part in whatever ritual was to come. “Naganti Kanan,” Daniel stopped as he groped for the word for ‘give’ and could not find it. He held up a finger at the guard. “Give me your hat.” He said to the Colonel. “Make a big to-do out of it.” Jack took the hat from his head and held it out to Daniel, “Naganti Kanan give” Daniel took the hat and held it close to himself, “give,” he repeated, “Calla,”

he pointed to himself, “ et Daniel?”

“Hei.”

“Why?” Daniel shrugged his shoulders and looked around the corridor. To this, the guard only sneered as though the white man had lost his mind.

“O-Nell, maen.” The guard ignored the question and instead pointed to a door on the other side of the corridor.

“He wants you to go in there.”

“Dan-yo, b’yan nin.”

“He wants me to go with him.”

“Why?”

“To get ready for the ritual. Go on, I’ll be fine. I’m sure it’s not big deal.”

Colonel O’Neill crossed the hall and entered the room that he had shared with Daniel and Teal’c the night before. “Be careful, huh? You don’t know what you’ve gotten us into.”

“Right.” Daniel agreed as the door between them closed. He followed the guard to the third floor of the castle keep and to a small room where a fire was burning brightly in the hearth.

“Dan-yo,” the guard said in a strong voice and then pointed to the floor and the rest of the room. He tossed his head toward the still open door, then shook it back and forth, and pointed to the floor once again. *Stay here.*

“OK, I’m not going anywhere.” Daniel was alone in the small room where the fire burned. Two of the walls around him were lined with floor to ceiling bookcases, the contents of which was stacked neatly in rows on the shelves and then had more books squeezed on top of them. A small canopy bed rested against the near wall to his left, on it was an old rag doll. Tapestries that appeared ancient hung on the walls; they were fraying and badly in need of cleaning but their colors were still bright. Images of fighting men graced all of them. As he looked at them, closer Daniel thought he recognized one of the scenes depicted upon on of them.

A tall light-skinned man with dark curly hair rode in a chariot pulled by two horses, one pure white and the other pure black. Daniel knew the names of those horses, Flame and Terror. His long hair flew behind him as the horses raced toward the scene of a battle, his jewel encrusted sword drawn and ready. The smile on his face was unmistakable as was the gleam that had been sewn into his eyes; clearly, this was a God who was handsome as he was cruel. “Ares.” Daniel whispered and reached out to touch the cloth. It was cold under his hand. Somewhere, he was unsure if it was around or somewhere inside of him, Daniel heard the sound of laughter.

He turned his attention to the small bed in the room, no bigger than a trundle mattress, the canopy

that hung above it had once been a shade of pink but it was heavy with dust now making it look more like some odd mauve hue. Two pillows covered with the same fabric as the canopy and lined with soft lace lay at the head of the bed and upon them sat the old rag doll. There was a small vanity in the room. A good-sized mirror in an ornate silver frame hung above the marble top on which sat a matching comb and brush made of silver. Daniel picked up the brush and realized it was too small for his hand; it had been made for a young girl to use. Feeling as though he were holding something he should not be holding in a place he should not be standing, Daniel put the brush back on the vanity and crossed to the room's only window. The view faced north and he looked over the rear wall of Kanan's keep. Off in the distance was a muddy river slowly making its way toward whatever sea there was on this planet and below him, just outside the walls, stood a perfect ring of five rowan trees.

A light knock fell upon the door and before he could answer it, it opened and an older woman stepped inside. In her arms was a heavy cream-colored robe, a wreath of greens that looked and smelled like bay leaf, and a large wooden staff. She laid the items upon the small table and then crossed the room to where he stood. Dark hands held a small book out to him. "Read." She said.

"Nin gak Cok'Mon?" Daniel asked.

"Hei, a little. Calla taught me long ago but now it is forbidden. I am Able." Daniel took the small book from her hands and opened it. The contents of which were written in the language of this world.

"I don't understand it."

"You must." She insisted. "You must say the words tonight." She stopped for a moment and then continued. "In your speak. When the light fades from the sky, they will come for you. You must be ready. You must not fail her." She warned.

"Or what?"

"Or she will die." The woman spoke as though it was the most natural conclusion in the universe. "She must be bonded to her Master. Kanan will not take her back if you fail. You must say the words. You must go through with the ritual, even if it is difficult for you."

"I can't read it." Daniel repeated. Now the heaviness of his decision began to rest on his heart. It was clear that he had not understood the responsibility he was being asked to take upon himself and already it was too late to back out.

She looked him up and down and thought of what she should say next. The words Calla had taught her so long ago danced around in her head and made their way to her tongue. "Read the words. When the time comes, speak with your heart." Without further words, she took her leave of him.

## Chapter Eight

When night fell and the guards once again appeared at his door, Daniel was dressed in the robe they had left for him, the wreath was sitting atop his short cut brown hair and he held the staff tightly in his hand. Even though he had spent the last six hours studying the text in the small book, Daniel was unsure if he was ready. Unsure if he would succeed or fail.

One large bon fire burned high into the descending night sky as the procession made its way toward the middle of the courtyard. The platform which had been there the day before was no longer, in its place stood a crude stone altar. Wooden risers much like those used for choirs, being long and having three separate levels to it, ran in an arc behind the altar. Several men, all donned in long robes like the one Daniel wore, stood on the platform and watched the proceedings going on below them. The town had turned out once again; all were sitting cross-legged on the grass in front of the altar, the men in front and the women in the rear. Slowly Daniel walked in the middle of the procession toward where Kanan stood tall and strong, showing no signs of his previous injury at all. Daniel wished that he were here at the start of this ritual but clearly, he had been called upon only when it was actually time for him to make his appearance. He was not to be a spectator at this event. As they made their way from the great doors toward the ritual area, Daniel looked around to see SG1 and the last member of SG3 standing in front of the men of the town but still in the gathering below. When the townspeople turned around to watch him walk down what could only be described as an aisle, Jack and the team turned as well. Jack raised a hand in the air in Daniel's direction, Sam smiled at him and Teal'c nodded. In their own quiet way, Daniel supposed they were lending their version of moral support to him at this time.

Standing before in front of the altar the procession stopped and Daniel stood still.

"Why do you come here this night?" Intoned a man who not only looked the part of High Priest in his long flowing robes and dark salt-n-pepper hair, but actually was. The High Priest's name was Marteen; he was a long time friend and confidante of Naganti Kanan. It had been Marteen who had bound Calla to Kanan so many years ago.

A group of women who were dressed in similar cream-colored robes brought Calla, clad in a dark green robe, forth from the side of the altar. They walked her up to him and in turn, he took her in arms and held her forward for Marteen's inspection. "To have this woman removed from my side." Kanan answered.

*Can you hear me?* Daniel asked inside his mind. There was no answer. Calla only stood there looking tired and dazed. Her green eyes were wide as they stared off into space but there was no sparkle to them. *Calla?* There was nothing, she did not even blink.

"Do you forget your vow?" The High Priest asked.

"No. There is one who will take her." Kanan laid his Cha'Dech on the cold stone altar.

"Hei," the High Priest agreed and picked up an object that had been resting by the top of her head.

It was small and shiny, there was some type of crystal in the middle of it. Placing it first on the left and then on the right side of her neck it began to emit a low sucking sound as it glowed first white and then red in the priests' hand. As he worked, Daniel was ushered up to a place behind the altar. Two of the lesser priests stepped from their place on the risers; Daniel's eye followed them as they crossed to a smaller altar decorated with less than colorful flowers and candles. On it were three large syringes.

The High Priest put down the tool he had been working with and took a large knife from the stone altar. Holding it out in front of himself, he cut the shape of a pentacle into the air above her. Completing the circle around the star hanging in the air, the priest brought his arms down harshly. At first, Daniel thought he meant to stab Calla with it; he moved as if to stop him but stopped short as the knife fell from the man's hand and implanted itself, hilt up, into the ground at his feet. Powdered incense was lit by one of the priests, he held the censer over Calla, allowing it to swing back and forth on the chain as he made his way from her head to her toes, as he worked he chanted; "Eh-Ei-He. Agla." The scent of rosemary and sage came to him as he concentrated on the sounds the priest was chanting. Again and again, the man chanted as the smoke rose all around him, until Daniel felt he would lose his mind if he had to hear the words repeated one more time. "Eh-Ei-He. Agla." Repeatedly until his tone reached a fevered pitch.

"Dark is the night as we gather here. Now is the time of death and of rebirth." He intoned in a commanding voice as he stood over her frail body.

"Every beginning has an end, every end a beginning." Another priest returned.

"Ebb and flow, this part of her journey has ended." Came the echo of yet another robed man.

"Behold now, the death of one." Marteen said solemnly as Kanan put an arm under Callas' neck and brought her to a half upright position while one of the women came forward with a golden chalice. Kanan raised the cup was held to her lips and forced her to drink from it. The contents of the cup emptied down her gullet, Calla was laid back upon the cold unforgiving stone of the altar. "Who will breathe new life into this body?"

Hearing his cue, Daniel rose to his feet. "I am Daniel. I will take her from him."

Trying to remember the text he read he stood silent by her side and watched as her eyelids fluttered closed, for one long moment, Daniel thought they really had killed her. She lay there still and silent, all color drained from her body. Her chest rose slow and steady.

The priest with the censer stepped to him and encased him in the sweet smelling smoke. It rose from the soles of his feet up to the top of his head as the priest worked and chanted softly, words that Daniel did not understand. When the priest finished smudging him, Daniel took the brass censer from his hand and turned to look down at her. Fearful that whatever had been in the cup would end her life if he did not stand up for her now, he hurried with the words he was to say. Removing the simple robe he wore, Daniel now stood naked before the crowd and the members of his team below him. The only saving grace he had the moment was the fact that the altar was roughly the same height as his hips and it hid his manhood from view of the spectators. The priests

raised Daniel left hand over his head and jabbed the needles under his armpits. The pain was almost intolerable but Daniel stood strong as they removed fluid from his body, it was little by comparison to the one that came next. The second syringe pierced his skin just above his right kidney. Daniel drew in a deep breath as the sharp object penetrated deep inside of him, he watched as the priest filled the syringe half way, drew it from his body a small distance and then filled it the rest of the way.

When they finished with their work, the priests placed the shining sharp instruments back upon the smaller altar and a woman stepped forward. This was a surprise to Daniel; it was obvious the women of this planet were subservient to the men here. Why was this one allowed to have an active part in the ritual, especially when Calla herself so obviously was not? His eyes followed her as she took the last and largest syringe from the altar and crossed to where he stood. The priest who had censed Calla earlier and another came forward to grasp Daniel by both hands. Holding him in a very firm grasp, they brought him down to his knees in front of her and pinned the palms of his hands to the stone altar floor. Soon the sting of the needle plunged into the back of his neck at the base of his spinal column. Daniel's first instinct was to pull up and away from the sharp sting intruding into the nape of his neck, the hands of the priest clamped down roughly and held him in place. The needle pierced his skin, she turned it in an upward slant, and he could feel her actually turning it around inside of him, searching for the place where the last (well almost the last) of his bodily fluids were to be drawn from him. Strong muscles in his neck tightened, as did the hold of the holy men, now each not only held his hands in place, but also kept a firm grip on the top of his head and the nape of his neck just below the needles' entry point. The woman probed and searched with the sharp object until finally, there was a popping sound inside his head and a small extra push of pressure felt as the needle punctured something within him and the fluid from inside extracted. It seemed to take forever before she finally withdrew the sharp object and the priests released him from their grasp. Shaking off the sting of the latest intrusion, Daniel rose once again to stand by Callas' side.

“What token do you bring with which to bind her?” Marteen, the High Priest asked of him.

Before he could even begin, Daniel felt there was the possibility that he had already failed. He had nothing to give to her. His mind working hard on the question he looked down at her to see she wore nothing except a necklace made of three glimmering jewels which hung on a gold chain. Without thinking about it, his hand reached out and snatched the chain from her neck; he flung it at Kanan who caught it mid-air. Daniel took the silver chain, the one with the symbol of Ares upon it, and clasped it on her neck. “I give her the symbol of my birth.”

“Hei.” Marteen agreed and then took two steps away from the altar, with an open hand he motioned for Daniel to begin.

Standing facing the east and the crowd gathered below him, Daniel began to speak. “I am Daniel. I am your Lord.” The pendulum swung back and forth over her inside of his hand. “I am your life. Always will I provide the fire you sleep by. Mine is the only hand.” As he replaced the censuring vessel back upon the altar, he meant to continue with the words he had read, however Daniel found that he could not say everything they wanted him to and certainly not in the way they wanted. With her life in his hands, Daniel decided to take the woman's advice and speak with his heart. “I will

never raise it against you.” He whispered close to her head. The swift movement of Kanan rising to his feet did not escape Daniel’s attention, he rose just as swiftly to meet the challenge. “Mine,” he said to the tall dark man, “My Cha’Dech. “ Daniel hit his fingertips against his chest. “My rules. My way.”

Kanan sneered but returned to his seat. She was the white man’s problem now; let him deal with her in a way that he saw fit. He would learn, in time, the white man would learn.

The High Priest took the first syringe from the small altar and laid it in Daniel’s palm. The priest placed his hand on the side of her head and turned it to the left, revealing a small tattoo upon her neck, the mark of Ares. He nodded slightly at Daniel who placed the tip of the syringe in the middle of Ares’ mark, he pierced her skin and injected the fluid into her. With the syringe emptied into her, he reached out a tentative hand and caressed the mark that Kanan had left upon her cheek. “I will never raise it to you, I swear.”

Handing the silver syringe back to the priest, Daniel walked one quarter the way around the altar to stand at her head and face north. “I am Daniel. I am your Master.” He reached for a crystal bowl that lay upon the altar; it was filled with what he knew to be salt water. Dipping his fingertips into the liquid, he sprinkled it upon her “I am your heart. Always will I provide the food you eat. Mine is the only voice.” He brought her hands together over her flat stomach and laid the flower within them. “Keep in mind I’m not always right.” He smiled down at her as she lay on the altar below him. The priest turned her head to the right revealing the mark of Aphrodite. Once again, he pierced her skin with the sharp needle and injected his own fluids into her body. Bending close down near her head, “I’m not always right, you don’t have to do what I say.”

Daniel made his way one last quarter around the altar to face west and stand with his back to the crowd. No saving grace this time, his tight ass was hanging loose in the night breeze for all to see. Before he spoke he laid the staff in her hands. So far he had been able to interject his own will into the ritual and no one had seemed to care. Daniel ventured to take that one step further and renounce his claim to her soul. “I claim this woman, her heart, her body and her mind.” He ran a hand across her forehead. “I leave her spirit untouched. Her soul belongs to her.”

“Bind her.” Marteen hissed in a low tone.

“I won’t take her soul.”

“Bind her!” He repeated with a raised fist.

“Nin kassa!” Kanan hissed from his place on the side of the altar and spat upon the ground at his feet. “You are weak.”

“Co. Co kassa!” Daniel hissed back. “I am strong.”

“Then bind her.” Kanan dared. “You cannot leave her like that.”

“You speak English pretty damn well, Naganti Kanan.” Daniel remarked. “Too well.” This was true, so why had he used her to communicate with them? Why, if she was not to speak to any man other than her Master, had he allowed her to talk to them? Why had he not kept her locked up as seemed to be his custom where she was concerned, why allow her to see the white men at all? Had he tired of her? Did he want to let her go? Was this a way for Kanan to do just that and still save face for both he and Calla?

“Hei, I remember the words.” Kanan agreed. “You cannot do this to her. It is,” he paused for a moment as he reached for the right word, “cruel.”

“Bind her.” The High Priest demanded.

Not wanting to but knowing that he had to; Daniel took the staff from her and repeated the words he had read in the book earlier that day. “I am Daniel. I am your Sovereign. My will is your will. Always will I provide shelter for you. Your spirit belongs to me,” Daniel touched the center of her chest with the tip of the staff, Calla’s body jumped a little as she lay on the altar, an aura of white light emitted itself from her deep within her skin and was sucked into the staff Daniel held making it glow from tip to tip. The light settled deep into the wood, Calla’s body lay still once more.

Daniel’s eyes met first with the High Priest next to him and then with Kanan’s both men appeared to be more pleased than they had been a moment ago. Taking the crown of bay leaves from his head and placing it upon her own, Daniel uttered the words he did not want to; “your will belongs to me.” This time he was not handed a needle with which to inject her. Daniel supposed that ones will or soul was not something that could be contained in bodily fluids or a syringe. Only his words and the staff bound her essence to him. They were enough.

Daniel made the last turn to face south to stand at her feet. This was where things were going to get sticky. Repeatedly he had read the next passage attempting to make any sense out of it at all and could not. He looked at the third needle that now lay in the hands of the woman who had plunged it into his neck, she was holding it out to him. “I am Daniel. I *am* Lord. I *am* Master. The Lady Wakes only unto me.” His voice grew stronger with each word that he spoke. “I *am* Sa’Tan. I give you all that you need. Mine is the only hand. Mine is the only voice. I will defend you with my life. I am Daniel, I *am* Sa’Tan.” Stronger this time.

Between her breasts, under the flower he had laid in her hand was the mark of Zeus.

*God forgive me.*

Daniel brought the needle down, harsh and swift to penetrate the breastplate deep inside of her “I am Daniel and mine is the only hand.” He repeated softly. “Mine is the only voice.” Daniel put his arms beneath her and brought her lifeless body to a half sitting position. He took the silver chalice from the altar and raised it to her lips. “Drink, “he urged in a soft tone, “c’mon, Calla, drink. “ The warm red liquid spilled down her chin, Daniel tilted her head back so that it would slide down her throat. Working on its own, up and down, her slender gullet took the liquid into her body. Calla’s eyes fluttered open but still there was no sparkle. When it was empty, he replaced the cup upon the altar and laid her down once more. “I am Daniel, I *am* Sa’Tan, the Lady Wakes Only Unto Me. I claim this woman for my own.”

The sides of the dark woman’s mouth turned upward in a very slight smile. It was not over yet;

there was one small thing left to do.

“Claim her, Daniel. Make your words true.” Marteen invited.

*Calla can you hear me? Calla please give me a sign. Anything.*

In return to his plea there was nothing from her. Callas’ eyes stared openly into space, Daniel could not even be sure that she was even seeing him as he lingered over her. Staring down into her eyes, Daniel thought that like her body, her mind, indeed her entire life was now open for him to pursue. All that she was, was dancing right in front of him. Images came flooding in to his head in rapid procession and they did not stop long enough for him to make sense of them. They were nothing more than snapshots really, the kind you might glue to the pages of a book, and someone was flipping the pages swiftly past his eyes. If they would just slow down he was sure he could make some sense out of it. They did not slow. The images of several people repeated as the pages flipped quickly by, a small girl, a tall dark haired man, a woman with long honey- blonde hair. From her there seemed to be an aura of warmth about these images, if he had to guess he would say that she liked looking at them. The girl grew before his eyes, with each swiftly passing page she grew from a small girl into a teenager. The feeling of warmth dissipated, the air in his lungs turned cold. The pages went even faster. Nothing more than a blur now, nothing that he could see at all, except the intermingled colors as they passed by.

Something very odd happened as he hung over her limp body, looking over the pages of her life and hesitant to take the next step. There was music in his head.

*It’s a marvelous night for a moon dance.* The words echoed softly inside his mind.

Questioning her only with his eyes, Daniel returned: *With the stars up above in your eyes.*

*A...fan-tab-ulous night to make romance.* The reply was distant but it was there. It was her.

Softly, he sang the words inside his own mind. *’Neath the cover of October skies.* Indeed the night was all of those things. The moon above was a full auburn globe hanging high in the dark night sky. Stars of every dimension glimmered as far as the eye could see in every direction. The air inside his lungs was cool, crisp and clean. Daniel climbed up onto the altar and swung one well-muscled leg over her splayed body. *Can you hear me?*

Nothing.

*Please answer me.*

Still nothing.

The music in his mind stopped playing. Whoever had been flipping the pages in the photo album also ceased their task. The uncertain connection he had felt with her began to slip away. *Stay with me. Calla, stay.* Breathing in deep of the cool around him, Daniel bent his upper body and took her in his arms. *You know the night’s magic seems to whisper and hush.* His lips descended on hers, the tongue that she wanted to taste the night before, now freely slid inside her mouth. *Stay.* That strange feeling of being Connected to her returned to him, the music played freely once again.

Behind his eyes, the snapshots resumed their hurried pace to the end of the book. *The soft moonlight seems to shine in your blush.* Slowly, so slow that at first he thought he was imaging it; her lips began to move under his. *Stay. Stay with me.* At his pleading, her lips became more insistent.

“Dark was the night as we gathered here. Witness now the rising of a new dawn.” Marteen, the High Priest, intoned.

“Every ending has a beginning, every beginning an end.” Another priest returned.

“Ebb and flow, this part of her journey has ended.” Came the echo of yet another robed man.

Marteen nodded with his eyes at Daniel. “Behold now, the birth of another.”

No longer taking note of the people around him or his place in this rite, he pulled her close and surrendered to the night. With his task still undone but becoming ever more enjoyable, Daniel entered her. There was one type of fluid left to give her before the ritual was complete.

“Whoa.” Jack cracked from the crowd in a low voice. “That’s my boy.” His tone was playful and not lacking in pride.

Sam held the laughter inside but her eyes sparkled at her commanding officer as she raised her eyebrows and nodded.

“Ok, we should probably all like look at the ground or something. Let Daniel do his thing with a little dignity, huh, people?” His voice had not lost that playful tone. Colonel O’Neill watched as the members of his team dropped their eyes from the sight of their friend, the Archeologist and all around Good-Guy Dr. Jackson, who was presently putting it to the pretty little red-haired woman lying almost unconscious beneath him. Their attempt at humility did not last long. O’Neill raised one eye to behold the sight going on in front of him, and noticed that while Major Carter’s head was bowed her eyes were raised. They caught sight of each other and passed a look between them that said *Well, what are ya gonna do?* Sam bit her lip and raised her eyebrow at her commanding officer. Looking around themselves, each noted that the rest of the townspeople did not appear to be having a problem with what was transpiring upon the altar in front of them, well with the possible exception of Kanan who was looking at Daniel like he’d like to cut a hole straight through him with a very dull and rusty knife. The rest of them were watching the scene. No, not watching, O’Neill understood that was not what they were doing. They were witnessing. In that moment, Colonel Jack O’Neill learned something that Doctor Daniel Jackson already knew; that some times in life, some things that should be private, had to be made public so everyone was positive that they had actually been done.

## Chapter Nine

For the first time in more months than he wanted to remember, Daniel awoke in a soft bed with sunlight streaming through the window and a woman lying softly in his arms. Looking down at her in the first rays of the new days' light, he wondered who she really was, where she had come from and why she seemed to have chosen him. For now, he told himself, none of that mattered. She was here. She was with him. Soon he would take her home, back to Earth. Calla began to stir next to him and he held her a little tighter, not wanting her to wake from her slumber just yet. The softness of her cheek nuzzled against the warmth of his chest and her breathing became deep once more.

His eyes turned the door as it slowly opened and the same elderly woman who had come to him yesterday now entered the room where Calla slept peacefully in his arms. With her, she had a silver tray, upon which was a pitcher of what he assumed was water, a silver cup, and something that looked suspiciously like a joint.

"I have not seen her sleep like that in a very long time." Able commented as she crossed the room to the other side of the bed and laid the tray on the table next to Daniel. "For whatever it is worth, you did very well." There was little mistaking the affection in the older woman's eyes as she peered down at the younger one who lay quietly in his arms. "She will thirst when she wakes and she will want that." Able pointed to the hand-rolled cigarette. Without another word, the elderly woman left the room, closing the door quietly behind her.

Daniel would have liked to take comfort in the words the elder woman offered him and could not. He lay awake most of the night pondering the decision he had made while Calla slept at his side. To regret or not to regret, that was the question, the answer was unknown. For now, holding her and breathing in her sweet scent, everything was more than all right. For now, for this moment, everything was just about perfect. How long had it been since he could say anything near words like that? Daniel held her a little closer. One word echoed through his mind;

*Home.*

Yes, that was exactly what she felt like; home. That in itself was a minor miracle. Daniel's parents were killed in a freak accident on July 12, 1979. It was a date that he would never forget no matter how hard he tried. Daniel had been ten years-old and he and his brother, David, had been raised in a series of foster homes after the death of their parents. At first, the state had tried to keep them together but David was a difficult child, he never wanted to get along or to fit in. Even when their family was still in tact, David never seemed to want to have to anything to do with them.

The first foster home the brothers had been in was with a very nice older woman who had taken very good care of them, Mrs. Kent. She was a very grandmotherly woman who liked to bake cookies and her own bread, David always complained that she smelled funny and Daniel supposed she did, old people just have a certain air about them. Mrs. Kent had passed away not nine months after taking the boys into her home. Daniel and David waited in an orphanage for a short while before moving onto their second foster home. Jen and John Kovach were an ok couple, they liked to smoke pot and have people 'sleep over' sometimes, and they considered themselves to be

'artistes'. In real life, during the daytime that was, John was a carpenter and Jen was a bookkeeper. A year and half into living with the couple, they split up and the boys were onto another home. This last foster home had been a more stable married couple, Mary and Bill Cabral. Very nice people, the brothers Jackson had lived from them from the age of 13 until Daniel turned 19 and went off to college. They still kept in touch with him from time to time. Daniel always promised himself he would call them or drop them a line but he never did. The State had split the boys up when they were both 14 and living in their third foster home and Daniel's last.

David, however, proved too much for them to handle. They caught him stealing money more than once and dipping into the liquor cabinet. Soon the problems at home and school became so bad that they felt they had no choice but to turn David back over to the State for care. Daniel could still remember Mary sitting on the side of his bed and holding his hand while she told him how sorry she was that David had to go away but that she had tried, she had really really tried with him and she just could not do it anymore. Daniel still remembered the pain in her eyes as she told him over and over that she was sorry that his brother had to leave. It was not her fault, it was David's even then Daniel knew that. That wasn't all he knew, no not by a long shot. Daniel was privy to information even Mary's husband didn't know and that was this; Mary had come early from grocery shopping and caught David jacking off into a pair of her panties. In short, the plain and simple truth was, the nice woman who had taken them in had become terrified of David.

Even though he frightened her, Mary insisted that Daniel spend time with his brother and to that end she had tried to get David to the house for one weekend each month. That worked for a while but in the end it wasn't to be and foster home after foster home soon gave up on David, turning him over to the state for care. For the past twenty years or more, Daniel had no idea where his brother was or if he was even still kicking around back on planet Earth. It wouldn't surprise Daniel if David had given up the ghost years ago due to hard living and heavy drinking.

Daniel had spent most of his adult life hidden away in one college or university behind a book or computer, keeping the real world at bay and burying himself in the past. How was he possibly supposed to feel like he belonged anywhere when everything around him kept changing? He supposed that David had felt the same way but instead of introverting, he had acted out on his emotions causing great grief to everyone around him.

Then, on his very first trip through the Stargate, Daniel had gotten extremely lucky. Sha're had come into his life and made him feel like he belonged somewhere, with someone, that there was a reason for the fact that he was breathing. Sha're was gone now and she was never coming back. Daniel looked down at the sleeping woman lying in his arms. Sha're made him feel this way. Since she died, Daniel had gone back to wandering around mostly empty, on the verge of being emotionally dead, inside. Home had become nothing more than a concept again. Not having been able to find a home here on Earth, he had turned to the Stars, to fill his own empty spaces and ease his mind. Free and untethered that's what he told himself. He told himself he didn't want anything like a home, not when it was so easily taken away, it was for other people. What did he need with such a concept as a home when he had the Stars?

Now he was here, and she was cuddled next to him. She was warm and soft like a sleepy kitten.

What a fool he had been.

“Daniel?” Calla asked a small voice as her eyes looked upon him. “Naganti Kanan.” She sat up quickly and gathered the sheet around her small breasts.

“No, no. Stay with me.” He urged gently and brought her body back down upon the mattress to lie next to him. “He isn’t here. He isn’t coming.”

“Daniel is Lord now?”

Never in his wildest or darkest dreams did he ever think he would agree with such a question. “Yes.”

“Daniel is Master now?”

“Yes.” He agreed as he ran his hand across her cheek. “I am. “

Calla’s mind began to spin and then to slow slightly as she pulled herself away from him and noticed a large scar on her new Master’s shoulder. Without thinking, she began to rub her hands together, building that same amber energy she had used on Sam and Kanan, she would use it on him now. Master Daniel took her hands in his and stopped her.

“You don’t have to heal it, Calla. It is healed. It’s all right.”

“What happened?” She asked in a small voice as stared at the rounded scar that had made a home on his skin.

“Oh, nothing. Just an old injury, it doesn’t bother me any more.” Some years ago, Daniel was shot in the line of duty but there was no need to worry her with that right now. “Do you remember last night?” Calla stared at him with wide eyes and shook her head. “Anything at all?” Once again, he watched as she shook her head. Something flashed quickly behind her eyes and told him that there was a possibility she was lying to him. Daniel wasn’t going to push the subject just now. “It’s all right.” Maybe it was just as well.

Calla was beginning to notice the pounding behind her eyes and the dryness of her throat. She reached for the pitcher of water that sat on the table on the other side of her new Lord and Master.

“I’ll get it.” Daniel told her as he sat up and poured water into the cup. He turned to look to at her as he handed it over it and found himself captured by those eyes. Calla stared at him and the cup, not knowing if she should take it from his hand. “Go on.” Daniel directed. “Take it.” Timidly her small hands wrapped around the cup and took it from his grasp. Instantly he knew just how rare the small gesture of getting her a glass of water was in her life. No, the Master did not give her water she sought it for him. Things were about to change in her life, Daniel told himself they had to change slowly for fear that she would not keep up and she would retreat into her own world rather than join him in his. For the next little while, both of them would be walking the Razor’s Edge. Either of them could fall off at any moment. He must be patient. He must not fall. “Do you want this too?”

He took the small hand rolled cigarette between his fingers, it did not feel nor smell as if it was full of tobacco. Calla cautiously nodded her head. From looking at her and the way she was looking at the joint, he wasn't sure how to tell her that she was not going to get this back in the United States of America, well not legally anyway. Daniel held out the joint and the wooden match that lay next to it on the tray.

"It will help my head and my stomach, Master Daniel." Her voice was small almost apologetic as she attempted read the thoughts of her new Master. Clearly, this was not something that he approved of.

Yeah, that much the joint would do for her, he thought as his open palm still held the joint with accompanying match out to her, he knew that he should not encourage this, he should tell her that she could not have it. Instead, "Go on, take it if you want it." His voice held an edge that he had not intended.

Master Daniel.

With a heavy heart he was suddenly aware that he was either going to grow to detest those two words or to like them far too much. Either way, it wouldn't take long. It was the way she said it. On others worlds, even his own, such designations were commonly used by many people. Calla did not use the words 'Master' and 'Lord' to refer to someone who just had a bit more power than she did or to show respect. No, when she uttered those words they sounded as though they came from a woman long past her time for ending her term of indenture.

Calla did want it, her stomach churned with acid and her head cried out as though someone were thrusting a rusted axe through the center of her forehead. She only sat there looking at him and waiting. Her new Master only returned her stare as he waited for her to do something. "You." Calla directed in a quiet tone.

"Me? No, I don't want it." As he spoke, his words became fainter and fainter until they were nothing more than a whisper. An image so old that he thought he had forgotten it came dancing through his mind. Without hesitating further, Daniel put the wrapped herb between his lips, struck the match against the headboard, and lit the joint. Warm piney smoke filled his lungs and he held back the urge to cough it out. He stuck the lit joint into his mouth, holding it between his teeth and grasped Calla's jaw firmly, her lips parted in a small 'o' shape as he blew the smoke into them. Back on good old planet Earth, friends and neighbors, in a place called the University of Chicago, many many years ago, Daniel had learned that was what was called a 'shotgun'. Calla held the hit he had given her for longer than he had expected, finally nothing but the smallest puff of gray smoke exited from her mouth. "More?" Daniel watched as she nodded. "Say it." He encouraged. "Say, 'yes'."

So many new rules to learn. So many new things to learn in order to please her new Master. "Yes, Master Daniel, please."

"Good. Let's try this one." There it was again; Master Daniel. Before he spoke again, he filled his lungs with marijuana smoke, covered her lips with his own and exhaled the smoke into her lungs. The stuff he was smoking was either extremely potent or he had become a severe lightweight in his years away from college life. The skunk-like odor of the weed was potent even before he had lit it,

so much so that he wondered if it was possible to get stoned off of it just by inhaling the aroma of it in its natural state; unlit. The pungent smoke hanging heavy in the air around them now filtered sunlight coming through the window across from the bed. Daniel's eyes felt like they were swimming inside of their sockets, his vision faded, blurred, and came into focus once more. When she had blown the smoke from her own lungs, Daniel spoke again. "Calla, I want you to call me Daniel. Just Daniel, ok? Not Master Daniel. Not Lord Daniel. Do you understand?"

No, she did not understand. "If that is what you wish." She agreed. The sharp pain in her head was beginning to subside and her stomach to quiet.

"Say it."

"Daniel."

That was a little better, enough to ease his mind for the moment anyway. Now, let's try this one, he thought. "Do you want more?"

"Hei," Calla stumbled over the next word, the one she was not supposed to say, omitted it, and continued on, "Daniel, please."

"Better. Wasn't so hard, was it?"

Yes, was what she wanted to say, "Co."

"You shouldn't smoke. It's bad for you. Last one, ok?"

"Ok?"

"It means 'do you agree'?"

Calla thought about it for a moment. What did her agreement with his wishes matter? He would tell her what to do and she would do it. Maybe Daniel was the one who did not understand the rules. His question remained and looking into his eyes, she saw that he was still waiting for an answer from her. She would like very much to finish smoking the mansis with him, she should not go against his wishes and clearly, he wished for her not to have any more of the sacred herb. "Hei, M...Daniel." The lips of her new Master descended onto her own, they were soft and warm as they filled her lungs with the sacred smoke for the last time. Well, for the last time that day anyway. "Ha'Nok re?"

He moved his lips to tell her that it was all right for him to touch her now, surely she could see that.

Ka'Nok re! Don't touch me. However that was not what she had said.

Ha'Nok re?

It was not a statement but a question. "Ha'Nok?" He asked and did wait for an answer. "Touch

you?”

“Hei M...” Calla dropped her eyes away from his. This was going to be harder than she had thought. Not to mention much more difficult than Daniel ever imagined.

He brought his hand up under her chin and tilted her face to look at him. “Dan..” He waited for her to finish it. “C’mon, Dan...”

“Daniel.” Tears welled up in her emerald eyes as she drew a deep breath. “Ha’Nok re, Naganti Daniel.”

Somewhere deep inside of him he became aware of her pulling away from him, that was why she was reverting to her use of the Shankuk language. It was comforting in its own strange way because it was familiar to her. Certainly more familiar to her than he was at this moment. He shook his head. “Nice try but no.” Daniel smiled to show that he was not angry with her. “No, Naganti either.” She turned her head to look away from him but his hand held her firm. “Say it, in English, Calla. It’s all right, say it.” He coaxed gently and watched as the first of those welling tears spilled forth.

Calla closed her eyes, causing the dry one to usher forth its contents and two round tears slowly made their way down her flushing cheeks. “Daniel, touch me.” Two bright shining emeralds emerged from behind her closed lids and beckoned to him. “Please? Master Kanan no longer touches me.”

Placing one hand on each side of her face, one covering the remains of the bruise Kanan had lain on just two nights before; he brushed away her tears with his thumbs and stared into those wide green depths. Deep inside there, something called and swayed as it danced to music only it could hear. It summoned him to come and dance with it. Come and see the secrets she hid. To lay her as bare as she had been last night. “Don’t cry.” He raised himself up to kiss the top of her head and hold her close. Daniel brought her head to rest on his chest. “Everything will be all right, I promise.” Calla wrapped her body around him. “I know you’re scared. It’s all right.” Slowly, his open palm worked its way up and down her naked back in a long leisurely rhythm. Calla snuggled against him, her body lost some of its rigidity as she began to relax in his arms. Up and down the length of her spine his hand ran, each pass it made she fell deeper against him until he could actually feel her taking some measure of comfort in the warmth his body had to offer her. “I’ll take care of you.” Daniel drew another deep toke off the joint into his lungs and shared it with her as he had before.

“Daniel!” Came Jack’s sharp voice from the other side of the door, his warning shout was followed quickly by his knuckles rapping on the door. “We’re getting off this rock. You got fifteen minutes, finish up whatever you’re doing in there and let’s go.” There was a slight pause. “Oh, and, ah there’s something out here for Calla, I think she’s gonna want it before you leave that room.”

Tossing his free hand over his eyes, Daniel gave out a small laugh. “That’s Jack, you’re gonna love him.” The last thing in heaven or hell he wanted to do right now was move...at all. It was unbeknownst to him whether it was his own heart or the weed he had smoked, but everything

seemed perfect in this moment. The colors around him were crystal clear, they mingled with the warm scent of the herb and the feel of her wrapped around him. For the first time in his life, Daniel thought he would do just about anything to freeze this one moment, to capture it, live in it forever. "He has great timing." Daniel laughed again. "He's right, you know. We do have to go soon. Is there anything you want to bring with you?" Kissing the top of her head, he withdrew from her and swung his legs over the side of the bed. The Real World called and it was time to go.

"No."

Daniel reached for his clothing which lay in the chair next to the bed. Looking around the room, he noticed there was no clothing for her. Daniel crossed to the door, opened it and found a long gown hanging upon the other side. "I think this is yours." He handed over the dress as he sat down on the bed next to her. Still sitting on the bed with the blanket pulled around her breasts, she took it from his hand and slipped it over her head before tossing the blanket aside. Looking at it for the first time, really looking at what she wore, he saw the necessity and design in it. The other women of Kanan's court dressed in clothes so thin you could see through them. Members of the royal court touched them all the time, no one seemed to care. Calla on the other hand, wore gowns that buttoned at the top of her neck and hung past her toes. The large bat-wing sleeves covered her hands as they hung at her side. The only possible way a touch could inflict harm on her was if someone intentionally touched her face and even then there was a mass of auburn hair with which to contend.

With the dress pulled neatly tight and properly buttoned up, she turned to look at him. "Where are we going?"

Well, there was a question. Daniel was taken aback by how little she knew of him and where he had come from. Not to mention how little he knew of her. Yet there they were bound to each other anyway. "Earth. It's very far," not for the last time that day he trailed off in mid-sentence as he caught the look in her eye.

"Home." All at once, it sounded like a most sacredly held desire and an admission of guilt. "We go home now? You will take me to Father now?"

"You know Earth? You know where it is?"

"Home." She repeated. "You are American." She charged.

"How did you know that?" Daniel asked in a suspect tone.

"Father sent you! He did!" She exclaimed and then cast her eyes away from him. "Why did you lie to me?" Calla's hand lay upon the charm he had placed around her neck the night before.

"Look at me," he waited while she gathered her strength and turned her eyes upon him. "Who is your father, Calla?" Although she did not answer him, Daniel already knew the solution. He took the medallion that was now hanging around her neck in his hand. It would be so easy to tell her that Ares had sent him, the lie would just fall out of his mouth and it would ring as true as any bell ever did. More than that, she would believe him. Of that he was certain. There were more...

...better...

...darker...

things that such a lie would lead to. The emerald eyes staring back at him were wide with wonder, they were ready to believe anything he wished to tell her, be it the truth or a straight-up lie. Daniel found that he had to struggle with himself to say the right words. "This is a symbol of my birth. Of the...the star I was born under." That wasn't exactly right but it was close enough. "It is Ares symbol, I know that, but it doesn't make me him or a messenger of his. We came here to get our friend back and nothing more." A bright flash of pain crossed through her eyes as Daniel bit back the next part of the thought going through his head; he hoped that she could not read it.

*You're the bonus package, babe. The Coupe de Ville at the bottom of the Cracker Jack box.*

To say such a thing to her would be beyond cruel, he shook his head to clear it of the lingering thought. Where had such a nasty thought even come from? "How do you know about Earth and America? Did Ares bring you here?" Daniel's hand snatched out with a mind of its own and sharply turned her head to the left and his eyes beheld nothing. "Where is it?" He turned her head to the right looking for the mark of Aphrodite that had been there last night. It too was gone. His hands reached for the buttons on her dress and for the first time he watched her flinch away from him. "Show me." She just stood there dumbly staring at him. "Open it!" Daniel demanded.

Callas' hands shook as she undid the buttons on her dress and exposed her breasts to her new Master. Maybe he understood the rules after all. The mark of Zeus; "It's gone." Last night, even by the light of nothing stronger than the full moon and the fire which burned around the altar, those marks had been small and more importantly, they had been there. He had seen them; there had been three small tattoos, the ink of which was embedded deeply into her skin. Even if he was wrong and they had been some type of temporary marking for the ritual, something of them would remain. If nothing else, the stained outline of those marks should remain on her alabaster skin. He did not see so much as a needle mark anywhere. The hand that earlier had been soft and gentle reached out in a clawed gesture toward her bare skin.

"Master?" It was nothing more than a plea whispered to the wind. It was enough to bring him around.

There she stood with her dress pulled open for his inspection. Those wide eyes, they wanted to trust him, oh so much they wanted to trust him, almost as much as they were afraid of him. "I'm sorry," he mumbled and turned his back on her. "Go ahead, button it up." His ears heard the soft rustle of the material, he became aware of just how quiet it had become in this room. The air was heavy between them. "I wasn't going to hurt you." Even to his ears, it sounded like a lie. Daniel turned around to face her. "There were marks on you last night. Ares." He reached a gentler hand to the left side of her neck. "Aphrodite." Now to the right side. "Zeus." He laid an open palm between her breasts. "I'm not dreaming. I saw them."

"Hei," she stuttered and corrected herself, "yes. You can only see them at certain times." She explained in a shaking voice. "Do they bother you?"

“Yes.” Now it was his turn to stammer. “I mean, no. Not like you mean it. Only at certain times. Like the ritual?”

“Yes. Only when the Gods are called or when They are near. You cannot see them any other time.”

“Who are you?”

“Calla.”

“No, who *are* you?”

“Daniel! Let’s go!” Jack’s thunderous voice was moving in the other direction past the door.  
“Damn kids!”

Yeah, Jack and his perfect timing. “Come on.” Daniel put his jacket on and opened the bedroom door. Five of the most dreaded words in her vocabulary ushered forth from his mouth. “We’ll talk about this later.”

“If it is what you wish.” She agreed without looking at him.

## Chapter Ten

For the first time in more than twenty years, Calla walked out into the courtyard without Naganti Kanan at her side. The bright light of the sun hurt her eyes and she raised her hand against its glare. Nervously her eyes darted around from one person to the next, the hair on the back of her neck stood up as she listened and waited for the sharp sound of a guard telling her to go back. Step after step she took and no one warned her not to go any further. The men of the village turned their backs upon her as she walked past them but the women raised their eyes to meet hers. Some of them nodded at her, some of them smiled wane smiles. No one came forward to say good-bye to her. Most of them would count themselves lucky to rid themselves of her. Others would worry how they would defend themselves when the Gesh'Tah returned. None of them wondered where she was going or if she would be all right once she got there.

Calla stopped at a flowerbed and stooped to gaze upon the many colored petals. With a strange longing in her heart, she remembered that she had planted this bed when she was a child, during her first spring here. How many years had it been since she had been allowed out here to tend it or to pick its blooms? She did not know. For a time after her arrival here, when Kanan's father was still alive, she had been allowed to wander the courtyard and to plant flowers. After Kanan's father passed her boundaries became smaller and smaller. At first, Naganti Kanan demanded she not leave the walls of the Keep. Then he demanded she keep to the first and second floors. Six years ago, she was locked away in his chamber and he forbid her to cross the threshold of his door without his permission, not even to walk upon the balcony and feel the sunlight on her face. Naganti Kanan would bring her out for important events, rituals and dinners; he would hang her off his arm like some great jewel and show her off. When the dinner or ritual was over, he would lock her away once more.

Daniel's hand slipped under her elbow and summoned her to follow him.

Rising with a stolen rose in her hand, she turned to look back at the keep and Kanan's balcony. Her Lord and Master was not there, his silhouette did not grace the sunlight before her eyes.

The heavy gates loomed ahead and Callas' legs felt weak as she approached them. Never once, in all of her time here, had she crossed through those gates except upon her coming to this place. For a very long moment they seemed larger than life to her eyes, as if they had grown huge fangs and were just waiting to tear off chunks of her flesh should she dare to try and exit through them. Again, she looked back over her shoulder to Kanan's balcony and again he was not there. She looked to her new Lord and Master, Daniel, who was leading her steadily toward the iron jaws. Taking a hold of the hand at her side and closing her eyes, Calla walked through the gate and out of Kanan's life. Calla breathed deep of the air outside of the gates and opened her eyes. The jaws had not fallen. The world had not crumbled. The walls of the city were falling further and further behind her.

At the request of Col. O'Neill, three of Kanan's guards met them halfway up the hillside to aid in carrying the dead back to their home. Four Shankuk women stood near the litters they had made for the dead Cok'Mon, their bodies lay covered in black silk on waiting to be taken back to their families for whatever burial ritual was customary to them. Sadness washed over her as she looked at them, she had tried to protect them. She had failed. Now three families would grieve and it was her fault. The four women, one of which was Able, the old woman who had come to Daniel twice, made their way to where Calla stood their eyes and ears mindful of the guards behind them. No words were expressed by any of them; they only walked up to Calla, looked at her sadly and then walked away from her one by one back down the steep hillside.

As the hill grew steeper, Daniel lead the way in front of her, holding out his to hand and helping her up the rocks in places too precipitous for her to climb on her own. Especially considering the gown she was wearing and the fact that it had been so long since Kanan had let her out of his keep that she no longer had shoes. Several times during the ascent, she had stepped upon something sharp and it had bitten into the soles of feet, which were now sticky with blood. The hillside was steeper than she had remembered as a child, each step upwards put pressure on her lower back that made her want to cry out in pain. The muscles in her legs, so long idle from sitting in Kanan's chambers, roared their discontentment with her as she hiked her way to something that smelled like freedom. The tenderness in neither her back or her legs or even the blood oozing from her feet stopped her from pushing forward. Not once did she complain about the pain she felt.

Daniel did not speak to her or to anyone else on their journey toward the N'kte, the Stargate. Knowing that she should not, she attempted to read his thoughts as they walked. Calla wanted nothing more than to know them so that she would be of assistance to her new Master, he seemed to be having trouble with his new role. Again, that was her fault. She had invaded the life of a man she had never met, had herself bound to him, and expected that he would take her away from this place. It was a foolish and impetuous act on her part, 'childish' Kanan would have said to her. Moreover, perhaps, he would say it was 'unwise' as well.

The hand of her Master extended itself once again to pull her up a rocky crag. "I feel you," he said faintly as she neared him, "don't do that. Not right now, Calla. Don't." Daniel laid his hand on her back to usher her in front of him and end the conversation there.

As the party emerged from a stand of trees, Calla caught sight of the Stargate for the first time since her arrival. It stood just as strong and large as she had remembered it so many nights in her dreams. "Stay here." Daniel left her side to work the control panel while the other members of the military team surrounded him. No sense in letting them have a good look at the number they were dialing. Didn't need any unwanted visitors hanging around back at the homestead. At Daniel's command, the gate opened with a grand flourish, from his place at the panel he held out a hand to her.

"Cha'Dech!"

Calla jumped at the sound of that voice, her heart raced as she turned around to face Naganti Kanan.

"Wait." Jack said as he put out a hand to hold Daniel back a moment.

Kanan extended a rolled up bit of material and the rag doll Daniel had seen in the tower room the night before. As he watched from his place at the control panel, Daniel knew the rolled up object was the tapestry that had hung in the small room on the third floor of Kanan's keep. "These are all that you brought with you. Take them away with you." Two small hands reached out tentatively to take the objects from him. As he looked down upon her, his gaze filled with regret, as he looked over at Daniel it filled with distrust and aversion. Wanting to say more to her, to tell her everything that was on his mind and that had been in his heart, Kanan reached out a large hand to trace the outline of her face and burned the tender flesh beneath. No longer was she bound to him. Although he knew it hurt her, she did not recoil from his touch. Soft tendrils of smoke began to rise from the place where their skin met. Still, she did not turn away from him. Good conditioning, he told himself.

Too good.

"Get away from her." Jack warned. "Now, Kanan." There was no mistaking the authority in his voice.

Unlike Daniel, the one called O'Neill spoke only when necessary. To his mind, O'Neill would have been a far more suitable choice for her than Daniel had been. Why didn't she see that? Even the Jaffa would have been better! If she was going to do this, why take the weak one? Kanan thought of that conditioning again, maybe that was it. She had spent too many years spent with the Sword of Damocles hanging precariously above her head and now she yearned for a gentler hand than his.

Fearing that at the last possible moment, Kanan had finally changed his mind about letting her go, Daniel stepped away from the control panel. "Calla, come away from him." Daniel ordered. Still she did not move and the smell of burning flesh became stronger. "Come to me! Maen!"

"Go to your Master, Cha'Dech." Kanan ordered and walked away from her.

It was the last command of Kanan's that Calla ever followed.

## Chapter Eleven

Six live bodies and three corpses emerged from the open gate. The sight of three dead men was upsetting to all but none more so than to General Hammond. “And who the hell is she and what happened to her face?” He demanded as they stood in the gate room.

“Yeah, about that...” Jack began but Sam interjected.

“We’ll cover it all in the briefing, sir.”

“You had better.” General Hammond warned. “I want you up in the briefing room in five minutes, got that? Five minutes.”

“Yes, sir.” Jack and Sam stated in unison.

“I want Dr. Frazier to take a look at her.” Daniel said to the General. “I’m going to take her down to the infirmary and I’ll be right up to the briefing room after that.”

At this point, the team parted company with Jack, Sam and Teal’c hurrying off to the commissary to get themselves something cold to drink and a quick something to fill their empty stomachs. Daniel ushered Calla out of the gate room, she left small bloody footprints in her wake and made a trail from the gate room to Dr. Frazier’s office. Once inside the infirmary Daniel told Calla that she was to stay with the doctor until he returned. “She’s going to examine you, ok? It won’t hurt.” Calla made no sound and did try to leave when he left her side to talk to the doctor; she only sat upon the gurney with her hands in her lap. Daniel pulled the doctor aside. “Don’t let any of the orderlies touch her.”

“What?”

“I don’t have the time to explain, they’re expecting me upstairs. Just trust me, do not let the men near her. I want you to do a full work-up on her, DNA analysis, and chemical analysis, everything you can think of.”

“OK, now you’ve got my curiosity piqued. What’s going on?” Janet looked over at the rather small and unassuming woman who was poised on the gurney but not looking at them while they chatted in whispers about her. “You want to know if she’s human?”

“Among other things.” He agreed in a low voice. “And I want you to cross reference it against mine.”

“Why for heaven’s sake? Daniel, what the hell is going on?” Janet insisted. “Who is she?”

“That’s what I’m trying to find out. Just do it, ok? Everything. Don’t let them touch her.”

“All right.” Janet agreed.

Daniel crossed back to where Calla sat. “I have to go upstairs now, I’ll be back. Stay here with Janet and let her examine you.”

“Ex-am-ine?”

“She’s a doctor, you know what that is?” Calla shrugged and nodded as if to say she thought she understood what it meant. “You just do what she tells you, ok?”

Calla nodded her head.

“Hi, Calla,” Dr. Frazier said in a warm voice, she looked her patient up and down and noticed the small blood pools which had begun on the floor beneath her.

“What happened to your feet?” Janet bent and took one foot in her hand and exposed the torn flesh there.

“Calla where are your shoes?” Daniel asked as his mouth dropped open.

“I have none.”

Jesus Christ! Daniel ran his open palm across his jaw line and pushed his glasses up on the bridge of his nose. “Why didn’t you say something to me?”

“It’s all right.” She murmured.

“No, it’s not.” He didn’t have time to deal with this right now. “We’ll talk about this later. You hold on to this” he pulled on the rag doll in her hands, “I’m going to take this. I’ll bring it back.” Daniel tried to take the rolled up tapestry from under her arm. Calla did not let it go. “Give it to me.” Her grip eased and it slipped away from her. “I’ll be back in a little while. Stay here.” To this, there was nothing from her other than a deep and heartfelt sigh. Calla stood where she was told and watched as Daniel walked away from her. She continued to stare in that direction long after he was gone.

“Ok, Calla.” Janet said in an easy voice. “He’ll be back. I want you to come with me now.” Daniel had said that the orderlies should not touch her, Janet hesitated before placing her hand upon Calla’s shoulder to lead her in the proper direction. Bowing her head but saying nothing, Calla began to allow herself to be herded forward into the examination room.

With nothing more than a thin layer of cotton fabric to protect her, Calla laid on something that was more table than bed though it did have something that looked like a pillow near the head. Looking around she noticed that there were not windows here, she had not seen even one since emerging through the gate. Earth had changed in her time away from it. The walls in this place were thick, thicker than in Kanan’s keep. Armed guards walked openly through the hallways. She wondered if they had finally suffered that Nuclear War everyone had always talking about in the

days before she left. Had the Mortals that Grandfather loved so much finally managed to destroy themselves? Their technology had advanced rapidly in her absence, of that much she was sure. Machines she remembered from younger days had either been made smaller or been replaced by other new and improved machines. The guns they kept were more powerful some of them even used the technology of Light to power themselves.

Where were the trees? The birds? The sun? Where was the music that she remembered?

Maybe this was not Earth after all, not the one that she had thought of anyway. Maybe this was a different place called Earth.

Maybe it was not called Earth at all. Maybe Master Daniel had lied to her.

“What happened to your cheek?” Janet asked as she inspected the burned area below her jaw line and the bruise on the other side. To her both of them looked like handprints. The bruise was fading but the light purple outline of the fingertips that had struck her was still clear. They looked about the same size as the shape of the two fingers that had been burned into her. Calla did not answer her. In fact, she did not even look up or acknowledge Janet’s presence. She inspected the burn mark a bit further, it had already begun to heal, and she would give her something to put on it so that the skin did not crack and to ease the scar it might leave. “Ok, Calla, I’m going to listen to your heart with this,” Doctor Janet held up a shiny object that she wore around her neck, “it won’t hurt. It’s a little cold but that’s about all. Ok?” Janet moved forward to place the stethoscope against her chest, Calla backed away. “You have to sit still.” She moved toward her patient and again Calla backed away from her. “Come on, Calla. Daniel wouldn’t have told you to stay here if he thought I was going to hurt you, would he?”

“No.”

“Then sit still.” When she moved forward this time, Calla sat still and allowed the doctor to listen to the beating of her heart. A nice strong thump-thumpa-thump echoed inside Calla’s chest. Janet moved the instrument around to listen to her lungs. “Sounds good.” Her tone was light and reassuring as she took hold of Calla’s wrist and began to take her pulse. Again, there was a nice strong rhythm. “Ok, this might feel a little funny,” Janet took the blood pressure cuff from the rack on the wall, “gets a little tight, but it’s all right.” She looped it around Calla’s forearm. 120/80. Most of the people she knew would kill for a blood pressure reading like that. Shining the pen light into her eyes revealed nothing wrong or spectacular.

“Where are we?” Calla asked softly as the light shone into her pupils.

“Earth.” Janet said, guessing at the meaning of the question. The light clicked off and Janet stepped away from her patient. “I have to draw some blood now, Calla. I’m not going to lie to you, this is going to hurt a little bit.” Janet kept her tone just as light as you please; they could have been talking about nothing more important than an uninteresting bit of gossip.

“Ok,” she agreed. “Where are the windows?” Calla looked around at her surroundings once again, it was all so cold here. So like the walls of the keep.

Janet looped the rubber band around the area where she had placed the blood pressure cuff. “Hmmm. That’s a good question.” She reached in her pocket and paused for a moment. “Why don’t you look over that way for a while?” Janet pointed to the other side of the room. When Callas’ head turned, she slipped the butterfly out of her pocket and into the vein in Callas’ arm. The woman jumped a little but did not say anything. “There aren’t any windows because we’re underground.” Janet explained as the first empty vile filled with Calla’s life force. “Maybe Daniel will take you outside soon. “ Janet slipped the first vile off and the second one on. “Where do you come from, Calla?” With the second vile now full, Janet removed the butterfly and placed a bandage on her arm.

“Tiberia. That is where I have lived since I was small.”

Janet moved her hands back and forth along Calla’s neck and found her first oddity. “Open for your mouth for me.” Calla opened and she shone the light inside. “How’d you lose those teeth?” She asked as she saw that four of her molars were missing. The back of her throat was bright red. Janet stuck a thermometer in her mouth. 101.7 Fahrenheit. “I think you have a fever. Do you feel all right?” Daniel had asked her to take a genetic swab and Janet took it from the cart beside her. “This won’t hurt.” She scraped the inside of Callas’ cheek, capped it and placed on the cart with the blood samples she had already drawn. She did not like the look of her throat or her fever, Janet thought it possible she had a case of strep throat. Janet would run a test for it later but would start her on penicillin before that. “Lay down now, I’m going to feel your tummy.” Calla lay with her head on the hard pillow. “You didn’t answer me, do you feel all right?”

“Yes.” It was more question than statement. Calla cringed at the touch of Janet’s hands on her skin and then to squirm as the woman’s touch began to tickle.

“And how did you lose those teeth?” Janet’s hands probed her stomach, Calla flinched and used the rag doll to push Janet’s hands away as they descended near her vagina. Janet sighed, took her hands off her patient for a moment and touched her once more at the area where her thighs began. Skilled hands worked each leg, feeling the bones as she went. Nothing was right here. “Stand up for me.” Calla rose. “Can you touch your toes?” Calla raised her foot to her hand. “Good.” Janet laughed and knew she should have been a bit more specific. “Like this.” She bent over to bring her fingertips to her toes. “Can you do that?” Calla shook her head. “Can you try?”

Knowing it would make her back pop and ache, Calla put her hands out in front of her, bent at the waist and made it only about three-quarters of the way to the ground.

“That hurts, doesn’t it?” Janet asked and watched as Calla nodded and tried to straighten up. “No, stay just like that for a few seconds.” Doctor Janet reached out a hand and traced it along Callas’ spine, it was not straight as it should have been. There was a very slow and gentle curve to the bone there. Glancing down with her physicians eyes, she noticed that Callas’ hips were uneven, one side of her, just above the kidney on the right seemed almost concave. Janet sucked in a harsh breath, as she looked further down Callas’ back and at the scars there. As she looked away from the site, she bit back the urged to utter ‘Oh my God’. From the area that comprised Callas’ low back to the tops of her thighs, all that which should be soft milky white skin, was a mass of tangled scars. Mostly of

the kind which would be made by a leather belt or whip. Some of the scars currently greeting her eyes had been laid there long ago, others were still pink with new flesh covering them. “We’re going to go and take some x-rays now.” She said hurried as she brushed her hair away from her face and helped Calla close the hospital gown.

“They’re like pictures. You have to stay very still but they won’t hurt.” Janet assured her as she led her toward the door that Daniel had walked out of earlier.

“Master Daniel said to stay here.” Calla stopped at the threshold of the door.

“Master Daniel? Did he?” Janet wondered just what was going on with the woman who was currently in her care. At first, she had thought it possible that Calla was mildly impeded in some fashion but that was not what was wrong with her at all. “I’m sure that Master Daniel won’t mind. Come with me.” The woman Doctor Jackson had brought back with him through the gate was pitifully shy and afraid but not impeded in any medical way. Standing there looking at the woman with the rag doll in her hands, Janet might have guessed that she was somewhere around the age of sixteen or seventeen. She would have been wrong.

Calla sat still, moved, sat still, moved, and sat still over and over again. It seemed they would never stop taking their pictures. When they finally did stop with what Janet had called X-rays, she was put through something called a CT Scan where she was forced to lie down while something circular machine went back and forth over her making little weerp-weerp-weerp noises as it went. When that was done, they put her into another contraption and told her to lie as still as she possibly could. This thing was an MRI machine; it was small, tight and uncomfortable. Doctor Janet had been right, none of the tests they performed on her actually hurt and for this reason Calla did not protest, she simply allowed them to lead her to one machine after the other.

All she wanted was to go outside and see the birds and the trees once again. Doctor Janet had said the world outside was fine, so why did they live under the ground in this darkened pit? Why did they desire to live in a place where there was no sunlight? Would her new Master keep her here long?

“It was reckless, Daniel!” Jack shouted from across the table.

“Fine,” Daniel agreed in exasperation, “it was reckless. It’s still done. I can’t undo it.”

“What the hell is going on here? Are you seriously telling me that that woman is somehow....attached...to you, Dr. Jackson?” General Hammond demanded to know.

Daniel thought about it for a few moments. “I don’t know.” He admitted finally. “That’s what Dr. Frazier is working on. I asked her to do a full work-up on Calla.”

“But you admit that you injected her with your own bodily fluids? That she considers you her master? I have to be honest with you, Dr. Jackson, I don’t like the sounds of that.”

“Yes,” Daniel wanted to toss his hands in the air but instead rested his head on the table like a kindergartener during ‘lights out’. If he was meeting with this much resistance on the smaller

aspects of his current situation, how could he possibly tell them that he thought Calla was a Goddess? A real one. Not some freakishly technologically advanced humanoid from another planet. Not some whacked out alien who got her jollies playing with the lives of humans but the real deal.

“With all due respect, sir...sirs,” Samantha began, “maybe we should just wait and see what Dr. Frazier has to say about this whole thing before we go jumping to any conclusions.”

“What did you want me to do? Leave her there, with him?” Daniel already knew the answer to that question was ‘yes’. “You can’t deny what she can do, that she could be of some assistance to us in our battle against the Goa’uld.”

“Oh, great.” Jack stood up from his chair and paced around. “There he goes again. What are ya tryin’ to do, Daniel? Appeal to my warped sense of Justice? ‘Cause if that’s it, I gotta tell ya, it ain’t workin’!” Colonel O’Neill ran a hand through his decidedly graying hair. “If you think that I want to see her locked up with the Lab Rats, you’re out of your freakin’ mind.”

“Hum. I suppose that’s a possibility.” Daniel did not look up to see the look on Jack’s face.

“For whatever it is worth,” Teal’c spoke up, “I believe that Dr. Jackson did the right thing in taking Calla away from Kanan.”

“You do?” Was the question uttered by Jack, Sam and General Hammond in unison.

“Indeed I do. She could not have remained with Kanan much longer, it is my belief that eventually he would have killed her.”

“Yes he would have and thank you, Teal’c. Nice to know someone has some confidence in me.”

“It’s not about confidence, Daniel.” Jack complained. “I know why you did it. I just think that maybe, maybe mind you, there could have been another way to go about it. That’s all I’m sayin’. That’s it.”

“Well, maybe you could tell me what you plan to do with her now that she’s here, Dr. Jackson?” General Hammond inquired.

Jack snorted. “He doesn’t know. Do ya, Danny-boy?” Jack stood behind the seated Daniel. “What did you think you were gonna do? Teach her to type, send her off to business school and help set her up in a place of her own?”

It was true, Daniel had no idea what he was going to do with Calla now that he had brought her back to... “Earth.” He muttered.

“What?” Jack asked as though he were about to bounce off the nearest wall.

“That’s what she said.” Daniel swiveled in the chair to look at Jack who was standing behind him. “She knew that we’re American.” Jack stared at him dumbfounded. “She said Earth was her home.” Daniel reached to the floor beside him, laid the tapestry on the table, and began to explain

his theory to those around him. "Hear me out before you say anything. I think Calla is the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite."

All in the room was quiet as glances were exchanged. Daniel went on to explain about the marks which had been on her body the night before, the ones which had disappeared with morning's light, the ones that could only be seen when the Gods were called or when They were near. He told of the tapestry lying before them and how it and the rag doll Kanan had given her, had hung in the room where he spent the few hours before the ritual and of Callas' utter insistence that Ares had sent him for her. "All right, go on." Daniel said as he sat back in his chair.

"What?" Jack asked.

"Tear it apart. Tell me I'm wrong." Daniel replied in a mocking voice.

None of them said anything of the kind. In fact, it was a while before any of them said anything at all. Finally, Teal'c spoke up. "There once was a race of what you might have considered Gods living here on Earth. They were a small group known as the Olympa."

"Olympians." Sam stated more than asked.

"That is correct, Major Carter. You would know them by the Greek pantheon." He turned his bald stare to Daniel Jackson. "I had thought them all dead."

"Well, they might be." Daniel said as he pondered Teal'c's words. "But so what? Calla is probably thousands of years old. Who knows how long she's been on Tiberia." He pushed his glasses up on the bridge of his nose. "These Olympa lived here? You're sure about that."

"Positive. When the Asgard and Goa'uld departed, the Olympa stayed on Earth, hidden on their islands and wandering among the mortals that surrounded them. From what I have been told, their numbers were few even then."

"Look, folks, even if any of this was true, why would Ares take her there? Why would he have his daughter bound to that, that, gorilla?" Jack sat down hard in his seat. "Doesn't make any sense."

"Maybe not." Sam agreed. "But if there was a reason, something we're just not seeing, he could be right." She nodded toward Daniel. "And maybe Ares didn't take her there, maybe he was supposed to come and get her."

"Well, I guess there's just one thing left to do." Jack grumbled.

"What would that be?" Daniel asked as he folded his hands and leaned over the table in Jack's direction.

"Ask her." With that, Jack rose to his feet. "I'm starving. Care to join me, Major Carter?"

"Sure, sir."

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Dr. Frazier cornered Daniel in the hallway as he exited the Briefing Room and dragged him into her office. “OK, it’s time to tell me what’s going on.” Her tone was light but there was an air of impatience beneath it.

“What? She’s not human, is she?”

“Well, the tests aren’t conclusive yet but preliminaries are that yes, despite an abnormal enzyme and some high levels of toxins in her blood, her DNA code is human. Preliminaries also indicate her DNA has mixed with yours somehow. If I did not know better, I would ask you if she was a relative of yours. What happened on the planet? What did you do to her, Daniel?”

“I didn’t do anything to her.” He snapped. Maybe if he said enough times he would come to believe it. Daniel explained about the previous nights events as best as he could. Even without a medical degree, he knew they had drawn hormones and pheromones from the glands in his body. Those hormones were now going to work on her, taking over her own immune, endocrine and nervous systems.

*Nin aswanz, gin aswanz.* That was what Kanan had said to her as he lay on his deathbed waiting for his Cha’Dech to save his life. *I die, you die.* Was the same now true of him? Jack had been right, Daniel did not know what he had gotten himself into.

Janet planted her hands on her hips and shook her head. “Well, that’s certainly one of the more fantastic stories I’ve heard lately. “ She patted him on the back. “I’ll know more about all of that tomorrow when I’ve finished running all the tests. For now, I can tell you that your new friend is deficient in every single nutrient you can name. She is about twenty pounds underweight due mostly to malnutrition I would say. Her bones are about as brittle as dry chalk.” Janet sighed. “Don’t let her fall down any stairs.”

“Excuse me?”

Janet flipped on the lights of the x-ray board to show Daniel some of the images she had taken earlier. “I don’t think that her calcium deficiency has much to do with these, but have a look for yourself. “ She invited. “Do you see a bone that hasn’t been broken at some point? ‘Cause I gotta tell ya, I’m havin’ a hard time finding one.” She pursed her lips and made a small sucking sound. “The girl has more fractures than a professional hockey player.” Janet tapped on the film. “Just look at this. Look at that shoulder, it’s been wrenched out of position so many times I’m amazed it works at all, and those wrists, just look at that soft tissue damage.” She pointed to dark gray areas on three of the x-rays. “Her jaw, both sides have been broken.” Daniel turned his eyes to the images of Callas’ skull and saw the long fissure that ran the entire right side of her head from skull to jaw line. On the left side there were three shorter, unconnected fractures. “Her right hip, pelvis, low back, both legs. None of them was set properly. To tell you the truth, Daniel, I honestly do not know how she is able to stand up, never mind walk. I did get her feet bandaged, she keeps telling me it doesn’t hurt but, frankly, I don’t believe her.”

“Could she have been in an accident?” He asked against hope.

“No.” Janet sighed. “All of these breaks and fractures occurred at different points in time. They’re all in different stages of healing. The last one, here,” she pointed a fissure running across Callas’ right wrist, “that was just a month ago or so. You can see the bone hasn’t finished knitting itself together. Some of these could be ten years old, more.” Janet took the films down. “You want to look at her MRI?”

“No.”

“You sure? I can show you the scars from the lacerations on her kidneys and liver. Or how about where one of those broken ribs punctured her lung?” The anger in her voice was quite clear. “Someone really had a grand old time at her expense, over and over again.” She flicked off the light on the X-Ray board. “You know, the most experience I’ve had with women who were this abused, is signing off on their death certificates.”

“Stop.” The anger in Janet’s voice was matched only by the sadness in his. “Please, don’t say anymore. I got it.” Daniel shook his head and drew in a deep breath. He rubbed his forehead where a pounding headache was beginning to make itself right at home. “Can I take her back now?”

“Yeah, she’s waiting for you.” Janet picked up a small paper bag from her desk and fished out three bottles of prescription pills. “Make sure she takes these, got it? Antibiotics three times a day. Percs for pain, no more than four a day, six tops on a bad day. Valium for her nerves. She takes all of them with food, no alcohol. Don’t mix these two,” she shook the valium and percs, “together. Got all of that?”

“Got it.”

“Good, now these....“

“More?“ He remarked.

“These are mostly supplements, iron, calcium and vitamins. I want her to take two of each these a day. I made her take two of the percs already, you can give her more in the morning if she needs them and she probably will. “Janet sighed and dropped the bottles of pills into the paper bag. “Well, Daniel, it looks like you’ve got your work cut out for you.”

“Yeah, I guess I do.”

Daniel began to walk away and Janet called him back. “Listen to me, that shoulder,” she pointed to the x-rays hanging on the lightened board, “isn’t the only place that’s covered in scar tissue. “ Janet looked down at her feet for a moment. “I don’t really know how to say this, as a doctor I’m supposed to do this stuff but as a woman and your friend, I’m just at a total loss. Maybe all of your expertise in other cultures will do some good here. “

“I’m afraid I’m not following you. What are you trying to tell me? “

“Are you familiar with the practice of female castration? “ Janet watched him flinch but he nodded

his head and motioned for her to continue. “Well, she’s still got that, well most of it anyway, but, someone, they, umm, “she shook her head again and forced herself to go forward. “They scared her, Daniel, inside. Are you following me? Or do I have to get graphic about this? “

Several Middle Eastern cultures practiced female castration or the removal of the clitoris and others that practiced a different kind of control over their women. In some of those cultures, men of great power were known to have their favorite women altered so that they would never lose that tightness. They would always feel like a virgin. The practice involved making three mid-sized incisions, which then became infected, were cured and then finally healed over. The resulting scar tissue was very thick and deep. Most women who under went this barbaric procedure never enjoyed sexual intercourse again but their Masters all reported being greatly satisfied. “No, I got it.”

With his head hung low, Daniel left the office with the paper bag of pill bottles and was off on his way to go and collect Calla who was sitting on the same gurney where he had left her several hours ago, waiting for him. The old rag doll lay on the floor at her feet, in her hand, she clutched the medallion around her neck. At some point in time between when he had dropped her off here and now, someone had taken the green velvet gown away from her and given her a set of rather ill fitting fatigues and a long sleeved black cotton shirt and a pair of USAF issued boots. Her auburn hair had been messed and played with, probably she had sat here twirling it while she waited for him, now it hung around her face and shoulders in an untamed manner. “Hey,” he said quietly as he walked through the door, “you ok?” Daniel watched as she nodded without looking up at him. “I bet you’d like to get out of here for a while, huh?” Now her eyes did turn to look at him. Lacing one arm gently around her shoulders, from now on he would be ever mindful of all those dark lines which ran through the inside of her and that ‘soft tissue damage’. “Come on, come with me. Let’s get out of here.”

## Chapter Twelve

Calla left the doll on the floor behind her. They walked for what seemed a very long time through brightly lit hallways that had large pipes running about the sides. Different parts of the walls had been marked with paint, while the words and symbols were what she recognized as English they were in some abbreviated form that she did not understand. Some of the pipes were painted a dull dark gray while other were bright red or yellow, the latter two were all marked with what she imagined was their contents. A soldier in uniform with a sidearm at his waist walked by, in his hand he held a familiar red and white tin can. "Do they still make that?" She asked in a quiet voice as he passed by them.

"Make what?" Daniel had been so intent on walking the path he was leading her on to notice the soldier who had passed them never mind the contents of his hands. She did not answer him, instead Calla glanced back over her shoulder and, with a slender finger, pointed at the man with the hard hat bearing the letters MP on his head. He was raising the white and red can to his lips. Daniel followed her gaze. "Coke?" Her eyes lit up and she smiled without realizing she was doing so. He thought it was probably the most genuine smile he had ever seen in his life. "Yes." He stopped their pace and glanced down at the woman by his side. "Do you want one?" The smile, that only a moment ago, he thought could not be any brighter suddenly lit up like a thousand suns. "I guess you do. There's a machine just around the corner."

As always, Daniel was true to his word. After they rounded the next bend, in the corner across from her stood a large machine with several large buttons. The image of a bottle of the precious caramel colored liquid was bright on the front, beads of water glistened upon the sides of the container as they gracefully made their way to a generous amount of ice at the bottom of the bottle. Calla watched as Daniel removed a leather object from his back pocket that was a wallet. She remembered that, men carried them in their pants while the women carried them in leather pouches called handbags. From the wallet he took a green piece of paper that Calla understood was money, he put it into a slot in the machine and the machine made a whirring noise not unlike the thing called an MRI had. Daniel hit one of the buttons and out popped a cold bottle just like the one on the cover of the machine. He held it out to her. "You know what this is, don't you? You've had it before."

Calla nodded excitedly as her shaking hand took the bottle from his grasp and unscrewed the top. Whhoosh. Air escaped from the bottle, little brown bubbles rose inside the liquid. She raised it to her lips and took half the contents down in three long slow gulps. "Ares can keep his nectar." She told him with eyes that were not only wide but also seemed to glow with an inner fire. "I'll take this any day." She raised the bottle once again and emptied it down her slender throat. "That is so good." The words on the bottle told her that she should look under the cap to see if she had won. Turning the round red top over in her hands the words 'play again soon' greeted her eyes. Calla turned the phrase over in her mind and shrugged her shoulders.

"Didn't win, huh?"

"I guess not." She agreed. "Daniel, do they still make chocolate?"

“Yes, they do. I think I can find a candy bar around here somewhere, would you like one?” Calla nodded. Daniel smiled gently, “One more time; would you like one?”

“Yes, please.” She held up the empty bottle and rolled her eyes toward it. Daniel didn’t say anything. She was sure that he knew what she was trying to convey but he was going to insist that she ask for it anyway. “May I have another?”

Daniel’s gentle smile grew wide and he kissed the top of her head. “Yeah, you may.” With Cokes and candy bars in hand, Daniel led them out of the installation and through the main gates of the base. Day had turned to night, he realized that he had lost all track of the time. There was a clean woolen blanket sitting in the back seat of a jeep, Daniel plucked from there without stopping and lead them further away from the base.

Taking a slow and deliberate pace, he led her up the nearest hillside. It was a short and gentle slope but still he worried whether or not she would make the climb with the wounds on her feet. Calla said nothing as they went up the hill to a place that was far enough away from the base to allow a little peace and quiet. He came up here often when he needed to think or just be away from it all. Daniel sat her down by a small circle of stones that he had assembled some years back and which now served him as a fire pit. Daniel gathered some dry grass and small sticks placed them in the circle and soon a campfire burned happily against the backdrop of the night sky.

“It’s nice here.” She said as she warmed her hands by the fire he had made.

Daniel stretched out by the fire and tried to decide if he should follow where she led him or if he should lead her where he wanted her to go. For now, he decided, he would do the following. “Yes, it is.” He tossed another branch into the flames. “I’m glad you like it. How do your feet feel, was the climb too much?” Calla did not answer his question, she just stared into the flames, Daniel understood that it was more than merely possible that she would not tell him if she were in pain. As the Cha’Dech, it was not her place to complain about such things. "I saw you heal Sam and Kanan, can't you heal yourself, Calla?"

Staring up at the stars she said; “Master must heal.”

Daniel had already taken note of the signs that she was going to pull away from him, short choppy phrases were a perfect example. If she said no more than what was absolutely necessary she felt scared, as though just one single wrong word, one solitary syllable out of place, would bring down a violent retribution. “And Kanan?” Daniel encouraged as he held her hand in his own.

A small shiver went down her spine. “Never healed wounds he laid on me.” Naganti Kanan would heal the wounds she had sustained during the normal course of her life, well if they were so deep as to require such special attention. Never did he heal the ones he laid with his own hands.

“Why?”

Calla sighed and gathered a bit of strength. “He wanted me to remember.”

“Remember what you had done and what the consequence was?” Across the growing flames, Callas’ head nodded. “I bet he did.” The image of the women laying her in Kanan’s bed after she had healed came to Daniel’s mind. The look on the drained man’s face as the women tucked her in next to him, how he had almost turned her away. The wound Sam had sustained was not life threatening but the gaping hole in Kanan’s chest certainly was. What would have been the outcome if Kanan had not allowed her to be laid next to him? “I am Master now, Calla. Can I heal you?”

“Would you?”

“Yes. Will you show me how?”

"Touch me."

Daniel rose to his knees and crawled to where she was, he took her foot in his hand and undid the laces on the black boots. Her bandaged foot slipped from inside its hold. It had swollen and blood was weeping through the gauze. With a light touch, Daniel unwrapped the bandage and let it fall to the ground. Familiar pale blue eyes stared down at her as his soft palm closed around her tender flesh. There was a tingling, which began in his head and made its way down his neck and shoulder to his arm and finally the palm that was touching her skin. As it traveled down the length of Daniel's arm it grew in intensity, his vision blurred and his ears began to ring. At about his elbow the tingling sensation evolved as blue energy began to radiate through the pores of his own skin, it meandered its way down to his fingers and finally engulfed Calla's wounded foot. The sound of her sucking in a harsh breath rose his eyes from the light to look at her, she had fallen back against the Earth, her eyes slowly closed before him. When Daniel looked back, the flesh of her foot was pink and perfect once again. Calla lay motionless on the ground as he unlaced the other boot and placed his palm over the wounds, the blue energy did its work and when he took his hand away from her flesh, it dissipated completely. She slept on the ground before him for six or seven minutes before she woke. As she rested Daniel sat under the stars, watching over her. Gradually his head began to cease its spinning and the tingling sensation became nothing more than a memory. In utter amazement, Daniel looked at his own hands and saw no sign a wound, his feet felt fine.. Healing her was not the same as when she healed another, he did not take on her wound as she did but merely made its close in it on itself. Unlike Calla who seemed to need a bit of rest now, Daniel felt energized, invigorated, by the experience

Soon her eyes were rolling open and Calla struggling a bit to raise herself onto one elbow and off the ground. As she did, a faint and hesitant smile crossed her lips. “Thank you.”

“For what?”

“Everything.” Her head swayed on her shoulders as the remains of his energy continued to flit around inside of her. “You took me from Naganti Kanan and brought me here. You heal me.”

“Doesn’t exactly make me a hero, Calla.” He reminded her. “I think any man would have done the same thing.”

Calla shook her head. There was one other man among them who might have done what Daniel had but it was not Colonel O'Neill. "O'Neill would have left me there."

"No," Daniel corrected her, "Jack probably would have thrown you over his shoulder and booked back to the Gate with you. But he would have brought you here, just as I did." Looking into her eyes, he saw that she did not believe him. "You don't trust him at all, do you?"

Calla did not answer his question. "I will do everything I can to aid in your happiness." She told him from across the flames. "I will not be a chain around your neck, Master Daniel. I promise. I am skilled in all of the womanly arts. I can cook, sew, keep house, if song should interest you I can play for you. There many other things in which I am skilled, Master Daniel." Her voice dropped low. "Things that will bring you great satisfaction. What can I do for you, Master Daniel?" Callas' tongue flicked out and licked her lips as she stared at him. After her rest, Calla too, felt very invigorated.

"To thank me?" He coaxed.

"To please you." She invited.

*Careful now, easy boy.* Maybe it was time he took the lead. "You don't have to do any of those things for me, Calla. I can take care of myself." There was a look of great disappointment that crossed her eyes; he caught it briefly, just before she dropped her gaze from his own. "Come here and sit with me." He held his arm out to his side and watched as she came to his call; he wrapped it around her when she settled in next to him. "You want to please me?" Callas' head nodded against his chest as she brought her hand up to the waist of his fatigues. "Yeah," Daniel caught her hand in his own before she could begin working the belt buckle that held his pants together. "No. New rule." Keeping his voice light and trying to find the right words he said; "when I want you, like that, I'll let you know, ok?" Calla did not answer him. "Other than that, don't. Don't go wandering around in my head either." Still she did not answer him. Walking that Razor's Edge, he wondered if he had not just caused her to back away from him altogether. Surely, Kanan had not rejected her in such a manner. Ever. No, Kanan had insisted on indulging himself in all of those skills and 'womanly arts' at every chance he got. To her mind, Calla had but one purpose, if he was not going to allow her to fulfill that purpose, what good was she to him? Daniel offered an alternative to sex. "If you want to please me, then talk to me."

"What shall I say?"

Those eyes of hers, one look into them and he wanted to experience everything that she was and everything she had to offer him. Try as he did in his day to day life to make a difference in this world and others, at the end of the day, he still had penis swinging between his legs just like any other human male. However, like any other human male, Daniel had his own dark fantasies that he kept hidden even from himself on occasion. Something in those deep green eyes called to that side of him like a siren's song. It brought the threatening thoughts to the forefront of his mind, offering the chance to make them reality. All he had to do was tell her what he wanted and she would do it. No matter what it was. Her eyes were shining at him. "Tell me about you. Where were you born?"

Calla had no idea why he would be interested in such a thing especially not when she offered him so much more than mere talk. Master Daniel was new to her and her to him, in the interests of satisfying him she was willing enough to go along with whatever he desired and besides this line of talk was infinitely more pleasant than her life with Kanan. "On the Isle of Skye near the Castle Dunvegan." Calla paused for a moment. "That's in Scotland."

"I know." Daniel commented as he wrapped his other arm around her as well. Calla let out a small sigh and nestled closer to him. "When?" There was the million-dollar question.

Lying next to him now, she began to relax as she breathed in his natural scent. Her voice became light and her mind drifted away, just for a few moments, to a place in time that had been calm and serene. "On the fourth day of October in the year nineteen-hundred and sixty-six the only daughter of the Lady Aphrodite and the Lord Ares."

1966? Had she really said 1966? If that were true then the Greek Gods could still be here on Earth somewhere. If they had no love for the Goa'uld then they could be very helpful indeed. "Is that AD?"

Calla seemed a bit surprised. "Yes, by the Gregorian Calendar. You still use that, don't you?"

"Yes," he agreed. 1966. That meant she was only two years older than he was.

"What year is it now?"

"It's two thousand and four." Daniel waited for her to say something more but she did not. "Calla, when did you leave Earth?"

Calla let out a deeper sigh and huddled as close as she could to her new Master. The memory was not pleasant but if it would be pleasing to him then she would say. "I was taken from my Mother's house in the small hours of the morning on the thirteenth day of July in the year nineteen-hundred and seventy-nine."

"What?" Daniel asked in disbelief. July 12, 1979 the day his parents died. She was spirited away just a day later. Just a coincidence, said a voice from somewhere deep inside him. "Never mind." Twenty-five years, dear God, she had spent twenty-five years of her life locked away with him. "Who took you? How did you get there?" Calla twitched beside him and Daniel smoothed his hand across her hair. "You're safe now. Tell me."

"Father." The word was flat but not completely without emotion, Daniel could not tell if it was love or hate for Ares that she was trying to hide from him. "He took me to a place that was covered with snow." Calla raised herself up on her elbow to look at him. "It was so cold, Daniel." Her body shivered and then settled again. "Father opened the Eye and took me to Naganti Kanan."

Unable to find the Gate buried in the Egyptian sands, Daniel knew that Ares had taken his daughter to Antarctica and used the Gate they had found there some years back. The very same Gate through which an SG Team had gone in search of Atlantis not that long ago. Ares had willingly

taken his only daughter to Tiberia and left her with Kanan. Daniel wanted to ask her why her Father had done such a thing but something in her eyes told him to hold his tongue for once and he refrained from asking his question just yet, she wasn't ready to answer it.

"Why do you want to know all of this?" She asked him. "What is so important about my family?"

Daniel thought for a moment and then attempted to explain, "You know that blue shield that you put up over Oz? "

"Hei. "

"Can you do that whenever you want to? "

Calla took a moment to think about it before she answered, her brow creased slightly as she chose her words. "I have only done it when there was a need." She explained finally. "You will ask the same about my healing? " She watched as Daniel pursed his lips and nodded. "That, also, I have only done when there was a need. Why? "

It was Daniel's turn to choose his words carefully before speaking. "There is a race of beings called Goa'uld, "he began but was interrupted.

"Is that what you think?" Calla hissed in shock, she sat up quickly and stared at him with widened eyes. "That I've a serpent in my head? You think my Father and Mother were Goa'uld?"

"No, I don't think that. " Again, Daniel stopped to choose his words. Calla knew what a Goa'uld was, just as she had known that Teal'c was Jaffa. His unintended innuendo insulted her and he did not think it wise to tell her that Dr. Frazer had already checked to see whether she had had a serpent in her head. In a soft voice, he attempted once again to explain, "Well, Cronos was the father of Zeus, right? "

"No! Cronos is a pig! "Calla spat with disgust.

"Well, from mythology we know..."

"Nothing," she hissed as her eyes narrowed upon him. "My Grandfather..."

"Zeus?"

Calla shot him a look as if to say 'who else'? and then continued on "banished Cronos to the Pits and away from the Mortals He loved so much. Long ago, Grandfather helped to save your race. My family is not of their kind."

"Calla," he waited while she turned to look at him, "the Goa'uld threatens Earth now, and we need allies. If Zeus helped to save my race, do you think...your family...would help us to defeat the Goa'uld? "

"They had no love of the serpent Gods. If the Goa'uld ever come here again, you will not have to ask for my family's assistance." What did any of this have to do with why she was here with him? Silently she stopped to remind herself that he was completely unaware of their prior meeting. While her mind told her that this was a good thing, sitting there with him under the light of the full moon, her heart ached for him to remember. He did not and she moved further away from him.

There was something in her eyes that Daniel thought even she was unaware of, something sadly shimmering back there in the emerald depths. Both his heart and mind told him that he should not ask his next question but it was so very important. "Where can I find them, your family?" That sad shimmering something seemed to cringe away from both of them, he watched it flee from her eyes back into the darkness of her mind.

So, maybe there was a method to Master Daniel's madness after all, Calla thought as she turned away from him yet again and stared up at the stars above. Orion was still drawing back his bow, Ares' ram still raced across the night sky and the Scales of Libra still hung in the balance overhead. The idea of seeing Father again filled her with hope and panic. He would not be pleased to see her, no, not at all. Lord Ares was not a man that one angered lightly. "If I took you there, would it please you?" Still her eyes focused on the stars and not on Daniel.

"It would."

Calla smiled a hauntingly sad smile as her eyes drew upon him. "Then I will take you. When shall we go?"

"I don't know. Soon." For a brief moment, he thought that she would be better off with the Boys in the Lab. "It's cold, come and sit by the fire with me." Still she sat where she was just staring at him, unsure of what to do next. Walking along the knife blade, mindful of where he stepped, "It would please me if you would come and sit by the fire with me, Calla." Daniel kept his voice firm but soothing and his eyes non-threatening.

Calla rose to her feet and submitted to his wish that she sit with him. The fire he had made was warm and inviting she watched as he tossed another bit of wood into the flames and held his arm out so that she could rest by his side. Daniel watched as she reached to hike up a gown that she was not wearing and looked down at herself and the military clothes that overwhelmed her small frame. She nestled in beside him.

"Not too much makes a lot of sense right now, does it?" He asked her.

"Not too much, Master Daniel."

"Hmm. What did I say about that?" He asked in gentle voice as he ran an open palm down the length of her hair, he had let her get away with that too many times this evening already. It was starting to put ideas into his head, dark ideas.

"Sorry."

“It’s all right, you’ll get used to it. Just Daniel.” He reached out for her hand and took her fingertips inside of his palm. Daniel had asked a question of her earlier today and to his mind had not received a satisfactory answer he thought he would ask again. Not just yet, though, he wanted to work up to it first. “What does Sa’Tan mean?”

A grimace crossed her brow as she gazed on his face. “Guardian?” Calla shook her head. “Protector?” Again, she shook her fiery locks. The lines in her brow eased as the answer came to her. “Avatar.” She proclaimed. “Sa’Tan is Avatar. Yes, that’s it.”

Her answer turned itself over in his mind as he replayed that part of last night’s ritual.

*I am Sa’Tan. I give you all that you need. Mine is the only hand. Mine is the only voice. I will defend you with my life. I am Daniel, I am Sa’Tan*

“Was Kanan Sa’Tan?”

“Co.”

“Am I Sa’Tan?”

“Sa’Tan Daniel.”

“Sa’Tai Callestah.” Daniel returned without thinking and watched her smile. Something inside his mind let out an audible clicking sound. Not Kelly. Not Calla.

Callestah was her full name; he knew that just as surely as he knew that he was Dr. Daniel Jackson. Why had it taken him so long to bring that thought to the fore?

“Calla, do I know you? “

Wishing to say that he did but feeling it better to fib a bit she answered him. “Co.” It was still the truth, at least partially. Daniel did not know her, who she was, what she was, although he was coming to find out about it. Whatever it was that he might be remembering, it was too long ago and too far away. “Why ask this?”

Depending on his answer to her question, perhaps she would change her mind about the answer she had given him.

“I don’t know. “ Daniel admitted softly. “There’s just something familiar about you, I guess. “ It wasn’t anything about her or the way she had told him no, but Daniel had the distinct feeling that she was lying to him, though he hadn’t the faintest idea of why. “Who was your master before Kanan?”

Calla looked away from him and those lines returned to her brow. “There was no Master before Kanan.”

“Who will be your master after me?”

The lines creased further. “There will be no Master after you.”

*Nin aswanz, gin aswanz.*

“Why not? If something happens to me...” Daniel’s voice trailed off as his thoughts turned to the Gate and how many times he put his life in danger just for the sake of going off on an adventure. Would he have to stop going to other worlds now? Putting his own life on the line was one thing, putting hers on it was quite another. “Can’t I give you someone like Kanan did?” His eyes did not meet hers as he asked the question, he was afraid of what he would see there. Her breath drew in quickly and she tried to pull her hand away from his. *Stay with me.* Daniel had no idea why that was the message he kept sending her but it seemed right, more than that, it seemed to work. Each time he thought it; she stopped in her tracks and moved no further away from him. Sometimes she even moved a little closer.

Confusion set into her mind once again, didn’t he want her? Now that he had claimed her, would he turn her aside? Everything was so different now and she found herself second-guessing her own judgment, maybe she should not have pushed Naganti Kanan into letting her go. Maybe she should have stayed with him in his Keep and his bed. “Co. I can not drink from the cup again.” Master Daniel was rejecting her. He had taken her from Kanan, had even submitted to the ritual of bonding and he had brought her to Earth. Brought her home. Now he wanted to hand her off to some other Master? This she did not desire. Above everything, she wanted to stay with Daniel, even if he never remembered her. Calla turned to him and stared deeply into those hauntingly familiar eyes, they pulled at her heart and offered to fill her soul. But in this moment she would have preferred to be back on Tiberia with Naganti Kanan, at least there she always knew what to do or what to say. She always knew where she stood or lay. Why would his mind bid her stay while his words told her that she was unwanted? What kind of game was Master Daniel playing with her head? Her heart? She didn’t know, but she knew that she would rather face the anger in Naganti Kanan’s eyes than the emptiness in Master Daniel’s. “You don’t want me.”

“I didn’t say that.” Daniel said in a tone that he hoped was reassuring.

“You did.” Calla countered. “Twice now you have said this.” Calla reached out, put her slender fingertips beneath his chin, and turned his face to look at her. “Why? What have I done? Tell me and I will make amends.”

That siren song echoed in his head once again. Yes, she would make amends all right. “You’ve done nothing wrong.” The hardness between his legs that had gone to sleep when she had begun to cry now returned to him vigorously. Staring into those eyes, he realized just how easy it would be to tell her that she had done something wrong, that she had displeased him in some way.

Then Daniel could just bend her over the log that his back now rested upon, put her ass up in the air... and....

“What? Tell me. I see it in your eyes.” Calla’s free hand moved to touch the hard part of him. “I will please you, if you let me. I am very skilled, I can do many things that you will find satisfying.”

Although he should have, he did not stop her from gently massaging the part of him that ached to be inside of her again. Cha'Dech, King's Whore. Daniel did not doubt that he would find her most satisfying. He already had, hadn't he? She had hardly been awake for the event. While one of her hands held his eyes firmly a fixed to her own, the one working his lower half now deftly undid the buckle of his belt and began to work on the button and zipper. The dark fantasies swirled around his mind. Maybe just for a moment, it wouldn't be so bad... would it?... just for a moment,...if he let her, if he let her.

Calla had reached her goal and her head now descended toward it.

*Not so bad.*

*Just this once.*

Her breath was hot upon his stiffness. He could feel the heat of her lips, the moistness inside her mouth that waited for him.

*Just this once.*

*Not so bad.*

Daniel found his hands were in her hair, slowly pushing her toward where she wanted to go. "Calla, don't." His voice was weak but his protest was heartfelt. She stopped where she was, her head at his waist and his hard cock in her hand, her emerald eyes peeked out at him from behind a mass of auburn hair. "What did I tell you about that?" Strength began to return to him, Daniel raised himself off the ground, zipped up his pants and tossed a few handfuls of dirt onto the burning fire. "It's late, it's time to go back." His voice was gruff as he tried to hold the thoughts in his head at bay. Daniel took her by the hand and led her back down the hillside.

Once back inside the base, Daniel led her through the maze of hallways to his quarters and was quite surprised upon opening the door. There in the middle of his room was a queen-sized bed complete with pillows, sheets and blankets. It had a metal frame and wooden head and footboards.

"Like it?" The voice asked from behind him. Jack. It had to have been Jack. Daniel turned to look at him. "After you got the Gate goin' again the other day, I had it expedited for you." He looked past Daniel to Calla. "I didn't know you'd be sharing it so soon, glad I got the big one."

"Yeah, me too."

"Yeah, well, I was gonna stick you with a twin but...well...."

"Thanks." Daniel motioned for Calla to enter the room. He wondered if Jack would never stop surprising him. "Going home?"

"Yeah, see ya in the morning." Once again, Jack looked past Daniel to the woman who was now accompanying him. "Night Calla." She turned her head to look at him and give him a slight smile. "Don't do anything I wouldn't do." Jack said cheerily to Daniel.

“Kind of leaves the field a little open, doesn’t it?”

“That’s my boy.” Jack tussled the hair on Daniel’s head, waved at Calla once more and then made his way down the corridor toward home.

Daniel walked inside and shut the door. “I know it’s not much and it’s a mess.” He began to pick up paperwork that strewn across the room. “But it’s home.”

“You live here?”

“Yes. We live here.” He corrected and watched as she looked around the small room. It was very different from Kanan’s palace but she would get used to it.

Calla's eyes scanned the small room where she was to spend her days. Two things caught her attention, the first was the black and white photograph of Master Daniel's wife, Sha're on the nightstand by the bed. The other was the fact that there was something missing from this room.

“Where is the fire?” The woman in the photograph was very beautiful and Calla understood how and why he had loved her, why he continued to keep her in his heart.

“No fire.” *Always will you sleep by my fire.* Maybe he should have paid more attention to the words he had spoken during the ceremony. He turned around to see her looking at the photograph and noticed that she was back to using short choppy phrases to speak to him in. It made a little more sense to him, those short phrases and the child-like voice and appearance she sometimes had. Part of her would always be a frightened 12 year-old girl who was being taken to a far away land as punishment by the one man who was supposed to love and care for her above all others; her Father. Though she tried to hide that little girl from him and probably even from herself it simply was not possible to do all the time.

Callas’ brow furrowed and she let out a small sigh. “Daniel?”

“Yes?” He waited for her to say something about the picture.

“Dirty.” She shook her head and held her hands out to him.

“Hmmm.” He took her hands in his, “I see that. Come with me.” Daniel led her into the small bathroom and to the shower there. “Here, you can wash up, ok?” Calla stared at the contraption until Daniel showed her how to work it.

“Hot!” She cried and pulled her hands away from the running water.

“Sorry, I’ll fix it.” He turned up the cold water to balance it out. “Better?”

“Hei, kum'atae.”

“You’re welcome. You shower, here’s a towel and you can use my robe.” He pointed to the large dark blue terry-cloth robe hanging on the back of the bathroom door. “I’ve got some work to do, I’ll be right there.” He pointed to the larger room on the other side of the bathroom door as he left her to her shower.

Daniel let out a large breath and shook his head while he tossed his glasses onto his desk. Daniel ran his hand across his eyes then down his face wondering what kind of mess he had gotten himself into this time. Jack was right, he had no fucking clue what he was going to with Calla only that she was here and it didn't look like she was going anywhere for the foreseeable future. The faint sounds of music came from the bathroom, Daniel realized she had learned how to work the radio that he kept there. It did not pick up many radio stations, not this far under ground, mostly he used to play audio books or CDs while he showered or shaved. However, it didn't seem to be having any problem picking up good stations now, he put his ear to the door and heard the sound of running water and Pink Floyd crooning about how he had become Comfortably Numb.

The water and the music shut off and she emerged from the doorway, her hair wet and tangled her skin freshly pink from the heat of the water. Her body encased in his robe. He smiled and shook his head; he really was going to have to get her some clothes. Then again, maybe it would better if he didn't. "Come here." Daniel straightened the collar, re-tied the knot at her slim waist, and retrieved his hairbrush from the bathroom. The bristles on the brush were for a military haircut like his own, they were too soft to tame the tangled mass of hair on her head. There was something else he would have to get for her.

"Sleep now?" She asked for the second time, her eyes were heavy.

Daniel looked at it watch, it was almost 11pm. "Yes, you can sleep now." He agreed and led her toward the bed. With great effort, Calla began to lay herself down on the floor between his bed and nightstand. "What are you doing?"

"You said, sleep now." Her brow furrowed once again.

"Not there." He picked her up off the floor. "You sleep here." Daniel turned back the blankets on the bed. Calla made no move to get into the bed she only stared at him. Daniel bit back the urge to be angry, it wasn't her he was angry with it was Kanan and the situation he was currently in.

"Kanan isn't here anymore, remember?"

"Yes."

"You do what I say now, right?" He coached.

"Yes."

"I say, you sleep in the bed and not on the floor." She opened her mouth to protest and he raised a hand to silence her. "In the bed." He repeated. Daniel tucked her in under the covers. "Tomorrow, if you want, I'll see about getting you your own quarters, would you like that?"

Calla's sleepy eyes stared up at him while her hand searched for his; she shook her head against the pillow without saying a word.

"How about your own bed? You don't have to sleep with me if you don't want to, but I don't want you on the floor."

Her hand held tighter to his and she shook her head again. With her sleepy eyes staring up at him, Daniel asked the question which had been on his mind earlier in the evening. "And the ritual? You remember it all, don't you, Calla?"

"Hei, I remember." She admitted softly. "I remember everything." As with just about everything she said, her words held a deeper meaning than the seven syllables she had spoken. Daniel kissed her forehead and withdrew from her.

"Why did you lie to me? "

"I saw it in your mind. The memory does not please you. You fear that you..." Calla cut her own words off as she searched for an alternative word.

Daniel interrupted her before she could find the word she was looking for. "That I did what? That I..." he led.

Her ears did not miss the anger in his voice. "That you....took..." she stammered.

"Took? No, I don't think that's the word we're looking for." Daniel found that his open palms had clenched into fists and he and the hardness between his legs had returned. "Tell me, did I..."

It was Calla's turn to cut him off before he could say the word. "Co, I will not such a wicked word to express what you did," Calla shook her head and plodded forward. "You feared that you... took..." she emphasized the word as she paused on it, "something which was not yours for the taking, but it was." Gathering more courage than she ever would have with Naganti Kanan, Calla reached out and grabbed his upper arm. "It is. Daniel is Master now and it is not possible for you to be guilty of that which you fear. Master can never be guilty of such a deed, no matter what." She looked up at him, her eyes heavy with tears and the wants of sleep she look up at him.

"Not even in my heart?" Daniel wondered aloud. If the master can never be guilty of such a deed, how could she possibly tell him 'yes'?

"You sang to me." Calla whispered in a tone which was both demur and strong.

"I did." Daniel agreed and brought the blankets tighter around her.

"To your mind, Master Daniel, does a man who..." she stopped and looked away from him, "...rapes..." Calla flinched as the words escaped her lips but she continued, "often lull his victim with song?"

"No."

"There is the answer to your question. Your mind was lost and confused, you were displeased with what you had done....I did not want to add to that. If you thought I did not remember then maybe your mind would ease and you would not be so displeased with me."

"I'm not displeased with you." Daniel brushed the hair away from her face. "But, listen to me, I get to decide what pleases me and what doesn't, not you." Though his words were stern, his voice was light. "You just tell me the truth and let me decide from there." Calla nodded her agreement to him. "OK, I'm going to stay up for a while, I have work to do. I'll be quite so you can sleep."

"Master Daniel?" Her voice, like her eyes, was heavy with sleep.

"What?"

"Are we far from New York?" Calla turned on her side so that she could look at him.

Daniel thought about it for a moment. "Yes, we are. Why?"

"I should like to see the Statue of Liberty." Her eyelids opened and closed, each time they closed further and stayed longer. "I hear she is very beautiful."

He kissed the top of her forehead and brought the covers around her chin. "She is." Daniel assured her. "Maybe one day I'll take you there. Tell me one thing before you go to sleep?"

"Yes."

"Why did Ares take you to Kanan?"

Calla turned on her side, away from him, wrapped her own arms protectively around herself she whispered, "I did a bad bad thing." Tears filled her quaking voice as a shiver went through her.

Daniel reached out for her she pulled away from him. "You weren't even thirteen yet. What could you possibly have done that was so bad?" If she would not come to him, he would go to her. Daniel sat on the edge of the bed and reached out slowly for her once more, watching, waiting for her to dart away from him but she did not. "Tell me."

"I ..." breath hitched in her chest as she started to cry. "I ...I did..." Still, after all these years, she could not say the words. Calla could not admit to her bloody deed. A violent shake racked her body and her weeping quickly became a harsh sound that seemed to arise from the depths of the Earth. She turned back towards him and wrapped her slight arms around Daniel's neck. Calla held on in a death grip as she continued to try to speak the words. "I did...I did *not*." Calla wrenched away from him once again and stared into the eyes that she thought so kind. "I swear, Master Daniel, I swear." Calla held her hands out to him. "Please believe me, Master Daniel, I did *not*."

In that moment, he would have given her anything. "I believe you." She willingly allowed him to sweep her up in his arms and hold her close. "I believe you. Shhh, it's all right, Calla." He whispered and rocked her back and forth in his arms, smoothing her hair as he offered her comfort. Daniel had no idea what horrible crime, what bad bad thing, she had done or been accused of. Only that whatever it was, she was not guilty. Ares had sent her to Kanan as a punishment for something. Whatever it was, whether she had done the deed or not, she had paid for it a hundred times over at the hands of her old Master. She would not keep paying for it at his hands.

“He said he would come back for me. Father promised.”

Daniel could feel her trying to get her own emotions under control and command her tears to stop falling. “And he never did. That’s who you thought I was, isn’t it? A messenger of Ares sent to collect you and bring you back to him.”

“Yes,” she admitted as she began to pull away from him again. “I thought he had forgiven me, but he never will.”

“I don’t know what you did or didn’t do, you don’t have to tell me right now, that’s ok. He never should have left you there, never should have taken you there.”

“He is Father. He does what he wishes.” Calla wiped the last of her tears from her cheeks and tossed her matted hair back over her shoulder. She closed her mind to her past and shoved the thoughts away. “It doesn’t matter, Master Daniel.”

“Of course it does.” He held up a hand to stop her from speaking again. “I’m sorry I upset you. We don’t have to talk about this anymore right now. I want you to sleep now, ok? Everything’s all right.” He stroked her cheek and brushed the hair away from her face. “No one’s going to hurt you here.”

## Chapter Thirteen

While Calla slept, Daniel returned to his lab and found something unexpected waiting on his desk, the book he had read from the night before and the staff he had used to take control of her soul. There was a small post-it note attached to it, in Janet's neat handwriting he read:

*These were tucked in with one of the bodies you brought back, forgot to give them to you earlier, thought you'd want them. Janet.*

The old woman must have stuffed this under the black silk they had used to wrap the corpses. He set straight to work with the small book and tapestry lying before him. Now that he was back in his lab with his computers and books, it did not take as long as he thought to decipher most of the text. Back when he was locked in that small tower room, he had not had the time to look through the contents of the book and instead concentrated his efforts on the passages that the elder woman had shown him. Now he could see that there were three rituals written in this book. At first, he had thought them to be the one in the same but there were differences. While all three were quite obviously intended to bind Calla to another person, the first ritual was clearly intended to be of a more temporary nature than the second one. The first eluded to the idea that the bond would last throughout adolescence and that condition seemed to be contingent upon the contents of the cup from which she drank. It almost seemed as though the first binding was meant to be a teacher/student type of relationship. Throughout adolescence, for Calla, that meant she would have been somewhere around eighteen when either the bond should have been broken or she would have undergone the second ritual. For a moment, Daniel wondered why that had not taken place, why they had waited an additional 19 years to remove the bond from her and then found his answer.

That second ritual eluded to a more permanent bond, in fact a lifetime bond. Again, it seemed to have something to do with the contents of the cup. This one, the one in which he claimed her, eluded to a relationship in which Calla was not only his property but his responsibility as well. Not in the teacher/student relationship but more along the lines of what she had said; an avatar or acolyte protecting her.

In the third he found something interesting and that Calla had not lied, there was no Master before Kanan and there would be none after Daniel. The third was a marriage ritual. There was no cup in this ceremony. The relationship of husband/wife and not Master/Submissive. Was it now his job to keep her from harm until this husband came along? And then what? Just hand her over to whomever he would be?

Something about either the contents or the cup, he wasn't sure which, but was sure that she could not drink from the cup again. Daniel found himself wishing that he knew what had been in those two cups! Before now, he had thought there to be some type of mild sedative in the cup, but perhaps he was wrong about that. Perhaps, whatever it was, it was a lot stronger than a mild sedative. There must be some type of herb or root, which was used as a type of bonding agent but

it, was probably also poisonous. It would take some digging to find such a ritual herb but he would dig for it. Whatever was in the second cup was probably meant to act as an antidote to the poisonous effects of the first. On through the night, Daniel sat at his desk deciphering the text, making notes, scratching things out and starting all over again.

Daniel pored over the words that he had said the night before and wished he had taken them a bit more seriously than he had at the time. In school they had taught him that such Pagan rites and rituals, like any other rites and rituals, were just words and ‘symbolic magick’. Maybe they had been wrong, certainly he had seen enough things on his trips through the Gate to be able to null and void a whole bunch of shit he learned in school. This ritual was greater than any Symbolic Magick he had ever encountered. This was some damn powerful Ju-Ju, not something to be fucked around with just for shits and giggles by any means. If he had had more time to think about it, Daniel realized he might not have taken part in the ritual after all, Calla might well still be stuck on Tiberia with Naganti Kanan. He found himself thankful that he hadn't had more time and that he had not known about the needles they were going to use on both of them.

*I am Daniel. I am your Lord. I am your life. Always will I provide the fire you sleep by. Mine is the only hand.*

Well, so much for the first promise he had made, hey? There was no fire for her to sleep by here on the base.

*I am Daniel. I am your Master. I am your heart. Always will I provide the food you eat. Mine is the only voice.*

Oh, well, we are really batting a thousand now, huh Danny? Let's see, today the food he had provided for her had consisted of two Cokes and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bar.

*I am Daniel. I am your Sovereign. My will is your will. Always will I provide shelter for you. Your spirit belongs to me.*

Well, doing a little better now, he did give her a roof over her head, or at least the military had provided it for her via him.

*I am Daniel. I am Lord. I am Master. The Lady Within Wakes only unto me. I am Sa'Tan. I give you all that you need. Mine is the only hand. Mine is the only voice. I will defend you with my life. I am Daniel, I am Sa'Tan.*

Had the Lady awoken? He didn't know.

Daniel turned his attentions from the text and the tapestry to the computer he began to search for information regarding Ares and Aphrodite. He did not find much more than the standard stuff that every first year student of Greek Mythology already knew. Aphrodite had risen from the Sea, so beautiful was she that all of the Gods fought over her. In the end, Zeus had given her to Hephaestus, blacksmith to the Gods. Aphrodite had railed against Zeus' decision; while Hephaestus was kind, he was the ugliest of all of the Gods. Hephaestus labored hard in Smith Shop day and night; he smelled of sweat and the grit of soot covered his body. His touch was always rough on her silken skin. She was the Goddess of Beauty, Light and Love.

Aphrodite loved all things bright and beautiful. She loved music and to dance. True to her title as the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite was especially enamored with all things having to do with art of lovemaking and experimented with all of them every chance she could. Above all, Aphrodite loved to be touched, more than the act of making love, she wanted to be stroked and caressed, it brought euphoria to her. Although certainly not adverse to any form of lovemaking, it was the sensuality and not the sexuality of the experience that captured the Lady of Love. It was not long before Aphrodite shied away from the blacksmith's touch of her husband and into the waiting arms of his brother, Ares God of War. Ares was tall, strong, handsome and every bit as passionate as Aphrodite. Against the will of the other Gods Aphrodite had engaged in a torrid affair with Ares that had lasted hundreds of years. Although both of them had many liaisons with other gods and mortals, not even under threat of death would Aphrodite leave Ares' side. She bore him three sons during their union; the most notable of all was Eros or Cupid, as he was known in the Roman pantheon. Daniel could find nothing regarding a daughter and no one by the name of Calla or Callestah. That was to be expected, wasn't it? Who in their right mind was trying to track the genealogy of the ancient Greek Gods FORWARD in 1966 or 2004? No one. Daniel did find one thing interesting in the story of the Lady Aphrodite and the Lord Ares; she had borne him four children according to history, all sons. Lord Ares, as far as Daniel could tell, had hundreds of sons with mortal women and goddesses alike. He had but one daughter and she was lying in Daniel's bed, waiting for his return.

Not finding anything else of much use where Calla's parents were concerned, Daniel turned his attentions toward finding what he could on ancient Greek gods and rituals. It turned out to be a longer search than he had thought. While finding the more mundane matters was fairly easy, finding detailed information was not. Searching site after site and online mythological encyclopedias, Daniel found himself wishing he had paid more attention in his Greek Studies courses instead of wondering what Michelle Brown was wearing under her skirt. Ah, those were the days. Daniel smiled a little to himself while he worked.

Problem was, he wasn't looking for something purely Greek in nature, now was he. No. Nor should he be looking to whatever traditions the Shankuk people held. The ritual was not Greek in nature at all; it was much along the lines of an ancient Celtic ritual. Kanan and his people had not written this ritual, he had simply found a way to twist it to his own best advantage. The ritual was something that, like the tapestry and rag doll, had been left behind with Calla when Ares took her through the Gate. So, who had written it and why? Why would Ares do something like that, if He was going to leave instructions or something behind with her, why weren't they of the Greek tradition, why weren't they even written in Greek?

The Shankuk people were a very odd mixture of cultures and Daniel figured that was because Kanan and his people were not indigenous to Tiberia. At some point in time Kanan's people had learned how to work the Gate and had used it to escape whatever home world they had for whatever reason they had. In their travels they had simply absorbed the other cultures they came in contact with and made their way of doing things, at least the ways they approved of, into the Shankuk method of doing things. Daniel wondered what became of the people who had been indigenous to the worlds the Shankuk visited and took over, had they too been absorbed into the Shankuk culture? By the looks of them, he didn't think so. Inter-breeding was not something which was likely to be smiled upon by the Shankuk. In the end, they had probably just obliterated

the people who had come before them. Where did that leave Calla? How did Kanan explain her to his people? Maybe Kanan had told them that she was a prize of some kind. Then again, maybe they all knew who Calla really was and had been hiding her in their midst. And if so, from who? And why? As crazy as it may have sounded to someone else, Daniel thought he was close to the truth with that. Still the 'why' of it all kept dancing out of his reach.

For the last time that night he compared the rituals in the book. In all they claimed to Lord, Master and Sovereign, and to have mastery over her heart, mind, body and soul. In all, fluid was drawn from the man, under the arm and at his side. Only in the last two was it also drawn from the base of his neck and plunged through her breastplate.

Only in Daniel's was there a claim to be Sa'Tan, the Avatar. Only in the second ritual did it say anything about "The Lady" or her needing him to defend her. Still he wondered, from whom was he supposed to protect her? Why couldn't she protect herself?

While the ritual appeared to be about binding her to him, something said that was just window dressing. In the end, he was going to be bound to her.

If nothing else, Kanan had told the truth about one thing, being bound to Calla was a big responsibility.

After untold cups of coffee and rolled bits of paper tossed at the waste paper basket, finally, in the wee hours of early morning, Daniel made his way back to his quarters. Opening the door, he remembered the woman who was asleep inside and refrained from turning on the overhead light. Instead, he dropped the papers onto his desk that was right by the door and took off his shoes and shirt. In the dark, he felt along the smooth wood of the footboard until he found the other side of where he had tucked her in earlier. Daniel drew the covers back and slid into the bed. Just wanting to feel the warmth of her skin beneath his hand, Daniel reached out to the other side and found it empty. He did not have to wonder where she had gone, he simply slid himself to the other side and turned on the small lamp by the bed. Lying on the cold floor with only his bathrobe to keep her warm was Calla and she was shivering in her sleep. His fingertips reached down and touched her hair. He took the comforter from the bed and laid it over her before he turned out the light. He lay awake for a while, alone in his new bed listening to the soft pattern of her breathing on the floor next to him. How many nights had Kanan left her battered and broken on the floor by his bed?

*I can't do this.* It was the one thought that tumbled in his mind in the darkness. *I can't do this.* In the grand scheme of things, Dr. Jackson was beginning to realize that he barely took care of himself and that Jack was right, Calla was not a pet. And really hadn't had a fucking clue as to what he was going to do with her once he brought her back to Earth. Nope, back on Tiberia all he had known was that she was leaving that planet with him, one way or another. Now she was here, where he had wanted her, she deserved so much more and so much better than what he could give her at the present.

Daniel reached down to touch the softness of her hair again and could not take the thought of her lying on that cold floor any longer. He turned on the lamp by the bed and gaze down at her. Calla was lying directly under the photograph of Sha're which sat on the nightstand by his bed.

Something inside of him knew that not only had Kanan made her sleep on the floor at his bedside as a sign of her submission but also, now she was showing her that same submission to him and the memory of his dead wife. Daniel drew a deep breath, reached out and put the photograph face down on the nightstand before he squatted down beside her. “Hey,” he whispered quietly so as not to alarm her. “Hey, Calla.”

She raised a small hand to her forehead and opened her eyes. “Master Daniel,” came her sleepy reply.

“Yeah, what are you doin’ down here, huh?”

“Sleep now.”

“What did I tell you?” He put his hands under her body to raise her off the floor. “Up there.” Daniel helped her into the bed, she turned to him as she slid into it and reached for the sash of the robe. “No.” He held her hands tight to keep the robe in place. “Sleep now.” He said in the same tone that she had used. “With me”. Crawling into the warmth of his new bed, he reached over and drew her close to his body. Calla looked over at the photograph with something that looked like longing in her eyes, and then she curled up in the space between his arm and chest and her longing soothed by the soft beating of his heart. Daniel thought that if he held her just a little longer, just a little closer, she would purr like a cat in his lap. Calla fit perfectly in the space where she was lying, like the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle, she just snapped into place (in his bed and his life if he let her) when she laid her head upon his chest. The day had been long and arduous, with her wrapped up by his side, his body warm and happy, his mind drifted off into a very deep sleep.

## Chapter Fourteen

The clock by Master Daniel's bed read 3:17am when Calla's eyes fluttered open as she woke to the same sound that had lulled her to sleep. Master Daniel's steady heartbeat had gone from a soothing cadence and soft thump-thump-thump to a primal beat that rivaled the drums on Tiberia. His skin covered with a fine bead of sweat and his breath began to come to shallow draws.

Calla did not want to wake him and so she did not turn on the light next to his bed, rather she sat up in the bed and brought his head to rest between her small breasts, the skin of his brow was soaking with sweat from the nightmare he was having. Master Daniel did not appear to approve when she tried to enter his mind, even if it was only to help him or to understand him better. Right now that didn't matter, caught deep in the grasp of the approaching nightmare she had no need to consciously enter his mind, he projected the image all around him. As she held him, rocking him very gently and running her finger tips across his brow the images in his head came to her own all by themselves.

Dream or no dream, in this state Calla would have recognized him anywhere just as she had when he first stood in the Great Hall of Kanan's keep. It was those eyes.

In Daniel's mind, it was a bright summer day and a small boy and his parents were entering a building where the sign read New York Museum of Art. The three of them very excited as the small boy held on to the hand of his mother. In the dark, Calla smiled at the image of her Master as a young boy, he was just as she remembered him to be, very cute and precocious, full of life and curiosity. His hair was shaggy and he had no need of those glasses yet, his pale eyes looked out onto the world without a barrier.

From the dream, she understood that Master Daniel's parents had been archeologists as he was and they were at the Museum today to erect a new exhibit.

"Danny, stand over there and try not to be in the way." His mother told him as they entered a large room where a pyramid of some sort was being erected. From her place as by-stander, she watched as the young boy crossed the room and began to take in the other exhibits as his parents worked. Soon there was a loud noise and she turned to see a big machine which was just revving up it's motor. Young Master Daniel wandered around happily taking in the sights and glancing back over his shoulder to see what his parents were doing.

The driver of the machine revved the engine as he began to work. It made a very loud and grating noise as it hoisted a large capstone into the air. Danny began to wander closer to where the cover-stone was being raised.

"Danny," came the soft voice and Calla turned to see her Mother walking towards her young Master, "Danny, come away from there, it's too dangerous." She put a protective arm around his small shoulders and led him away from where his parents were standing. Calla watched as the

cover-stone fell from the hoist and crushed the parents of her Master. Young Master Daniel screamed. Those beautiful pale blue eyes filled with fear and then tears. Mother offered the small boy comfort if only for a few moments, she stood with her arms around him, soothed his hair, rocked him gently and told him everything would be all right. Danny screamed. Danny cried.

In his sleep Daniel let out a harsh breath, Calla ran her fingertips across his brow.

"Sleep, Danny. Everything is all right." She whispered. Just like her, Master Daniel knew what it was to lose everything in the blink of an eye, to have it just swiped right out from under your feet. Never to return. He knew what it meant to have that empty gaping hole in your heart, to feel it always throb and ache and to know that no matter what you do or how hard you try, it would never be filled, never be satisfied. Feeling the weight of his sadness and despair, Calla brushed a tear away from her cheek and ran her fingers through his hair. "You're safe," she told him, "rest now." Daniel's breathing came easier and the sweat that covered him began to evaporate. Calla brought the blankets up around his shoulders. "I'm sorry, Danny."

In his sleep Daniel's heartbeat slowed down as his arm laid across her, pulling her closer to him, he laid with his body over hers. Calla looked down at him in the darkness, unsure of what to do. Naganti Kanan had never clung to her like this and had hardly allowed her to lay upon him in recent months. Calla did not argue with her instincts, she wrapped her arms around her new Master and pulled his sleeping frame closer to her. She kissed the top of his head and drew a deep breath to fill her head with his scent.

With her mind stuck on Instant Replay, Calla sat the rest of the night in the dark with Master Daniel's head on her breast. Filling herself like this was so easy; he would sleep through it and never really know the extent of the gifts he gave. The thought both pleased and disappointed her. Encouraging thoughts began to form in her mind as she stroked his hair and gently drank in the touch of his skin next to hers. The dream had told her that some part of him did remember Mother coming to him and turning him away from the danger that had taken the lives of his parents. Might some part of him not remember her as well? Some small part hidden way back in the dark recesses of his Memory Warehouse? No, probably not. That day was a dark and tragic, one that Master Daniel would never forget. The day that he had met her had been a day just like any other, nothing special really. Just the chance encounter of two children running around a mall in search of whatever it is adolescents find interesting at any given moment. For her it had been records and blue jeans, he had been in search of something to fill his stomach.

It was nothing, really.

Just a chance encounter.

Calla wrapped her arms around him in the darkness and let out a heavy sigh. Yes, just a chance encounter, nothing really.

Nothing at all.

Master Daniel would never remember such a small incident. Why should he? That was just as well.

It would not probably mean anything to him even if he did recall. Or worse yet, his memory would lead him to know of her own culpability and that she could not risk.

Calla only wished that she could forget it as easily as he had. On the other hand, maybe not. Maybe it was right that one of them remember. Just for a moment or two. Calla held the sleeping man in her arms and felt the pull at her heart. She did not resist it or try to hold it down while she held him close. Even then, when he was so young, he had made her heart hurt and ache inside her chest when she stared into those wonderful eyes. "You've grown to be a very handsome man. I knew you would, Danny. I remember when you were small. I remember everything. I have missed you so much." Calla cuddled her cheek against the top of Daniel's head and ran her fingers through his hair. Yes, just for one moment, that would be ok....

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May 15, 1979

Athens, Greece

The sun was shining high overhead and the islands were quiet. Mother had gone off to do what She did best; cast her spells of Love upon the mortals of this land. Father was off doing what He did best; reeking havoc upon the same mortals. Eros was off in his castle pining away for his lost Psyche and Hades was tending to the Underworld. Callestah was alone. She had wandered down to the beach and taken the opportunity to steal one of the small sailing boats that was anchored there. Knowing she would face the wrath of her Father should He find out at this little escapade and without looking back at her guarded island home, off on a grand adventure yet again, Callestah set sail to the main land.

Was it her fault that her Grandfather had bestowed upon His love of their kind?

Certainly, it was not.

As she sailed across the channel Callestah kept her mind fixed upon her goal, which just happened to be the nearest shopping mall. It was there that the lights glittered and music played through speakers while the aroma of hot food tickled her nose. The place where the Mortals lived was very different from her hidden island home. The islands were barren, there was nothing to do and no one to do it with. Callestah was the only child on all three islands, the last one of her kind to be born in more than five hundred years. The Ones that Remained were old and decrepit for the most part, they did not understand her desire to be among those who were not like her. All she wanted was what They had and enjoyed for millennia the chance to walk among the Mortals, to interact with them.

To be like them.

Although she was not aware of it at the time, this was the last trip Callestah, daughter to Lord Ares and Lady Aphrodite, would make to her forbidden shopping mall.

Callestah hid the boat on a secluded beach and wandered up the sand to the city before her. People were milling about everywhere, on the beach and on the land. So many people! She wandered through the huge double doors of the local mall and made her way to the Ladies Room where she could have a moment to herself. Mortals used something called money in order to make their

purchases and she had none. In the privacy of the bathroom, she took a moment to conjure up a bit of cash for herself. It was an easy trick, one that Eros had taught her just in case she should ever find herself in a place where she needed it. Oh, Father had been so angry with Eros when He found out! Callestah smiled a little to herself as she exited the stall with two hundred Dinars in her pocket.

The mall was quiet today, most of the people were out enjoying the sunshine and warm weather on the beach or in the parks. Callestah wandered from store to store and quite literally ran into Danny Jackson, a mere mortal boy, and lost her heart. She had been 12 and he 10. Neither love nor desire should ever come to two who are so young, yet sometimes, on rare occasions, for reasons of its own, it does just that.

She had just come out of a record store and was looking into a Victoria's Secret window, one hand holding a paper bag marked Macy's which held two pairs of very forbidden blue jeans along with the clothes she had been wearing when she docked and the other filled with record albums she had just purchased. Callestah never even heard him coming. Just one moment she was standing and peering into the window and the next, she was on the floor of the mall with the contents of her bags sprawled across the floor. Her head hurt, it pounded and rang while stars danced in front of her closed eyes. When she regained herself she looked up to see a boy with pale blue eyes holding his hand out to her and saying he was sorry for running into her like that. Without thinking about it, she took the hand that he offered to her, and it did not burn, but it was smooth and warm inside her own.

"I'm Danny," he offered in a hurried tone, "are you all right?"

Using one hand to brush the dust from her new jeans, she told him she was unharmed. She stared down at the naked skin of his hand still pressed to her own and wondered how that could be. Instinctively she tried to pull it away from him but Danny held on and refused to let her go. It was not an offensive move on his part and it held no malice. With her hand inside his, Callestah could read all the thoughts going through the young boy's mind. Danny was still living in era of Girls Are Yucky. The trouble in his mind was the thought that maybe this girl wasn't so yucky after all. Quickly, he helped her pick up the bags she had been holding while gazing into the store window.

"What's your name?" Danny asked when she didn't answer him. "Hey, I'm up here." He moved his hand in front of her eyes to bring them up to look at his face.

"Callestah." She answered as she turned her head to look at him. She was two years his senior and she had to crane her neck up at him even then so that she could look into those soft blue eyes of his. What did she see there? What was that dancing behind his eyes? Callestah saw the man that this boy would become and he was strong of will and heart, he was kind, intelligent and brave. For one moment she thought that she would very much like to know this 'Danny' when he grew to be a man. Feeling as though she were standing on the edge of some great abyss, she wanted to reach for his hand again but did not.

"Hey, you wanna go get somethin' to eat? I got money." Danny told her.

Heavy footfalls were close behind her and the marks on her neck began to burn, she raised her hand to her neck to cover the glow. Father was near and so was Mother. They had returned to the island to find her gone and come looking for her. Before she could tell Danny to go back about his business a large hand gloved in black leather laid itself on her shoulder. The bags, which they had just picked up, dropped from her hand to the floor of the mall. With her young mind still standing on the edge of that abyss and staring into the boys' eyes, Calla pitched forward and fell into the gaping hole. "It is time to leave." A guarded voice held thinly veiled anger, she had defied Him again and she would pay for it when He returned her to His cave. Better to be forever falling into that endless blue abyss than to live with what was coming next. One day, the boy with the pale blue eyes would catch her. No matter how long or how hard she fell, he would catch her.

"Good-bye, Danny."

Ares began to lead her away from him.

"Wait," his small voice called back to her but it was too late. "Hey! Your stuff!" Danny shouted as he picked up the bags she had been carrying. When he looked up again, they had disappeared into the crowd. The man who had come to collect her had to be the tallest man he had ever seen in his whole entire life, Danny could not see his head above the crowd.

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"That's enough." Calla said to herself in the darkness and held the sleeping man close to her the remainder of the night but she did not sleep. Tonight and for many nights to come, she would keep watch and make sure the nightmares stayed away from both of them.

## Chapter Fifteen

While Daniel slept peacefully nestled in Calla's arms, the sun rose on Tiberia and Naganti Kanan awoke with no woman by his side. Lonely were the days ahead but he might finally be able to find some peace in them as well. Wanting to be near her, he slipped out of his room and made his way to third floor and to the center tower, to the room where the man called Daniel had waited for the ritual that would take her away from him and this world.

Kanan opened the door to the tiny room and climbed into the small canopy bed pulling the pillow and the rag doll that lay there close to his large body, they still held the faint scent of her. What had he done and why? Some of his counselors would call him a fool and admonish him for letting her go. The Gesh'tah had returned and she was their best defense against them if nothing else. Kanan already knew that he would lead his people through the N'kte once more, they would find another home one far away from the Gesh'tah. The priests would understand they would stand up for his decision. Almost as if on cue, a faint knock fell upon the door. Kanan clutched the pillow tighter. Kanan did not turn around as the door squeaked open and its shadow fell across him, he did not have to look up to know who had entered the room.

"I thought I would find you here, my Lord."

"Go away."

"You did the right thing."

"Then why does it feel so horrible?"

"It was time."

Kanan knew those words to be true. Calla had been with him for more years than he could remember. Always there, always by his side, always so willing to serve. Always so willing to please him.

"You love her."

"Once, perhaps I did." Kanan agreed and turned on his back, his eyes looked up to behold the site of Marteen, the High Priest who had presided over last night's ritual. "No more."

"You still do, my Lord. I can see that you worry about her."

"I fear for her, whether she is with me or him." Kanan turned away from the man standing next to him and stared out through the window at the ring of trees with a blank expression on his face.

"They will never come for her. They have forsaken her, you know."

“Hei.” Marteen agreed in an undersized voice. “You did the right thing.”

“They left her here too long.” Kanan raised his arm to cover his brow. “Too long.” His voice was nothing but a whisper confessing to the darkness. “I tried, so hard and in the end, I could no longer stop myself.” The dark man drew a deep breath into his lungs that exited as no more than a sigh.

“She has a new Master now, she is not your concern any longer. Your burden has been lifted, my Lord. You should rejoice.”

Kanan dropped his arm to stare into the eyes of his High Priest. “She made a foolish choice.” Denigration was clear in his voice. What a foolish girl. What a clever girl. Calla had decided she wanted to leave Tiberia with Daniel when she first saw him of that Kanan was sure. However, she had not allowed Daniel to challenge for her. No, that might mean he would lose and she would still be stuck here with him. She had waited for her chance to make her break and then forced Kanan into letting her go. Daniel was unharmed and she was free. Clever, clever girl.

“It was hers to make. You always knew you would have to let her go one day.” Marteen felt pity for his Lord and tried to hide that fact from his tone.

“You don’t know.” Kanan lamented as he lay on the bed where Calla slept as a child. “The things I did to her. Those that I made her do for me. Perhaps if she had been Shankuk and I could have taken her for my wife....”

Marteen interrupted, “She is not. Pardon my arrogance, Lord Kanan,” he began, “you and I both know if she continued to stay here she would never be anything more than your whore. Callestah deserves better than that. She is more than that.”

“Yes,” Kanan agreed without looking at his High Priest, “don’t you think I know this?” He grumbled. “Look at me, Marteen!” Kanan demanded as he looked up at the gray haired man standing over the bed. “I am older than you are, I remember when you were in diapers.” Kanan held his youthful hands in front of his eyes. “Look at me.”

“Her gift to you, my Lord?”

“Gift?” He snorted. “She kept me young so that I could what? Fuck her longer?”

“So that you would live to keep watch over her.”

“Ah, is that what it was for? Now she will give this gift to her precious Daniel. Nevertheless, Daniel is weak. He will turn on her sooner than I did. She will be stuck with him. What will become of her when that happens?”

Marteen thought about it for a moment. “Daniel is not weak, Lord Kanan. Do not underestimate him, his heart is strong and his mind stronger. Do not despair there is hope for her. The bond he forged is powerful, it will last.”

“You have seen this?”

“Hei. Even if he is not aware of it, he did come here for her. When the time comes, if she allows him to, Daniel will stand.” Marteen left the room and his Lord.

## Chapter Sixteen

At promptly 9:30 am, the members of SG1 gathered in the briefing room to discuss their new companion and what they were going to do with her. Daniel laid out his new theory as he passed around copies of a report he had made up early in the morning after he dropped Calla off with Janet. However, he did first make sure that he brought her down to the mess hall and fed her (what passed for) a good breakfast. Calla had taken cereal and juice and Daniel tried to get her to eat the half-cooked bacon but she refused once he confirmed her suspicion that at one time the bacon on her plate had been an animal. Daniel had asked her if that was a personal or possibly even a religious choice on her part but that was not the case. She revealed that Naganti Kanan did not allow her to eat meat, he had kept her to a diet of fruit, vegetables and grains. Daniel wanted to tell her that she could eat the meat if she wanted to but after twenty-five years without it, reintroducing meat products to her diet would have to be done over time or she would become very ill. That wasn't any thing particularly special about Calla, it was just what happened to the human (and Janet insisted that Calla was human) body if it cleared itself of meat for a long period of time. The stomach could not digest it and rest of the human system just couldn't handle it.

Daniel watched as she picked at the cereal and he made her take the anti-biotic, percodan, and supplements that Janet had prescribed. Calla did not want to take any of them but at his insistence she downed the handful of pills and gave him a small smile. To his eyes, she looked pale and weak this morning, she had not given him any trouble when he dropped her off with Janet for more tests, even though she had confided in him that she did not like them.

"I know it's not much, but I think I've got a good bit of this figured out." He began. "I did ask her about everything Jack, just like you wanted."

"Hey, he took my advice. Must be a sign of the Apocalypse or something." Jack cracked with a smile.

Daniel ignored the comment and relayed the information that she had told him the night before, pairing it with the information he had been able to dig up online and in his dusty old Greek Mythology books he laid a new theory before his teammates. Not a really a new theory, it was more like he added information to the theory he was already holding to.

"According to this," he flipped through a few pages in the report, "in Celtic traditions, sometimes the children of the gods could be a bit unruly," he began.

"Sounds normal, teenagers and all." Jack quipped.

"Yeah, I guess." Daniel agreed with a smile and went on. "Anyway, sometimes the children would be bound to one of the other gods. Like an apprenticeship...a teacher"

"Someone to give them structure." Teal'c intoned from his side of the table. "Sounds reasonable."

“Kanan?” Major Carter asked with disgust in her voice as she glanced through the paperwork Daniel had given her. “He’s hardly a good choice, don’t you think?”

Daniel had thought about that question throughout most of the night and decided that Kanan was probably Ares’ ideal as far as someone to teach his daughter. “On the contrary, Ares probably hand picked him for the task. He is the God of War, remember?” Daniel returned. “the problem is, it was never meant to be permanent. From what I can gather, that first binding was some sort of teacher and student thing and should have lasted until she was eighteen or so.”

“OK, fine, if you say so. Then what? What happens after the apprenticeship is over?” Sam asked again.

“Well, then, the offending youngster would be given the opportunity to demonstrate that he or she had learned to deal with their powers and could live a normal productive life.”

“Sounds more like Juvenile Hall for the Extremely Gifted. With Kanan as the warden.” Jack interjected.

Daniel nodded his head while he thought it over, not quite the words he would have chosen but, “Sort of, yeah.”

“So what then? What if they kid couldn’t make it?” General Hammond asked.

“Then the second ritual...”

“The one you took part in,” Jack reminded him.

“Was meant to be more permanent.”

“Lock down.” Jack said with fairly good-natured disgust. “Up the river for life.”

Daniel grimaced. “Let’s not look at it quite that way, shall we?” He knew he wasn’t getting things quite right but still Daniel plodded forward. The Celtic rituals he found were the only things he’d come across which even remotely fit with what was going on with Calla. “But, this time, it’s not quite like that.” Daniel tossed the book on the briefing table. “She said Sa’Tan means avatar or acolyte. I’m supposed to protecting her from someone or something.”

“Forever?” Jack asked as he shoved the papers around before him.

“No, just until her husband comes along.” The sadness in his voice was unmistakable though he tried to hide it from those in the room and himself.

“There is only one problem with your theory, Daniel Jackson.” Teal’c spoke. “Kanan is not a God.”

“Neither am I and I don’t know what he is.” Daniel admitted. “But you’re probably right, he

probably isn't a God, but that doesn't seem to be a prerequisite. In addition, the reason she was not unbound from him is probably just that Kanan didn't want to let her go. However, if he took her permanently, he would have to accept whatever children she gave him, they would be his heirs and rule when he died." The image of that perfect ring of trees appears behind his eyes again as he spoke, Daniel shook his head to clear the image but it would not go. "Kanan didn't want that either. I don't think they were aware of the fact that they could have let her go. No one bothered to tell them." Daniel rubbed his temple.

"Have you also figured out that she chose you? That she set this whole thing up?" He turned to look at the younger man. "Well, have you?"

"What are you talking about?"

"She used you to get off that rock, to get away from him. She knew you," Jack stopped for a second and thought, "or one of you, would stand up and 'claim' her."

"What do you mean one of us?" Daniel looked around at the two other men in the room with a bit of suspicion in his eye.

"You did not notice, did you? You were too intent on the moment." Teal'c said and watched the puzzled expression on Daniel's face. "As Kanan asked who would take her, Corporal Blood stepped forward at the same moment as you."

"You opened your big mouth first." Jack poked Daniel in the chest with a sharp finger. "You never know when to shut up." Jack shook his head. "Look, I'm not saying she's done something sinister, I don't blame her for wanting to get out from under his thumb, I'm just saying that she saw an opportunity and she took it. The telepathy thing she has with you, I doubt she even tried to reach of us like that. What about Kanan, if she could tell him what to do inside of his mind, don't you think she would have told him to keep his damn hands to himself?" There was anger rising inside of him now and he was not sure where it was coming from or just whom he should direct it. "She chose you for this bonding thing. Why do you suppose that is?"

Daniel's mind first mulled over his theory of just plain dumb luck and the necklace he had been wearing and that she had simply mistaken him for someone else. In the dream he had shared with her, and later after the ritual, he had told her that he was not a God, he was not Ares and that he had not been sent by Ares either. Calla had reached out for him anyway. "I don't know. Jealous, Jack?"

"Don't go there, Daniel." Colonel O'Neill warned. "How about that appointment with the boys in the lab? Did ya make it yet?"

"No."

"Not gonna, are ya?" Jack shot.

"Would you two knock it off?" Major Carter asked, watching this little spectacle yet again was

getting too much for her.

Dr. Jackson ignored her and kept his eyes fixed on Colonel O'Neill. "She said she would take me to her family, can we wait until after that?"

"Really?" Jack asked. "How do you suppose Ares going to feel about you just showing up with his daughter out of the blue, Daniel? The daughter he sentenced to hell and never went back for."

It was clear to Daniel that Calla both feared and loved her Father; the idea that she was willing to take him to the home of the Greek Gods gave Daniel reason to hope that a Father/Daughter Reunion between them would go well. That didn't guarantee anything. "I don't know. I guess we'll find out when we get there."

General Hammond sat pensively in his chair listening to the exchange. "My question is; where is he? Has she said?"

Daniel turned to look at the base commander. Calla had not said where she would be taking him, only that she would. "An island, some place near Crete."

"When would you like to go on this little excursion?" The General inquired.

He thought it over for a few moments before he answered. He would like her to get some what acclimated before taking her off somewhere else, it seemed very cruel to offer her a home here and then take her back to a man who had so callously abandoned her. Calla was too fragile for that. "I'd like to wait a few weeks, if that's all right. I know it may seem like a lot but..."

Janet appeared in the doorway with Calla. "I'm all done with her. Do you want me to take her back to your quarters or are you ready for her?" She asked Daniel.

"If you're done for now, Dr. Jackson...." General Hammond said.

"Yes, for now."

"Ok, people. Go to work." General Hammond rose from his seat and began to make his way to the door.

"About that time frame, General?" Daniel asked.

"Take as long as you need." General Hammond replied. "Nice to see you again, Calla."

"When you're finished here, I'd like to see you in my office, Dr. Jackson." Janet said before leaving the room.

Sam stared at Calla from across the table and finally broke out laughing. "Daniel, she looks like a little girl playing dress-up in her father's old military clothes."

Daniel smiled, as did the rest of the men in the room. "I know."

“Hey, Calla, you want to go to the mall with me?” Sam asked her.

“Would you do that?” Daniel asked her with relief in his voice. (Shopping is not a hobby for men or the faint of heart.)

“Sure, I’ve got nothing to do for the rest of the day. How about it, Calla, want to go shopping?” There was a hint of anticipatory glee in her blue eyes.

Calla looked up at Daniel. “Do you remember malls and stores?” He asked.

“Hei.” She said. "Agora."

“English.” Daniel reminded gently. “ Yes, much like the agora. Do you want to go to the mall with Sam, maybe get some new clothes?”

“Yeah, clothes, and other things. Like, I don’t know, a hair brush maybe.” Sam reached out touched Calla’s tangled hair and as she did so, a faint and familiar aroma came to her. “No offense, Daniel, but she smells like you.”

“What’s wrong with that?”

“Nothing, if you’re you know, you. She needs some clothes, her own soap, toothbrush, don’t you, Calla?” Sam encouraged.

“Perhaps a few items.” Calla agreed in a small voice.

“That settles it. We’ll go shopping.” Sam stood up and held a hand out to Daniel who just stared at it. Sam cleared her throat.

“Oh, duh.” Daniel pulled his wallet from his hip pocket and handed over a credit card.

“Yeah, don’t be so cheap, hand it over.” Jack encouraged in a light voice.

“Oooh, Calla look.” Sam held it up so the other woman could see it. “Platinum. Can you say platinum?”

With a puzzled look on her face, Calla repeated the word, “Platinum.”

“Platinum is good.” Sam nodded her head with a big smile in Calla’s direction. “If you don’t remember much else, remember when it comes to credit cards,” she held the plastic card up, “platinum is very good.”

“Yeah, ok, try not to teach her anything else.” Daniel pleaded and Sam laughed, her blue eyes lit up.

“Ok,” she slung an arm around the shorter woman’s neck, “off to go shopping. Come on, Calla, let’s put a hurt on his wallet.”

Calla turned back to look at Daniel with wonder in her eyes. Did the woman want to hurt Daniel? “Go on, go with Sam.” He told her. “Hey, Sam?” He said quickly as they walked out the door.

“Yeah.”

“Thanks.”

“No problem. Don’t worry, she’ll be fine with me.”

Daniel wasn’t sure that she was right but he stood there and watched them go anyway. Janet wanted to see him. “Wanna come down with me?”

“Sure.” Jack shrugged his shoulders.

“You too.” Daniel said to Teal’c. The three of them left the briefing room and headed toward Dr. Frazier’s office.

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“As her doctor, I don’t feel comfortable giving you this information in front of them.” Janet said as they all sat down in her office.

“Look,” Daniel began, “I’ve already told them everything else. Just about anything you tell me now I’m just going to relate it to them anyway. Just think of it as cutting out the intermediary. Tell us what you’ve found out.”

“With very few anomalies, I still say she’s human, genetically speaking anyway.” Janet began the task of relating the results of all her medical testing. Callas’ blood contained an enzyme, which seemed to make it thinner than normal human blood, Janet wasn’t sure what use that was to anyone but it seemed to help in slowing down her normal system. “You know, when you first brought her in here, I thought she was about seventeen. All hair and eyes.” Janet smiled. “Could help explain that.”

“Are you saying she doesn’t age?” Jack asked.

“Not exactly, I think it helps to slow down the aging process. Those enzymes are attacking the toxins in her system, but they are not exactly winning the war. It is more as if they are slowly absorbing it. I haven’t really been able to identify what type of poison she ingested, just lucky it didn’t kill her. However, her blood is very thin and lacking in iron, don’t be surprised when she starts telling you that she’s cold.”

“What about her THC levels?” Daniel asked as the thought of the joint she had smoked after the ritual came to him. He had Janet run what tests she could to determine how often Calla smoked the illegal weed and whether or not it was necessary for her to do so.

“They’re off the charts.” She remarked with a laugh. “If I didn’t know better, I would have said that she was smoking a joint as I ran the test!” Janet shook her dark head. “She smokes it fairly regularly, Daniel, from what I can see it isn’t doing her any harm, and in fact it’s probably helped her. At the least, it keeps her calm.”

“So what, you recommend it?” Daniel asked. Janet just shrugged her shoulders and nodded in tacit agreement. Daniel asked as he wondered just where he was supposed to obtain the illegal herb for her. If he decided to continue letting her have it, finding it probably would not present much of a problem.

“Don’t suppose you’ll write him a prescription.” Jack cracked.

“And children?” When he dropped Calla off with Janet this morning, Daniel had asked for several very specific tests, including whether or not she’d ever given birth.

“Yes. From the looks of it, I’d say four.”

“How about five?” He asked quickly. The image of the perfect ring of trees that stood outside the walls of Kanan’s keep would not leave his mind. Last night, as he worked, he had taken the time to hunt down his suspicion. Planting a tree in the memory of a lost relative or loved one was an ancient Celtic tradition. In fact, they would plant so many of these trees that the glens often became Sacred Spaces.

“Sure, ok. Five maybe. It’s not an exact science.” Janet agreed. “Now you want to know the rest?”

“Yeah.”

From the information Daniel and her tests provided her with, Janet broke the news. The burning sensation when a man touched Calla was being caused by the release of a mild acid by her upper epidermis. A sack located near her heart, where Daniel had plunge the last needle into her, secreted this mild acidic compound. The acid excretion to the touch of the offending male, was triggered because he did not have the same pheromones and genetic code as the one to which she was bonded. In short, it was a defense mechanism. The affect on Calla’s skin, though it burned her, was short lived and she did not suffer any permanent scaring as a result. Janet thought there was a possibility that she could rectify that and lay the acid dormant but she was not sure yet. (Daniel was not sure that he wanted her to.) The ritual had not only bonded her to Daniel it cemented her there. “You know that blood work you had me to do this morning?” Daniel nodded. He and Calla had blood drawn from them at his request. “Your numbers are an exact match, hemoglobin, cholesterol. In fact, from the looks of it, she’s beginning to develop a histamine problem.”

“Allergies?” Daniel asked with amazement and smiled.

“Yep.” Janet agreed. “She’ll probably start sneezing come spring time. You control everything.” She said with amazement. “From her nervous system, to her endocrine system, her immune system, all of it. I just wish I knew how exactly.” Janet pondered the thought for a moment and came up with no real answer. “I don’t know, it’s like your system kicks hers into gear, but she has to wait for you to tell her what to do.”

“How long can I leave her for?” Once again, his thoughts turned the Gate and not wanting to give up his trips through it. “This all works based on her proximity to me, right?” Daniel looked down at his own hands and thought of the way she curled up on him like a cat begging to be pet. The wrong touch produced acid from her skin but the right one produced something essential to her. She just could not live without for very long.

*Mine is the only hand.*

*Ha'nok re.*

*Touch me. Master Kanan no longer touches me.*

“The longer you’re with her the more she fills up. I think she has been runnin’ on bone dry for a very long time. Anyway, I wouldn’t leave her long if I were you.” Janet returned to her chair. “Not right away. Maybe, down the road, you could leave her here for a week or two at a time, but not right now.”

A week or two at a time. He could live with that. She would be all right without him for that long and he could always return through the Gate whenever he needed to if a problem arose. “Maybe touch isn’t enough to keep her full, huh?” He looked at Janet out of the corner of his eye.

“Hardly,” she replied. “It’s essential, yes. There are all kinds of studies on the benefits of massage and touch therapy. Just the act of touching her releases endorphins, relieves stress and illness, a whole host of things. Nevertheless, if you don’t, um, drop off that other particular DNA sample on a regular basis, she will run completely dry. Your touch kicks her system into gear but the other stuff, is the fuel her system runs on.”

“She’s a junkie, Daniel,” Jack said as he rose from his seat. “You’re not just the drug pusher, you’re the drug. Be careful how you dole it out to her, my friend.”

“Agreed.” Intoned Teal’c in his dark voice.

The moment grew heavier than Jack would have liked and so, being Jack, he did his best to lighten it. “C’mon, Daniel, the task can’t be that difficult.” Jack cracked. “I saw you. You didn’t seem to have any problems.” He stood and swiveled his hips in a circular motion, “Nice move, I gotta remember that one.” He patted Daniel on the back while Daniel hung his head in his hands.

“Indeed. Certainly, there are worse fates which can befall a man.” Something that almost passed for a smile crossed his lips. “Don’t you agree, Dr. Jackson?”

“That’s just the start, isn’t it?” Daniel asked in a voice that clearly hoped he was wrong. Then he wondered why it had taken Jack so long to start teasing him about it to begin with. He was probably just waiting for the right moment, this one seemed pretty good.

“Oh, yeah. You’re never going to hear the end of that one, my friend. Never.” Jack threatened playfully.

“Ah, men.” Janet tossed her folder down on the desk. “Get out of here, all of you. Shoo.”

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The sun was shining and the weather was warm as Calla sat in the passenger seat of the convertible on her way to the mall with Daniel’s lady friend, Samantha. The air smelled fresh and clean, the vibrant colors that surrounded her as they flew down the old mountain road amazed her eyes. With the top down, Calla’s mane of auburn hair billowed out behind her. Everything on Tiberia was so brown, almost sepia toned. The land Daniel called home was bursting with colors; the leaves were brilliant shades of red, gold and rust. Golden flowers grew right out of the ground wild and untended. Although as a child she had wanted it very much, Calla had never been to the land called America. She had always understood it to be a somewhat magickal place, where no matter who you were or what you were, there was a place for you. All you had to do was find it.

“Feels good to be out of there, doesn’t it?” Sam asked as she drove. “Don’t worry, I know, I spend waaay too much time there.” She smiled and shifted the T-Bird into third gear.

“Yes, it does.” Calla watched Sam’s feet and hands as she worked the peddles which made the car move and the stick between her fingers. She had no idea of what the purpose of the stick was, but the peddles seemed to make it speed up, slow down and something to do with the stick. The third peddle had to be depressed when Sam moved the stick. Calla drew in a deep breath of clean mountain air. “What season is it now?”

“It’s autumn, that’s why the leaves all look like that. Beautiful, aren’t they? Do you feel the chill in the air? Pretty soon it will be winter and this place will be covered with snow.” Sam explained and went to ask her if she knew what snow was then realized, of course she did. Daniel had said Ares took her the Gate in Alaska, she had seen snow at least once in her lifetime and it probably was not the best memory she had.

“It’s good here.” Calla remarked as she took her eyes from the motions Sam was making and back the scenery that rolled by. “I like it.”

Soon they were pulling into the parking lot of the local mega-mall, Sam pulled the car to a stop and they walked through the lot. “This place is kind of big, just stick close to me if you get scared or anything, ok?”

The door opened and the many faces of happy people wandering around the big building with brightly colored packages and bags in their hands greeted her. There were smells in the air as they entered, Calla saw they had come through into an area where there many different types of food available for sale. Her eyes scanned the area quickly and came to rest on the Sabbro stand. Pizza. “Are you hungry?” Sam asked. “I’m starving.” Sam grabbed her stomach to show her hunger. For the next half hour, they sat in the food court and stuffed pizza and burgers down their throats with happy smiles. Quickly Sam came to like the woman Daniel had brought back through the Gate. Calla wasn’t stupid and she wasn’t limited in the way other people might think she was. She was just a little shy and very unsure of herself. A dog that has been whipped one too many times by its Master. It was easy to see, that if one could win just a little of her trust, she turned into a completely different person, one whose eyes lit up like the mid-day sun, a sun which saw no set in its future.

“Hey baby,” a man commented as he walked by their table on his way to the exit. Both women looked up at the sound of his voice. Sam noticed that his comment, like his eyes, was directed at Calla who made no move to smile or show or any other sign that she had heard him.

“This going to be fun,” Sam announced. “Ready?” Sam asked as she took the last sip off the Sprite she had been drinking. “Let’s go put that dent in Daniel’s wallet.”

Calla giggled, a sound like faeries dancing around under the full moon light. And smiled which brought the light in her eyes to her lips. At first, Calla was not sure that she would like this woman. For the most part and except for very special occasions, Kanan had kept her away from his other women. Calla had feared that she would be jealous of Samantha Carter and her relationship with Master Daniel but she was not and that was good, bad bad things happened when she became jealous.

First stop on their shopping spree was Bath and Body Works where Calla picked out shampoo, conditioner, soap and facial cleansing products that did not smell like Daniel. Though Calla rather liked the way Daniel smelled, Sam told her that was a good thing. Calla picked out floral scents, mainly lavender and jasmine. They pleased her nose most and she hoped they would please his as well. The first hit that Daniel’s wallet took that afternoon was \$42.10

Next, they perused through a store called the GAP, Calla thought the name was vaguely familiar but was unsure if she had been to a store by that name before. At the GAP there many pairs of what she remembered were blue jeans. Ares hated blue jeans! If he caught her in them, he would be so angry. The last time she had brought a pair of the wretched pants home Ares had roared his disapproval at her and set them to burn. Klotho, Lachesis and Atropos were not only responsible for weaving and tending the delicate Threads of Life for the Mortals but, for the Gods, they spun the most exquisite silk that Minerva (from whom she had learned several of those ‘womanly arts’) sewed into the finest clothing for the Gods. Father would not have his daughter dress in the rags of Mortals when such fine garments were available to her.

Still holding onto a pair of Levis, Calla looked around the hustling bustling people, many of the women here wore blue jeans. Even Samantha was wearing a pair.

“Hmm, any idea what size you are, Calla?” Sam asked as she picked a pair of jeans off the rack.

“These are cute.” She held them up for Calla to see.

Calla thought about it for a while. “Some time ago I tried on a pair like that, the tag in them said 3. They fit well at that time.”

Sam looked her companion up and down, she was very small and slender. “Three it is.” Sam began to poke through the rack for the specified size. By the time they left the GAP Calla had three new pairs of the forbidden blue jeans and two warm sweaters. Daniel had been charged \$176.33 on his credit card. They were not done yet. After all, no matter how old you are, if you’re female and you have money, (or even better someone else’s money!) shopping is definitely one of your all-time favorite activities!

Thoughts and images from what seemed a lifetime ago, began to fade in and out of her mind as they walked through the promenade. Calla had not been to many stores or malls while she had been here on Earth but she had managed to escape on occasion to places like this, to walk among those she should not and be like them just for a short while. Some of the stores in this mall, such as

Macy's and JC Penny Calla knew and told Samantha very short tales of the last time she had been in a store by such a name. Sam surmised she had been about 12 the last time she had gone shopping, standing at about five feet flat, Sam realized that in that time she had not grown a single inch. She was also able to gather that the last time Calla had done this she had been alone and wandering around by herself. Several Mall Rats caught Sams' attention as they walked, some of them were as young 12 but frustrated older sisters accompanied most of them. 1979 had been different from 2004, (she couldn't remember very much of 1979 she had only been nine at the time) but still, who let their pre-teen daughter wander around such a place without any one at all?

They came out of Macy's without buying anything, something Daniel's wallet would be grateful for later on, and into the mall itself. Sam watched as Callas' eyes scanned every inch of her surroundings, stopping to gaze upon things and people that she found to be interesting and then moving on. As the people walked by them, Sam caught on to something; all of them men stared at Calla. Whether they did it out of the corner of their eye or they blatantly stopped and took in a good eyeful, they all did it. A few of them stopped to take in the view as the backside of her pass them by. Some of them were as brazen as the guy in the food court had been and made a lude comment as she passed by. Calla ignored all of them, to Sam it seemed that she did not even notice them looking at her, leering at her, not even the sound of their voices brought her eye to theirs. Sam realized that Calla had stopped, she looked up at the sign above the store; Victoria's Secret. Cool.

"Let's go." Sam ushered her inside where Calla related the information that she had never tried on a bra before. Sam crossed to the counter and the saleswoman there. "She needs to be fitted." The saleswoman led them to the rear of the store and to the dressing area where Calla removed her shirt in the company of the two women. The saleswoman Sam had asked to assist them had short black hair and dark eyes. There was a strange object, some sort of bolt or something, protruding through the space at the bridge of her nose and she bore a tattoo on her wrist. Now the woman leaned in close to her and drew a tape measure around her breasts, Calla held her arms out to the side as she stared into the younger woman's eyes. The woman's hands closed in front of her and she looked down to read the measurement, her hand brushed across Callas' nipples and turned them hard.

"Ahem," Sam cleared her throat from her place on the soft purple sofa in the dressing area. The saleswoman dropped her hands.

"34, probably B cup." She said in a slow voice and realized the space between her legs was wet. "We have a lot of things you'll like." She smiled a sly and not so innocent smile.

"Thanks," Sam rose, "that'll do." Calla put the black t-shirt back on and they sorted through bras, panties and nightwear in the outer store. "She was a little forward, don't you think?"

"What?" Calla asked and held up a white lace bra.

"Well, I mean, she was kind of lookin' like she wanted you, you know?" Sam cajoled, how could Calla not know what she meant. How could she not notice how the men stared at her? "A little pushy." The look in the other woman's eyes plainly said she had no idea of what Sam was talking about. "Do you like this one?" She held up a bra which matched the one Calla was holding but instead of white, it was dark green like her eyes.

“Yes!” Callas’ eyes lit up and she took the item in her hands. “It’s very pretty. Do you think Master Daniel will like it?”

Sam did not have to stop and think about it, “I’m sure he will.”

They left Victoria’s Secret with seven new pairs of panties ranging from ultra-bikini to thong, four new bras, and three new nightgowns. Once again, Daniel was down on his credit to the tune of \$249.87. “Ok, well I guess there’s just one thing left.” Sam looked down at Callas’ feet.

“Shoes!” Calla cried with childish delight.

“Yeah!” Sam agreed in the same tone.

The women made their way through the nearest shoe store where Calla tried on several pairs of shoes. It was wonderful to have something on her feet once again. It had been many years since Naganti Kanan had allowed her to wear shoes. Not having something to cover her feet helped him to keep her inside the Keep where he believed she belonged. Finally, she settled on a pair of black sneakers and a pair of black hiking boots. Calla thought if last night was any indication, Master Daniel may well like to hike into the woods more often and she wanted to be prepared for that. Total cost; \$58.62

With bags and packages in hand they began to make their way through the mall and back to the food court where they had come in. “Sam?” Calla asked as they walked. “When I was young they used to have big black discs.” Calla stopped and held up her hands so that they formed a circle that was roughly one foot in diameter. “They played music. Do they still have those?”

“Not exactly,” Sam explained, “they’re CD’s now. About this big,” she made a circle with her own hands but it was only about four inches around, “shiny. They still play music. Do you want to go into the music store?” They had put a huge hurt on Dr. Jackson’s credit rating this afternoon but, what the heck, another fifty or sixty bucks wouldn’t matter much at this point. “It’s right over there.” Sam pointed across the promenade to a store sign that read Strawberries’ “We have to go into the drug store next door anyway. You really do need a hair brush.”

“And a toothbrush?” Calla sucked on her teeth and the beginnings of the bitter taste there. “If you wouldn’t mind too much, yes, I would like to go.”

“Ok.”

At the music store, Calla ignored the CDs on display in at the entrance and began to wander the aisles looking at the titles and categories. While the instrument that delivered the music may have changed, record stores were still the same as she had remembered them to be. Everything neatly organized and categorized alphabetically by subject. Eyes scanning, searching, she finally found what she was looking for. 70’s rock and roll read a black sign with white lettering. Slender fingers made their way through familiar names and titles, Pink Floyd, Bob Seger, Bruce Springsteen, Jethro Tull, Little Feat, Deep Purple, Cream and more. Most of the CDs here were all called ‘Best of’ or ‘Greatest Hits’ and upon turning them over she realized that all the songs that she

remembered best were on each CD that she held.

“Do you want some of those?”

“Yes,” Calla held up Pink Floyd, the Eagles, Bob Seger, David Bowie, and Bruce Springsteen ‘Best of’ CDs, along with two compilations by various 70’s artists. “Do you think he will be very upset?”

“Daniel?”

“Yes, I don’t want him to be angry.” Calla explained.

Sam took the CDs from Calla and looked the titles over. “No, I don’t think he’ll care. Why?” She handed them back to her.

Calla wanted to tell Sam that the last time she had purchased music it had not gone so well, but she just smiled a weak smile and held the small plastic cases close while they made their way to the check out counter. The last hit that Daniel’s wallet took that day came to a total of 81.76. Sam was signing her own name to Daniel’s credit card receipt when she noticed that Calla was no longer next to her. Peeking over the shoulder of the cashier and through the window behind him, she saw the woman standing across the promenade staring into the window of a different type of music store. “Thank you,” she said hurriedly to the cashier as she grabbed the package and headed to where Calla was staring at the instruments in the window. Before she could catch up with, Calla dashed inside the store.

Looking around with eyes hungry for the site of the, Calla’s fingertips glided along the smooth surface of the guitars hanging from the walls of Bill’s Music Emporium. Glancing around with sly eyes to see if anyone was looking, she took a black Ovation from the wall and sat with it in her lap. Calla began to strum and realized it was horribly out of tune. With only her ears, she turned the keys until the guitar rung out clean and clear.

“It’s a marvelous night for a moon dance with the stars up above in your eyes,” she sang as she strummed and wrapped her knuckles against the wood keeping the time of the backbeat. “A fantabulous night to make romance ‘neath the cover of October skies.”

Samantha Carter stood at the end of the aisle behind a display of sheet music watching Calla as she sat on the floor strumming the guitar and singing. The image was somehow surprising although she didn’t know why that should be. After all, Calla had a different life than the one she had lived on Tiberia, at least, once upon a time anyway. What surprised her most was how talented Daniel’s new friend was. The sales people and shoppers all stopped to listen to her sing and play. Some of them snapped their fingers in time to the beat or tapped their feet, others sang along with her in voices that were not as melodic as hers.

“Can I just have one more moon dance with you,” dunt dut, “my love! Can I just make some more romance with a-you,” dunt dut “my love!” Calla ended the little Van Morrison tune and looked up in dazed at the sound of applause, she had been unaware that anyone was listening to her play. The sight of the small crowd gathered around her caused her to recoil a little.

“That thing was made for you, love.” Said one the salesmen with the British accent. “Why don’t you play us another?” He encouraged. “Better yet, I can wrap it up and you can take it home.”

As much as she might have wanted to, Sam declined to urge to put a charge of a new guitar on Daniel’s credit card. “One more if you want, Calla, and then we really have to get going.”

At the sight of her companion, Calla relaxed a little and realized she would like to play one more song. Calla picked at the strings and whistled; doot doot do do doot do, doot doot do do doot do, she made a humming sounds, “Oh, yeah. Ziggy played guitar, jamming good with Weird and Gilly and the Spiders from Mars. He played it left hand but made it too far, became the special man, then we were Ziggy’s band.” She played the old David Bowie song flawlessly and once again the crowd around her, which had doubled in size, applauded to show their approval when she was done. Call rose silently to her feet, smiled at the nice people around her and hung the guitar back upon the wall.

“You sure you don’t want that, love? I still say it’s made for you.”

Calla just shook her head with a smile and waved good-bye as she set off with Sam.

“That was really good, Calla. Where did you learn to play like that?”

“The love of music was a gift from my uncle, Apollo.”

“Wow.” Sam’s sapphire eyes blinked in amazement.

“I can play piano, saxophone, drums and many others.” Calla paused for a moment and took a deep breath before continuing. “Father never approved of such things.”

“Well, obviously, he never really listened to you play.” Seeing the look in the other woman’s eyes, Sam changed the subject. “After the drug store, we really have to go.” Sam said as they walked through the mall. “I think we spent enough of Daniel’s money.” She looked down at her watch and realized they had spent three hours wandering around the mall; Daniel would probably be getting concerned about them by now.

## Chapter Seventeen

Upon their return from the mall, Sam and Calla found Daniel in his office going over the text in the small book. Daniel looked up and saw the two women standing there; he closed the book and stuffed his notes in his drawer.

“Well, nice to see you.” He remarked as he looked at his watch and noticed they had been gone over three hours. Calla stood before him with bags from different shops in her hands and looking rather guilty. She held the bags out for him to inspect without looking at him. “Why don’t you show me what you bought?” He asked and then turned to Sam. “And my credit card?” Daniel held out his hand and Sam turned it over, Daniel swore it was still smoking. “Come on, let’s go back to my quarters and you can show me what you have in those bags.” The light on his desk flicked off while Daniel rose and put his arm around Calla’s shoulders. There was something oddly familiar about the sight of her with the shopping packages in her hands and that guilty look on her face. “Sam thanks again.”

“No problem,” Sam reached out and touched Calla’s upper arm, “we had a good time, didn’t we?” Suddenly the small auburn haired woman didn’t seem to be the same one with whom she had spent the afternoon shopping and laughing. Now that she was back with her Master, Calla seemed much more subdued and shy.

“Yes.” Calla agreed with a warm smile. “We did. Thank you for taking me.”

“Any time.” Sam left Daniel’s office to make her way back home for the evening. Daniel led Calla back to his quarters.

“Aren’t you going to show me what you’ve bought?” He asked as she set the packages down on the floor and then walked away from them. Throughout his lifetime it had been his experience that when a woman came home with that many packages full of clothes, she usually wanted to show them off. It was obvious to him that she was afraid he was about to disapprove of the way she had spent his money.

Calla looked down at the bags and back up at Daniel. “If you wish.” She stooped and emptied the contents of the GAP bag onto his bed to show him the three pairs of blue jeans and sweaters. She opened the two shoeboxes and showed him the contents.

“Are they comfortable?” Daniel asked as he sat in the chair by his desk. He was very glad she had purchased not one but two pairs of shoes, he thought that might be Sam’s doing. Calla nodded her head in response to his question. “Good. I expect you to wear them.” Again, she nodded her agreement and then began to gather up her new clothes without opening up the Victoria’s Secret bag. “What’cha got in there?” Daniel asked coyly as he raised an eyebrow at the bag.

Master Daniel had not made any advances toward her since bringing her through the Gate, in fact, he had been very much against the idea and she was beginning to think that he would not change

his mind about that. If she showed him the contents of the bag, he might think she was overstepping her bounds and going against his wishes. “Nothing important, just some undergarments.”

“Oh. Not going to show me those?” Daniel watched as she shook her head no. It was as though he were the one with the telepathy, her eyes showed him everything she was thinking. “Ok.” He held out his hand to her and Calla slipped hers into it. “Hungry?”

“No.” She reached into the Victoria’s Secret bag with her free hand and produced a bag from Strawberry’s Record Store. “These too.” Calla held the bag out to him. Daniel dropped her hand and took the bag, he peeked into it and she waited for him to tell her that she could not keep them.

“Good taste.” Daniel remarked as he looked through the CDs she bought today. “You want to listen to these?”

“Yes?”

Within a few moments, Bob Seger was coming through the speakers in Daniel’s quarters, he was singing about his ‘Night Moves’ and Calla was humming along happily. “I made some room for your clothes,” he crossed the room to the chest of drawers and showed her where she could store her things.

“Thank you. I don’t wish to disturb you, Daniel, I know you were working.”

“You’re not disturbing me.” Daniel told her and ran a hand across her cheek. “You sure you’re not hungry? Did you eat with Sam?”

That guilty look flashed across her face again. “Pizza.” She muttered.

“Pizza? That sounds good.” He rubbed his flat stomach and kissed the top of her head, glad to hear that she had eaten something today. It wasn’t the most nutritious food item in the world, that much was true but, at least, it was something.

After she put her things away in the designated area, Calla took her Bath and Body Works bag and her Victoria’s Secret bag into his bathroom. It was not long before the sweet scents of lavender and jasmine filled the undersized room and distracted him while he tried to work at the small computer there. On the CD, Bob was singing about the fire down below while Daniel tried to concentrate on his work and the exotic aromas tickled his nose and his fancy. Daniel looked up when he heard the bathroom door open. Calla stepped out of the bathroom, followed by a heady load of steam, in a new white terry cloth bathrobe, her damp hair had been towel dried then combed back away from her face, her skin cherry pink from the hot water. Daniel sucked hard on the pencil he had been holding his mouth, while his thoughts wandered to what was (or was not) under that velvety robe. He found that he could see his hands caressing that soft whiteness, undoing the sash and sliding it down her milky shoulders.

Was it possible that she saw desire in his eyes? Carefully she walked over to where Daniel sat and put her hands on his shoulders, she began to knead the knotted muscles beneath his black t-shirt.

“You are very tense.” She remarked and rubbed a little harder. “You should relax more.”

The yellow pencil dropped from his full lips as a large breath exhaled itself from his lungs and Daniel's head drooped backwards to rest against her breast. "That feels so good." Before he could indulge himself further, Calla's hand was under his forearm, she was guiding him from his chair across the room to his bed. Without any words she took the glasses from his face and the black t-shirt he had been wearing from his body, she tossed it over by the desk before she laid him face down the bed. Calla straddled his back, and snuck a small bottle of musk scented lotion from her robe pocket, rubbed her hands together lightly to build up energy between them and began to massage his tired muscles again. Her delicate hands were slick with lotion; they flowed effortlessly over the silky-smooth surface of his back. Energy rose and his mind opened just the smallest bit as his body relaxed with the motion of her hands. Calla could see that the scar on her Master's shoulder ran straight through him. Whatever it had been, it looked like it had entered from the front and exited through his back. She ran her fingertips along the bumpy and knotted flesh and then bent to brush her lips across it lightly.

"My Lord Daniel, " Calla lowered herself to whisper against the nape of his neck, "Does my touch not please you? " At her question, his body stiffened under her. Softly her hot tongue flicked gently around the inside of his ear. Between her legs, Calla felt the waves of desire rippling down his spine as she sat straddled over his bare skin with her hands working the tired aching muscles of his lower back. Beneath her, Daniel rolled over and Calla found herself no longer straddling the soft mound of his ass but the hard mound of his wanton cock. It seemed he found her touch pleasing enough.

Softly scented hands cautiously made a steady descent from his neck, down the well-indented crevice of his chest and down his tight abdomen. Calla lowered her body to stop and listen to the sound of his heart, just like his cock and his eyes, it was strong and full of want. Daniel sucked in breath as he felt her moist lips closed around one hard nipple. She reached down between her legs and grabbed hold of the belt buckle. With skilled fingers, she nimbly slid the hard part of him free of its restraint. Calla covered his hard torso in a mass of silken fire as her mouth descended toward her goal. For the first time, Calla caught sight of new Master's tool. It was large and hard enough to hang a wet towel from without bending it. Only time would tell how he would use it with her. Whatever he wanted, she would do it, anything to please him.

The dark thoughts, which had begun to dance in the back of his mind as they sat on the hillside returned to him as her lips, closed around his hardness and she took him into her mouth. Fighting them off proved a difficult task, especially when she was so goddamn willing. Before he knew it, Daniel's hands clenched into fists, he was grabbing handfuls of damp lavender scented hair. Calla looked up at him as she ran the flat of her moist tongue along his hard shaft. One hand worked his hardness with an expert but gentle touch while the other reached under him to cup his balls, her index finger probing for the hole below. It slid delicately inside of him as she took him full into her mouth, sliding down her throat and out again while her hands worked him, Daniel's heart began to pound in his chest as the fire rose in his belly. God, did her jaw unhinge or something? Before he knew it was happening, he was coming hard and fast, his cock was throbbing and he was trying to push her away from it but she would not go. Calla's mouth closed tighter around him as he came in her mouth and down her throat. When she was satisfied that she had done a good job, she turned her head upward to look at him, she ran her tongue across her lips while her eyes gleaming with

devilish delight. She whispered something against the fading hardness and it came to life with a vengeance.

“My Lord is unsatisfied.” She cooed as she took the leather belt from the fatigues he was still wearing and slithered up his body with the strap in her hand. Calla settled herself on top of him but did not take him into her. Instead, she pushed aside the scanty Victoria’s Secret panties she was wearing under the soft white robe, she rubbed the hard tip of his shaft against the hungry part of her, still she sat just out of the reach of Daniel’s waiting cock. As she perched there on top of him in the dim light, he watched as she wrapped the strap around her own wrists, cinching it with her teeth, and then held her bound hands out to him.

“No.” Daniel reached up, unwrapped her hands, and tossed the belt to the mattress.

“Master Daniel, please touch me. Please let me.” The words she fought for came to her mind, landed on the tip of her tongue and stuck there. Never had she said this phrase. Never had she really known what it meant until this very moment. Through all the years she spent with Kanan, she often thought if things had been different she might have loved him or at least not have been repelled by his touch. He was viscerously handsome and for some time, eons ago, he had been kind to her, his touch had been softer than in recent years. Even then, back in those early days when he might have held some genuine affection for her, she could never call what he did with her lovemaking. “I’ve never wanted to do this.” Calla confessed in a voice that was scarcely perceptible. “Let me. I will please you.”

“Not like that.” Daniel reached out to bring her down to him; she flinched away from him as he tried to kiss her. Her emerald eyes filled with both fear and desire, there was something else lurking in there, confusion. For all of her ‘skills’ she was completely lost right now, waiting for him to guide her in the right direction and reveal what he wanted her to do for him. What he wanted was for her to let him make love to her, but he was not sure that was possible or if she even knew what it was. Daughter to Aphrodite, how could she not know what it was to make love? It was clear to him that Kanan did not kiss her. No, there had been no tenderness at all in her last master’s touch. He felt her tender waiting body shiver inside his hold. “Let me.” Daniel whispered and then closed his lips around hers.

It was not long before Calla stopped pulling away from him and began to come closer toward him. Her slender arms wrapped around his neck, Daniel rolled her under him. Lying on top of her with his hands in her hair, his tongue exploring the back of her throat, Daniel felt like an Avatar. He felt as though the Gods had endowed him with some mysterious power and that they had bound this woman to him. She was his, whether he actually liked that idea or not did not matter. It was far too late to turn back now. She would stay by his side and be everything he ever wanted her to be and in return he would keep her safe, he would protect her and be the Avatar when the time came. Calla shivered beneath him again, whether from fear or desire he didn’t know, his strong arms wrapped themselves around her tighter and brought her closer.

“I like this,” he whispered as he tugged on the soft cloth of the robe she wore, “give it to me.” Calla sat up part way and allowed him to strip her of it; she brought her knees up to her chest and wrapped one small arm protectively around herself while the other reached out for the blanket.

“No,” he tugged at her arm, “let me see.” Disquieted eyes stared back at him, but Calla slowly unfolded herself and then lay down before him, ready for his inspection. “Beautiful,” he whispered to her, “I can’t believe you’re here with me.”

Beautiful? Had he really said that? More important, did he mean it? It had been a very long time since anyone had uttered such a pretty word to her. Naganti Kanan had always said that she was ‘adequate’ for his needs. Calla licked her lips. “Kiss more.” She implored.

“Ha’nok re?” He bid in return.

“Please,” Calla moaned as his hands ran down her flanks. “Ha’nok re.” Her body rose to his touch and her heart began to race. Master Daniel was not like Naganti Kanan; his touch was soft and yielding. There was an energy in it that she had not known existed, it ran around and through her until finally it settled itself somewhere deep inside of her and filled all the empty aching places there. She never wanted him to stop touching her. Calla’s nipples grew so hard with want of him that she thought they would pop off. Master Daniel’s mouth opened and descended to cover her left breast, his hand descended the flat of her stomach and ran his firm hand under the white silk panties, across the space where a snatch of hair should be and was not. Calla’s hips rose to the command of his hand but her legs did not part. When he looked up at her, suspicious eyes stared back at him. “What do you want?”

“Stay with me and I’ll show you.” He leaned down and kissed her again. “Give to me.” Slowly he slid the white panties down her milky thighs and free of her body. She let out a low sigh as she cuddled her cheek against his own and her legs parted below him. “Good. Don’t be scared.” He kissed her again. “I’ll never hurt you.” One hand reached to the part of her that had opened to his command while the other kept her held close to his warm body. Calla twitched as one finger slid inside of her and he held her closer.

“Sa’Tan Daniel.” Calla cried softly as her back arched and his fingers probed deeper inside of her. It was so hard to catch her breath. So long had she thought herself to be among the Walking Dead and now his touch was making her feel alive. The things he was doing to her brought on a wave of lightheaded desire that she had only heard of before. Even in the early days with him, Naganti Kanan never made her feel this way. Naganti Kanan would never allow this at all.

As soft and sweet as she laid spread out before him now, Daniel knew that in the next second or two she was going to try to pull away from him. “Don’t be afraid.” With his free hand, he applied slight pressure between her breasts until she lay flat on the bed once more. “I don’t ever want your fear, Calla.” Daniel’s head descended and he breathed in deep of the musky scent as his tongue began to maneuver around the place where his fingers were gently moving in and out. Calla did flinch. She did try to jump away but he held her firm until the fear subsided and she rested once more against the soft mattress.

The taste of her was just as he knew it would be honey and cantaloupe juice. Light and sweeter than the finest wine. If she would but let him, he would drink down every drop of her and ask for more. Calla’s hips rose and fell to the rhythm he created, her breathing became shallow and harsh. From his place between her legs, he watched her chest rise and fall in time with those lovely slender hips. Her eyes closed and her hands lay upon the mattress at her sides. A little further, a

little faster, a deep moan escaped her lips. She would cum for him and quickly. A little further still, a little harder now. Her hips rose and fell, rose and fell and she began to cry out. It was music to his ears. Her lips moved, she was saying something but he could not make it out. Frantic fingers reached out and pulled him away from her, toward her, up to her.

“No,” she cried in a soft whisper, “Master Daniel, do not.” The heat in her voice betrayed her words. Calla wrapped both arms around him as he laid himself over her and entered her.

The other night during the ritual Daniel had thought her to be so tight because he hadn't the chance to ready her, not to mention the idea she was barely conscious. Now, he understood that was not the case. She was so exquisitely tight because of the scars Kanan had left upon her insides. Naganti Kanan had scarred her for the same reason that she was hairless; Kanan take pleasure in feeling as though he were taking a virgin, and a young one, every night. From this night on every time Daniel made love to her, he would reap the benefits of Kanan's perversions and her pain.

Halfway inside of her, so tight and hot, he wanted to explode right then and there. Calla's breath hitched in her chest and he looked down to see a bright flash of pain dart through her eyes before she could hide them from him. She did not cry out or tell him to stop, instead Calla held tighter to him. “Don't be afraid.” To his words, her hips began to rise to greet him as he entered her further. “Do you want me to stop?”

“Co. “ The Sa'Tan's body was hard, it was soft and warm against her skin, his touch was more than she had ever imagined in her wildest dreams, it brought fire to her body and life to her heart. She never wanted to be without him, never wanted to be anywhere that he was not. Always, always, did she want to do this with him. Always to please him. Calla accepted it when he sank further into her, the pain was there but it was bearable not like when Naganti Kanan took her. Not at all like that. She had not known that pain could feel so good. Right. Calla's heart raced as she tried to catch her breath and could not. “Please, it will ease.”

All the way inside of her now, Daniel struggled with himself to keep hold of her and not surrender to the darkness that tickled the back of his mind. In this moment, it would be so easy for him to tear into her and rip her apart. To bend her. Twist her. Rape her. Raising his body weight off her and onto all fours, his fingers brushed across the cold metal of his belt buckle. They closed around the leather strap and for one moment, he could clearly see himself binding her wrists and securing her to the headboard. Easy. So damn easy. She would never cry out or tell him to stop. No, such a good girl, she would lay there and take it, all of it, in any way he saw fit to put it to her. After all, the Master could never be guilty of anything as vile as rape, could he? Daniel slid the strap closer to where she lay.

Calla's eyes lay closed, her hips rose and fell in time to his thrusts until he thought that he would burst. As he hovered over her with the darkness in his mind begging him to tie her down, Calla began to cum. The walls around him grew wetter, tighter and hotter. Her hands ran wildly down the length of his spine. Daniel leaned in closer to suckle at the nape of her neck. She smelled like heaven and she felt like home. This was so much better, so much sweeter, than anything those dark fantasies had to offer him. This made everything worthwhile. Daniel pushed the strap off the bed and onto the floor.

“No,” it was only a soft whisper and one that he probably had not been meant to hear but he did hear it. Her breath was hot against him, her breasts pushed against his chest as it rose and fell to the rhythm of his thrusts. “No,” a little louder this time but not much. Her arms dropped from him and pinned themselves back upon the ground. “Sa‘Tan, do not.” If he had not been listening closely he would not have thought them words at all, only breath rising and falling from her lungs.

“Do not what, Calla?” Daniel whispered as he continued to thrust slowly in and out of her.

“No, do not.” Her hips betrayed her words as they rose and fell against him. “Please.” She turned her sharply so that her hair fell across her face. Daniel knew she had opened her eyes beneath it. He brushed it away from her face.

“Don’t hide your eyes from me.” He whispered passionately and held her head in place with a gentle but firm grip. “Don’t what. Tell me.”

“Please,” she begged. “Forgive.” Calla cried softly as her body tightened against him. “Do not.”

“Don’t do this?” He teased. “You want me to stop?” Callas’ legs clamped down over his own, pinning him to her in response. “No, I didn’t think so.” He kissed her neck once more. He would not stop. Daniel had passed the point of no return. Stopping wasn’t what she wanted anyway, no matter what her words said to him, her eyes belied her words, and they begged him to continue to doing just what he was doing. She was trying to hard to hold herself back from him but he would not let her. Daniel thrust a little harder and a cry of desire escaped her lips.

“Do not,” she begged softly and wrapped her arms tightly around him. “Please forgive. I’m sorry. Forgive,” she uttered quietly once more. In her mind she felt herself falling, falling, down, down, into the soft depths of his blue eyes. Nevertheless, it was all right to fall he would catch her. Of that, she was certain. She had always known that he would catch her one day.

Today?

How many nights had she wished for this? Prayed for this?

*Yes, tonight. I will catch you.* Daniel’s voice bid softly inside her mind as his hand ran along the curve of her face and his lips brushed lightly against her own. *Let go, Calla.*

Callas’ nails sunk into the skin at his back as her legs clamped down harder, holding him in place, keeping him where she needed him to be. The last bit of resistance left her. She could no longer hold off the man above her or the incredibly intoxicating feeling he was so willingly giving to her, Calla surrendered to his wishes. Calla buried her head deep in his chest and allowed the wave of desire to sweep her away. She held on tightly to her Master as the forbidden liquid flowed freely from her and she gave completely over to him.

With her orgasm brought on his own. Daniel felt the hot ball in the pit of his stomach rise as she whispered for his forgiveness and she drenched him with that sweet honey and cantaloupe juice it

coursed hot and free over his hardness and down his inner thighs. Daniel took and then gave that which she had begged for so sweetly.

As his life force emptied itself into her, he felt a strange and wondrous energy. Daniel did not know if it came from her or from him and he didn't care. He knew what it was, healing energy. The same energy she had given to Naganti Kanan and to Sam. It was inside of her now, healing her. Maybe the next time he entered her there would be less pain.

"I'm sorry, please," she stammered in a quite whisper as the first of her tears kissed the warmth of his shoulder. "Forgive me. Please, don't hurt me."

Daniel's heart broke at her words. Never did Kanan allow that, no a man who would maim her like that certainly never wanted her to feel any pleasure, now did he? If, per chance, it happened anyway, there must have been consequences for her to pay. Perhaps it resulted in the wounds that Naganti Kanan had laid upon her and would not heal afterward. "I'll always forgive you." Was all he could say as he lay there soaking inside of her.

## Chapter Eighteen

### One Month Later

What the hell was he doing here, sitting in the dark, in the cold, in his beat up old Duster when he should be curled up somewhere with a bottle of Jack Daniels and maybe a little female companionship to warm him up. He had picked up a pair of cheap binoculars at the pawnshop in town today and now he took them from their hiding place under the front seat (many goodies were hidden under there!) and raised them to his eyes. Every night for the past two weeks, he had sat up here on this hill staring down at the scene below him. Every night he waited and watched and every night nothing happened. He was in there, damn it! He just knew it.

The lights of the heavily guarded military base were bright against the night sky and tonight (as every night) he could see several sentries on patrol behind the razor wire. He would never get in there. Might as well just pack it up for the night. It was still early, only 7:30, the package stores were still open, maybe he could get himself that bottle of JD, yeah, and maybe he could find a little of that female companionship too.

He was just about to lower the binoculars, when it looked like his patience might pay off. The big steel door opened and five people emerged from it. One he knew-- how could he not? He had seen that face in his nightmares every night for the past 25 years. He glanced in the rearview mirror, that was not the only place he saw that face. The second he recognized though, he had not met her. She had been in his dreams too, with the other one, taunting him, teasing him. Offering him things she said he could never have.

Fuck that.

The big black man got into a white Lexus with an older white man. The white woman got into her own car, a light blue Thunderbird. He liked that one, it wasn't an old piece of shit, it was one of those new fancy models built to look like the older ones but faster. The other two walked to a third vehicle, a black Jetta. They stood outside it for a moment talking. From his vantage point, it seemed like the auburn haired woman wanted to drive and the man was refusing her request. He'd give in. He was sure of it. Soon enough the fair skinned and auburn haired woman gave the man with the short brown hair a pout and held out her hand. He laughed as he watched the man hand over the keys and climb into the passenger seat. The outer gates slowly slid back on their tracks and all three cars exited into the night.

With stealthy precision he followed at a slow safe pace and distance. The T-bird and the Lexus didn't interest him, he kept his eyes focused on the black Jetta, license plate Colorado NCC-1701, but it soon became apparent that all of them were going to the same place. He followed the little convoy over the darkened mountain roads towards the town of Silver Springs below.

Rolling down the window just a smidge and lighting the Marlboro sticking out of his mouth, he thought of how damn cold it was here in Colorado and flicked on the heater. He would rather be back in his little studio apartment in Corpus Christi then riding around these dusty mountain roads with the chill biting at his neck. Back at the Crow's Nest shooting pool and the shit over a few

shots of JD while Willie Nelson crooned on the jukebox. Maybe at the end of the night the bartender, Linda --a big-busted blond woman if there ever was one!-- would let him take her home.

In the end, none of that mattered. After all these years, Fate had finally dealt him a winning hand. When luck like that rolled around, you didn't ask questions, you just went with it, as he was doing now.

Soon the little convoy was pulling in the double driveway of 1313 Mockingbird Lane; he pulled his old Duster to a halt about a quarter mile up the road. He did not need the binoculars to take in the scene that was playing out below him. The man who had ridden in the black Jetta, Daniel, let himself out of the car and grabbed a firm hold of a for sale sign that was sticking out of the dirt in the front yard of the colonial style house, he tossed it across the lawn with a good natured grin. The other people who had come to gather at this little housewarming party were now opening their trucks and taking brightly wrapped packages from them.

So, it was true, Danny had bought himself a house. He had read about the closing on the property in the legal section of the Colorado sun times three days ago and had cruised by here just to check the place out yesterday. As he dragged from his cigarette, he wondered just where his brother had been living up until now if he hadn't a home of his own. That answer was easy to grasp, he had probably been living on the military base and sucking off the welfare of others all these years, just as he always did. The little sap. Always so ready and willing to suck up to whoever was around him.

Daniel was sliding a key into the lock of the front door and letting everyone inside; in a few moments, he would take a walk down the cul-de-sac and see if he could get a look in the windows. Not just yet, he lit another Marlboro and drew deeply from the smoke, give 'em time to get a little lit first, the chances of anyone inside noticing him would be lessened once they'd had time to get a drink or two in them. He caught sight of himself in the rearview mirror, oh what a shame, he thought as he stroked his own shoulder length sun-bleached hair, he would have to cut that off and shave his beard as well. But no bother, it was only hair, it would grow back. Tomorrow he would go to the eye-shop in the local mall (every mall had at least one!) and pick up a pair of glasses like Danny's. David had always been partial to contacts but glasses seemed to be called for and so he would have to get them. First, he wanted to get into the house. Tomorrow, he reminded himself, tomorrow everything would be set into action.

"Nice place, Daniel." Jack remarked as they walked into the two-story colonial house that Daniel had closed on this afternoon. "Good job."

Since his ascension Daniel owned almost no worldly possessions, what he did have left was waiting for him in storage. He had already sent for it, his belongings were slated to arrive the day after tomorrow, until then the house was a bit empty and only three boxes sat in the corner of the living room waiting to be unpacked. The other things, the bed, two computers and two television sets had been moved into the house earlier in the day. His credit card was about to take another hit at the furniture store and the appliance store and the carpet store. Daniel laughed to himself as the thoughts went through his head.

That was all right, after spending the last 3 years living on the base, he had saved just about every

dime the military had paid him. For the first time in his life, Daniel was aware of the fact that he didn't necessarily have to scrimp and save any longer. "Thanks, I like it."

"Ok, isn't it time for the Grand Tour?" Sam asked as she came over to where the two men stood talking.

Daniel led them around the house, upon entering the front door one entered into the living room that had a big picture window on the left-hand wall. The view was of the side yard and a small garden that the previous owner had planted there. At the far end of the living room was the object that had really caused Daniel to buy the house, a fireplace. He supposed she could sleep by it if she wanted to, but hoped that she would spend many nights lying with him by it before they made their way upstairs. Over the last month he had brought her back up to the hillside and lit the fire for her, Calla would lay by it on a blanket or in the dirt and stare up at the stars. To him it seemed that she almost drew as much comfort from the flames heat as she did from him. Lately it had been too cold for Calla to climb the hill in the night, the fire and his body heat were not enough to keep her warm, not up here in the Colorado Rockies where the temperature currently hovered somewhere around 40 degrees in the daytime. Daniel had taken a cue from Teal's and brought candles into his quarters. She loved them, they were almost as good as the fires he would build on the hillside for her.

Off the living room to the right was a spare room that he intended to use as study. As they made their way through the living room to the middle of the house, they came into a large kitchen. Some of the appliances needed to be replaced and the kitchen could use a new floor but it had a large center isle and chef's stove. Past the kitchen was a large screened-in porch that looked out onto the back yard where a staunch shed stood to the left and the train ran on rails beyond. It was far enough away so that it should not bother them once they got used to it. Back inside, off to the right of the kitchen was a formal dining room. Upon exiting the dining room, they came to the stairs that lead to the second floor and the two bedrooms and one bath up there.

"I know it needs a little work," Daniel said as he rubbed his hands together and looked around, "but I can do it." Jack snorted. "What?" He turned to look at Jack. "I can swing a hammer."

"Without hitting your thumb?" Jack laughed and clapped Daniel on the back. "If you need any help let me know, huh?"

"Sure. Thanks." Daniel led them back down the stairs and into the living room where Calla had a platter of cheese, crackers and fruit waiting for them. They didn't have any formal wine glasses and so there were disposable plastic cups sitting next to chilled bottles of wine. Calla filled plastic cups with good wine, passed around the hoer's oeuvres. She laughed, she smiled and made genuine conversation, she had given up her use of those one or two word phrases and begun talking to those around her more like an adult. Calla had proven she was intelligent and quick witted over the last few weeks. She just seemed to captivate everyone around her and it seemed to come so effortlessly to her, she didn't even know she was doing it. Daniel was growing fonder of her every day. Although the last month had not been the easiest of his life, she was a challenge to say the least, he had gone to sleep every night and woke up every morning with her in his arms and thanked whatever Gods there were for bringing her into his life. He could love her, he knew that,

but he wasn't sure if he could love her because his heart told him to or if it was because of the bond she shared with him. As such, he hesitated to give in to what he felt, but that did not stop him from sleeping with her.

"You're looking good these days, Daniel." Jack complimented from behind Daniel. "You working out?"

Daniel tossed kindling into the fireplace and then rose to look at the Colonel. "No in the ah, traditional sense, no." Daniel smiled happily as he glanced across the room at Calla. Now that Jack mentioned it, Daniel realized that he felt exceptionally well, almost like he was in his early twenties and full of steam, ready to take on the world. This morning, as he packed up his shaving equipment from the bathroom on the base, he glanced at his reflection in the mirror and swore that the little lines beginning to appear around the corners of his eyes had faded.

"You've really been good for her. She's really growing up." Jack remarked from behind Daniel as he bent to build a fire.

"Yeah, I noticed." Daniel chuckled as he looked at her over his shoulder.

"So have you." Jack's tone did not change. "Look at you, finally moved out of the house. Got yourself a nice girl. Before ya know it, you'll be making babies." Jack drank deeply from the cup in his hand.

Daniel pushed his glasses up on the bridge of his nose as he stood up and away from the fire he had lit while he ignored the comment. He knew what Jack meant and that he meant it well, there was no need to argue over it. While he did not fool himself into thinking that a mere month with him had made up for a lifetime of abuse, Calla did seem to be doing much better than she had been when he first brought her here. She had gotten away from her use of the word 'Master' before his name, a fact for which he was profoundly grateful. She now had several new friends, Colonel Jack, Major Samantha, Sir Teal'c, Doctor Janet and General George.

Calla did seem to prefer Sam's company to that of the others but she no longer attempted to shy away from conversation with any of them, not even Jack, if they wished to talk with her. She was curious about the world around her. As well as about, how things worked and rarely did he show her anything more than once and she understood it. Just last week, Daniel had sat down with her in his lab and thought he might show her how to read some hieroglyphics, Calla had surprised him by learning to what amounted to college level Hieroglyphics 101 in an afternoon.

Before she and Sam had returned from their shopping spree she was knowledgeable in the workings of driving a car and had begged Daniel to let her try, just let her try it! Upon her return. The next morning, Daniel capitulated and she had driven the Jetta down the winding country road toward town without any hesitation or problems whatsoever. She had complained that his car lacked the 'hand stick' that Samantha's had.

In the process of showing her how the world worked and trying to be the Adult in his recent situation, Daniel imaged that he had grown up to a certain extent. If he not met her, he would not be standing in the living room of his very own house by his very own fire. He would still have his nose buried in a book somewhere. While he would have admitted to anyone who asked that yes he

had purchased the house for Calla, the base he realized was unsuitable for her. He wanted her to live in a place that had plenty of sunlight and where she could walk out the door at any moment she pleased to without having to check in and out. The base really was far too much like Kanan's keep. What he would not so readily admit was just why he had done so. It was not unpleasant memories the base might have brought to her but because of the men who resided there, which concerned him most.

Upon coming back from their shopping spree at the mall and handing over his credit card, (which Daniel swore was actually smoking when she gave it to him), Sam had related the way the men had reacted to her and told him to keep an eye on her. Daniel had done so. On the occasions they walked the halls of the base together, (she always walked on his left and either held his hand or looped her arm through his own), the soldiers would glance at her. However, when she walked the halls on her own and Daniel caught sight of her and those around her, he watched them leer at her she passed. Daughter to Aphrodite, they would stop in their tracks as she walked by, stopping to take in a long cool drink before she was out of their line of sight. Most of the time it was just as Sam had said; Calla did not notice them at all. Sometimes she did and she would either nod or give them a smile but never did she talk to them. Daniel found himself wondering how much danger was in those leers and just safe she might be, or not. He had started looking for a house almost immediately; he wanted to move her out of there and away from them.

That was obvious to him on the day he had walked into the mess hall to find Calla playing a guitar, which Lt. King had lent her, and singing an old Eagles tune "The Last Resort". There wasn't anything wrong in that, not by itself anyway. The people he worked with had stopped shoveling the undercooked food into their mouths and all eyes were on her as she strummed the guitar and say; "She came from Providence, the one in Rhode Island. Where the Old World shadows hang, heavy in the air...."

Daniel had stood out of her line of sight and watched the scene. As he stood there watching her he kept reminding himself that there wasn't anything wrong with it, really there was not. She was just sitting there happily strumming the guitar and singing the old Eagles song, all eyes were upon her. This was something she often did alone in his room while she waited for him to return to her. Daniel would open the door to his quarters to find the stereo on hi and Calla dancing around the room singing whatever old rock and roll tune she had picked out from her new CD collection. When she did this alone in his quarters it made him smile, but here it made him nervous. "They call it Paradise, I don't know why. You call some place Paradise kiss it good-bye. "As Calla finished the song, he had walked away from the door with an uneasy mind.

Maybe even that would not have been so bad except there were the comments he received on a daily basis. Nothing threatening by any means, and he probably should have found them flattering but he did not. No, he did not like the men he worked with saying things like;

"Gee, Dr. Jackson, she's really great."

or

"If you weren't dating her already, I'd go after her myself."

or

“She sure is pretty, Dr. Jackson.”

More than the comments he got or the looks and leers she received, it was her absolute lack of attention that bugged him. Daniel wasn't sure if she was truly unaware of what was happening around her or if she was just choosing to ignore it, either way, it could turn out badly for her. It was his to see job to it that nothing bad should befall her, wasn't it? Daniel had begun to understand Kanan's reasoning when he confined her to the walls of his Keep and ultimately to his chamber alone.

When she wasn't playing to the masses, he could usually find her at the laptop he had installed in his quarters surfing the Internet. Once he showed her how to work the computer, he couldn't get her off it. She spent hours playing games and playing catch up on the happenings on Planet Earth over the last 25 years. Daniel was glad he had not informed her of IM programs, he kept her out of chat rooms as well. He had tried to explain to her that the people were not always who they said they were but she didn't understand. Afraid she would do something foolish out of nothing more than sheer naivety he had blocked her from entering them any more.

Through her ever-increasing skills with the keyboard, Calla had learned of the assassination of John Lennon, the death of George Harrison, Union Carbide, the gruesome Life and Times of a man by the name of Saddam Hussein, AIDS, and September 11, 2001. She looked up at him that night with tears in her eyes and remarked that in her absence the world had gone insane and that it was a wonder the Mortals of this planet had not managed to destroy themselves.

Daniel supposed she was right.

“General's starting to ask when you're going have her take us on this little trip.” Jack said as he took the last drink from his glass. “Any idea on what I should tell him?”

Daniel had stalled on this issue; in fact, he hadn't really even brought it up to her over the last two weeks. Truth was he didn't want to bring her to Ares or anywhere near a place where the Olympa might be hanging out. What if they were not happy to see her? What if they tried to send her back to Kanan? “Soon,” he said as he stared across the room at the woman who was currently sharing his life and his bed. “I just want to get her settled in here and then we'll start making plans.”

“Yeah, I got it. “ Jack reached into his pants pocket. “By the way, he's really grateful for you letting the boys in the lab have a look at her. “

“Is he? Well, that's good. “Daniel said absently. Calla's day with the boys in the lab had not been what anyone of them had expected. Daniel had taken there mainly to appease the General, he knew he was dragging his feet on taking Calla to Greece and hoped that having her spend a day with the Lab Rats would help make up for that in some small way.

Daniel sat with her while Dr. O'Gara and his assistants hooked her up to machines, put suction cups on her head and chest, little alligator clips on her fingers. They subjected her to another MRI this one scanned her brain. Calla sat patiently and allowed them to do whatever they wanted, so long as Daniel stayed with her. At Dr. O'Gara's demand, she attempted to produce either the healing or the protective energy and could not, once again, she reiterated her assertion that there

had to be a need for such things. Daniel began to fidget in his seat; he wanted to take her out of here and away from the Lab Rats. An idea had come to him and Daniel told her that his back ached, would she rub it for him? Sure enough, a few moments after her hands touched his bare skin they began faintly glowing with amber light. The machines around her began to make noise, they recorded her brain activity, heart rate, blood oxygen content and only god knew what else. In a few minutes, he told her that was enough, the amber light retreated back into the palms of her hands. Dr. O’Gara and his boys oohed and ahed, they thought that was a cool trick. However, Dr. O’Gara wanted to see her make wounds disappear and they wanted to know how her protective shield worked, he was damn insistent upon it. Doing so was against his better judgment but the information could be very valuable to all of them. Instead of taking her away, Daniel provided the need she was looking for by taking a small pocketknife from his pants pocket. He opened the blade in front of Calla who looked at him with a very puzzled expression, although he was certain she already knew what he was going to do. Without hesitation, Daniel drew the sharp cutting edge across the palm of his hand, the wound opened easily and his blood began to pour through his palm and onto the floor of the lab. Calla rubbed her hands together immediately and reached out quickly to grab his injured hand in both of her own. Before the unbelieving eyes of Dr. O’Gara and the Lab Rats, the gash, which probably would have required seven or eight stitches, turned back into smooth unblemished flesh. The cut appeared on Calla’s left palm; Daniel covered it with his own. The amber light turned in on itself and when she opened her hand, again no trace of the wound remained. Before Daniel could look up and ask them if they were satisfied yet, Dr. O’Gara called out his name in a hard voice. Daniel’s head snatched up to see that Dr. O’Gara had drawn a gun and was pointing it at his head. The blue light appeared before him before the lab rat could even think of pulling the trigger.

Calla stood quickly between Daniel and Dr. O’Gara with one hand facing out in Daniel’s direction, a stream of blue light emanated from her palm and surrounded him from head to toe. The other palm faced the Dr. O’Gara and in it was a glowing ball of pure fire. “Holy shit!” Daniel exclaimed as he tried to duck away from the shield surrounding him but it followed his movements as though attached to him. “Put it down!” Daniel demanded. As the blood drained away from his face, Dr. O’Gara dropped the gun onto the desk and swore that it was not even loaded; he never intended to shoot Dr. Jackson at all. “Calla, it’s all right. It’s over. “The blue light disappeared back into her palm but the fire ball in the other remained. “I have to throw it.” She said in a quite voice as she struggled to maintain control of the growing ball of fire in her hand. “Master Daniel, I have to.” Not being able to control it any longer she thrust her arm all the way forward and tossed the flaming ball at the far cement wall. It burst through the cement, leaving a divide that was more than a foot across in the eight-inch thick cement. The glass partitions in the lab shattered, with the force of the explosion, raining broken glass down on those in the lab and bursting forth into the hallway beyond. The alarms overhead went off, Calla covered her ears to block out the sound and clutched her arms around him. The sprinklers went off in the lab and soon everything, including the five people in the room, were soaking wet. Security guards ran inside the lab with their guns drawn, Daniel grabbed her and held her tight to him so that she did not see the weapons they held. “I’m sorry.” Daughter to Ares, Daniel had not even suspected that she possessed such an ability to defend. “That’s enough.” Soaked through to the skin and watching the smoldering smoke still rising from the cement wall, Daniel took Calla by the hand to lead her out of the lab. A shaken Dr. O’Gara stared at them with his mouth agape as they neared the door; he called out a question before Daniel could get her through the door. “Why is the energy different colors?” Calla shook

and shivered from cold as her clothes stuck to her skin and water dripped from the tip of her nose, she held very tightly to Daniel and in a small voice explained that amber, like her Mother's hair, was the color she associated most with healing and that pale blue was the color she most associated with protection. Daniel stood with her and let her answer the outrageously stupid question which had been asked of her, when she was done he led out of the lab and back to his quarters as quickly as he could.

Later that day, while Calla slept safe in his bed, Daniel cornered Dr. O'Gara (quite literally) in one of the corridors and laid into him over the stunt he pulled. In a very serious voice, Daniel warned Dr. O'Gara that he and his Lab Rats were to stay away from Calla. As Daniel stuffed his hands into his pockets and turned to walk away, Dr. O'Gara called after him. "Don't you want to know why I asked her about the colors? That light blue protective energy she produces, since before you knew her, it's the same exact color as your eyes, you know, Dr. Jackson." Dr. Jackson had avoided Dr. O'Gara since.

Jack looked over at Daniel as they stood by the fire in the living room he was lost in thought. Calla, Sam and Teal'c were having a very nice chat over a bottle of wine. Sam was giving her opinion on window treatments and Teal'c was saying that suit of armor would look good in the corner by the fireplace. Everyone had an opinion. "Hey, Hammond sent these over for her." He handed over a small stack of what looked like credit cards. "Now that you're living off base and all, he thought she might need them."

Daniel glanced through the small stack Jack had handed him and realized it was identification for Calla. There was a driver's license, library card, birth certificate, passport and two credit cards, all of them with the sole exception of the birth certificate said Calla Jackson on them.

"They, ah, made her your wife." Jack shrugged. "I guess the boys figured that you two didn't exactly look like brother and sister, you know."

"Marriage certificate." Daniel stuttered as he continued to sift through the pile. "They forgot the marriage certificate."

"No, they didn't." From his other pocket, Jack produced one piece of paper that said that Daniel Jackson and Calla Jones had been married on May 5 in the year 2003 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. "I guess they thought the idea of you being newlyweds was a good cover, you know, with the new house and all." Jack leaned in close to Daniel's ear. "It's not legal you know. It's just for show."

"I know." Daniel put the items into his shirt pocket.

"These too." Jack reached into another pocket and produced two solid gold bands. Daniel opened his hand and Jack dropped them in.

"Hey, it's time to open the gifts we brought." Sam said as she walked over to where the men were engaged in heavy conversation.

Standing outside in the cold of the late autumn night, David crept up to the window to get a good

look at his brother and the woman who was sharing his life. Were they married? If so, how long? Were they engaged? Maybe they were just bumping uglies. He would know better if she was still there come tomorrow morning. David scratched notes into a scraggly notebook as he stood in the shadow of a street lamp peering in through the picture window at his brother and friends. Everything looked so nice. So peaceful. So calm.

Man, was that gonna change.

After an hour or so the little gathering began to break up and David made his way back to the Duster to wait and watch while the T-Bird and Lexus pulled out of the driveway of Daniel's new house and passed him on their way back up the cul-de-sac. In a few moments, he would make his way back down to the little house to peek in the window. Who knew? Maybe he'd get lucky when he got down there.

"Calla, come and sit with me." Daniel bid as he tossed two large throw pillows onto the floor before the burning hearth. "As I see it, we have two choices." He began and she sat next to him on one of the pillows. "We can either sleep here by the fire, or take all that stuff upstairs and put the bed together."

She did not hesitate. "I would like to sleep by the fire with you. The blankets are in the box over there." She pointed to a large cardboard box that had earlier served as a makeshift coffee table. Calla kissed his cheek before rising and taking the blankets from the box, she tossed them at him and Daniel spread them out on the carpet in front of the fire. "Daniel?"

"Yes?"

"Why don't you sleep with Major Samantha?" Calla tossed the last pillow in his direction. Off his game, the pillow hit him squarely in the chest and then fell to the floor at his feet.

"Why would you ask me that?" Daniel returned when he had time to think. "Sam and I work together, Cal, work. That's all." He tossed another log into the flames and gave the fire a good poke.

"She is very pretty." Calla encouraged as she began to smooth out the blankets he had lain on the floor. "Don't you want to experience her? I'm sure it would not interfere with your work."

"Yes, it would." He sat beside her on the blanket and brushed the hair away from her face. "What's this about, hum? Are you trying to get rid of me?"

The question seemed absurd, how could she possibly want to away from him when he was the very air that she breathed? "No, of course not. It is just that Kanan had so many women and you spend all of your time and attentions on me. You must be tiring of me by now."

Daniel smiled without thinking or holding back. "I'll never get tired of you."

Calla pulled away from his embrace. "That is very flattering," she said in a soft voice, "but you are a man, you must....want. Don't you?"

“Hum-um.” He agreed as he ran his hands through her hair. “I want you.” Daniel kissed her full on the mouth; Calla did not pull away from him. “Just you.”

The idea of her being his only lover for the rest of her days was most intriguing to her, most desirable. It was not realistic. “She has no Master. I know my place,” she reminded him softly, “I am not your wife, Sha’re is your wife.”

“No, you’re not my wife.” He thought of the identification hiding his shirt pocket that stated otherwise. “You know that Sha’re is dead, she is never coming back to me. You’re not my Cha’Dech.” This were two of those sticking points that he’d kept running into over the course of the last month and he supposed he would run into for a good while to come. He knew that Calla understood Sha’re was dead but she would not stop putting her memory between them. Daniel had put away the photograph which had been beside his bed the last few years in the hopes that without the constant reminder of his past, Calla would open up a bit more to him. Instead, Calla had found the photograph within hours, (in fact, he was convinced that she had actually gone looking for it! She had to have because he removed it from his quarters and put it a desk drawer in his office) and she placed back in its proper place on the nightstand next to where he slept. Behind it was the staff he had used to take command of her soul during the ritual. That had also come from his office; Calla had placed it behind the photograph in the corner by his side of the bed, just where he remembered seeing it when Kanan lay dying in his bed. Daniel wanted to tell her that, like Sam, she had no Master either, but Calla was not ready to hear that. She was still a long way away from being able to handle freedom on her own. Baby steps, he reminded himself, just so long as they kept going forward together, she would eventually be able to live free.

Without him?

That was not a thought that brought him any happiness. What would happen when she did stand on her own two feet and make her own way in this world? Calla would still be tied to him but perhaps she would no longer want him as she did now. What would become of the bond between them if that should come to pass?

“I’ve got something for you.” Daniel reached into his shirt pocket, thumbed past the new identification hiding there and produced a large hand-rolled object. “Doctor Janet said that you should have this from time to time.” Finding marijuana had been easier than he had ever expected, he had in fact bought a forty-five dollar bag from one of the MPs on the base. So much for the military’s stance on drug use.

“Mansis?” She asked.

“Ah-uh. Why don’t you bring that bottle of wine over here and sit by the fire with me.” Daniel invited. Once upon a time, he had thought himself above the concept of seduction but not tonight. Tonight with the fire, the wine and the mansis, she would be very ready to be seduced, she would drop her veil, if only for a little while and give over to him rather than tell him what she thought he wanted to hear. Calla was the Queen of Diversion and of Telling Lies of Omission. Many times over the last month he had caught her calling attention away from whatever the subject at hand was, usually Kanan or Ares, and piping his mind off in a different direction. She was very skilled at

it, most of the time he didn't even realize she had done it until the conversation was over and he remembered what it was he had set out to do in the first place, before she had called his mind off to something far more gratifying. On the rare occasion she had been unable to divert him from his line of questioning, she had simply skipped over what she did not want to talk about or replied in terms so vague he was left to wonder if she had answered him at all.

Not tonight.

Calla stretched out by the fire with Daniel at her side and a bottle of white wine in her hands. "Then what am I, Daniel? If I am not your concubine, if I am not here to satisfy you, why am I here? What is my place?"

Daniel lit the joint and drew a deep toke from the pine-scented smoke; he leaned down and parted her lips with his tongue as he gently blew the smoke into her lungs. Eagerly she accepted the gift he gave her. "Here with me, as my lover, not my whore." He leaned in close to her ear. "In case you hadn't noticed, I find you most satisfying." Soft lips landed on the nape of her neck. "No more talk of other lovers, ok?" He drew smoke into his lungs once again and gave it with her.

Calla looked deeply into the eyes of the man sharing in the sacred herb with her and saw that he did speak the truth. Daniel did not think of her in the way that Kanan and even Ares had, she was not a prize to be won or lost, bought or sold. Not to Daniel anyway. Afraid to look into the softness reflected back at her any longer, afraid she would fall in there and never come out again, Calla closed her own eyes against the sight of the world he offered her. "It's just that, if you want her, or someone else. If you want," her eyes opened to look at him, "us to..."

Daniel put his fingertips up to her lips, her eyes like her voice was starting to trail off and away from him. He took another hit off the joint and shared the smoke with her. "What are you offering me?" His voice was soft and inviting as it waited for her reply.

Calla let the smoke fill her lungs and her mind as she searched for the English word for ya'ku mon and found none. "If you want me to make love to her," she stopped as she heard him draw in a harsh breath. She looked up to see the sparkle in his eyes. The idea did appeal to him. It appealed to all men, didn't it? "Kanan would often bring other women into our bed, I can please her." Calla bid. "You can watch and then you can take her."

"Been thinking about this for a while?" Daniel asked and smiled as the answer flashed across her eyes; yes, she had been thinking about it. "Is that something you enjoyed?" The joint was growing smaller, it was getting to the point where he could not hold it between his fingers much longer but still he drew a deep hit and closed his mouth around hers, giving the smoke to her waiting lungs. Jesus, he hoped they didn't piss test him any time soon. This was the only way she would take it. Kanan had made a ritual out of it, one that could be very enjoyable as it was right now, but it was also a control mechanism and Daniel warned himself against using it. Whenever he wanted her to be calm, Kanan would share this with her and in this way only. Kanan forbid her to touch the herb without him. Kanan dolled everything out to her in just the increments he wanted to and in the time he wanted to.

Calla thought about it for a few moments while the smoke settled in her lungs. She had never

stopped to wonder if she had really enjoyed the act or not, only that it was a part of her life and something she did to please her Master. Calla began to relate to him one of the Rites of Passage of the Shankuk people. It was one that Daniel found most disconcerting but he listened to her. Each member of the Royal Court turned over his daughter to the king one month prior to her turning 15. For the month before her birthday, she was held in the small tower room where Daniel had been taken. She was locked away there until two weeks after she bled, at which point, after a fine dinner and ceremony, she would be taken away to Kanan's chamber where Calla would ready the young virgin for her Master. For three days, she would be held in his chamber and give over to him or Calla at any time he requested it. After the end of those three days, she was once again taken to the tower room for one month. If she bled, she was freed. If she did not, Kanan had to accept his heir and his new wife. In twenty-five years, he had failed to produce an heir in this fashion and thus had no wife, only his Cha'Dech.

"And you enjoyed that?" Daniel asked as poured the last of bottle into her cup. At first, he thought she would tell him that her enjoyment had not mattered that it simply was what it was, she loved to use that line of reasoning with him.

"I was not adverse to the experience." Calla drank down a long sip of the wine. It was the truth, their touch, no matter how wanted or not, was so much softer than Naganti Kanan's had ever been.

"Is that a 'yes'?"

Calla sidestepped him. "Or, if you would prefer," her words staggered but Calla continued on, "another man."

"How is that possible?"

"If you...touch me..." Calla's words began to break apart but still she forged ahead, "...when he does...it...it"

"It won't burn you, will it? Because my touch already registers, it sort of cancels his out, huh?"

Calla raised her index finger to her lips. "Shhh," she whispered and looked around the room with her eyes wide, "it's a secret. You must never tell. Kume?" She sounded like a 12 year-old sharing some deliciously wicked secret with her best friend on the playground at school.

"I promise, I won't tell." Daniel agreed and in that instant he would have sworn he was looking into the eyes of a little girl. "You liked it?" he asked even though he already knew the answer. Calla had loathed it, the memory danced in her eyes and Daniel did not turn away from it. Her mind to his, it was like being the last balcony row of an old theatre, watching a movie which had been run so many times that its colors had faded to almost nothing, only those dark emerald orbs were the screen upon which it played and the sound was turned down low. The latter he was profoundly grateful for, he could see her lips moving and he knew that she was begging, pleading with them, not to harm her. His head tingled and buzzed, in the back of his mind he could quite clearly see a young Calla cringing away from two pair of dark hands which were descending toward her. Calla did not answer him, she only stared at him with those wounded eyes, and she was trying to so hard

to find something that she could give him that would equal the material things he had given to her over the last month. "Then why offer it to me?" Daniel reached out to trace his fingertips along the outline of her cheek. Again, he already knew the answer to his question, it was as plain as the fear in her eyes; Calla was still trying everything she knew to please her Master. Especially now when he had given her such a nice place to live, some place which was not constantly surrounded by strangers. Some place much more private where certain things could take place and no one need ever know. "You don't have to do that anymore. Please, tell me you know that. Lie to me if you have to."

"It was considered to be a great honor if Naganti Kanan invited one into his bed with me. Would you not like such an experience, Daniel?"

Again, she was trying to side step him. "I consider it an honor every time you let me make love with you, Calla." He watched as she blushed and turned her eyes away from him. "And no, I wouldn't like such an experience." Daniel told her as he rose from the floor and held up the bottle of wine, "It's empty." He smile and realized that his words had two meanings, much like hers often did. "I think there's one more left." Daniel crossed out of the living and into the kitchen. A threesome, with Sam? Well, that certainly was an appealing idea, now wasn't it? If only for a brief moment anyway. As he stood in the kitchen reaching for the bottle of wine, Daniel realized that he had absolutely no intentions of every sharing her with anyone. There would not be another woman and certainly never another man in their bed. Still, the thoughts lingered in the back of his mind as he returned to her with a fresh bottle of wine. Filling the cup again, he kept his eyes away from her. "Twenty-five years is a long time for Kanan not to produce an heir." Now he did look at her. "How do you suppose that happened?"

Calla stared into the flames while she drank from the cup he had filled for her. Master Daniel loved to ask leading questions. They often played this game of Cat and Mouse. "I don't know," she replied in a distant voice, "perhaps it was the seeds I crushed and put in their drinks."

"Perhaps it was. She had given them an herb either a contraceptive or an abortifacient, he didn't know which, so that they would not produce his heirs. "Why stand in the way of that?"

"If he took a wife, I would be cast aside in favor of her." Now she did turn to look at him. "I could not risk that, especially not when the bond began to break." Another, longer, swallow of wine slid down her gullet.

Daniel wanted to ask what would happen if he took a wife but refrained from doing so. There was no need to worry her with something that was so far into the future he couldn't even see it himself. "No, of course not." Daniel agreed. If Kanan took a wife, Calla would have become nothing more than another whore in his stable. Daniel thought that she should have longed for such a thing to happen, should have wished it with all of her heart. He looked down at his own hands. Should have. Would have. Could not. As much as she loathed it she needed Kanan's touch, just as she needed his now. Especially when that bond began to break, she had to find some way to secure her place in his life no matter how much she didn't even want to be there. "And you, Calla?" Daniel sat back and watched her drink.

Calla was not stupid; Doctor Janet had run her tests and no doubt told Daniel all sorts of things.

“What about me?” She did not turn to look at him; instead, she finished the glass and reached for the bottle. “The seeds were very difficult to obtain. Illegal on Tiberia, no form of...” She searched for the phrase for a moment, “birth control...was allowed in Naganti Kanan’s kingdom.” She explained and drank down the last of the alcohol in her cup. “Very difficult. With the girls I had time to plan, for myself I did not.”

Daniel found himself wondering just how she had obtained them and what the price had been. They had to have come from a woman, he doubted that Calla would dare enlist the assistance of a man in such a manner. What had her price been? Maybe she had been lucky and the old woman, Abel, had helped her. Daniel moved from his place on the sofa to sit behind her and filled the cup once more then placed the bottle by the hearth and wrapped his arms around her, pulling her in close. To him it seemed that sometimes it was easier for her to talk to him if she did not have to look him in the eye, if she didn’t have to see disappointment or disapproval flash there. Daniel wanted to make this as painless as possible for her but he needed to know. The thought that she had left her children behind on Tiberia to come with him kept nagging at him, he wanted to put it to rest. “He killed them, didn’t he?” Daniel whispered as delicately as he could. “Your babies.”

Calla stiffened in his arms as she nodded her head. “I know what you are doing, Daniel.” Her voice was soft but shaky, “You are trying to ply me with mansas and white wine, huh? You think I will tell you everything that you want to know.” She glanced over her shoulder at him, her eyes heavy with tears, “You forget, my Mother taught all men and women the art of seduction.”

“So, how am I doing?” He asked lightly.

“Very well.” Calla smiled a little as the tears grew heavier and then drank deeply from the glass as she turned away from him again. “He said they were all born dead,” her voice shook, “but I heard them cry. Liar. I heard them.” Calla raised a hand to her cheek and wiped away the tear that was falling there. “Will you do the same?”

Daniel rocked her back and forth in his strong arms and held her tight. “No.” He kissed the soft hair on the side of her head. Daniel wasn’t sure what he would do if she did get pregnant but he was certain that infanticide was not going to be the choice he made. As he held her close, he reminded himself she had bled last week and, for now, he was safe from having to deal with that. “I’m so sorry, Calla, for everything that he did to you. It makes me sick.” Daniel kissed her cheek. “I want to kill him. Slowly.” He confessed. “I will never do those things to you. No man will ever do those things to you again, not as long as you’re with me, I swear.”

Calla turned around inside his hold and stared into his eyes. Yes, he spoke the truth, at least in this moment he spoke what his heart believed was the truth. His words were kind and well meant, but Calla did not allow herself to believe in nor take any comfort from them. She took the last bit of wine down her throat as she scried into the flames and absently held it out so that he could refill it. “Do you know what I did, Daniel?”

“No, what did you do?”

As her eyes held fast to the flames before her, she confessed to him that the reason Kanan had been injured was because she had weakened the force shield around Oz so that Daniel and his friends

could come back to the safety it offered; back to her. What Calla did not admit to him was the fact that she had seen the Gesh'Tah who fired the laser rifle at her Master, had seen him before he fired and had chosen the moment he pulled the trigger to weaken the shield. It had happened, more or less, just as Jack had told him:

She had seen an opportunity and seized upon it with an iron fist. With Kanan fatally injured, he would have no choice but to let her go or die, Kanan would always chose his own life over anything any day of the week. More than that, Daniel had not had to challenge him for her, as Naganti Kanan wanted him to do. Daniel had not had to risk anything for her sake and if she could help it, he never would. While she would always hold him at arms length and never allow herself to love him, she would always do whatever she could to protect him from harm.

“Do you want to know about Ares now?” She asked in a detached voice. “You have been very patient, Daniel.” Calla leaned against the soft warmth of his chest with the cup in her hand and sighed.

Calla didn't have any problems keeping up with the conversation and there were days that he swore she read him like a cheap paperback novel, even when she wasn't poking around inside his head. “Who in your family was left here when you...went away?” Daniel asked. Calla always referred to them that way, as her family.

“Eros still lived here, he’s my brother. “She explained as she took another drink. “He has the most beautiful bronze skin and blonde hair.“ Although he could not see her face, Daniel could feel her smile. “Hades was here, he’s my uncle, well he’s my Father’s uncle. Ares, you know, was still here and me.”

As he sat by the fire with her in his arms, Daniel listened intently while Calla related tales of her life on the islands with her mother, father, and beloved brother, Eros. Like her eyes, her voice lit up when she spoke of him, it was obvious that she missed him very much. Out of the entire Greek pantheon there had been three original Olympians left here on Earth when she was taken away. A few ideas began to form themselves in Daniel’s mind. Death. Love. And War. A brother, an uncle and her father. It probably should have been a happy family but, as she had said, they were a dying race and with Calla the only female left.....

“Where was Aphrodite? Calla, where is your mother?” Daniel readied himself for her to pull away from him but she did not. Instead, she turned around inside his hold and threw her arms around his neck.

“She’s gone, Master Daniel. Mother resides with Hades.” The tears were clear in her voice. “In the Elysian Fields.”

Daniel had suspected this but, as always, he wanted to be sure rather than going on assumption. He soothed her hair and held her a little closer. “It’s all right, don’t cry.” He told her as he kissed her forehead. Thoughts of his own parents went through his mind as he held her. “Just tell me one last thing, ok?” He did not wait for her to answer. “Why were you born in Scotland?”

“You ask questions that I have no answers for.” Calla stopped for a moment. “Talk, with you it’s always talk.” Sometimes Master Daniel could be exasperating. Always did he ask questions and then follow those questions with more questions. Nothing ever seemed to satisfy his curiosity. “What more can I tell you about this?” Calla took a drink of her wine. Still he waited for her to answer and so she obliged him. “I lived near Dunvegan until I was five, even though I was very small, I can tell you that I preferred the green hills of Scotland to the dry heat of the islands where I lived next.”

Daniel’s ears did not miss the thinly veiled anger in her voice. That was new. She was not ready to pitch a fit anytime soon but he was glad to see it just the same. At some point, they had crossed a line where she decided it was all right for her to express some amount of displeasure with him. At some point, she had decided she would trust him a little more than she had the day before. As he sat with her in his arms in the fire light, looking at her silhouette, he thought that Calla really did look more like a Faery or Elvin Princess than an Olympian. He could see her running through the green forests of Scotland, and skipping down the rolling hillsides there far easier than he could envision

her among the likes of Zeus, Hera and Ares.

“And then Mother came and took me away.”

“Mother came?” That was new information. “Where was she before?”

“In Greece with Father.” Calla’s tone was annoyed, why did always ask questions he knew the answer to? It was very tiring.

“Who took care of you, Calla?”

She smiled sweetly and shrugged her shoulders at him as if to say ‘I don’t know’. “The ones she left me with cared for me.”

Duh. It was Daniel’s turn to smile. In a weary voice, Calla continued her story. She had not even met Ares until Aphrodite brought her back to Greece, Daniel wondered if Ares had been aware of her existence up until that point. One day her Mother had just shown up on the Scottish shores, packed up her daughter and taken her to the secret islands on which Calla’s family resided. There were three of these islands, Calla explained, they lay just off the coast of Crete, and she assured him they would not appear on any map. In there stead would be nothing at all or the symbol for three very large and barren rocks. It was an Exclusive Club; No Mortals Allowed.

She also assured him, that when she brought him to the islands he would see them for what they truly were and not chunks of rock jutting from the sea floor. He would see them because not only would she open the doorway with her presence but also because he was now Sa’Tan and had his own bond with her family whether he liked it or not. Indeed, whether They liked him or not. The Good Dr. Jackson would see with his own two eyes, the magnificent gardens of Aphrodite’s temple, the highest towers of Eros’ castle, and the etchings upon the walls of Ares’ cave. If able to, she would even take him to the Great Council Chamber where he could sit in the very seat from where Zeus ruled. He would walk where the Gods walked and touch history.

Calla did not openly speak of her people in terms of being aliens or otherworldly, she always referred to them as her family. “Where did your family come from?” Daniel asked as she tossed her hair over her shoulder and then cuddled up against him.

When she spoke again Calla sounded tired, probably too tired for her own good or perhaps it was the wine he had plied her with or the prescription pills she had taken earlier, in any case the end result was the same. Calla dared to do something with Daniel that she never dared with Naganti Kanan, she did not stop to choose her words but spoke straight from her heart. “Come from? You talk as though my family is not of this world. As though we came from somewhere outside of this place, is that what you think?” Daniel pursed his lips and nodded his head. “Oh, Grandfather! When will they learn?” Calla turned her eyes back to Daniel and drew in a deep breath. “Do you know,” she began, “that the thing you call ‘Evolution’ sometimes takes a giant and sudden step backwards?” The question was rhetorical and she did not wait for him to reply. “And, sometimes, mind you, those who were here before that backward step get left in the fore. Because there are so few of them, they scatter and hide among themselves, afraid of the new ones who appear. Eventually, your kind came to call my kind Gods and most of us let you for one reason or another, maybe it was a want of power, greed, or control or as in Grandfather’s case, perhaps, it was a love of your kind which allowed that. Your world is so vast and ours is so small, yet you spend your time exploring the stars, trying to understand them and their worlds when you should concentrate your efforts on understanding your own.” She stopped and drew in a breath. “To answer you, Daniel, my Family and the other Families we are all dying. So many of my own family passed during my early years that there were very few of us left on the islands near Crete when I was taken away and I fear that there are none left. As for the others, I fear they may all be gone by now.” Calla turned her eyes away from him. “You ask who we are,” she turned to look at him again, “we are you. Just a little more advanced, that’s all.”

“The other families?” Daniel asked as he sat and pondered what she had told him.

“You asked me to take you to Greece, to your fabled Mount Olympus. I can take you to the Dark Kingdom, I still know the way.” In his eyes, she saw confusion. “Avalon?” She asked hoping he would recognize the name. “And the Faery Realm? Would you rather see them?” She prayed the answer to that question was ‘yes’.

Avalon and the Faery Realm, of course! Aphrodite had taken her daughter to one of the Other Families for safekeeping. She had left the infant Callestah with them and returned to Greece, to Ares, and it had been five long years before she told him that he had a daughter. “Maybe one day. You don’t want to go to Greece, do you, Calla?”

“If it is what you wish....”

“I know that part already. You, Calla.” Daniel turned her around to face him. “What do you want?”

“To please you.” With her head full of wine, her mouth tired and her throat dry from talking she rested her head against his shoulder. “Nin samje’sh agakiko.”

Daniel turned her around to face him. “I’ve heard that before, in a lot of languages. You’re right, I talk too much.” Daniel kissed her and laid her down by the fire. That night, as every night for the

month previous, she offered up her wrists to him and he refused them yet again. Not her, however, no, Daniel never refused her.

## Chapter Nineteen

Morning came and Daniel dressed to go to work. Like a worried father leaving his only child alone for the first time, he pointed out where he had left emergency telephone numbers and what she should do if anything dire were to happen in his absence. Calla listened, at first, and then reminded him that she was not a child and she would fine without him for the course of a day. Daniel understood that she was very glad to be away from the base and would probably be equally glad to be without him for a few hours; it would at least give her some time to herself. “The cable guy is supposed to come this morning, I asked for a woman but you never know. If it’s a man and you don’t want to let him in you don’t have to.” He told her as she saw him to the door. “They’re going to install the cable lines for the televisions in the living room, bed room and the modem lines for the computers.”

“Everything will be fine. I will be fine.” Calla raised herself up onto her tiptoes so that she could kiss his cheek. It was then that Daniel realized just how small she really was, rising to no more than the height of his heart. Something within him told him he should stay home; he should not walk out that door. “Go. You’re needed at work, I will be here when you come home.” She stood in the doorway and watched him drive off toward the military base she had called ‘home’ just the day before. Calla leaned against the closed door and looking around the living room, she let out a heavy sigh. The place was a mess! She picked up plastic cups and empty wine bottles and threw them into the small trashcan in the kitchen before she gathered up the clothes they had left strewn on the floor by the fire the night before.

There was heaviness to the shirt Daniel had worn last night and she noticed there was something hiding in the pocket there. She should not look at whatever it was. It did not belong to her. Out of curiosity, she shook the shirt and heard a small jingling sound that intrigued her. No, she should not look. Nevertheless, if, somehow, the contents were to just fall out, what choice would she have but to look at them as she picked them up? Calla turned the shirt around and held it by the hem between her fingertips, she gave it a light shake and the pocket spilled its contents. Laying on the floor, staring back at her, were gold rings along side of which was a card with picture of her on it. The words on top of the card read Colorado drivers’ license, the words below proclaimed her Calla Jackson currently residing at 1313 Mocking Bird Lane, Silver Springs Colorado. There were two other cards and she recognized them from Daniel’s wallet. One said visa and the other master card, both with the name Calla Jackson on them. “Ooooh, platinum.” She marveled as stuffed them back into the pocket and reached for the two pieces of paper that had also fallen out. According to one she had been born with the name of Calla Jones on October 4, 1966 in Norwalk, CT the daughter of Antoinette and George Jones, she had weight 5 1/4 pounds and was 21 1/2 inches at birth. The second piece of paper stated that Calla Jones had married Daniel Jackson on May 5, 2003 in Eau Claire, Wisconsin at 11 o’clock in the morning by Reverend Michael Shanks. “I am not his wife.” Calla muttered as she held onto the pieces of paper and two gold rings. “I am not Calla Jones. Not Calla Jackson. This is not my house.”

A harsh knock on the door caused her to jump and Calla remembered what Daniel had said about someone coming to the house to do work this morning. She dropped the pieces of paper onto the cardboard box that they had used as a makeshift coffee table the night before and realized she was not yet dressed. Pulling the sash of Daniel's robe tight around her naked body and brushing the hair from her face, Calla peeked through the window to see a man in a uniform that read Colorado cable and high-speed modem on the breast pocket of his shirt. Daniel had said she did not have to let a man into the house, but he was here and Daniel needed his computer for his work. With some trepidation, Calla opened the door.

"Morning, ma'am." The man said from behind a cheap pair of Ray-Bans. "My name's David, I'm here to hook you up." He smiled at her with a warm grin.

"Hello, David." Calla returned in a congenial voice, "I'm sorry, but I thought Ma...Mr. Jackson had requested a female."

David the Cable Guy looked down at his clipboard and then back at the small red-haired woman. "Yeh, I see that. You know, Mary called out sick today so they sent me. I can call in that you really want a woman, that's no problem, I understand about these things." His voice was as soft as his smile. "But you know it could be another week before they get someone out here." Poor Mary, she wasn't sick at all, she was dead. David had cornered her earlier, snapped her neck and left her lying in a ditch off a back road before stealing her truck and work orders.

"Please forgive the state of the house," Calla said as she stepped aside and allowed him to enter, "we just moved in yesterday."

"No problem, ma'am. Believe me, I've seen worse." He commented on his way through the door. That had been easier than he had expected, though she stared at him something fierce he was confident that she could not see his resemblance to her lover. Danny had nice short hair and David had yet to make his trip to the barbershop to have his long sun-bleached locks cut off. Danny was clean-shaven while David's face hid behind his thick beard. After he finished his work here in Danny's new house, he would take care of the personal makeover part of his plan. His thick Texas accent was something that was going to be a bit harder to deal with. David had been living in the state of Texas for the last twelve years or so, the last three of which he spent in Corpus Christi, Texas. As a result, David no longer sounded like the mid-western boy that his brother did. David knew that getting his original accent back would take a bit of work and he had spent a good portion of last night practicing in front of the mirror in his motel room. Today, however, the Texan accent would do well for him. "If ya'll jus' show me what you want done, I'll get to work, Missus Jackson." So long as he kept his Ray-Bans on he would be in like Flynn.

Carefully she took him around the house pointing out the television in the living room and the computer in the room which Daniel intended to let her use as her own space. The computer there would be hers to work with and the room would be her study. To her that was a very strange idea indeed. However, that didn't mean that it was unwelcome.

As they climbed the stairs to the second floor, David admired the way her ass swiveled from side to side with each step she took and the long length of her legs. Soon, he told himself, not yet but very soon, he would know what it felt like her have her under him. "The television in there," Calla

pointed through the doorway and into the bedroom she was looking forward to sharing with Daniel in the nights to come. "There is another computer in this room," she said as they made their way to what would serve as a guest room or second study for the time being, "I believe Mr. Jackson wants that hooked up to the cable modem thing as well."

"Do you have everything where you want it?" David asked her as he pretended to make notes on the clipboard he was carrying. She did not answer him. "It's just that it'll be kind of hard to move it all around once I get it hooked up."

"Yes, I think everything is where Mr. Jackson wants it." She replied. "I'm going to get dressed now." Calla began to walk through the door to the bedroom.

"OK, I'm gonna go out to my truck and get a few things. I'll start downstairs, I'll try to stay out of your way, Missus Jackson." David left the room off on his way down the stairs.

Rather than protest the idea that she was the Master's wife, Calla closed the door and listened to him pad off down the hallway. She rifled through the one box in the bedroom looking for her blue jeans and one of Daniel's shirts. Though she liked the sweaters Sam had helped her pick out at the mall, Calla loved to wear to Daniel's shirts, mostly because they smelled like him and partly because it sort of felt like he had his arms around her throughout the course of the day. It was always cold here, unless she was laying skin to skin with Daniel, no matter what she did Calla could never seem to get warm enough. Daniel now kept a blanket in the back seat of his car so that she could wrap up in it when they went out. With his shirt next to her skin and one of his pull over sweaters over that, she turned her attention to the tasks of the day. Her eyes fell upon the bed sitting in the corner waiting to be assembled, it was a very heavy piece of furniture but she imagined Daniel should like to sleep in his own bed tonight rather than the floor in the living room. He should not have to wrestle with it after a long day of working hard at his computer and his linguistics.

Looking around with keen eyes to be sure no one was intruding upon her she fixed her stare on the unassembled pieces of the bed she shared with him. Concentrating as hard as she could, Calla raised her right hand to shoulder level and pointed her slender index finger at the headboard that slid effortlessly across the room at her command. Did she like it over there by the window? No, the sunlight would come in too early in the morning and wake them. She waved her hand in the air and the headboard quietly slid to the other side of the bedroom. The headboard stood alone on the far side of the room across from the walk-in closet. It looked very nice there and it would not be in the way of anything. Calla pointed at the side rails that now glided across the room and joined the headboard, lastly she gave her attention to the footboard that in turn slid into place with the rest of the bed. She crossed the room and kicked and tugged at the assembled frame to be sure she had put it together well, satisfied that she had, she now concentrated on the box spring and mattress, each in turn glided through the air before her eyes to land upon the bed frame. "Better."

David lost no time at all setting about his work, he yanked two converter boxes from the back of the van and enough cable modem to hook up most of the house. He would need that extra wire and it didn't look like "Mrs. Jackson" would know the difference anyway. On his way back inside he noticed the items sitting on the cardboard box in the living room, the glitter of gold that caught his eye, David was a kleptomaniac from way back and anything shiny always caught his attention and, if at all possible, it ended up in his pocket. Not this time. The fact that the wedding rings were

sitting here rather than residing on the fingers of their respective owners told him there was no way in hell his brother had actually married the pretty red haired woman upstairs. Nope. His eyes scanned over the fake birth and marriage documents. Government work, he thought to himself and laughed, the paper clearly said Danny and Calla had been married in Eau Claire, Wisconsin but the official seal was from Silver Springs Colorado. Most people would not even notice such a thing, wouldn't even look at it. Nope, they would just glance at the names and the dates and that would be it, so long as there was some type of bumpy part in the lower corner no one gave a shit. But, then again, David Jackson was not 'most people'.

David had more than his share of adventures with the Law of the Land and he could spot a scam coming a mile off. Even the certificate, which stated she had been born in Connecticut, bore a Colorado seal. The driver's license looked real enough and he imagined that those platinum credit cards probably really did work as well. David jotted down the numbers and the security code on the back, and then he placed everything back onto the box just the way he had found it and quickly hooked up the television in the living room to the outside cable lines. Piece of cake. David had worked for a cable company in Texas for a while, but most of his experience with cable was stealing it from other people. Using the remote he flicked the television on quickly to be sure he had hooked it up right and then went to work with the more important items.

The telephone jack was near the picture window and from his pocket he produced a very small object, which looked like a miniature hairpin of some type, he slid it into the jack and then plugged in the phone, it worked just fine. He did the same with the jacks in the kitchen and spare room, he would repeat this with the telephone in the bedroom once he got up there. David whistled a happy tune while he bugged Danny's computer in the spare room and then hooked it to the Cable Modem line. David walked back into the living room and then into the kitchen looking for a proper hiding spot. He wanted the web cam in the living room where he would be able to keep an eye on Danny and his new 'wife' but was unsure if there was a place for it there. However, there was a large mirror hanging above the mantle over the fireplace, he took it down and thought that would be a good spot. "Missus Jackson?" He called up the stairs and in a moment, she appeared at the top of them. "I'm going to have to do a little drilling, promise not to make a mess. Just didn't want to scare you with the noise."

"Ok," she replied, "whatever you think is best."

David smiled at her from the bottom of the stairs and then set off about installing the web cam behind the mantle mirror. First he drilled a hole in the wall large enough to secure the camera to and then wiped away part of the silver on the back of the mirror, not much, not so it would be noticeable or anything, just enough to let the camera do its work. Perfect. Technology, it was a wonderful thing, the wi-fi remote control camera would send a signal to Danny's computer which in turn would relay it to the website David was monitoring. It would bring Danny's daily life to him in full living color while being simul-cast on the World Wide Web. Damn, it was nice of Danny to have two computers constantly hooked up to the internet and each within twenty feet of his cameras. Damn nice indeed! David was even thinking of charging people to come in and view the Happenings in the Jackson Household. Hell, people made a lot of money off shit like that. Human beings were not just fucking strange but damn perverted as well, himself included.

David made his way back to the base of the stairs. “Ma’am?” He called. “I’m done down here, I’m on my way up.”

“Come ahead,” Calla called from the bedroom and opened the door for him. “I’m done in here, I’ll be downstairs when you’re finished.” She told him as she walked by. The blankets and sheets from the bed were still on the living room floor and Calla supposed she should do something about cleaning them before she put them onto the bed. She would not be in the way of the cable worker if she was down in the basement and that would be a good thing. Calla made her way to the living room, gathered up the blankets, and made her way down the basement stairs.

David walked into the bedroom where the pretty redhead was presently humping his brother and the first thing he noticed was the bed that was unassembled just a half hour before. He had not heard the sounds of heavy furniture dragging across the floor and he wondered just how she had managed not only to move the heavy object on her own but to put it together as well, all without a single sound. Well, at least she had done him the favor of assembling the bed, now he knew where to put the second web cam he had brought with him. Calla had positioned the bed across from a walk-in closet, one with a nice high ceiling that would collect lots and lots of dust and no one would pay any attention to. Getting out his drill once again, he drilled a small pinhole above the closet on the wall facing the bed then nestled the camera into the space between the trim and ceiling inside the closet with the lens facing the bed on the other side of the wall.

Very nice. That should give him the proverbial Birds Eye View of the events that took place in this room. David hurriedly hooked up the television and slipped the high-tech bug into the phone jack before making his way down the hall to bug the jack and computer in the next room.

With everything done on this end, he should get out of here while the getting was good and with that in mind, he made his way back down the stairs to look for the woman. “Ma’am?” David called to a seemingly empty house. “Mrs. Jackson?” She was not in the living room, dining room, kitchen, spare room or the sunroom. “Mrs. Jackson?” He called again.

The sun porch was her favorite room in Daniel’s new house, Calla could imagine herself sitting here on many mornings to come with a cup of coffee looking out over the yard and watching the train go past. Perhaps, in the spring, a garden would please him. If so, she would be more than happy to plant and tend it for him. In fact, she had already gone so far as to order free plant and seed catalogs from several nurseries that advertised online. Calla let out a sigh and then shook her head as she silently scolded herself that she had best not become comfortable here.

While he allowed her to live here, it was not her home. While he was extraordinarily good to her, she must not become accustomed to such treatment. Naganti Kanan had once been very good to her as well but all of that changed. Father taught that Change was a good thing, that one should not be afraid of the Change one should embrace it! He taught her that nothing grew in a stagnant environment, no matter how good it was, everything that grew there would eventually wither and die. Calla wanted to embrace this new Change in her life, but the last lesson in Change, of course, was that it was the only Constant in Life. One day everything which now seemed to peaceful and perfect around her would all Change. Calla reached into the pocket of the blue jeans she wore and opened the small amber bottle she so often kept there lately, looking around cautiously she popped

two green pills down the back of her throat and put the bottle back in her pocket. Change was the last thing she wanted but there was no stopping it, perhaps if she tried hard enough she could slow it down a while.

“I’m done, I need you to sign my work order.”

A sound so like Daniel's voice startled her from the haze, she looked up to see the cable worker standing next to her and holding out a clipboard. Calla took it and the pen he offered, she scratched something that looked like ‘Calla Jackson’ on the line where he indicated. “Thank you.” I am not his wife, she reminded herself as she handed the items back to the nice man who had come to hook up the television and internet for Daniel.

“No problem, Missus Jackson.” David commented as he took back the clipboard and pen. “If you want to check my work, I’ll wait.”

“No, that won’t be necessary.”

“You have a good day, now, Missus Jackson.” David tipped his hat to her with a smile.

David turned, walked up the stairs, got in his stolen Cable Truck and drove off back to the Motel 6 to check his work on his own computer.

## Chapter Twenty

Daniel stood up from his desk looked at his watch, 11:50, and realized he was starving. Absently, he tossed the pen onto the desk, turned out the light and began to make his way down to the mess hall.

A week had passed since he and Calla moved into their new house, rather HIS new house as she kept calling it. No matter what he did, he could not get her to say that it was her home or even take the key for the front door. To his knowledge, she never ventured outside the safety of the house, with the possible exception of the fenced-in back yard. Daniel had tried very hard to encourage her to go out and to tell her that it was OK if she did so. Calla would nod her head, smile at him, and then stay right where she was.

Daniel could not make her wear the gold wedding band either. Repeatedly Calla insisted that she was not his wife (Sha're was his wife! Would she never stop throwing her at him?) and she steadfastly refused to wear the ring. Even when he tried to pull rank by telling her that he was the Master and she would do what he said, she wouldn't budge. Daniel supposed that was because she was catching on to the idea that she could refuse, which was a very new concept to her. Calla's logic was twisted but simple enough. Daniel had yet to raise his voice, never mind his hand, to her, which meant there were few if any consequences. If there were no consequences, where was her incentive to do what he said? While he understood her line of reasoning, Daniel was unsure if that was a good thing or a bad thing, it was good to see her exerting some form of authority but he wondered about her choice of where to assert it. What was so bad about wearing the ring? She wore his necklace. According to her that was another story, the token around her neck meant something much different than the one on her finger would.

Daniel had brought Calla in to see Dr. Frazer yesterday, she came kicking and screaming but she did allow Janet to run the rest of her tests. Mostly Daniel just wanted to know if her old wounds were progressing or not, according to Janet for the most part they had healed. The injuries to Calla's shoulder and wrists were not going to get any better then they had, which wasn't much but they were better than they had been. Janet thought those particular injuries were the result of repetition rather than being sustained at one time and that was why they were being so stubborn. On cold or wet days, Calla tended to favor her right arm by holding it close to her rib cage and her grip would often slip. Today was such a day, when he left the house this morning he noticed her holding her arm close to her side, though she would never tell him, Daniel knew she was in pain. She would not take the pecs, she complained that they upset her stomach. Her lower back was another problem area, on those cold or wet days she would often stoop over and he would watch her rise to her feet with more effort than normal. The injury took certain sexual positions off the table, her back just could not handle being on all fours in front of him. The scar tissue inside of her had also eased but had not dissipated and as such penetrating her, no matter the position, never lost the initial feeling of piercing virgin territory.

It didn't take Daniel long to realize, as far his ability to 'heal' her went, that it had much less to do with the little genetic deposit he so enjoyed dropping off and much more to do with the long massages he had gave her by the heat of the fire which mattered most. She did so love it when he touched her. Daniel had never had a woman respond to his touch in the way that Calla did, as far as she was concerned, his touch was intoxicating. It didn't matter if it was him doing the massaging or her rubbing his own tired and aching muscles, the result was the same. Skin to skin contact with him made her drunk.

It made her high.

And it made her heal.

However, it seemed he had reached the end of his ability to make her whole again.

New furniture had arrived in bits and pieces over the week, some of which had come from his storage hold. Calla had spent her days arranging the furniture and his archeological treasures. Everything in the house shined and everything looked as though it were exactly where it supposed to be, as though Fate herself had ordained that the easy chair should go in the corner between the bay window and the fireplace rather than the sofa (which is, of course, where he would have put it). In the evenings, after she sat with him at the dinner table, she would go upstairs for a long hot bath. Calla loved to bath, there had been no running water--never mind hot running water--on Tiberia and she would just soak away for an hour or so in the hot water and bubbles. Often, after one of her baths, Daniel would walk into the room and marvel at the fact that a woman could actually leave the bathroom smelling better than it had before she went in.

After her evening soak, Calla would return to where he was (provided he wasn't busy at one of the computers, Calla never disturbed him when he was intently working away and off in his own world) which was usually in the big easy chair in the corner between the bay window and the fireplace working on some translation or problem. She would poke and feed the fire, pour herself a glass of wine, and curl up at his feet wearing nothing more than the fluffy white bathrobe she had purchased on her shopping adventure with Sam. Calla would drink her wine and drink in the heat of the fire while he scribbled and made notes. If he worked too far into the night, he would suddenly find that the book or note pad in his lap was pushing its way forward and look down to see that she had fallen asleep with her head in his lap.

"Hey, Daniel," Major Carter called from behind him, "on your way to get something to eat?"

"Yeah," he turned back to look at her, "want to join me?"

"Love to. "

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Calla was in the kitchen deciding what she was going to make for Daniel's supper that evening when a familiar voice came to her from the living room. "Anybody here?" It asked.

"Daniel!" Calla cried happily as she came out from the kitchen to see him standing by the front

door. "Why are you here so early in the day?" She put her arms around him and hugged him tightly.

"I thought I'd come home for lunch," he replied. "Surprised?"

"Yes," her eyes lit up as she raised herself to her tiptoes and kissed him. "What shall I make for you?"

"To tell you the truth, I'm not really hungry." He nibbled at her neck, Calla jumped in his arms and let out a small laugh. "Not for food anyway."

David wasted no time in getting his new sister-in-law up the stairs to his brother's bedroom. If he stopped to kiss her more than once or twice or to stare into those wide eyes of hers, she might recognize the fact that the man who was about to fuck her was not the same one who was pretending to be her husband. David did not want to risk tipping his hand in the least, but he did want to fuck her. Fingers which tried but which were not as gentle as Daniel's worked the buttons on the flannel shirt which covered Calla as his lips descended down the nape of her milky neck. Her skin was smooth against the surface of his clean-shaven cheek. Beneath the palm of his hand her heart beat hard and steady inside a chest that heaved with want. Over the last week, David spent his evenings whacking off at his laptop in the Motel 6 to the sounds and full color images of Danny and her going at it. David really got off watching her ride Danny on the screen and now she was the one who was going to be ridden, hard and fast.

"Daniel," she whispered against his cheek as her hands reached to take off his shirt.

"No, leave it." David told her and moved her hand to cover the hardness between his legs.

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"Daniel, you all right?" Jack asked. "You look a little flushed."

"I'm fine," he said absently but his heart was beginning to race in his chest

"Hey!" Jack snapped his fingers. "I'm over here. You sure you're all right?"

Suddenly there was a sharp stabbing pain in the pit of his stomach, suddenly he felt very ill. His head began to spin and his vision blurred, Daniel shook his head hard to try to clear it. "No, actually I'm not." Daniel rose leaving the tray on the table. "Must have been something I ate. Excuse me." Hurriedly he left the mess hall and made his way to the safe haven of his lab. When he arrived, he found that his cock was an aching lump of fire pushing the material of his fatigues to maximum. His mouth was suddenly wet and filling with a familiar sweet taste, but there was something wrong with that taste now, it was tinged with something bitter and salted. Sweat covered his face, it ran from his brow down his cheek and over his lips. Daniel slumped harder against the wall with his cock on fire and his eyes closed, his hot breath laboring inside his chest. The pain in his stomach rolled.

"Daniel?....." Sam's voice came from the doorway.

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“...take...” Calla asked as the juice of David’s cock still slid down her throat. He had entered her already but had stopped to make her take him into her mouth. It was dirty and degrading, something Daniel had yet to do but Kanan did often. There was something different about him today, something aggressive and dark. Calla rose with the taste of herself on her tongue and held her wrists out to him for binding.

David had watched her do that many times and every time Danny turned them away. Not today. He took her small wrists in his hands and wrapped his leather belt around them, he watched as her eyes grew wide and her mouth dropped open. She did not protest. Cinching the leather strap tight and holding it with one hand in a firm grasp, he snatched the scanty Victoria Secret panties from her hips, which he had merely pushed aside earlier and turned her around to face the wall. For a moment, he thought that he should lay her down on the bed the way his brother so often did, but then he dismissed it. He had watched Danny fuck her, it was probably time she was laid proper. He was the man for the job. Like a cop about to pat down a wanted suspect, David spread her legs roughly with his knee and wrapped one around her waist to bring her fine ass closer to himself as he entered her...

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Sam reached out and touched Daniel’s hand as he stood against the wall. “What’s wrong? You look like you’re about ready to...” she cast her sapphire eyes downward at the floor and took in the site of his hard cock, “about to explode.” she finished.

That stabbing pain returned to the pit of his stomach, as if someone was jabbing with a hot poker from the inside His mouth gaped open and Daniel slid down the wall.

“Daniel!” Sam cried. “Colonel O’Neill!” She shouted out the door to the guards. “Get Colonel O’Neill and Doctor Frazer now!”

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David surged in and out of his brother’s ‘wife’, his heart racing like a thoroughbred horse speeding toward post line. While she was just as tight as any 17 year-old he’d had the pleasure of deflowering, Calla was not as fragile and inexperienced as she appeared to be. Danny’s current fuck could really take a good pounding and David delighted in sliding every inch of himself in and out of her over and over again as he held her hands captive above her head.

Calla’s legs grew weak as she stood with her cheek pressed to the wall and her ass jutting out behind her. “Master Daniel,” she cried softly.

A wicked smile crossed his thin lips, David grew even harder at the sound of her words. He liked that, Master Daniel. If only it was Master David she had said he would blow his load right there and then. “Say it again.”

“Master...”

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“...Daniel, can you hear me?” Janet asked as she stood over him.

Sam, Jack and Teal’c stood in the doorway of Daniel’s lab watching as Daniel’s eyes stared into space while he sat bathed in his own sweat and his hands clenched to the middle of his stomach. Jack thought that was the last time he was eating in the mess hall, this looked like one hell of a case of food poisoning to him.

Daniel cried out and then doubled over in pain as the gurney was wheeled in and the orderlies hosted Daniel onto, they rushed him out of the office and down to the med lab.

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“Master Daniel, please,” Calla begged as Daniel used the weight of his body to push her forward into the wall. “Forgive.” she whispered.

“Again,” he demanded and stretched the restraint around her wrist higher into the air. “Say it again.”

The muscles and joint in her shoulder barked with rebellion as white-hot pain shot through her. “Please, Master Daniel, forgive me. Please.” She was not begging his forgiveness for the climax that was coming for one was not, she was begging him to stop hurting her. With her mind she reached out to try to touch his, try and make him stop doing this to her. There was nothing but emptiness there, she could not reach him, and Daniel could not hear her.

The dark fantasies, which so often crept into the back of Daniel’s mind when he made love to Calla, thrust themselves forward through David who had no problem giving into them. David brought the strap that held her wrists high over head and planted the same elbow between her shoulder blades so that Calla's wrists and her body were securely held in the position he wanted her. David pushed his throbbing cock forward with cold gusto, putting his entire body weight into thrusts and crushing that delicate shoulder into the cold drywall. Her throat, like her cunt, gave a grunt of resistance and he let out a deep almost primitive howl and dumped a hot load into her soaking cunt. When he was done with her, Calla slid down the wall to the floor of the bedroom and watched as Daniel slid his pants back to his waist. He reached down and pulled the belt from her wrists then slid it through the loops. “I really hate to just rush off but I have to get back to work.” Looking up at him from inside the wake of her hair and holding her arm tightly to her body, she wondered what she had done wrong to cause this change in him. How had she offended him? Would he just stand there and not tell her what she had done and how she could make amends for her deed? It appeared not. Daniel took the brush from the bureau and ran it through his hair, he did not look back at her. On weak legs, she rose and wrapped his flannel shirt around her naked body. “You will come home again later?” She asked as she reached for her underwear and blue jeans.

David smiled to himself, oh sure, Danny would be home later. He wondered what she would have to say to him about this afternoon. He would be waiting and watching via the internet for his answer. Fucking her had been a terrific experience, there was no doubting that, but more than that, it would start to throw her off and, in turn, and it would throw Daniel off as well. A little turmoil in their relationship was a good thing as far as David was concerned. David figured if he kept the playing field uneven and kept her guessing about what ‘Daniel’ was up to, and who he, David, was she would be less likely to suspect the truth when he took her out of here and away with him. “I’ll be home around 5:30 or so.” David kissed her cheek as he walked out the bedroom door.

David stood there on the porch for a few moments smoking a Marlboro and playing the little Afternoon Delight he had partaken in over in his mind. Oh, yeah, he could see why Danny would keep her around; she really was a fine ride.

Ah, poor poor Danny. David smiled and drew deeply from the cancer stick. "Sorry, boy, but someone else had dibs on her first." He flicked the butt onto the front walk, it landed next to the one he had tossed before letting himself into the house earlier. "He'll share her with me and you won't." Taking one last look back to see if she was staring out the window at 'Daniel' and seeing that she was not, he climbed into the black Jetta he had rented earlier in the day and drove off toward the nearest package store.

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Daniel laid on the gurney in the base med-lab for an hour and a half, the first twenty minutes or so of which he suffered through the worst case of the Bed Spins ever known to man! The worst of the pain he felt had subsided within twenty minutes or so but it took longer for his head to stop spinning and his heart to stop racing. The thing inside of him, which caused his heart to race, was fear. As he lay there, he could not shake the feeling of being a deer caught in the headlights of an oncoming car. After Janet cleared him, he thought about calling Calla, this had to have something to do with her, the spinning in his head felt like it did when she tried to peek inside his mind only to the 25th degree. Whatever it was, it had left him utterly helpless and confused. Instead of calling her, Daniel decided to go home for the day.

It was usually dark by the time he arrived home but he was early today and the sun was still shining. As he made his way up the front walk to his new house, he noticed two cigarette butts on the concrete by the front door. Daniel stopped and picked them up, he was still holding them in his hand when he opened the door to find Calla sitting by the fire with an open bottle of White Zinfandel and bottle of percs on the coffee table.

"Hello, Daniel. Home again so soon?" Calla did not rise to greet him as she normally did. "How was the rest of your day?" Calla turned to look at him from her place on the sofa.

"Oh, fine, I guess. I wasn't feeling very well earlier but, ah, I seem to be all right now. Seems to have been something I ate. How about you? How are you feeling?" He asked and hoped that she would give something that he could work with regarding his earlier bout with what Janet thought as a mild form of food poisoning.

"I'm fine."

So much for that idea. Calla was never one to volunteer information. "Something smells good," he commented as he stood next to her and realized that although he had been sick to his stomach just a few hours ago, he was ravenous now. Calla was a wonderful cook and she had made meals for him every day since they moved into the house. She still did not eat meat; she did prepare it very well. Calla would sit with him at the kitchen table while he ate what she had made for him. Food was not among her favorite things, while she would take a small plate, she mainly pushed the food around with her fork and made conversation. She cleaned, did laundry and all of the 'wifely' duties, which might have been expected of her in, oh, say, 1940. Daniel had told her that she didn't have to do those things for him. He could cook, kind of, and he really didn't give a damn what the house looked like, let it get dusty and cluttered, that was ok with him, just so long as there wasn't any old food hanging around. Calla would smile and agree with him and then turn around and do

all of those things anyway.

“Yes, your dinner is just about ready.” Calla waited for him to say something about this afternoon, even to acknowledge that he had been here earlier, but Daniel did not. “Is there anything else I can get for you?”

“No,” there was something different about her tonight. Her eyes, why wasn’t she looking at him? To Daniel’s ears her tone was still light but there seemed to be an edge hiding in it somewhere. “Hey,” he sat down next to her and reached for her hand but she did not offer it to him, “what’s wrong?”

“Nothing.” Still she did not look at him.

Daniel was content to let it go for now but he’d get it out of her before the night was over. “I’m going up for a shower. We’ll eat when I come down, ok?” Not to mention the fact he could use the shower after all the unscheduled sweating he had done this afternoon.

“If you wish. Master Daniel.”

The phrase made the hair on the back of his neck stand up. How long had it been since she had called him ‘Master Daniel’ or said ‘if you wish’ to him? Two, maybe, three weeks now. It wasn’t just the words, it was her tone, so like when he had first found her on Tiberia. Something was wrong with her today. Perhaps something had upset her, it was probably something small. She had done so well up to this point in making all the adjustments she had and that had to be hard on her. It couldn’t possibly be easy. If she slipped once in a while, that was to be expected, wasn’t it? Daniel made his way up the stairs without further comment, absently he dropped the cigarette butts into the wastebasket before stripping off his clothes and standing under the hot jets.

The meal came and went and still Daniel said nothing about coming home this afternoon or about their encounter. Maybe he would not, that was possible, of course it was. Why not? Calla decided not to push him about it and to do her best to forget it. Long ago, Mother had told her that Darkness hides in the hearts of all men. It was part of Calla’s curse to bare, as the daughter of Aphrodite and Ares, that her presence would always call to that Darkness in the men--especially the Mortal men--around her. They would always look at her, leer at her, try and possess her. Calla was no fool, she saw the way they looked at her and kept a close eye on all of them when need be, she only chose not to pay any outward heed to them.

The Darkness was the reason Eros had gifted her with what served as her only true defense, the acid in her skin. Eros did not want his sister to be touched by just anyone. Master Daniel was a mortal man and he was no different from the other mortal men where the Darkness was concerned. Though he was better at controlling that Darkness than most men probably were, he still harbored it and from time to time it would show itself. That was just the way it was. Calla did not let the new house in which she resided or the attentions he gave to her lull her into moving from her place in his life and this afternoon had proven to her that she had been right to dig in her heels and not take the comforts he offered her. She was not his wife and never would be. Daniel repeatedly said she was not his whore either, but that was not true. Not at all.

After her evening bath, Calla returned to Daniel's side, settling in at his feet with her glass of wine. Daniel looked over the top of the book on Ancient Egyptian Cultures he had been reading to see her take the bottle of percs out of the robe pocket and down not one but two with a large gulp of the alcohol in her cup. "Hey," he called her attention to him, "it hurts today?"

"Hei."

"Do you want me to rub it for you?" He closed the book and put it on the floor.

"Co." She turned her eyes away from him. "It will be fine." Calla drank down the rest of the wine and put the glass on the coffee table as she turned herself toward the heat of the fire.

## Chapter Twenty-One

Three more days in which ‘Daniel Jackson’ returned to his new home every day at lunch time and partook of all the delicacies that Calla had to offer him.

Three more days in which the real Daniel Jackson spent his noon time in the infirmary with sweats, palpitations and pain in his abdomen. Janet could not find anything significantly wrong with him at all. Whatever it was seemed to come and go within the space of an hour or so. The rest of the day, except for a tingle in his head and a dull ache in his lower regions, he was fine. Janet was convinced that it was something he was eating; Daniel might have been inclined to agree if it had not been for the outrageous hard-ons that accompanied these episodes. Janet tried to tell him that was due to adrenaline and endorphins which running like wild horses through his system when this happened to him, in other words, it was nothing to worry about.

Three more days, inside of which, Calla pulled further away from him with each day that passed by.

At a quarter to mid-night on the fourth day the phone in Daniel’s house rang, waking him from a sound sleep and he fumbled to answer it before it woke Calla. “Hello,” he said in a gruff voice.

“Daniel, it’s General Hammond. Sorry to call so late.”

Daniel rubbed his eyes, “That’s all right, what’s going on?”

“We’ve received a message from the Nok home world, they need your help. I’m sending you and the rest of SG1 through the Gate in the morning. I just wanted to give you as much notice as possible, since you’ve got someone depending on you now.”

“Thanks. What’s wrong?”

“They didn’t say, just that they wanted you to come to them. Will Calla be all right? Dr. Fraser told me you should be able to leave her for a week or so but we don’t expect this to take more than two days at present.”

Daniel looked around the bedroom and felt the bed with his free hand. Calla was nowhere to be found. “I’m sure she’ll be fine.” However, he was not sure about that at all. This was not going to be his first trip through the Gate since she had come to live with him but it did look like it might be the longest to date. At Calla’s insistence, Daniel had kept up his commitment to SG1 the entire time she was with him, (it was just lucky for her that no one was currently trying to blow up the entire known universe and that an Ally Planet wasn’t about to go super nova or something any time in the near future). In other words, those trips had only last a few hours and none of them over night. As he held the phone to his ear, Daniel reminded himself that she had been fine while he was away. “I’ll let her know what’s going on. Thanks General.” Daniel hung up the phone.

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The sound of his own voice coming through the speaker woke David; he rolled over and listened to Daniel's late night telephone conversation. He didn't know what a Nok was, or where it's 'home world' was or what the 'Gate' it was all probably just some government mumbo-jumbo anyway. There was one thing he knew for sure; Danny was going to be gone for three days. He would be damned if that pretty little wife of his was going to be waiting at home when Danny returned. Opportunity knocked and David was all set to answer it. With a happy smile he drifted back to sleep.

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Daniel wandered around in the darkness looking for Calla, she was not downstairs and she was not upstairs. On his second trip through the dimly lit house, as he walked through the kitchen and passed the screened-in porch, he caught sight of her in the backyard. Quietly he let himself out and stood watching her. She wasn't doing anything in particular; she was just sitting, alone, in the dark, under the stars, a single candle and stick of incense burning in front of her. Perhaps she was meditating, he thought, and then wondered if he should just return to the house and leave her be for now. A light snow was beginning to fall, under the light of the full moon he watched it catch in her hair, fine white powder against a backdrop of fire. He ventured a step closer to where she sat. Creeping closer he realized she was whispering something to the moon light;

"Father, lover, husband, brother. Father, lover, husband, brother." Over and over just at a level to be heard under her breath, the night air froze her words and carried them upward toward the God she was praying to. Daniel did not have to guess who that was. There was something wrong with the words and he didn't know why but he knew they were out of sequence.

The instant he walked out the door she knew he was there. She had felt him wake and then wander around the interior of the house looking for her but when he emerged from the door she could see him in her mind's eye, standing behind her, listening to her.

Calla had sat out here under the light of the full moon for the last hour or so, seeking guidance. Hoping her Father would hear her, she would never give up hope of attaining his forgiveness and in turn his love. Instead, her own voice rose inside her head to answer her questions and to admonish her for asking them in the first place.

Castle keep or two-story house.

Naganti Kanan or Master Daniel.

What difference did it make?

None. A Prison was a Prison and a Master was a Master, no matter how they all looked on the surface.

"Master Daniel?" She asked without turning around to look at him.

"What are you doing out here? It's cold, Calla, come inside. I have something to talk to you about." Daniel extended a hand to her. "What have I told you about calling me that?"

It would have been easy for her to love her new Master. Easy to accept what he offered as being Free of Charge, but it was not. It never was. It was only an illusion; she had lived so long and unwell to believe in such Fairy Tales. Even though he was the same boy she had met so long ago and deep within her heart of hearts, she would like to be something more to Master Daniel than his Cha'Dech that was not to be. Calla did not know what game her new Master was playing with her now, why he would be so forceful and harsh with her during the day and then act as though nothing had happened when night fell. How did he expect her to lie well in his arms when the moon rose when he had been so cold during the daytime? It was almost as though Daniel had become two different men since he moved her into his new house. She very much missed the one that he had been. Calla not could love him but already did, she couldn't help herself, however, she could never give into it. No, that would never do.

Callestah had not endured years with Kanan and watched him murder her children for nothing. Whatever it took, she would survive, if nothing else, she would survive. She must keep her place and her distance from him.

Rising on her own two feet without aid of his hand, she followed him back into the house. Upon her rising, Daniel could see the old rag doll clutched tightly in her hand, she was holding it to her heart like a little girl.

Daniel told her about the phone call from General Hammond, Calla did not seem upset at the news that he might be gone for several days. Something in her eyes told him that she actually welcomed the news. He wanted her to stay at the base while he was away but she refused, telling him she would be fine here by herself and there was no need for anyone to fuss over her as if she was an infant or something.

"I don't mean to treat you like a child," Daniel explained in an exasperated tone, "I just worry about you. Is that so horrible?" As he reached out to turn down the blanket, his eye caught sight of the photograph of Sha're sitting on his nightstand. Damn her! He had purposefully put that photograph away in the desk drawer of the study down stairs and Calla had found it and placed it back where she thought it belonged. The staff stood quietly in the corner beyond just as it had when they lived on the base.

Calla did not answer him as she turned down the blankets on the bed. "I understand that you must work and that it is important to you. If that means you leave me then that is what it means. There is no need for you to worry about me, I am not your child nor am I your wife, Sha'..."

"Stop it!" Daniel shouted before she could finish. "Stop using her as a shield against me!" His voice dropped low. "No, I'm not your husband." Daniel knew she hated it when he turned her words around her like this. "Does that mean I can't care about you?"

Calla ignored him and continued with her own train of thought. "I can take care of myself. I am not a chain around your neck, Master Daniel."

"I never said that you were!" Why was he so angry with her? He didn't know and he was not in the

mood to stop to think about it. She had really been acting very strangely the last few days and he had about all he was going to take of it. "Stop calling me that. You know I don't like it."

"I think you like it fine." Calla returned as she climbed into the bed.

"What is that supposed to mean? What is wrong with you lately?!"

"There is nothing wrong with me." For the first time she had come to live with him, Calla turned her back on him and pretended to sleep.

Daniel did not know what was happening with her but he knew he did not want to sleep in the same bed with her right now and he walked off down the hall to sleep in the guest room.

3:17am Calla's eyes rolled slowly open and beheld the clock next to the bed. Even though he was not with her, she knew the nightmare was coming to Danny again. Slowly she swung her legs over the side of the bed, her right hip howled in pain as she stood up, but Calla gathered the robe around her and went off in search of her Master. Creeping into the guest bedroom she saw him lying there on the full sized bed, she crawled under the blanket with him and as in nights past, Calla did what she could ease the dream for him, to lessen the brightness of the colors and round the jagged edges just a little bit.

"Danny," came the soft voice, "Danny come away from there." Calla watched the image of her Mother as She wrapped Her arm around the young boy's shoulder and drew him away from where his parents stood. Although Calla hated the dream that plagued her Master, she did love to see the bright image of her Mother in his mind. It had been so long since Calla had laid her own eyes upon Aphrodite and drinking her in, even in Daniel's nightmare, filled Calla with hope and comfort.

As always, seconds after Aphrodite lead him away from where his parents were working there was a horrible crash and young Danny screamed. Calla watched as the cover-stone fell from the hoist and crushed the young Daniel Jackson's parents before his beautiful blue eyes. Mother offered the small boy comfort if only for a few moments, She stood with her arms around him, soothed his hair, rocked him gently and told him everything would be all right. Danny screamed. Danny cried. In his sleep Daniel let out a harsh breath, Calla ran her fingertips across his brow. "It's all right, it's over now." She whispered to him in the darkness. When his breathing returned to normal and she was sure the dream would bother him no more on this night, quietly she edged herself out of the bed once more to sleep on the floor by his side.

5:17am and it was Daniel's turn to soothe a nightmare.

The image of the death of his mother and father had faded only second before (or so it seemed like seconds, you know what time is to a dreaming mind) and then he was standing on a portico made of pink marble overlooking the sea. The breeze was steady and strong, the moonless night sky was cold and unforgiving.

Raised voices behind him took his attentions from the sound of the waves crashing against the rocks below him. The voices were loud but the words unclear, all he could tell for sure was that one

voice belonged to a man and the other a woman. In the dream, he turned slowly from the open sea toward the windows behind him and peered inside. A woman with long honey-blonde hair ran past him with a man hot on her heels. He reached out and grabbed hold of her arm yanked it impossibly hard and turned her around to face him. Daniel caught sight of the harsh gaze in his deep brown eyes, the long black wavy hair on top of his head and the weapons hanging on his thick leather belt. A sword, a dagger and a small mace. His resemblance to Kanan was striking, same build, same powerful voice and eyes. Daniel knew him, even here in the dream, he knew the man, he was Ares. Daniel watched as he shook a large finger in her face and shouted at her again.

In Greek.

Daniel's sleeping mind struggled to understand the words that his waking mind would normally interpret within seconds. It was something about a boy and how dare she interfere with the plans he had made for his daughter. The tall man backhanded her and the woman with the honey-blonde hair and frightened sapphire eyes fell to the floor.

Daniel had seen her before, in another dream, not so long ago. She was the same woman who had smiled so brightly and kissed him so softly, giving him the gift of telepathy so that he could reach out to Calla. She was his Lover and Consort, the Lady Aphrodite.

There was another voice now, a younger voice, crying, screaming. An adolescent girl with auburn hair came running into the room from some place that Daniel could not see. The tall man with the dark hair turned his cold stare upon her and the young girl froze in her tracks. Aphrodite raised herself from the floor to her feet and held her arms out to the girl but the man pushed her away. "Oxi!" The little girl defied the man who was her father and stood between them, one small arm holding the man back, attempting to stave him away from her mother. Ares picked her up and tossed her half way across the room, out of Daniel's line of sight and Aphrodite ran after her, both of them were now out of his vision. Lord Ares, God of War, did not run but rather he strode slowly toward where the girl and her mother had gone a cold smile on his face.

Someone screamed.

Daniel tried to let himself in to the abode and could not. He ran down the long portico looking from window to window until the sight of the woman with the golden hair met his eyes. The Lady Aphrodite was lying in a pool of her own blood on the floor with the dagger sticking out of her heart. The little girl sat over her mother's limp body with her small hand clutched to the dagger's hilt.

The little girl tilted her head to look out the window, she stared straight at him, and her mouth dropped open as her hand fell away from the dagger. Her small arms reached out to him as he stood so far away from her on the portico.

Daniel sat bolt upright in the guest room of his new home with his hand clutched to his chest and the racing heart beneath. The first thing that came to his mind was the look on that little girl's face. It was Calla, of course it was. She looked so damn familiar to him in the dream. So young and so goddamn familiar. Daniel's waking mind reached and reached for the memory of the pervasive

sense of deja vu that was running through him and could not attain it. As his mind ascended further and further away from the dream, he became aware that all around him the room was shaking, the clock by the bed fell off the nightstand and crashed to the floor. The picture hanging on the wall across the room bouncing and wobbled before it too crashed to the floor shattering the glass in the frame. Daniel realized he had woken from a horrible nightmare only to find himself in the middle of an Earthquake.

Daniel's hands reached for the woman who should have been beside him and was not, it was then that he remembered he had left her in their bedroom earlier while he had gone off to sleep here without her. He swung his legs over the side of the bed and stepped upon something soft.

"No." In the pale light of the new morning, he looked down to see Calla sleeping on the cold floor next to the comfortable bed he had been sleeping in.

"Oxi, parakalo. Siynomi." She cried softly in her sleep.

With his mind now awake, he had no problem interpreting her words; No, please. I am sorry.

"Calla," Daniel's hand stroked her hair, "wake up. Calla wake up." She did not wake; her cheek did not so much as cuddle to the warmth of his hand. With a heavy heart, Daniel realized, he had his answer as to what had happened to Aphrodite and why Ares had taken his young daughter to the likes of Kanan and left her there to rot. He knew Calla's secret and the bad bad thing she had done. "Jesus," Daniel muttered as he ran a hand across his face.

## Chapter Twenty-Two

"Ready?" Jack asked as they stood in the Gate Room.

No, he wasn't ready, what kind of stupid question was that? Daniel held his tongue and kept silent. Calla hadn't even spoken to him this morning, she had not walked him to the door not kissed him good-bye. Worst of all, he had let her. He had not wanted her touch this morning or her kiss and when he walked out of his front door earlier this day he had not looked back to see if she was standing in the window watching him go. The image of Calla with the dagger in her hand, the one that was jutting out of Aphrodite's heart, would not leave his mind. Even with his eyes open, he could see it as clearly, as if it were happening right now, right in front of him. How could she have hidden the fact that killed her Mother from him? With his mind on everything but the Noks, whatever their current problem was, Daniel agreed that he was ready to go through the wormhole. Lya was waiting for them on the other side. "It is nice to see you again, Daniel Jackson." Lya said in a soft voice. "And all of you." She addressed the rest of SG1 in a rather absent manner as she rose to her tiptoes to gaze behind them with hopeful eyes until the Gate closed once more. "Where is Callestah?"

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David didn't waste any time putting his plan into action, he was already aware of his brother's reluctance to take his new 'wife' to her homeland but David had no such reservations. It was the reason he was summoned here to Silver Springs and Danny to begin with. David would never forget the night that the tall man with the long wavy hair walked into the Crows Nest. It had been one of the best nights of his life. The finest part about it was that it was a complete surprise to him. David had been knocking down a few JD and sodas and shooting pool when the guy walked in and laid a hand on his shoulder. "Greetings, David Jackson." He had said. David missed his shot and looked up at the man who had just caused him to lose ten bucks, he did not look familiar in the least. The dark man with the dark hair introduced himself as Ari and said he had a job for David, one that would not only pay handsomely in money and other rewards but would bring him a great deal of satisfaction as well.

Before the end of the night he had five thousand dollars in his pocket along with the current whereabouts of his long lost baby brother. Eh, so there was only seven minutes between them, so what? David never let Danny forget who was the 'older brother'. The strange thing was that up until that night David hadn't thought about his sibling in more than a decade and didn't give a damn about him either. David hadn't tried to look up his brother after his stint in Irving MacAllister's Home for Wayward Boys, which is a fancy term for Juvenile Hall. That had been his first stop along the Chain Gang. After having been so rudely exiled from the Cabral household, David went through a series of foster homes getting into drugs and crime along the way. He had spent eighteen months in MacAllister's Hell Hole after he'd been caught vandalizing cars in a parking garage. No, Youthful Offender Get Out of Jail Free card on that, he'd used it up six months before when the cops caught him smoking a roach in a city park.

After his release from Juvey, David was just shy of his eighteenth birthday and rather than look up

his dear brother, he had wandered around aimlessly from place to place and job to job. David been arrested so many times after that he'd lost count, but if pressed he would have to say that, all in all, he'd probably spent twelve or thirteen of his 35 years in one jail another. Whether it was a city jail on a charge of Drunk and Disorderly, a county lock up on charges of petty theft or the last stay which had been in good old John B. Connally Jr. Maximum Security lock down after being busted with four kilos of heroin. (That he had been a lot of fun! Five years in a Texas State Prison was enough to make a beast out of the docile of pussy cats.) One more charge on a Class A Felony and he was going away for life, there was no doubting that and David did his best not to think about it. And then there was that little matter of that outstanding warrant in Dallas (hey, how was he supposed to know the girl was only 15? She was drinking at the bar!) and the one El Paso (ok, so she was way over 15 and not as drunk as he had hoped). What else could he do? Change his life? Fat chance. The best he could at this point to stay out of prison was not be caught, that meant he had to be extra careful. No matter what Ari wanted or had promised him there was no way in hell that he was going to go back to life behind bars. David was a real "Look, ma, top of the world" kind of guy.

Besides, he was helping Ari get his daughter back and that was a noble cause wasn't it? Sure it was. Why not?

David packed up his belonging at the Motel 6 and put them into the trunk of the Jetta, looking around and being careful that no one was watching he switched the plates from his old Duster to the shiny German car and put the rental plates on his old piece of shit. David drove the Duster to an abandoned hospital four miles away from the motel and set ablaze behind the building. Just in case, he told himself, no sense in taking any chances that the cops would get his fingerprints or the serial numbers off the car.

It was a cold day but the sun was bright, David ended up walking all the way back to the motel, arriving just before lunch. Perfect timing. He would show up at Danny's house, tell Callie he was home early and that it was time for them to go and see her father. David toyed with the idea of spending the day with her in his brother's house, taking her away tomorrow but did not want to risk the idea that Danny would come home early and spoil his plans. The faster he got her out of there the bigger lead he would have on them when Danny came home and found it void of his appealing new pump. David wanted to be long gone when that happened. Yes, as far away as humanly possible, after all Danny did work for the government and there was no telling how far that little shit had actually gotten in life. He could have some hefty help in tracking her down. Dealing with the likes of the USAF did not come high on David's Top Ten List.

Opening the door to the motel room for the last time, David looked around with a practiced eye. For the most part the maid would take care of any finger prints he'd left behind but he'd help her out just a little bit anyway, you know, just in case. He wiped down the television, remote control, telephone, and faucet in the bathroom. He saved the inside and outside of the doorknob for when he exited.

Removing the bugs he planted in the house would not be so easy and he thought it possible he could get the ones he had put in the phone jacks but there would not be time to remove the web cams. Too bad. The upside to that was that they were hidden well and if he left them up and

running then he would be able to capture for posterity the look on Danny's face when he came home and realized everything he held dear was gone. Yes, that would be good. It would be a DVD that he would watch many times, along with the other DVDs he made. Of all of those, he supposed that he liked the tape of him and Calla the best, David had been unsure if his positioning would come out on the web cam but it had, in full living color. He had those tapes safely tucked away in his bag of goodies along with a pair of police issue cuffs, a length of rope, duct tape, knife, the .38 Special he kept around (you know, just in case), and a few assorted adult toys should the need for such things arise. Callie was a good girl, she would not give him any trouble so long as she thought he was Danny. Since he hadn't heard Daniel mention any family to her, David was sure she was ignorant of the fact that he even had a brother, never mind a twin. No, Danny wanted to forget David just as much as David wanted to forget Danny. Nevertheless, just incase, he kept a bottle of valium in his breast pocket.

David put on his new eyeglasses, the ones he had picked up early this morning with the light gray tint to them. He checked himself in the mirror. There was something about the way she stared at him that he didn't like, he thought that it was possible his eyes were giving him away to her. Later on, once he had her where he wanted her that would be just fine. Nevertheless, for now, she had to believe that he was his brother. The glasses did a nice job of shielding his eyes from her stare. Clearing his throat and taking one last look in the rearview mirror, David let himself out of the car parked in the driveway of 1313 Mockingbird Lane.

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"How did you know?" Daniel was dumbfounded as he stood staring in Lya's eyes.

Lya began to lead SG1 away from the Gate they had come through and down a woodland path. "You never stop asking questions, do you Daniel Jackson? Even when your heart is screaming all the answers at you, your mouth still continues to wonder." Lightly shaking her head, she smiled at him. "We know many things."

Daniel smiled in return, knowing that he should have guessed her response before he posed the question. The Noks had not called Stargate Command because they were having some difficulty or other but because Lya wanted to talk to him about Calla. The faint image of the Isle of Skye and the Castle Dunvegan lingered in his mind as he looked down at her "You didn't say anything about Calla in your message, you just said you wanted us to come to you."

"No," she smiled shyly, "we asked for you, Daniel Jackson." Lya looked around at the rest of the team, that shyness remained, "not all of you." She turned back to Daniel again. "Is she well? Why is she not with you?"

Daniel thought about it for a moment, "She's doing better." That was the truth; at least it had been up until a few days ago. "She isn't here because you didn't ask me to bring her."

"Sa'Tai and Sa'Tan." Lya returned and waited for him to answer her but his eyes only stared at her with more questions. "You are bonded." She held her hands up and then laced her fingers together. "Like this, yes?" Daniel nodded. "We did not think to ask this, we thought she would be with you because that is where she belongs. Does she not want to see us?"

Well, he didn't know if Callestah had wanted to see her old friends the Noks or not but he should

have. "I didn't tell her I was coming here." Daniel admitted. To this Lya gave a sad smile and crinkled her brow but she said nothing. "Lya, whatever it is you have to tell me, please, just....tell me." He was hungry for information and his voice made no attempt to hide that fact.

"It is not I who wishes to speak with you, Daniel Jackson." She led them off further into the wooded land. Walking carefully through a last thicket of trees they came to a tree which had a small doorway carved into its trunk. The tree itself was enormous, well over a hundred and fifty feet high, so wide that Daniel, Jack and Teal'c would be unable to make a ring around it. The leaves were unlike he'd ever seen, they glistened with what appeared to be frost in the heat of the day. "Here you may ask your questions and many will be asked of you."

"Who's in there?" Colonel O'Neill asked.

"Maeve awaits him." Lya said with a worried look as she waved a slender hand toward the entrance. "Only you Daniel Jackson." Daniel watched as the heavy wooded door swung open. "Good luck, you may need it." She smiled for him one last time and then left him to his audience with the Faery Queen. "None of you may enter but you may wait here if you like." Lya informed the team as she passed by them. "I will return when they are done." "See ya then." Jack told her. "OK, Daniel, what's going on?" He asked when Lya was out of sight.

"I'm not exactly sure," confusion was clear in his voice but a slight ray of understanding was beginning to dawn in his eyes. Daniel did not walk directly through the open door but stood outside for a long while gathering not just his nerves but his precious knowledge. In Celtic mythology Maeve was a Faery Queen, a Ruler of the Underworld and the inspiration for Shakespeare's Queen Mab, he probably should have known that he would find such a creature living among the Noks. "Goin' in?" Major Carter asked as they stood before the open door.

"Do I have another option?"

"You do not." Teal'c returned.

"Yeah." Taking a deep breath, Dr. Jackson departed the company of his teammates and wandered through the open door of the Faery Realm. All before him was dark as the door behind him closed, when it had shut tight everything around him began to glow with a warm silvery light which seemed to come from everywhere and nowhere at the same time began to grow in slow steady increments. The sound of someone plucking away on a harp was the first thing which came to him; the second was the hardy scents of ale, fresh bread and roasted pig. The silvery light grew brighter still and Daniel could see a fair haired girl sitting in the middle of a sunken circle, a gold harp between her legs, her slender fingers gently plucked at the harp strings. She did not look up or acknowledge him but continued to play her tune as Daniel walked by. The light around him grew to its peak and the darkness faded away to nothingness, the sights and sounds of the people who lived here greeted him. Diminutive people stood everywhere around him, some were drinking, some were eating, some were singing, others were engaged in conversation. All were happy and appeared to be the gentlest creatures he had ever encountered. Their eyes all sparkled bright and their laughter resounded around him.

A hand fell upon his back and Daniel turned around and then looked down to see a man with enlarged blue eyes and yellow hair staring back at him. "You are Sa'Tan Daniel Jackson?"

"Yes."

"This way."

They walked past several tables where the Faery folk sat drinking and talking, some of them raised their eyes to look at him as he passed by and most took no notice of him at all. Together they passed through the main entry and down the corridor beyond. "It's a long climb." The Faery man informed him. "Are you ready?"

Daniel looked through the door which had opened and saw the staircase he was being asked to ascend. Around and around it coiled, spiraling ever upward to some place beyond the stars. Daniel held out his hand and motioned for the Faery man to lead the way. The climb seemed to go on for eternity and then some. Ever upward they climbed until Daniel's legs felt like slightly melted rubber and he thought he would tumble the entire distance back to sod below them (well, it was down there somewhere! But he couldn't see it anymore.). His guide was silent as they traveled, he spoke to Daniel only to ask if he required a break and a few moments to rest before climbing further. The Faery man was having no problem at all with the climb. He didn't even break as much as one bead of sweat.

Daniel gazed at the wood which surrounded him as they climbed and felt it slip by under the grip of his palm he noticed that the staircase had been intricately carved of one solid piece of the tree. He could not see nor feel a seam anywhere. Elves, faeries, birds, butterflies, flowers, sun, stars and moons had been carved into the hand rail and depictions of ancient Celtic lore had been carved into the wall of the tree on the other side of the rail.

Finally the stairs stopped and a door which might have opened to a hobbits' abode appeared in the finely carved wood of the tree. "In there?" Daniel asked and scratched his head. "I can't fit through there." To this the Faery man with the over sized eyes and long golden hair only motioned toward the door. Daniel walked forward and placed his hand on the knob which turned easily inside his palm. He bent at the knees as far as he could in anticipation of trying to fit through the door.

Dr. Jackson found himself in the middle of Maeve's chambers. He hadn't crossed through the door at all, just turning the knob had been enough to allow him entrance to her domain.

The circular room was brightly lit by the same silver light which appeared to come from somewhere deep inside the wood floor. The walls glistened with the same frosted glitter as the leaves outside. Off to his left stood a piece of onyx so large that Daniel wondered how anyone had gotten it up all of those stairs. It was at least as tall as he was, the front had been polished to a high black shine in which he could see his own reflection very clearly. Crisp water from an unknown source cascaded down the polished surface giving it a hypnotic effect.

Across from him sitting on a throne made of the clearest crystal, on the right arm of which a bird in flight had been carved and on the left a dagger, sat a woman who herself was no bigger than a hobbit. She had jet black hair and was wrapped in a dark purple cloak which glittered and glistened

in the silver light. Although her skin was fair and smooth, age and wisdom shone in her eyes which were violet and oversized like those of her kin drinking and partying far below them. Those oversized eyes narrowed harshly upon him. "Where is Callestah?"

"Seems to be the question of the day." Daniel replied. "She isn't with me. I take it you're Maeve?"

"Insolence!" She cried. "This I can see!" The Faery Queen hissed at him. "It does not answer my question, Sa'Tan Daniel Jackson....where is Callestah!" Fire burned in her voice and in those aged violet eyes.

"Um, well," Daniel's heart began to pound in his chest and a light bead of sweat broke out on his upper lip, "she's, she's at home, my home," his fingers turned in toward his chest to point at himself, "she's safe...."

"On Earth?!"

"Um, yeah."

"She can not be safe on Earth!" The irate Faery Queen rose from her crystal throne and began to cross the room to where Daniel was standing. Even though he outweighed her by a good hundred pounds and towered over her by more than a foot, Daniel found himself cringing away from her in fear. The anger rose in her voice but her tone fell to just above a whisper. "You have no idea who she is and what her significance is, do you?"

"If I say 'no' will you fill me in?" Daniel asked.

Maeve let out a laugh which was both delightful and dreadful. "She tells you nothing, she hides from you." Maeve appeared to stop and think about what she should say but she already knew every word that she would utter during this private conversation and any pause was merely for dramatic effect or the benefit of allowing Daniel Jackson's mind to catch up. "Do you know that Ares has one daughter?" Daniel nodded. "Do you know that, like the rest of those who remained on Earth, her kind is dying?" Again Daniel nodded. "There hadn't been one of them born in over five hundred years, Daniel Jackson. Certainly wasn't likely to be another, do you think? Has she told you of the 'gifts' she received from her family?"

Daniel thought about it for a moment, she had told him that Apollo had gifted his love of music to her and that Minerva and Demeter had also gifted her the former with the gifts of Home and Hearth and the latter with the gifts of the Fields. "Sort of." Was his reply.

Maeve smiled a coy grin; she began to tale for the benefit of the man before her. "When Aphrodite returned for her daughter and took her away, those that still remained saw their last chance for Immortality and bestowed all of their gifts upon the child. Can you imagine it, Daniel, all the power and knowledge that they possessed given to just one?" Her voice turned sad. "It was too much for Callestah. No one should have to bare that burden alone." Catching sight of the look in his eye she stopped for a moment to allow what she had told him to sink deeper into his brain. "I offer her sanctuary from all of that. You offer her nothing. Bring her to me."

Could it be true? Was all the power and knowledge of the Olympa gifted to the tiny woman who was even now waiting at home for his return? Yes, that was a heavy burden for anyone to bear. "You took care of her, you raised her for those first five years. Why?" His words were slow as the thoughts formed in his mind. "Is that why you offer her this...this...sanctuary?"

"Yes, Aphrodite came to me when she was very full with child because she feared him and feared for the daughter she carried. To that end, Callestah was born in my realm where there is no death, sin or transgression. These things do not exist here in the Land of the Ever-Living. This is what I offer her. I can ease her burden, Sa'Tan Daniel Jackson if you bring her to me. Callestah will be safe here with us, far away from Earth, from you and from him. "

Daniel ignored the last part of what Maeve had told him, he might come back to it later, but he wasn't going to let her dissuade him from what he wanted to know. "Who? Who is she being kept away from?"

Maeve stood and stared at him with those glowing violet eyes. "The one man she cannot fight against on her own."

"That doesn't answer me, Maeve." Daniel found his fear turning slowly into anger. He knew Calla hid things from him but this? The memory of the nightmare he'd shared with her last night came to him, by accident or with malice he didn't know, but she had killed her Mother and she had hidden that fact from him, hadn't she?

"Answer me, Daniel Jackson, who is the first love of all little girls?" Maeve stood silent with her hands clasped in front of her while her riddle rolled around in his head.

Daniel stood there with the question turning itself over in his mind, this was a subject he had become familiar with through the work he was currently doing toward his Masters in psychology. "Her father." Daniel replied.

"Aye," Maeve agreed. "Ares and his sons, he would have driven through hell and back for a daughter, Aphrodite knew this and tried to keep the child from him but she could not. In the end, her love for him was her undoing, Aphrodite could never deny Ares anything for long. And now, Ares knows where she is, he has been waiting for you to bring her to him. And you will, won't you, Sa'Tan Daniel Jackson?" Her voice was low and full of distrust. "Now you understand, now you will bring Callestah to me."

"No, I won't. I won't bring her to you and I won't bring her to Ares." That wasn't exactly true, he had been making plans for a trip to Greece in fact he had poked around online last night for places to take her when they were there. But he had been dragging his feet about it, hadn't he. "You tell me, why he wants her. Why would he take her to Kanan if he wanted her for himself?" Daniel asked as he stared into the violet eyes of the Faery Queen. The answers formed in his mind as he stared in her eyes. Calla's shaking voice echoed in the back of his ears *I did...I did...I did...not...Master Daniel, I swear, I did not.* "Because Eros and Hades would not let him have her and he did not want them to have her. So, Ares hid in her Kanan's care."

"Care?" Daniel spat. "Do you know what he did to her?"

"Aye," her voice was dark and full of hate, "does it ease your mind to know that he died badly for it?"

"Yes." Daniel replied without thinking. If what she said was true then Kanan was dead and he couldn't be happier about that fact. "Why him?"

Queen Maeve was already miles ahead of Dr. Jackson as she lead him down the path she wanted him to travel with her. "Kanan was the only one Ares could find who was strong enough to control her. His father agreed to give her the station of his son's Cha'Dech and to keep her in the Royal Court. This would allow her some degree of status, he promised that she would be treated as though she were his own daughter. I am told that for a time she was." Maeve stopped to allow him to catch up enough to ask the question she had lead him up to. "But time passed and Ares did not return, the bond Callestah had with Kanan began to crumble and she was trapped with him."

The puzzle pieces moved around on the imaginary board in his mind and began to make a recognizable picture. "Why didn't Ares go back for her?"

"This I don't know, other than to say that someone stole his Stargate." She raged as her arms flew in his direction. "You did not go to her. No, you spent your time searching for something else, didn't you?" The Faery Queen turned her back on the Sa'Tan. "All those years she sat and waited for her Father to come, to take her home and to forgive her. So many wasted and lonely years." Now she did turn to look up at him. "Still, after all that's been done, Callestah would give up her life for this. Ares cannot have her. You were supposed to see to this. But you are weak, worst of all, you make her weak."

"I am not weak." He said through tight lips. Daniel was getting damn tired of people telling him that he was weak and now to have that expounded upon and turned around on Calla as though something he had done had caused her harm was too much. Daniel reached out and turned the petite woman around. "Why me?" He demanded to know as he stared into the Faery Queen's eyes. "If I'm so damn weak, why me?"

The Sa'Tan did ask good questions and he was sharp, Maeve gave him credit where it was due on those points. However, he was a bit slow on the uptake in certain areas. She thought it possible that Callestah was actually blocking the memory from him now. Maeve could feel the young Goddess all around the Sa'Tan and if she looked hard enough she felt sure that she could see Callestah's handy-work reflected in those blue eyes. "Do you know the one thing Aphrodite loved more than Ares?"

"Calla?"

"More the look she saw in her daughter's eye the first time she looked into your own."

"I don't understand," Daniel stammered as his eye caught the glistening chunk of onyx.

"My point exactly." Maeve hissed she was growing impatient with him. "Do you have the will to understand?"

He didn't know. "Yes."

"Will you gaze into the mirror?" Before he knew it, she had approached him and her small hands were turning him to toward the chunk of rock which was waiting for his gaze.

Daniel's head began to feel light and that bead of sweat on his lip subsided.

*The first time?*

Had been on top of the hillside on Tiberia as he stared down at Oz through the binoculars...

...hadn't it?....

"I just sort...." his words were becoming heavier as his gaze was held by the black mirror, "ran...into....her." Daniel's hand flew to his forehead as his eyes shut tight. "Goddamn it! That hurts!" He bent over in pain and rubbed his forehead with his palm.

His adult voice turned into that of a much younger Danny Jackson. "Geez! Ow! Man!" Stars in his head, Danny opened his eyes to see the red haired girl sprawled on the floor of the mall, the bags she had been holding as she looked into the shop window were scattered across the promenade. She was lying very still; at first he thought he'd killed her with the unintended head butt. "Hey!" He called out as he shook her. "Hey! Wake up! Oh geez! C'mon, wake up." In Maeve's quarters the adult Daniel Jackson stood near the mirror, he was bent at the knees and holding out his hand to no one other than the girl in his mind as he spoke. The girls' eyes opened and Danny felt his heart skip a beat as she looked up at him, he thought it was relief at the time but it was something much more powerful than that which caused his heart to jump. "Hi, I'm Danny. You ok?" He slipped his young hand into hers and helped her to her feet. Those green eyes widened as she looked down to see her skin touching his own, Danny felt her give a little tug to move her hand away for some reason he tightened his grip on it and she didn't try to pull it away again.

Daniel's palm closed around thin air as he rose to his full height once more and helped the non-existent girl to her feet. "I'm sorry," his voice boyish as he made the motion of brushing dust from his pants and then gathering up bags which were scattered across the mall floor. He knew where he was, his family had gone to Greece two months before his parents death, the Archeologists Jackson had been invited to attend and give a lecture at seminar in a nearby University. On this day the four of them had been out enjoying the sights and had stopped in the mall because they were going to the beach and his mother wanted a new bathing suit. Danny had gotten tired of waiting around for his mother and bugged and bugged his father until he was handed enough money to go down to the gyro stand and fill his stomach. That was where he was charging off to when he ran headlong into Callestah. She didn't say much to him as they stood there with the people hurrying past on their way to spend their money but her eyes seemed to stare

through to his soul as she gazed up at him from where she stood. Gee, just twenty minutes ago he was still convinced that girls were the yuckiest creatures God ever put on Earth but not now. No, he didn't think that right now. The one with the red hair and expressive green eyes seemed all right to him. "You wanna get somethin' ta eat? I got money."

Overhead Van Morrison crooned through the speakers; "It's a marvelous night for a moon dance, with the stars up above in your eyes."

Off beyond her shoulder a dark shadow and heavy footfalls approached. Something on her neck, hidden beneath her hair, began to glow. She raised her free hand to cover it. Behind her the footfalls came closer and the dark shadow loomed overhead. There was fear in her eyes. She dropped her hand from his. Danny Jackson looked up to see an impossibly tall man standing behind the red haired girl. The impossibly tall man laid a heavy hand on her shoulder and those emerald eyes filled with moistness. Danny knew she did not want to go with him. Those eyes, something in those desperate eyes begged him for help even though they knew he was too young to give it.

"It's time to leave." The impossibly tall man intoned in a deep voice. "You've no need of these things." He ripped the packages from her hand, letting them fall back to the floor. Just before he turned her away from Danny, that something he saw dancing in those desperate green eyes leapt from her. Danny felt a sharp pain in his small chest which was followed by deep radiating warmth. Like sitting by a camp fire late into the night.

"Good-bye, Danny." She said in a said voice.

"Wait!" The adult Daniel Jackson cried in Danny's voice. "Wait!" Before he could grab the packages the dark man had disappeared into the crowd with the red haired girl.

Maeve was about to call off her spell when saw the image of Daniel Jackson's parents reflected in the blackness of the mirror. Knowing what happened to them not long after this incident, Maeve had often wondered who they had been and what had happened in the moments after Callestah's departure from him. In that interest she allowed the spell to linger a moment longer.

In the mirror a boy by the name of Danny Jackson held up the bags to his mother and told his father of the dark man who had come and taken the young girl away with him. Some one came into view, some one who should have been seen years before and had been kept hidden from all of them. But Ares knew him; he had the smell of Ares all over him. Even through the cold black rock Maeve could feel it radiating from him.

"Danny's got a girlfriend." The image in the mirror teased through the adult Daniel Jackson standing in Maeve's room. "Shut up, Davy." Danny returned and shoved his brother. "Danny's got a girlfriend." Davy chanted again and shoved Danny harder. Their father broke it up.

"Duplicity!" Maeve screamed. The images in the mirror and those in Daniel's head shattered and flew away. "No duplicity!" The room around him began to shake. The Faery Queen had summoned the Sa'Tan here to further his understanding of Callestah's situation, to recover the early memory of her from his mind. If she felt it wise, to tell him of the connection between

Callestah and the death of his parents, this was completely unexpected and would not be tolerated in the least. It was bad enough he had been so foolish as to leave Earth without her, hiding his duplicity was nothing short of sedition as far as she was concerned. "You will bring her to me or I will go and retrieve her myself! She is not safe with you, she never was. You were supposed to be her greatest champion, but instead you are her greatest weakness."

Daniel did not need to ask what she was talking about. No stranger to the subject, he knew that identical twins have identical DNA and as such one would not be selected to bond with someone like Calla. He would have been dismissed for the job out of hand; no twins need apply.

"You will bring her to me." Maeve demanded for the last time. Daniel found himself on the other side of her chamber door.

Daniel's head spun around like a disc being spun by a vicious DJ. David would be able to touch her and David would bring her to Ares on demand. The cigarette butts he'd found, the way she'd been treating him the last few days as though she didn't want him near her any longer. How long had David been hanging around? Daniel tried to stop the wild thoughts which followed that particularly nasty one and couldn't. Calla had a large bruise on her thigh that he'd noticed yesterday, when he asked how it happened she looked at him like he was insane and then told him she run into the corner of the dining room table. The percs she'd begun taking regularly even though they upset her stomach so much that two weeks ago she had tossed the bottle at him telling him she wasn't going to take them anymore!

Putting the palms of his hands on his knees and bending over, Daniel tried to catch his breath and stop his head from spinning. His rational mind told him that everything was all right. David wasn't around at all; it was all just a coincidence. He would go home in a little while and Calla would be sitting by the fire waiting for him. Everything would be just peachy.

That stabbing dagger in his gut said otherwise. He hadn't even kissed her good-bye this morning. Calla hadn't wanted him to. David was around, he had been fucking with Calla...

Daniel shook his head to clear the image which followed the thought....

Before he knew it he was tearing down the huge spiral stair case and past the golden haired girl who sat plucking on her harp and the faeries who danced and drank and laughed. His hand fell upon the knob to the main door and he was thrust out into the bright sunlight once again. Jack, Sam and Teal'c turned from where they had been engaged in a heavy conversation concerning the Canuks chances for a season win to see Daniel running as though hell itself were hot on his heels. "What the hell?" Jack asked as he dropped the sunglasses from his eyes.

Daniel didn't stop, he just sprinted past them. "Come on!" He called as he ran. "We gotta go now! Someone open that fucking gate!"

## Chapter Twenty-Three

"What the hell is going on?" General Hammond demanded to know as Daniel crashed through the worm hole and onto the cold steel ramp. "You barely waited for us to respond to the signal, Dr. Jackson."

"Leave it open," Daniel panted, "they're coming. Phone! Someone give me a phone!" He pushed past the General just as the rest of SG1 appeared through the Gate.

"I don't know sir," Colonel O'Neill spoke before the General could ask, "he just ran past us and dove through the Gate."

"Whatever it is, it must be of great importance to him." Teal'c remarked.

"Where did he go?" Major Carter asked as she shifted the weight of the P90 to a more comfortable position on her shoulder.

"He tore out of here looking for a phone."

Daniel picked up the nearest land line which happened to be the briefing room and punched the buttons which dialed his home number. *Answer, Calla, c'mon, answer*, he thought as the line rang and rang in his hand. Soon his own voice was coming through the receiver and informing him that no one was home at the moment but to please leave a message and someone would call back soon. "Calla? It's Daniel, pick up the phone!" He waited. "Come on, if you're there pick up the phone. Please Calla, pick up the phone." There was no response.

"What is going on?" Jack asked as he stood in the doorway.

"Come on, we have to get to my house! I'll explain on the way." Daniel brushed past him, leaving the receiver on the desk behind him.

The four of them piled into Jack's Lexus and sped down the winding country roads towards Silver Springs. On the ride, the rational side of his mind kept telling him that Calla had just gone out for one of those walks that he was always trying to encourage her to go on. They would get to his house, open the door, and she would be sitting by her fire just like she always was. That voice, so calm and easy, Daniel knew that voice, he had used it many times. It was trying to lull him into a false sense of security.

Jack drove at lightning speeds toward Daniel's house with Teal'c and Sam belted in behind him in the back seat. There was something fishy about that girl all right, at least now they knew what it was. It wasn't that he didn't like Calla, of course he did, *\*everyone\** liked Calla, you just couldn't help it. Maybe it was something in her eyes or in the way she always seemed to make you feel like you were the only person in the room, even there were fifty others around you.

"You should have told us about this!" Jack snapped as he slammed his fist against the steering wheel. "I thought we were friends!"

"We are," Daniel couldn't get Jack's eye because he was keeping it on the road and instead turned to issue his plea to his friends in the back seat. "It's not like I really tried to hide it, if anyone ever looked at my birth certificate it does say 'twin' on it." He grumbled.

"Which one of us was supposed to go peeking into your background, Daniel?" Major Carter accused.

"You too, huh? That's great." Daniel tossed his hands in the air. "Look, I just wanted to forget about him, is that so horrible? Jesus Christ! I haven't seen David in 20 years!"

"That doesn't matter." Jack did turn his head to look at Daniel as the road straightened out for a bit. "You should have told us and you damn sure should have told her!"

"Is it not more important that we find Calla rather than continue this pointless bickering?" Teal'c asked.

"Yes, it is." For the second time on the drive, Daniel fished in his pocket for his cell phone and dialed his home number; all he received was the cold ring and then his voice coming through the message machine. He slammed the cover shut and tossed the phone onto the dashboard. "Can we just get there? You guys can tar and feather me later, ok?" Gentle warmth descended onto his shoulder and Daniel turned to see Sam staring at him.

"OK." She agreed.

"Fine," Jack chimed in, "but let me tell you one thing, when this over, boy Lucy you got some 'splaining ta do!"

The white Lexus screeched to a halt in front of 1313 Mockingbird Lane, before he even opened the door to the car, Daniel knew the house was empty. Shoving his fist into his front pocket and fumbling for the house key, Daniel charged up the front walk with his friends close behind. He grabbed the brass knob and the door swung open without the aid of his key.

The silence inside was maddening. It rung out all around him as he stood in the living room and gazed down at the cold embers in the fireplace. Calla almost never let that go out, only at night when they went up to bed, the first thing she did in the morning was to stoke it up again. Now there wasn't enough heat coming from it to warm an ant by.

"Calla?" Jack called out as he made his way past Daniel toward the kitchen. "Hey! Calla?"

There was no reply.

The light on the answering machine blinked three times, no one had to punch the button to know

that they were all Daniel's calls.

"Do these belong to you, Daniel Jackson?" Teal'c asked as he held out his hand to reveal three Marlboro butts.

Daniel gnashed his jaw tight and shook his head.

"All right, room to room, let's go." Colonel O'Neill ordered. SG1 split up and began a room by room search of Daniel's house. Jack and Sam took the first floor while Daniel and Teal'c sprinted for the second floor.

In his bedroom, Daniel found the bed a mess, her old rag doll on the floor in the doorway and her side of the closet almost completely empty. Other than that the house seemed to be in perfect order. David had just walked right in and taken her right out, no fuss no muss no problem. Daniel stooped to pick up the doll and knew instantly without any reservation at all, that she wanted to take this with her and David had slapped it out of her hand. He'd told her she wasn't a child and she didn't need childish things, Daniel could hear his brother's nasty voice just as clearly as if he was right next to him. He could see the crushed look on her face as she gazed into what she thought were Daniel's angry eyes. His heart sunk to his knees.

Daniel was standing in the walk-in closet looking at the empty hangars when Samantha rushed into the room with his metal lock-box, the top of which had been pried open.

"What was in here?" She asked him as she held it out and watched as Daniel flipped through the contents.

"All of her identification is missing, her passport, MY passport, credit cards, it's all gone." Daniel dropped it to the floor and bent to retrieve it as it hit. He flipped through it again and then dumped the rest of the contents onto the floor in front of him. "The wedding rings are gone." He rose quickly and kicked the box, it twirled its way across the hardwood floor and slid under his bed.

*Tink.*

"Son of a bitch!" He railed. "I'm gonna kill him, Sam, I swear, I am." Daniel spun around with rage in his fist and punched the rear wall of the walk-in closet, his fist went through the dry wall as cut into his skin. Daniel pulled his hand out of the wall and reached out to touch the empty clothes hangars, she was gone and it was all his fault. Jack was right; he should have told her about David. Slowly Daniel turned around and ran his shaking bruised hand through his hair, his eyes turned upward to plea to whatever Gods there were for help. There was a small black object secured to the wall above the trim. "Sam?"

"Yeah, Daniel." Sam followed the lock box across Daniel's bedroom floor and was peeking under the bed to see what had made that noise. She stood up with three empty wine bottles and one empty Kahlua bottle in her hand. Major Carter turned to look at her friend with the empty bottles in her hand, she couldn't remember ever seeing Daniel this angry, he had a right to blow off some steam right now. She followed his hand as it pointed upward and beheld the object which had caught his

attention.

"What's that?"

"I dunno but it looks like a wi-fi web cam." Major Carter walked into the closet for a closer look. "You always keep your empties under the bed?"

"No."

"You two find anything?" Jack asked as he walked through the door.

"I think so, sir. Better call the General and get a team in here. I think this house is bugged." Major Carter said as she craned her neck to get a better view of the device secured to Daniel's wall.

Twenty minutes later a team of the USAF's finest descended upon and then took over Daniel Jackson's house. They de-bugged his phones and his computers and ran bug sensing devices over every inch of the house. Daniel sat on the sofa with his head in hands feeling powerless, some Avatar he had turned out to be.

Colonel O'Neill took Major Carter aside as they stood in the living room watching over their friend. "Listen to me, when they get that web address, you come and tell me. Got that? He doesn't need to..."

"I understand, sir. General Hammond put a trace on Calla's credit cards, we'll know if she uses them and where."

"Good. Go help them, I'll stay with Daniel." Major Carter left him to make her way into the den where the de-bugging team had set up most of their equipment while Jack settled in on the couch next to Daniel. "Hey," he said in a soft voice as he laid a hand on Daniel's back, "it's gonna be all right. We're gonna find her. You know that, right?"

"No," Daniel wiped the wetness away from his face and looked down at his open palms. "Actually, I don't think I ever knew anything where Calla's concerned." Daniel picked up the soft bodied doll which he had brought downstairs with him and clutched it in his hands.

"Sure you do," the hand on Daniel's back lightly began to rub back and forth, "you know you love her, don't you?" Major Carter came out of the den and whispered into Colonel O'Neill's ear. "Stay here, I'll be right back." Jack got up and followed her into the den leaving Daniel alone on the sofa. Muffled voices from the other room came to him but he couldn't make out what they were saying and couldn't concentrate enough to even try and make it out.

A few minutes later one of the de-buggers walked out of the den with an electric screw driver in his hand. He walked up to the mirror over the fireplace without saying anything and began to take it down, another man came over and helped him set it on the floor. Daniel looked up and saw the second web-cam that his brother had hidden. He bolted from the sofa and into the den. Before he could get through the door he heard her voice; "Daniel," it was soft and quiet. "Daniel, please."

"Get him out of here!" Jack shouted to Teal'c as he reached out and turned off the monitor.

Teal'c grabbed Daniel by the arm before he could get through the door.

"You found it." Daniel tried to push past the man who was holding him back. "C'mon, you have to let me see it." He demanded.

"You don't want to see this. Just go back out there." Sam said in a stern but concerned voice. "Just go."

There was no picture on the monitor but the speakers were still on; "Daniel." Calla whispered.

"You have to let me see it." Daniel repeated in a demanding whisper.

"Why would you wish to put yourself through this?" Teal'c asked as he held on to Daniel's forearm.

"I have to know so I can fix it later. When we find her." Daniel turned to Jack with wide pleading eyes. "You did say we would find her, didn't you?"

"Yeah." Colonel O'Neill shot a look at Teal'c. "You sure?"

"I can do this. I have to do this, Jack."

"Let him go." Jack raised a hand in the air as he signaled for everyone to clear the room. "Go on, it's all yours." He moved away from the desk and Samantha rose from the chair to allow Daniel to sit down. "You want us to stay?"

He didn't know and he didn't care, rather than answer them Daniel drew in a deep breath and flicked the monitor back on. The image of his bedroom displayed on the screen, his eyes closed and then opened again as he summoned an inner strength. The tape playing in front of him was from four nights ago, Daniel was making love to her. Calla's arms were wrapped around him and she was covering him with those soft kisses of hers.

So, OK. He thought as he sat there. That's OK. So, David had been watching and getting his kicks, at least it was him, it was Daniel. He moved the mouse and rode the elevator down the screen. HOME. He clicked the link.

"Shit." Jack muttered. "OK, before you go any further." He shut the monitor off again. "There's about ten days worth of this stuff. Your bedroom and by the fireplace." Jack stopped not knowing how to say what needed to be said.

Major Carter took over as she reached out for Daniel's hand and took it in her own. "He's been broadcasting it live over the web 24/7." Her words were hard to say and they stuck in her throat. She watched Daniel's eyes fall. "He's been charging people, making money off it, Daniel. A lot of it."

Sure, why not? Daniel thought as he sat there feeling the warmth of Sam's hand against his own and wishing with all his heart that he could take everything back. This was Davy to the proverbial T, if there was a buck to be made in anything then Davy was all over it. How many times had Davy been to his house? Obviously, he had been the Cable Man (rather than the Cable Woman) how else would he have set this up? "He used my computers to relay this, didn't he?" Daniel asked.

"Yeah." Sam agreed.

How many of those ten days had Davy come to call on Calla? How long had he waited and watched before he made his move? Daniel turned the monitor on for the last time and was greeted by a full color picture of Calla, she was wrapped in that white robe that he loved so much. The one that he liked to bury his head when he pulled her close to him at night. The one he reveled in removing from her, slowly untying the sash and peeling back the material until she lay willing and waiting for him to touch her. Here on the Internet the soft robe that his palms had grasped so many times over the last month was open halfway to revealed the place where he loved to lay his head at night. Her green eyes sparkled with life and desire as she stared back at him from the screen.

She was not supposed to be *there*, not on the Goddamned Internet for the entire world to see! No, Calla was supposed to be here, with him.

Daniel used the mouse and rode the elevator down.

David was a good web master, Daniel had to give him that much. The site was nicely peppered with pictures of him and Calla in various stages of dress and undress. It was categorized well. One could get live feed for \$9.95 an hour. Or one could search through the archives which had been broken down first by day and then by activity. The more mundane activities were available for \$1.95 an hour. The steamy stuff was priced right at \$5.95 for the first hour. There had been many nights that Daniel had lasted more than that first hour, if you wanted to see it, well at \$2.95 every hour after the first it was cheap at twice the price. Or if one were just in the mood for smash and grab one could get the Highlights of Events for a flat rate of \$7.95 per Event. Daniel hit the ARCHIVES button looking for his brother.

Jack's cell phone began to ring. "Keep an eye on him, don't let him watch too much of that."

"I won't." Sam agreed as Jack left the room to answer the incoming call from General Hammond. "Don't you think that's enough?"

Daniel didn't turn around to look at her. "No, I don't. He's in here somewhere." His eyes scanned the dates listed on the site. December 15th met his gaze and Daniel clicked on it. The next page showed more images of Calla and Daniel tried to ignore them as he kept his eyes on the text. December 15th had been broken down into increments; MORNING, EVENING and AFTERNOON DELIGHT. That was Davy. Before he knew it he clicked on the link and was being asked for his credit card number. "Give it to me." Daniel held out his hand without looking at Sam.

"Daniel, don't do this." She begged. "C'mon, let's just go."

"Goddamn it! Give it to me."

From her breast pocket she pulled the credit card they had used to access the site initially and handed it over to him. Major Carter stood by while she watched him punch the numbers on the card into the computer and the next screen appeared.

LOADING.....LOADING.....LOADING.....

The image slowly opened onto his bedroom, Davy was walking through the door with Calla in his arms. She was kissing him, looking at him with those big green eyes so trusting and sweet. *Oh God, he loved it when she looked at him like that!* But that wasn't him; Daniel felt his stomach twist and knot. What followed next while clear as the crystal of Maeve's throne on the screen, seemed to come through in waves. It was nothing more than a jumbled bunch of sight and sound as Daniel stared at it. For a moment he wondered why he couldn't see it, why it was so hazy, and then he realized his own tears were blocking his view. With a shaking hand he brushed them away to see David had her wrists bound and was pushing her into the cold dry wall.

December 15th 12:15pm, read the time stamp in the lower left corner. David had been raping her while Daniel lay in the infirmary with that horrible pain in his stomach and bitter taste in his mouth. A hard-on that just wouldn't quit. Janet thought it was food poisoning. Yeah. Right.

He knew better now, didn't he? It was Calla and her Bond to him. She had been trying to tell David to stop hurting her, unable to reach David's mind, the Bond sought him out. For the next three days David had shown up on his door and had his way with Calla while Daniel had been confined to the infirmary. It had been that Connection which made him sick, it had been trying to warn him, trying to tell him what was happening to her. He hadn't listened.

For four days she had kept her mouth shut and kept her distance from him. Yeah, of course she had. What else was she supposed to do? And why should she have said anything to him at all about it, huh? As far as she was concerned he already knew everything, didn't he? To her, Daniel must look like a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. In order to cope with that was happening to her, what David (Daniel) was doing to her, Calla had begun drinking while he was at work, hence the empty liquor bottles under his bed. When the booze wasn't enough she'd gone for the perc and the valium, hence the empty perc bottle in his bathroom waste basket and the valium which was missing from the medicine cabinet.

"Daniel, please." Calla's voice cracked through the speakers. Her voice trembled and so did her body. "Master Daniel," she begged quietly as David planted his elbow in her back. David must have loved that. Sure he did, Daniel could see him smile on the monitor while he thrust away behind her.

As though he could offer her some small bit of latent comfort, Daniel's fingertips reached to touch the cold glass. There was no comfort he could offer as he watched her slender body give way and slide down the wall when Davy was finished with her. Nothing he could do to change that broken look in her eye as she stared up at him from her place on the floor at his feet. Daniel stood up swiftly and laid his hands on the monitor. "No! No! No!" Each time Daniel spat forth the word it

grew in intensity as he grabbed the monitor and heaved it to the floor. The glass shattered as it landed face down on the hardwood floor and tendrils of smoke rose from the broken machinery. "She thinks he's me." He whispered to no one in particular other than himself and then fell back into the chair with his head in his hands.

"I know." Samantha knelt beside him. "He's not you. She'll figure it out, Daniel."

Daniel laughed, a haughty little sound, as fresh tears began to roll down his cheeks. "Great, Sam. That's just great. What happens then? When he doesn't even have to remotely pretend to be me anymore? What the fuck is going to happen to her then?" Seemed to Daniel that David not only heard the siren song of that horrid Darkness, but he was only too willing to be swept away by it. So willing to give into it and twist her.

Sam did the only thing she knew, she reached out and wrapped her arms around her friend and hugged him tight. "We'll find her before that."

"Then can I kill him?"

"I'll hold him down for you."

"Hammond's got a lead." Colonel O'Neill told them as he walked into the den with Teal'c. "OK, you, Daniel, purchased two tickets to Greece early this morning. You also got a duplicate driver's license a week ago. Their plane left from Denver 35 minutes ago." Jacked looked down and up again. "We've able to confirm that they were on it. Flight goes to Chicago and then to New Haven before leaving the country. We can't catch 'em at O'Hare but we can meet 'em at Tweed." The absolute truth was they could send someone to intercept David and Calla at O'Hare but Jack didn't want some local cop playing hero and getting someone hurt in the process. Calla would be fine with David all the way to Greece, he wouldn't do anything stupid on an airplane full of people and neither would she, and Jack was pretty sure about those two facts. Their best option was to get to New Haven before them and wait.

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Calla sat in her seat on the airplane with her hands clasped in her lap. The gold band on the third finger of her left hand stared back at her. Before they left the house, Master Daniel had insisted that she wear it when she refused, yet again, he'd grabbed her wrist, yanked it forward and forced the gold band onto her finger. Calla watched as he slid the matching ring onto his own hand, telling her that everything had to look right and she was going to wear the ring whether she liked it or not. So many things had changed about him over the last few days, Calla had done her best just to try and stay out of his way over the last bit of time. She had not given any further argument with regard to the wedding ring.

Here she was, sitting in this big machine soaring above the clouds. Calla had never flown before, she didn't like the way plane sometimes leapt and jerked. Master Daniel said that was called turbulence and that it was nothing to worry about. It did not mean that they were about to fall out of the sky. His words did little to stop the churning in the pit of her stomach as she sat holding onto the arm rest.

At this end of journey she would see her Father again. She'd much prefer it if he'd tell her that he wanted to see Avalon. Perhaps Master Daniel knew something that she did not; perhaps Father was ready to forgive her after all. For all of the Changes he had gone through over the last few days, Calla still felt sure that he would not knowingly walk her into harms way. Though, it was strange of him not to give her some advanced notice regarding the trip. He had just come home a little before noon saying that his business was wrapped up and it was time to go. The others, he said, would not be accompanying them even though that had been the plan all along. When the time came, Master Daniel had said that all of them would go to Greece. It seemed that they had changed their minds about her as well.

"Here, take one of these." David told her as he dropped two small green pills into her palm. "It'll help with the flight."

Calla's valium bottle was in her purse, she didn't know where Daniel had gotten these particular green pills but if he was willing to let her have them... Calla dropped them into her mouth at his command and washed them down with a gulp of Coke. Soon she was sleeping beside him, she slept all the way to O'Hare. With any luck, he'd get her to take another one on the leg to New Haven and another after that. She would sleep the entire way to Greece and not give him any trouble.

The plane landed at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport right on schedule and David and Calla departed the plane. There was a forty-five minute lay-over between this flight and the second leg of their journey, at the end of which would be a two hour lay-over in New Haven. David and Calla, looking like any other Middle American Couple, walked through the terminal on their way to the next boarding gate, without attracting much attention from the hurried travelers they passed. Upon reaching the boarding gate for the second leg, David left Calla sitting in one of the chairs in the waiting area while he went up to the desk to inquire if the plane was on time or not. David was hungry and airline food just plain sucks. If it was delayed maybe there would be the opportunity to hop up to the bar and grab a cold one and a sandwich. The ticket agent behind the counter informed him that his plane was running on time, however, there was a big snow storm rolling into the east coast and it was possible his flight might be diverted along the way. That wasn't good news. Even though he hadn't been given much time, he did have this entire thing planned out to the very last. Except this. David returned to where he had left Calla hoping to out fly the approaching storm. They boarded the flight for the next leg of their journey right on time.

"Why don't you sit here by the window?" David told her as they made their way to their assigned seats. "You'll get a better view, it's still light out." He encouraged as she stood there looking at him with questioning eyes. David didn't give a damn about her view, keeping her in the window seat meant he would control when and if she got up during the flight, the second longest of the journey they had embarked upon. He was hoping that on the last leg, he would be able to convince her to become part of the Mile High Club before he led her off to sleep with another pill. But if not, that was OK too, he had broken off a good piece before they left Danny's house. "What's wrong?" David asked.

Calla didn't answer and instead, after thinking about it for another moment, she moved in and sat where Master Daniel had told her to, at his right hand. She gazed out at the other planes waiting on the tarmac as he settled in next to her. His hand appeared below her eyes and in it was one green

pill. "Co," she told him, "I'm all right now."

David would rather she took the pill but he wasn't going to make a stink over it on a plane full of people. He looked at his watch as he put it back in the bottle, the pills he'd given her earlier still had some time on them. "Want a drink?" David asked as the flight attendant made his way down the aisle. "White wine?" David knew that Calla drank that often, more so lately since he'd begun to make his afternoon visits, especially as she sat by the fire with Danny after one of David's noontime visits.

Over the last ten days, David had become very familiar with Calla's nasty little secret...several of them as a matter of fact. If Danny knew how much she drank during the daytime he'd be really pissed off. If it wasn't a glass or two of white wine then she was sneaking into Danny's liquor cabinet to pouring a healthy dose of Kahlua into her morning coffee just after Danny's car left Mockingbird Lane. Not to mention her favorite little green pills. David didn't know what pain she was trying to kill with all that booze and valium only that there must be a lot of it.

And she was hiding it all from Danny, the man who was supposed to be her husband. She couldn't hide it from him, no way man, his eyes were open all the time! She was good, too, David had no problem handing her that credit. Danny never missed the wine because Calla had found a local liquor store online and they delivered. She would steal a few dollars out of Danny's wallet, just a dollar or two here and there, nothing he would miss. She'd stash it away and use it to purchase more wine or whatever liquor struck her fancy from the online booze shop. Calla hid the dead soldiers under their bed until the recycle man came to take them away on Thursday morning.

The flight attendant stopped. "Wine?" David asked again.

Calla looked at the wide variety of liquor available to her. "That would be nice." She said. "But, um, could have that Southern Comfort instead?" She pointed to a bottle filled with caramel colored liquid.

"Sure you can." David looked up at the attendant. "Three please." He gave two small nip bottles to Calla and kept one for himself. "Cheers." David winked at her as she swallowed the first nip down in one gulp.

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The forty-five minute lay-over for David and Calla at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport was just the break SG1 needed. By the time David and Calla's flight was taking off, they had passed Chicago and were well on their way to beating them to Tweed-New Haven. The pilot's voice came over the intercom and informed them to stay in their seats with their seat belts in place, they were about to start flying into some rough weather. There was a Nor'easter heading in, the pilot was fairly certain that they would make New Haven ahead of the worst of the storm. That just left David and Calla's flight. What if they didn't out fly the storm and landed some where other than Tweed? None of the members of SG1 wanted to think about that possibility just then.

Daniel sat in his seat with his head leaned all the way back and his eyes closed, he'd said almost nothing from the time they'd left his house until now. There was just so much to take in, to consider reason through and (hopefully) understand. For once in his life, he was absolutely speechless.

"I don't think he's doin' so good. What do you think?" Jack asked Sam as they sat a few feet down from their friend and trying not to stare at him.

"I dunno, sir. Doesn't look so good to me, either."

"I'm fine." Daniel said without opening his eyes and then burst out in a small fit of laughter. That was what she always said to him, wasn't it? *I'm fine. Everything's all right. Nothing to worry about.* Liar! "Bitch." He muttered under his breath.

"Excuse me, didn't catch that last one?" Jack asked although he'd heard it perfectly fine.

"Nothing. I'm fine." Still Daniel didn't open to his eyes to look at anyone. "Let's just get there and we'll sort the rest of it out later."

"Right." Jack agreed. "Whatever you say, Daniel."

Their flight landed in New Haven, Connecticut right on time and just ahead of the storm which was rolling in fast. Fresh snow covered the ground and the wind whipped up into a frenzy as they departed the plane. Jack inquired if the David and Calla's flight was on time and was informed that it was but there was a heavy possibility that they were about to be diverted to another airport, they were waiting for word as to how long Tweed was going to remain open. All they needed was another half hour.

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David and Calla did not fare as well as SG1 in so far as their travel plans went. The entire flight was riddled with turbulence and the SEAT BELT sign had remained at during the whole time. Calla sat nervously in the seat next to him and holding on to his hand. Through the window was only a cold steady blanket of falling white, the plane climbed higher and higher in a futile attempt to fly above the storm.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is your Captain speaking" came the voice from the loud speaker and Calla turned to look at David with frightened eyes.

"It's ok," he muttered and held his breath to hear the coming news.

"I'm afraid our plans have been diverted just a wee bit." While the Captain's voice was calm, the situation they faced was serious. Something about the storm had caused them to fly off course and they were now headed into Rhode Island air space. Normally he would just change course and head back but the wings were icing and the plane was not responding to his commands as well as any of them in the cock pit would have liked. Some moments ago he had radioed in to tell Air Traffic Control that there was no way he was going to make it to T.F. Greene in Rhode Island or Tweed in Connecticut, they had to land now. The only available place was a small airport in southeastern Connecticut which was not truly equipped to handle the landing of a 727. After what seemed like agonizing hours the Captain had finally radioed in that they were either landing at Groton-New London Airport or on I-95 and Air Traffic Control could take their bloody pick of the two! Within moments he had clearance to land at Groton-New London. "We're going to be landing at Groton- New London Airport in beautiful Groton, Connecticut. We're very sorry for any

inconvenience this causes you good folks but due to the weather we really don't have another choice. We'll be landing in just a few moments so if everyone will please remain buckled in their seats we'll get this puppy on the ground." The intercom clicked off. The passengers moaned and groaned and the question of 'Where is Groton?' was heard throughout the plane.

"Shit." David said louder than he expected.

"Daniel?" Calla stroked his hand. "Is everything all right?"

"Yeah, I just hate it when this happens. Everything's ok, Calla. Don't you worry." He stroked her hand in return.

The landing at Groton-New London Airport was anything but smooth or picture perfect. The runway was barely long enough to land the plane on in the first place and it was covered with ice. Groton-New London had officially closed for the storm when they radioed in, they had done their best to try and clear some of the ice and snow from the runway but there just wasn't enough time before the plane was coming in for a hard landing and skidding to a stop just inches from the Bluff Point Cove.

The airport was small, just a blip on the old radar map really. It was used mainly for private planes and puddle jumpers, corporate jets and high rollers the local casinos flew in. David inquired about his flight in New Haven and was told that Tweed was shut down, the lady behind the counter gave him a number to call to find out when his flight would be scheduled. He glanced over his shoulder at Calla who was waiting patiently in one of the blue plastic chairs with a Coke in her hand and dialed the number on his cell phone only to be told that the flight had not been re-scheduled yet but if he'd like to leave a number where he could be reached someone would get in touch with him and inform him when his flight to Greece would be departing. David gave the woman his cell phone number and went over to the Hertz Rent-A-Car kiosk. It was there that he learned more about the two local Native American run casinos. The woman behind that counter informed him that while Foxwoods Resort and Casino was probably a little closer, she personally like the Mohegan Sun Casino and would recommend it if that was what he was looking for. Other than that there didn't seem to be too much to do in this part of Connecticut and it looked like they were going to be here at least until morning. Well, at least he still had a two day jump on Danny. David only had Danny's credit card numbers and not the actual cards, he called Calla over and used her credit card to rent a 4x4 Suburban. Calla followed the steps that she had seen others do several times, she gave the woman her driver's license and then signed her first name and Daniel's last to the receipt. He took a map to the Mohegan Sun as they exited the airport.

Calla hoisted her bag into the rear seat of the overly large Suburban and then climbed into the front passenger seat with snow in her hair and frost already forming on her toes. Why did it have to be so cold here? "The storm is bad, perhaps we should stay here, Daniel?" Calla suggested as she tried to see the road ahead of them, they weren't even off the airport property yet and the wind was already assaulting the big vehicle, causing it to ebb and sway as they drove out of the parking lot. And it was cold, so cold. Calla reached out to turn up the heat.

"It's warm enough in here." David told her as he squinted to see through the falling white snow.

"Leave it alone."

"All right." Her shaking hand moved away from the console and wrapped itself around her mid-section to try and bring herself some warmth or at least keep what she already had. "Daniel? When did you get those glasses?" Calla had noticed them earlier in the day.

"Oh, this morning. You like?"

No, she didn't like them. "They hide your eyes." She said in a low voice as she glanced over at the man driving the car so recklessly through the snow storm. "I like your eyes." Over the past four or five days he had acted so peculiar with her, she told herself that was nothing unusual, they were still getting to know each other and, after all it was only in a sexual way that he had been different and all men were prone to such things. That was up until today when he had come through the door and insisted that she begin packing her bags for their unscheduled trip to Greece and to Father. It seemed to her that the new Master she was coming to know would have given her a bit more warning regarding their trip. Still, she tried to dismiss all the little peculiarity of the last few days and just chalk it up to Life or Fate or whatever one wished to call it.

*You like Danny's eyes.* David took a quick glance at the woman in the seat next to him. "Well, I like them. They cut down the glare. Enough talk, let me drive, ok?" David flicked the radio on and hit the buttons until something which struck his fancy came to his ears. He watched as Calla folded her hands in her lap and tacitly nodded her agreement.

*I like the way you smack my ass. I like the dirty things you do, when I have control of you.* The man on the radio sang and Calla felt the weight of Daniel's eyes on her, she tuned her head and looked out the window at the new fallen snow until she felt their weight ease. In the month and a half she had spent with him not once had he stopped upon a radio station which played such music, Daniel's taste usually ran a bit more composed than what was currently assaulting her ears through the car speakers.

On the other side of the window, the state of Connecticut passed by in shades of white and gray as they drove down Route 12. Out the window she saw the contents of Route 12 in Groton, Connecticut which was not the world's largest city by any means but it seemed a fair enough size to be comfortable. They passed a large complex of buildings, outside of which men were in uniform like the ones who lived on the Cheyenne Mountain Base but their uniforms were slightly different. As they drove by she read the sign; Groton-New London Naval Submarine Base. Further down the road and the pavement began to show its ice encasement, snow piled up on the road and hid most of the glistening slippery substance from view. Every now and then Daniel would hit a patch of it as he drove causing the large vehicle to skid from one side of the road to the other. Calla thought she might have liked to chances on the airplane rather than on these slippery roads. Onward they went and the man next to her didn't speak to her, he just kept his eyes straight ahead as he tried to see the road through the falling snow and he hummed to whatever tune the station (which identified itself as 102.7 WFNX) was playing. It seemed all they played was loud and obnoxious music, she didn't like it. Calla rubbed her icy hands together in a vain attempt to bring warmth to her stiffening fingers, but they just grew colder as did her toes. The tip of her nose began to tingle with the cold.

“Take a look at that map, will ya?” He said to her as he brushed his hand against the window to clear it of condensation which was starting to form. “We should be close to it by now.”

Calla opened the map and struggled to understand it at first, it had been a very long time since she had been asked to look at such an object never mind to decipher it. They were on Route 12, she found that on the map and then the Submarine base they had passed, Dow Chemical which they had also passed was marked on the map, and she followed the line up to where the woman at the Rent-A-Car desk had circled their destination. “There’s going to be a light,” she said to Daniel, “take a left there and go over the bridge,” still tracing the line with her icy finger, “after that take a right and we should be there.”

“Geez, Callie, what are the route numbers?” He asked with hostility. David knew he should try and control himself a bit better, what with Danny being the “Good Twin” and all but he was in the middle of a heavy nicotine fit and in no mood to coddle anyone. Just as soon as he got her upstairs in a room he was definitely going to give her some valium, a stiff drink, a stiff fuck, and then mosey his way on down to the casino to drink, smoke and gamble the night away. He was even thinking about taking a cash advance against her credit card in order to pay for his evening spree.

Calla drew a deep breath and traced the line on the map once more. “Route 12, across the bridge at the light over the Thames River, to Route 32. Is that better?”

“Yes.” David turned the radio up as another ditty he was fond of came on.

*I like your pants around your feet, I like the dirt on your knees, I like the way that you say please when you're looking up at me.*

At the sound of the dirty lyrics she felt his stare upon her again. Calla steeled herself and tried to ignore it as she looked out the window onto the cold New England night. There was no denying the fact that here was something very wrong with him today. Just down the icy road and around the corner the light she had spoken of appeared. “Turn left here.” She informed him absently and continued her gaze. Something up ahead caught her eye and it made the mark between her breasts itch, Calla raised a hand to cover the dim glow there. In her mind there was a great pull, as though a team of horses were yanking her, body and soul, sharply to the right. There stood a great mass of buildings, the car slowed down for the red light. Calla stared out the front window of the ghost town before her. In the dark she could not make out the entire scheme of the place but she could see two very large buildings which looked to be fairly new. They didn’t interest her very much. There were other buildings there, although she could not see them, she knew them to be very old and filled with souls long since past from their torturous lives.

As the car stood at the red light and her heart began to race faster inside her chest, she had the incredible urge to lay her hand upon the latch and run toward the rundown abandoned complex. The itch grew hotter and she scratched at it with icy fingers, the glow grew brighter. Calla brought her coat tight around her chest to keep its light hidden from her driver. Whatever that place was or had been, Hades presided there and he still held sway there. Tearing her eyes away for a brief moment to look at the man at the wheel she wondered if she should tell him what she felt right now. Surely, if no other reason than his Archeology, he would be interested to know what she did. Calla held her tongue as she watched him. His eyes focused on the snow and the red light, as her

head began to pound she found herself wishing very much for another of those little green pills or two. The light turned green and the car lurched forward once more, soon they were turning past the old ghostly buildings and Calla could see that she had been right. As they crossed the Thames River, even in the dark, she could make out a mass of buildings, almost an entire town unto itself, which stood sprawled out beyond the two newer ones which had first met her eye.

*Hades. Uncle Hades.* Was he really there? He had to be, just look at that place! Even in the darkness she could see the lonely and lost souls wandering around in the biting frost, their faces long and haggard, wearing clothes which were merely rags. In her head she could hear them, some of them wept, some of them screamed, some of them rambled on endlessly to no one other than themselves. They all spoke and they all had some story or another to tell.

The abandoned remnants of the Norwich State Hospital fell away as they neared the middle of the small bridge which spanned the upper part of the Thames River. Now a new site met her emerald eyes. Directly across from the place where Hades presided stood a great glass tower. It was made of two separate buildings which seemed to stretch upward to the Sun itself! In direct contrast to the buildings across the river, this one glistened and gleamed in the harshly falling snow. A line of cars were waiting to pull off the bridge and into the Mohegan Sun Casino. No one was waiting in line across the river; their turn in line was never-ending over there. As they drew further and further away from the dilapidated place where all those souls were trapped the itch between her breasts and glow subsided.

David pulled the car to a halt in the parking garage and made his way around to the rear of the car. Getting his favorite things through airport security these days was no fun at all, however, sharp as a tack as he was he had managed to get everything, including the small caliber pistol from Colorado to Connecticut unnoticed. He handed Calla her bag and took the rest of them out himself. They rode the near-by elevator down to the casino floor.

Calla was at once amazed and panicked by the flashing lights and noises which surrounded her upon entering the casino, she reached blindly for his hand and could not find it. Daniel was wandering off towards a bunch of machines with flashing lights and levers on them, he turned back to look at her and then motion her forward. People were everywhere, it seemed there was not one single inch in the entire place that did not have someone standing in it and she soon lost sight of him in the crowd.

For one minute David thought he'd lost her, everyone around her seemed to just tower over her and block her out of his view and finally he caught sight of her in between people as they passed by. She was standing just where he had left her, he pushed his way through the people who were milling about, off to lose their money on some slot or hand of poker and land a hand on her shoulder. "Stay with me, understand?"

"Yes, Daniel."

David was getting annoyed with her frequent use of his brother's name, just once he wanted to hear her say David. And he would. Just as soon as he got her within sight of her Father he would tell her who he really was. He grasped her by the left forearm and guided her through the crowd. On their way to the reception desk he stopped to drop a few quarters into the slot machines but came up a

loser on each turn. That was all right, he had his goodies with him, and he'd feed them to her once they got a room and then come down and gamble for a while.

David had Calla use her credit card to rent a room in the hotel, she looked at him oddly while she signed the name Calla Jackson to the receipt and he figured that Danny usually did this part of the deal. "Sorry, Callie, I left my credit cards in the luggage." He explained weakly and watched her nod in response.

"Here you go Miss Jackson, room 217, take the elevators to the second floor, go right and it's at the end of the hall. Enjoy your stay." The man behind the counter handed over the cardboard key to room 217.

## Chapter Twenty-Four

“All right,” General Hammond said through the phone lines, “their plane was diverted to Groton-New London Airport.”

“What?” Jack hissed into the transmitter. “Shit.” Maybe he should have had them stopped back at O’Hare after all.

“Calla rented a car at the airport and the rental agent said they were talking about going to one of the casinos there. David even took a map to the Mohegan Sun, that’s in Norwich, about 50 miles from where you are now. How’s Dr. Jackson holding up?”

Jack took a quick look at his friend and teammate who was sitting about fifteen feet from him in one of the plastic airport chairs, still clutching that damn doll, Daniel looked like he hadn’t slept in weeks and she’d only been gone a few hours. “Not good.” Jack turned away from Daniel as he looked up at him. “I think he’s gonna crack.”

“Sorry to hear that. Anything I can do?”

“No, sir, I don’t think so.”

“Well, then, just keep me informed.”

“Will do, sir.” Jack hung up the cell phone. “Ok, kids, road trip!”

Daniel stood up. “They were grounded, weren’t they?”

“Yeah. Looks like we’re going to the Mohegan Sun Casino. Sound like fun boys and girls?”

“Why there?” Teal’c asked. “Seems like a strange place for him to take her.”

Daniel laughed right out loud. “No it doesn’t. Not for him.” He ran a rough hand across the side of his head. “She’s going to freak out when she sees all those lights for the first time, the noise, and the people.”

Quickly the members of SG1 began to make their way to the Enterprize Rent-A-Car station and used Colonel O’Neill’s credit card and ID to rent one of those huge gas guzzling Denali’s. It was luxurious all right, but most of it all it had 4 wheel drive, not to mention it was one of the last vehicles left at the airport. “Hammond’s not 100% sure that’s where David’s taken her but it looks like they were headed to that casino.” O’Neill informed them. Keys in hand now they hurried down the corridor and out to the tarmac where the oversized car and snow storm awaited them. “He’s got a tracer on her credit cards, he’ll call us if she uses them anywhere, until we hear different, we’re goin’ down I-95 to Norwich. Listen up, boys and girls, along the way we have to

stop and change out of these clothes. It's sovereign land, you all got that. We can't show up in military garb and not expect to raise a few eyebrows. We gotta do this as quiet as we can." The bags tossed into the storage area, Sam and Teal'c piled into the backseat while Jack took the wheel and Daniel the passenger seat. "Any chance you can find her?" Jack raised a knowing eyebrow at his friend while he turned over the ignition and backed out of the parking lot heading toward Interstate 95.

"I don't know. Maybe if we get closer to wherever she is, but I don't know." Daniel's voice sounded as weak as he felt. At least his headache had finally gone away and everything around him wasn't tinged with that strange red light anymore. He had always understood that the phrase 'seeing red' meant someone was really pissed off but he'd never had the disquieting sensation of experiencing the phenomena for himself until today. From the moment he'd walked into the door of his new house up until this one, the entire world had just turned red, as though someone had replaced the lenses in his glasses with red glass. He couldn't shake it, for hours all he wanted to do was scream and spit. The urge to spit had been almost uncontrollable but he had managed it.

As the last of the pounding in his head gave up the ghost, Daniel realized he still wasn't sure just who he was the most angry with; Calla, David or himself. Everything that had happened to her because of his dear brother was not Calla's fault. No, the blame there clearly rested upon David's shoulders and his own. However, not telling him about how Aphrodite died and the extent of her 'gifts' was certainly her fault and so was her closet drinking and pill popping. Those two things were going to stop, if there was any prayer of this relationship going any further, here now and they were just going stop!

She was going to start telling him the truth, no matter what it was, just like he had told her before. But no. Every time, Calla just smiled and nodded at him and Daniel let himself believe that everything was all right. The same voice which had echoed in his head earlier today, the one which kept telling him that Calla was fine and there was nothing to worry about, had been whispering to him in the back of his mind the whole time. What had it been saying? Why, that everything was all right, friend, just fine. Don't worry about her, don't worry about anything. Everything is just fine. The last few days had only been an 'adjustment period' for her, that's all. Everything was just Fucking Fine.

Worst of all, Daniel knew that he had only listened to that voice because it was telling him what he *wanted* to believe. He wanted to believe that she was just a normal woman with a few, oh, what shall we say?...extraordinary powers...and that, at least eventually, she would fit into his life and they would have the proverbial happy ending. For once, he would get his shot at happiness and no one was going to take it away from him. Or so he thought at the time.

*Idiot.*

But it wasn't Fine. It had never been *All Right*. They both wanted things to be Fine and they both wanted Everything to be All Right. To finally get their hands on that ever elusive Happily Ever After. Yes, he was sure she wanted that as much as he did. How could they get it there if she wouldn't talk to him?

Calla had hid from him, just as Maeve had said, she'd done it because she was trying to hard to fit into the mold he'd set before her and he hadn't even known he'd done it. If Calla told him exactly what she was and what she could do, she ran the risk of him rejecting her, of displeasing him with the natural end result being him sending her away (because they ALL sent her away in the end, didn't they? Wasn't that the one thing she feared more than anything in the entire world? Of course it was.).

But she knew, somewhere deep inside of her, Calla knew they couldn't have that Happily Ever After and it was killing her. All that booze and pills. The Lady was waking and Calla was doing her damndest to make her stay asleep because once she woke, Calla couldn't control her. That's where Kanan and the Bonding Rituals came in and Daniel had done what one would consider a 'bang up' job asserting his authority and being the Master, had he? No, he'd done a piss-poor job at that. If he found her, if she came back to him after all of this, Daniel knew he'd have to take a much firmer hand with her.

Maybe it was all just as much his fault as it was hers. Maybe. He should have listened harder and paid more attention to her instead of believing what he wanted to. That wasn't all that hard was it? No, in his heart he knew everything he needed to about her, more than enough to know that he would never love anyone the way that he loved her, would never want another woman with as much passion as he wanted her. The way he wanted to hold her right now, just find her and wrap his arms around her, tell her he was never going to let her go again. Never. Fuck Maeve, he wouldn't bring Calla to her or anyone else. Although, when and if he found her, he would have to tell her about his visit to Maeve, about her offer of sanctuary and (eventually) Kanan's death. In the end, maybe she would be safer with Maeve in her Dark Realm than here with him. Wasn't that what mattered most?

In the end, maybe, he would have to let her go. But he wouldn't abandon her, if Calla chose to go with Maeve that was her decision but he wouldn't just take her there and drop her off like so much unwanted trash.

"So, are you going to spill it or do we have to drag it out of you?" Sam asked from the back seat as the SUV began its slow journey down I95 in the blinding snow storm. "We let you get away with not saying anything on the plane but you know what's going on, part of it anyway. So, before we go charging in to rescue her, you want to clue the rest of us in on what we're risking our necks for?"

Daniel looked over his shoulder at her. "Sure, fine. Let's do that." Came the sarcastic reply. "Humm, now, where shall I start?" He rubbed his hands together for a moment and then brought his chin to rest upon the tips of his index fingers. "Ah, how's this? Just sit right back and I'll tell you a tale. Go on, you're gonna like this, it's a real....Greek Tragedy."

The roads were covered with two inches of thick wet snow, the SUV lumbered along at 45 mph on the deserted stretch of dark highway. Everyone in the SUV was quiet while they listened to Daniel unravel the mystery of the woman who had come to live with him and how their lives had been intertwined for more years than anyone present had thought. What puzzled him was where to start with his tale? Should he start with meeting her in Greece so many years ago? How about with the

death of his parents? The death of Calla's Mother? Well, then, what about with the plans that her Father had for her? That was as good a place as any he supposed. "Good news is, at least now I know who I'm supposed to defend her from. Believe it or not, it isn't David." He reached out and lightly punched Jack's forearm. "Nope, it's Ares." Daniel turned around in his seat so that he could look at Sam. To her, his eyes seemed wild and dark, almost as though her good old pal, Daniel Jackson, just wasn't there at the moment. "Do you know what he wants from her? Check this out. Calla was gifted all of the talents and powers of her entire family, right? So he figures he'll use that and her to start his own race of gods." Daniel was so very delighted that Kanan was dead, his only regret was that he hadn't been there to watch--nor help--the monster go down. Kanan had killed five of her children, each one of them had possessed the powers of their ancestors. Each one of them could have ruled entire universes. Had Kanan known that when he choked the life out of them? Had Calla? Ares would walk through fire for those children, her children. After all there was so much on Earth to feed on, why shouldn't he have a family with an appetite for war which was equal to his own? Why shouldn't he be free to make the entire planet over in an image which better suited him?

"He wants to breed with his own daughter?" Sam asked but didn't wait for a response. "That's disgusting."

"Oh, hell, yeah, it is." Daniel shook his head very primly. "Very disgusting." He agreed in a high and mighty voice. "But you know, he has to have me or, David, to do it." Daniel remembered sitting by the fire with her the first night they moved into his new house. How she had looked up at him and told him; *shhhh it's a secret, you must never tell*. "See, one of us has to be touching her while he..." Daniel stopped just sort of saying what he meant and instead gestured in a forward motion with his hand..."you know, while he..." his hand turned into a fist and pushed it forward and pulled it back in the a few times to emphasize his point. "Looks like I was taking too long to bring her to him so he sent David to collect her."

Sam and Teal'c gazed upon him from the back seat and Jack turned from concentrating on his treacherous driving to look at his friend as well. It was clear to everyone in the vehicle that the good Dr. Jackson was about to simply cave in.

"But, since he is Ares, you know, God of War and all that, who's going to stop him?" Daniel waited, looked around the car for a moment. "Oh, wait! Yeah, me. I'm supposed to stop him. That leads me to this part here. Do you know why my parents died?"

Teal'c took that one. "They were working in a museum and there was an accident. You were present."

"Yes!" Daniel snapped his fingers together and nodded his head excitedly. "There ya go! But I said 'why' not 'how'. I'll tell you, they died because Ares wanted them to, wait, let me re-phrase that. Ares wanted me to die but Aphrodite thought that was a bad idea. So, she spared my life and took theirs." Daniel's eyes were wild and he was talking so fast he hardly had the time to hear what he was saying, small streams of spittle began to fly from his lips. "She was there, she was the woman who lead me away from where my parents were standing just before the chain snapped. I've been dreaming about it all my life!" His hand ran roughly across the side of his cheek, it bristled with

shadow which had past 5 hours ago. "I finally got it! I finally understand. You were right, Jack!" Daniel tagged the Colonel's forearm once more. "She did choose me for this, but not back on Tiberia, no. She picked me out of the crowd about 25 years ago. How do you like that one?" Daniel related the tale of meeting her in the shopping mall in Greece because his mother wanted a new bathing suit and he was too hungry to stand around and wait for her. What if David had been with him instead of running off to the arcade? Or if David had been in the museum when their parents died? Certainly he wouldn't be sitting here now if someone had known there were TWO of them. "And wait! There's more!" He turned around with wide blue eyes and focused in on Sam one last time. "Ares, he killed Aphrodite--I think-- and he blamed it on Calla. Do you want to know why Ares killed the only woman who ever loved him? Because Aphrodite spared my life. Ain't that a kick?"

"Yeah, life's a real bitch, keep going Daniel." Jack asked as he wiped the condensation from the windshield. He could barely see a foot and half in front of him and had been reduced to driving well under the posted speed limit for the last twenty minutes or so. The storm was picking up, the flakes were getting bigger and heavier. The only saving grace at the moment was the emptiness of the road, it was almost totally deserted. He hadn't seen a pair of headlights for the last two miles or so.

Dr. Jackson slumped back against the seat. "I can't take this shit!"

"It's all right, Daniel." Sam reached out to lay her hand on his shoulder.

"Don't tell me that." He hissed at her as he pulled away from her touch. "Such bullshit. It's not all right, it's not going to be all right. No one in her entire life has ever been straight with her, no one's ever told her the truth! How the hell was she supposed to give that to me? What fucking good am I to her, Sam? I was supposed to protect her, look what I've done. She's out there in this shit storm with my dear brother because of me!"

"Let's not play the Blame Game right now, Daniel." Sam assured in an easy voice.

"There'll be plenty of that to go around when this is over."

They were traveling down I-95 between two shopping malls. "Should we not stop here in an attempt to change clothes before entering this casino?" Teal's inquired.

"Yeah, we should. Listen guys, when we get to the casino, no one says anything about the military or the government or anything. You all got that?" Jack asked as he took the exit which would lead them to the Marshalls department store. "We can't afford to shake their feathers, no pun. It really is like going to another country or something. We probably won't be able to get real police back-up if we need it either, or it'll be slow in coming. We'll have to deal with what or whoever passes for law enforcement on the territory." Jack pulled into the parking lot and was more than just surprised to see that the clothing store was actually open in this shit storm. "All right, quickly, everyone. Quickly."

They all jumped out and sorted through the civilian clothing inside the store. Within twenty minutes the four of them were emerging in their brand new outfits and climbing back into the SUV. Suddenly Daniel noticed that he was cold, his finger tips turned numb and the tip of his nose began to tingle. Daniel wrapped his arms around himself in an attempt to bring warmth. "Where

are we?” There was a suddenly sharp pain in his chest, but it left as quickly as it came.

“Looks like we’re passing through New London, we’re going to turn up route 32 and take that to where it intersects with 395.” Major Carter informed them from her place in the backseat. Now the slush on the road was not as deep, it appeared a plow had been by on this stretch of road not too long ago. They were passing a complex which identified itself as the Coast Guard Academy, on the other side of what he was route 32, was a place called Connecticut College.

“How far are we from this casino?” Daniel asked hurriedly as he rubbed his hands together.

“I don’t know, about ten or fifteen miles, it looks like on the map but in this shit...”

Daniel turned toward Jack. “She’s cold. Wherever she is, she’s cold.” That figured. David would not be paying attention to her, he would not be taking care of her the way that Daniel would if he had her out in this god-blessed snow storm! She was probably hungry as well, his stomach was turning around. Maybe that wasn’t hunger. Daniel waited to see if the sensation in his stomach would turn to outright pain but at that moment it did not. It merely turned and burned. Hunger or an upset stomach, perhaps. Or too many valium and too much alcohol to wash them down. That was right up Davy’s alley. Let’s face it, Daniel told himself, Davy had been watching, he must know that Calla had been drinking during the day and about the pills she’d been taking. The true irony of it was that David had known before Daniel, he had full access to Calla’s inner life and what she did when Daniel wasn’t around.

“You can feel her?” Teal’c asked as the car continued its journey.

“Yeah, no, I mean,” he leaned his head harshly against the passenger window. “I don’t know. I know that I’m cold but it’s not me who’s cold, it’s her.” Daniel struggled to quiet himself for a moment as he drew in breath and realized his head was beginning to ache again. “She has a headache, or something, something’s wrong with her head.” Like a little boy lost, he nestled the doll under his chin while he continued to gaze distantly out the window.

“Carter, get Hammond on the horn, see if he can verify whether or not they checked into that casino yet.” Colonel O’Neill ordered.

“Got it, sir.” Major Carter flipped open the phone and punched the buttons to dial General Hammond back in Colorado.

“You, Daniel, you’ve got to try and reach her yourself. You got that? You’re the only one who can do it. So just sit there and do whatever it is you gotta do to make it happen.”

“Colonel, Hammond says Calla used the credit card to check in about half an hour ago. They’re in room 217.”

“Tell him we are en route now.” Jack turned to look at Daniel again. “Are you trying?”

“Yes!”

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David opened the door to room 217 and dumped the bags by the dresser; he flopped onto the bed and let out an exhausted exhale of stale air. Jesus, he wanted that cigarette! Oh, to have a pack in his hands, smell that wonderful tobacco smell, just to run one under his nose and breathe in! That would be a great start. He had plenty of nicotine gum with him, which he kept chomping on during the flight, damn stuff tasted like stale cow turds. "It's late, Callie, you should probably get some sleep. Why don't you come and lay down here with me?" David patted the empty space on the queen sized mattress next to him. "I got something that will help you sleep; it's been such a long day, hasn't it?" He asked as he reached into his breast pocket and produced a small amber bottle of prescription pills. Instead of giving one or two of those little green beauties, he opted for two of the smaller blue ones. Morphine was a wonderful drug! Took the pain away, she should be able to appreciate that more than anyone. David held his hand out to her; she hesitated for a moment but took them from his hand. There was a mini-bar in the room, "Hang on a sec, let's see what we got in here." David said he rose from the bed and opened the door to the bar. Southern Comfort, one of her favorites. He plucked the small bottle from its place. "Here, wash them down with this, it'll help."

Quietly she took the bottle from his hand and opened it. David watched while she popped the pills into her mouth and washed them down with the alcohol. Such a good girl. "Come here," he whispered as he reached out for her. A good stiff fuck and she'd be out like a light, which would leave the night free for him to enjoy.

"I have to use the ladies room." She said in a calm tone. "Wait for me." Calla crossed out of his line of sight and into the small bathroom. She spit the pills into the palm of her hand and then flushed them down the toilet. Since they left the Groton-New London Airport she had been trying to reach him with her mind and received no response at all. It was as though he could no longer hear her. Daniel didn't even turn to look at her when she made her attempts. Why couldn't he hear her? Why did he insist she keep taking all of these pills? Most of all, why did his stare upon her seem to make her skin crawl? A nasty little thought began to creep around in the back of her mind as she stood staring at her reflection in the bathroom mirror; what if the man in the next room wasn't Master Daniel at all? That was ludicrous, of course he was Daniel, who else would he be? How else could he touch her? Unless.....

"Breathe, Callestah." She encouraged quietly as she continued to stare at her own reflection. "Don't panic." Calla ran her hands through her hair and then smoothed out the cardigan sweater she was wearing. Taking one last deep breath she opened the door and exited the bathroom. "Sorry to take so long." She apologized as she gazed upon the man who was lying on the bed.

"I don't really mind the wait." David reached out and grabbed her by the waist, tossing her onto the bed with him.

Her stomach twisted and knotted with his touch. "I'm glad." Calla did her best to keep her voice light and not turn away as he lowered his mouth over hers. Was there something different in his kiss? Perhaps those really weren't the lips she had come to crave on her own.

*Master Daniel? Sa'Tan, hear me.*

Nothing. Just dead empty space lay between their minds. There was no such grace between his body and hers. Calla could feel his hard cock pushing the restraint of the khakis he wore. If he was not Daniel she should not allow him to do this, she could not allow him to do this. If he was, she could not turn him away.

*Daniel, please answer me.*

David's hand was sliding up her sweater now, reaching, pawing, grabbing at her breasts. "I want you," he whispered against her neck. "To suck on my cock. Come on, Callie, no one does it like you do it." David's hand descended to his own zipper and freed his hot hard cock from its restraint. "Come on," he whispered again. She didn't move towards it, which was alright with him, he didn't mind straddling her pretty little head for a while.

Callie, that was the third time today he'd called her that. Master Daniel never called her 'Callie'. Sometimes he called her 'Cal' and was known to say 'Red' if he was particularly upset with her, but never was she 'Callie' to him. Master Daniel was slithering up beside her now with his cock in his hand; he was looking at her with hunger in his eye. As the soft tip of his hard cock brushed against her lips and he swung one leg over her head, Calla began to shake. "Please, Master Daniel," she protested in a small voice, "I'm tired. Those pills you gave me...."

"Not that tired, babe. Open up, you can sleep later, when I'm done with you." David looked down at her and thought he saw suspicion in her eyes, that didn't stop him from coaxing her jaw open with his fingers and sliding his cock into her mouth. Calla choked and he backed off but only for a moment to allow her to catch her breath, she could take it all the way down to the end and she was going to. "Suck it." David grabbed the back of her head and thick handful of hair as he brought her up to greet his hard cock. "Yeah, work it, babe."

Calla lay on the bed with the weight of her Master on her chest and his cock in her mouth. She worked it as she always did, soon he was cumming, his cock sliding in and out of her mouth, down her throat, it began to pulse and as he cried out it ejected a harsh load of spew down her slender throat.

"Jesus, you're good at that." David remarked as he pulled his still throbbing cock out of her mouth. "Such a good girl, Callie, I love it when you do that."

"I am glad that I can please you, Master Daniel."

Soon she would say Master David, very soon. David ran a rough hand across her cheek and gazed down into her emerald eyes. Suspicion was still there, he would have to do something more Daniel-like. "Tired?"

"Yes."

He wanted to get that piece of ass but his cock was happy for now, he'd let her sleep and then run downstairs to the casino for those cigarettes and some gambling. Who knew? Maybe he'd even win at Black Jack. "Why don't you lay here," he patted his chest, "and go to sleep."

Hesitantly Calla moved toward him and laid her head upon his chest. His heartbeat was strong but there was something different about it tonight. She loved to lay her head here and sleep, Daniel was so kind as to allow her to do that every night, to listen to the sound of his heart and let it lull her to sleep. She had become very familiar with the rhythm of his heart. It was always a strong thump-thumpa-thump. Calla quieted herself and her mind and listened a little harder. wump-thump-wump. She listened closer and heard a gurgling sound in between the beats.

That was not the rhythm of Master Daniel's heart.

"Daniel?" She said quietly with her head still resting on his chest.

"What?" David answered as he waited for her to fall asleep but instead she sat up beside him.

"Do you remember the day we met? In the park. " Calla waited for him to tell her that she had too much to drink but he did not. "It was raining and we both ran under the same tree for shelter."

"Of course I do." He lied. "How could I forget that?" David felt like he was being lead down a dangerous path but he had no choice other than to follow where she was leading him.

"I don't know." Calla whispered as the tears began to sting her eyes as she laid her head back down on his chest. One last test, one last try. She reached a hand under his shirt and smoothed it across his skin as it ascended upward to his shoulder. There was only smooth skin there, no scar whatsoever. That was why this man never took off his shirt when he took her. The man she was laying with was not Daniel. And Master Daniel had never returned to his home in the noon hour, it had been this one the entire time, fooling her, tricking her, using her for his own ends. Silently she chastised herself, she really should have known that he was not Daniel just by the way he touched her during those noontime trysts. "I'm tired. May I sleep now?"

"Sure, you go on. Sleep." David wrapped his arms around her and within a few moments the soft pattern of her breathing greeted him, she was sound asleep in his arms. He rose from the bed and covered her with the blanket. That pack of Marlboros was calling his name and so was the gaming. He left her to sleep in the safety of the motel room.

Upon hearing the door close, Calla's eyes opened. She tried to quiet herself and stay calm as she reached for the phone beside her and dialed Daniel's cell phone number. It rang a few times in her hand before she was informed that the cell phone customer she was trying to reach was currently out of his calling area. Calla hung up and called home, there was nothing but the sound of Daniel's voice on the answering machine. "Daniel, please pick up the phone." She whispered. "Daniel, help me. Please. I want to come home. Daniel?" Tears flowing freely from her eyes as desperation rose in her heart. She hung up the phone. Daniel had gone through the Stargate this morning, he was off on some planet doing God only knew what and he could not help her. "Daniel." She whispered to no one. She would have to find her own way out of this.

The lights across the river caught her attention as she stared out of the window. Hades was there or could be called there. He would help her. What if she was wrong? What if the man with her was

Daniel? He wasn't. No, he wasn't Daniel. Maybe, if Fate was with her, the real Daniel had come home early and found her missing. Maybe he was looking for her. Calla felt a strong pull at her heart as she stared at the abandoned buildings across the water way. She grabbed her coat as she crossed the room and opened the door to see the hallway empty.

The night was dark and cold, snow continued to fall, there was already a foot of it on the ground at her feet. Calla stood on the bank of the Thames River staring across it to what could be sanctuary. To anyone else the place looked like a haunted house of the most massive variety and Calla didn't doubt that the more sensitive mortals knew the place was crowded with spirits, some to be feared but most were just lost lonely souls. Though it was cold and the banks of the river had frozen enough to tip-toe upon the channel was clear and running free. "Poseidon, hear my plea." Calla whispered. "Help me, uncle. I must cross." Without further entreaty, she stepped upon the thin ice and ran across the face of the Thames River; the water froze at her feet as she sprinted across to the bank on the other side.

## Chapter Twenty-Five

Knee deep in snow, Calla wrapped the coat closer to her body with one hand and used the other to hike it up so that she could trudge up the hill which greeted her when she reached the other side of the Thames River. It was a long steep grade, which even in the dark she could tell had been some type of road at one time. Here and there stretches of pavement met her feet on the occasion they met the bottom of the snow but mostly the hill had been reclaimed by Mother Nature and was now overgrown with weeds and rocks. Demeter had often joked to her that the one place in the entire world where rocks actually bred was New England, as the stiffness in her knees settled in for a good long visit, she could see that Demeter had been right. Large boulders jutted out of the hillside, beyond which was the remains of an old water tower now long discarded and out of use. It sat quietly rusting away on its' three sturdy steel legs looking over the river to the new fancy glass tower casino on the other bank. In the dim light she could make out the outline of a small building, a utility shed of some type, she reached out to trace her hand along the stiff brick as she passed it and used it to push against as she began to make her way up the next part of the hill.

The path lead around a corner and further upward still, her nose tingled so much she thought the tip of it would freeze right on her face and drop off into the white snow below. Calla stopped for a moment to briskly rub her hands up and down her arms and once again pull the long coat tight around her. No longer could she use her hands to hold it up or keep it closed, the brush was too thick here, briars and pricklers met her every inch of the way and she had to push against them in the dark. They scraped against her cheek and bit into the palms of her naked hands. Finally the hill ceased and she emerged in the on the outskirts of the old buildings. Calla stopped once more to take a quick glance back the way she came and be sure that he not followed her across the river. She couldn't stay away from him forever, sooner or later he would return to the room and find her gone. Still, she knew that she could not reach his mind so maybe he could not reach hers either. Maybe she could hide here until Master Daniel came for her and he would come....

Wouldn't he?

She didn't know. She couldn't rely on him to ride to her rescue, as far as she knew he was still off world somewhere and he had no idea of what was going on at home. The ground below was jagged and uneven, pavement kept breaking up into pot holes which could engulf a VW Bug. Several times on her journey Calla's foot landed in one of those large gaping holes, her ankle twisted and she twirled toward the ground and into the frozen snow. Each time she fell, the pain ran up her leg and throughout the rest of her in stark waves but she pulled herself up and out of the snow and pushed forward through the storm. The hiking boots she wore were lined with something called Thin-Sulate and while they did help to keep her feet warm at first, now they were nothing more than a refrigerator for her toes to hide inside of. The biting cold began to sink through her clothing and brought stiffness to her knees which slowly began to spread toward her hips and upward to the joints in her fingers.

All around her was a labyrinth of buildings. The full moon broke through the thick clouds overhead from time to time illuminated the broken windows and the sturdy bars on them. With the snow falling all around the buildings shined and glistened with an eerie glow making them look almost peaceful. Inside faces stared back at her; they beckoned her to come forward, to talk to them, to spend time with them, to listen to them! Faces twisted and gnarled into otherworldly expressions which would haunt her until her dying day. They called to her as she passed by swiftly as she could. Tortured and tormented they had spent their days here in this God Forsaken place, some of them had been quite insane and it had been right to lock them up and away from the Good People of the World. Others were not crazy, they were just sad or lonely or depressed, they had seen too much or lived lives they were not meant to. Their minds had broken but there could have been hope for them. Instead they had been locked away here forced to take pills they did not want and endure shock treatments which were not as kind as they were today. So many buildings! So many souls! There must be one building where the souls would be kind. Just one building where she could hide. Calla tried to open the closed wooden doors she found that at some point in time someone had come along and nailed them all shut. They gave but only part way, she could not get inside any of them. Broken windows were everywhere but almost all of them had bars before the glass and she could not get through there either.

Onward she went through the stinging cold, the wind had picked up now and it howled around her, Calla pulled the collar of the coat close around her ears to keep it the cold at bay. Everything on her was freezing now, she couldn't feel her toes or her knees any longer, her ankle kept crying out in protest, and every step became an adventure just to see where her feet would land and if she would stay upright on them. Calla closed her eyes and drew in a frosty breath. There was pavement beneath her feet again and she moved forward very slowly as the wind whipped up the falling snow. The pavement went on for a good long stretch, in the pale light of the moon she could she was passing by the remnants of an old green house. The glass was completely gone now but the frame was in tact and weeds of all sorts had grown up inside, dark brown dead leaves filled every inch of the interior and spilled across the walls into the snow.

Calla looked up with worn and tired eyes, there was a building in front of her, there was a door and it looked as though it might be partly open but she couldn't be sure. On nothing more than sheer will she moved her frozen feet forward and climbed one last small hill. She thought her knees would give out before she could climb the three steps to the door and they buckled beneath her, she groped out for the tree which had grown through the cement and found it was not a tree but a large pricker bush. The sharp stickers bit into her hand and sliced it open as she grabbed at it for support. Hot blood gushed forward it ran down her palm and fell into the white snow at her feet; she tried to close her hand and could not, briars stuck out of her flesh. Calla bit at them and spit them out.

Three steps. It was just three little steps.

Blood running hot and sticky from her palm and bringing odd warmth to her fingers before it turned cold and began to congeal and then freeze, she laid her hand on the cold brass knob. At first the door gave only part way and her heart sunk as the cold settled all the way through her bones. Calla tugged at it again with a weak grip and it gave a little more. One more try. One more. The door opened enough for her to squeeze inside.

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David had been just about to buy those cigarettes when he remembered he really had left his money in the duffle bag back in the room. Expecting to find a sleeping Calla sprawled out on the bed, he used the cardboard key to open the door and let himself inside. The lights were on and nobody was home.

She was gone.

“Fuck!” David shouted as he balled up his fists and shook them in the air. “Fucking bitch!” It was the shoulder; it had to have been his shoulder. He had been so damn careful about not taking his shirt off if he was going to face her when he was fucking her. Danny had gotten himself shot or something at some point, David couldn’t fake that scar. She had reached up to touch the skin under his shirt as she lay with him, she felt its absence. Damn! He was pacing the room and staring blankly out the window when something rather odd caught his attention.

Out on the river, someone was out on the river. Not in a boat. They were standing; no make that running, across the unfrozen water. In the light of the full moon David saw a mass of red hair flying out from behind her as she went.

“Gotcha!” He grabbed up the car keys and headed out the door but not before taking his special black bag from its hiding place. She’d been bad and it was time that he gave her a slight correction.

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On frozen legs Calla stumbled through the entryway and shut the door behind her. Dark. Nothing but darkness at first. Then, then, that smell. A horrid dry stench greeted her. Something rotted and old, long forgotten and stowed away.

Crunch. Crunch. Crunch.

There were large chunks of something hard under her feet and they broke and crunched as she lightly stepped across what at some point in time had been a floor. Her numb right foot, the one with the protesting ankle, struck upon something hard and Calla fell face first onto a small set of stairs, her knee jamming hard against them as she went. There was another audible crunching sound but this time it didn’t come from the floor at her feet. Deadened finger tips reached down to touch the newly wounded knee cap. Her jeans were already soaked through with blood, the bone beneath was clearly broken.

In the dark her numb fingers crawled out to touch the cold steps and the chunks of plaster which lay scattered everywhere. That was part of what she smelled, a mixture of dry and soaked, rotted dry wall. The walls of this place had been falling down for some time. Bits of it stuck to the wound on her palm. Calla rose part way on icy feet, her damage right knee gave out an unforgiving wail. How many steps? With her good hand she reached out and tried to find the landing, stretching as far as she could her fingers found what they were looking for and then made their way down once more.

“Hades?” Calla called out while she lay face down in the rotten plaster and garbage.

Four steps.

It was just four steps. Four small steps, she encouraged herself. It was warmer in here than it was outside. Although not by much, the wind came in through the shattered windows and echoed through the holes in the walls around her. Still, maybe she could find one room that would offer something which resembled shelter and the space to call for Hades to come to her aid. Four steps, that's all. Her knee did not want to cooperate and neither did her ankle, Calla found herself crawling the distance up the four cement steps. Sharp bits of old plaster and of things she didn't recognize bit into her hand as she pulled herself up to the last step.

So cold. So damn cold. Calla sat freezing on the landing bringing her knees up to her chest and her arms around them in an attempt to find warmth. The breath which clung cold in her lungs exited in puffs of white and her nose began to drip ceaselessly. There was a long corridor before her, it was lined with shattered windows and the moon light offered some glimpse of what was down that way. The walls had long ago begun to fall, so much so that she would say there was more plaster on the floor than there was on the wall. Where the plaster still held its proper place the paint peeled in great long sheets. Wainscoting lined the lower walls and at one time this place may have actually been very attractive. Yes, at one time when the walls had been new, the sun had probably shown brightly through the windows and the beams did not sag overhead. She could almost see those days in her mind, the ghostly images of women in white, nurses, walked by with white hats on their heads and trays in their hands, their white stockings looking smart with their sensible white shoes.

This building had been different than some of the others, it had housed a different kind of tenant. Not the kind who were normally considered dangerous or outright insane but something...different. As she sat on the cold sagging cement floor with her butt turning numb, Calla could feel the souls in this place, they were trapped here just as those who pressed their faces against the bars in the other buildings were trapped. These souls were also different. They hid from her. She could feel them; somewhere deep inside of her she thought she heard someone snicker just the slightest bit.

Calla used the wall at her back to push herself onto her feet. Behind her was nothing but an empty room and more stairs leading upward. Keeping her good hand against the wall and using it to slink against from time to time, Calla made her way down the daunting corridor. If only she had a fire just something to bring warmth for a little while. She could make a fire and then she laughed a little to herself. Sure, she could make a fire and burn this whole place to the ground. Just one little spark was all it was begging for. Or and possibly worse than that, it wouldn't burn to the ground but the man pretending to be Daniel would see it and it would give her away.

There would be no fire and no warmth other than what she could make for herself. "Hades?" Calla began to call as she walked down the long hallway. "Hades? Uncle, hear me." She begged. The frozen air in her lungs made it hard to breathe, they just wanted to squeeze up and shut tight, to freeze with the cold. Blood coursed down her leg ran into the sock and then into her boot where it was beginning to make a small pool under her heel. She dragged it behind her more than walked upon it, using the crumbling walls for support. The wound in her hand was no better. The briars had cut deep and it bled freely, leaving a clear trail behind her as she walked. Calla used her good hand to unbutton the coat and rip off a piece of the cardigan sweater, she wrapped it around the palm of her hand and cinched it tight with her teeth as she continued her journey. "Uncle, hear me,

please you must hear me. I need you.” The hallway split off into several different directions. Ahead she could see the highway beyond the broken windows, to the right was a set of stairs leading up and a branch of the corridor which lead to maze of rooms, to the left another corridor and another maze of rooms. It was so cold, it made it so hard to think straight. Something in her kept whispering that she needed to go up but more stairs were not in order for her, she couldn’t climb up to the next floor, she couldn’t even feel her legs or her feet any more. Her clothes were turning wet and cold as the snow which had clung to them earlier began to melt.

“Hades!” She called out in desperation. “Oh, Daniel! Daniel please help me.” Calla stood at the base of the flight stairs with hopeless eyes. Against the screaming protests of both her knee and ankle, Calla began to climb.

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“Ow!” Daniel cried and brought his leg up to his chin. “Ow!”

“What? What is it?” Sam asked as she leaned forward from the back seat. “Daniel!”

“My leg, it hurts.” Daniel rolled up his pant leg to inspect his own skin, it was white and perfect just as it should be. Still, it felt as though there should be a gaping hole staring back at him. There should be blood pouring from it, it should be soaking the leg of khakis

(jeans)

“Calla.” He whispered as his eyes doubled in size. “She’s hurt her leg, something’s wrong.” His eyes closed as he drew in a hard breath. Daniel had kept turning up the heat in the car for the last ten or fifteen minutes but no matter what he did he just couldn’t get warm. Before that he had had that bad taste floating around in the back of his mouth. That one Daniel had done his best not to think about, but the biting cold and now the sharp pain would not go away. There was a sharp ache in his right ankle and throbbing in his right palm but it was the knee that hurt most. “Something is sooo very wrong.”

“Can you see her? Talk to her? Anything?” Jack asked.

“I keep trying but I don’t think she can hear me. I can feel her. I don’t think we’re close enough. How much farther?”

“It’s still a ride and this weather isn’t making this easy.” Jack remarked as they passed the sign which read Mohegan Sun Casino exit 79A 5 miles. With this snow and these shitty roads those five miles were apt to turn into a half an hour or even more.

“She isn’t listening for you.” Teal’c remarked from the backseat.

“What?” Daniel turned around sharply to look at him.

“She is unaware that you are even on this planet, Daniel Jackson, she is not listening for you. You have to concentrate harder.”

“Harder? Yeah, got it.” Daniel agreed as he turned around in his seat and laid his head against the

cold glass. Harder. Problem was he wasn't really sure that he wanted to know just *exactly* what was going on. The amateur porn he had been treated to earlier today had been enough. "It's so goddamn cold."

*And dark. And lonely. And desolate. Here*

It was just a random thought skipping through his head but it was Calla's voice and for one instant he could see where she was and it was dark, lonely and desolate. Certainly not the words one would use to describe a gaming casino and resort. She wasn't at the Mohegan Sun. "We're going to the wrong place."

"What?"

"She's not there. Not anymore." Daniel stopped and gazed out the window at the passing world. He had a pervasive feeling of despair and lonesomeness. "Oh shit." He muttered. "She knows. She left him." She was alone and on the run from David. Out of nowhere Daniel drew his cell phone from his pocket and opened it, no signal, the battery was dead. "Give me your phone." Sam handed hers over the seat. It had signal and Daniel dialed his home number and then punched in the code for the answering machine. Calla's desperate plea met his ears; "Daniel help me, I want to come home." She had probably tried to reach him on the cell phone and couldn't get through. When the message ended he pushed the proper buttons to replay it and handed it over to Sam so she could listen to it.

"Oh, Daniel. She sounds..."

"Not good, huh?" He bit on the tip of his thumb nail. "No, not good. I know." *Come on, Calla, listen for me. Please just tell me where you are, I'll come get you.*

Jack's cell phone was ringing. "Get that, will ya?" He asked Daniel as he struggled to keep his eyes on the road. The snow was letting up or so it seemed for the moment and here and there the flakes grew small and the moon peeked out from behind the clouds. The storm had already dropped about a foot of the white stuff from what he could see and he was running along a stretch of road that did not look as though it had seen the likes of a snow plow in the last two hours or so. Jack felt Daniel's hand moving along the length of his thigh searching for the ringing People Collar, Daniel's fingers were stiff and shaking.

"Daniel Jackson." He said as he put the phone to his ear.

"Doctor Jackson, I've been trying to reach you on your cell phone." General Hammond said. "Seems you're out of service or something."

"Yeah, I noticed. What have you got, General?"

General Hammond proceeded to tell Daniel of Calla's telephone call to his house in Colorado and that they had traced the call to room 217 of the Mohegan Sun Casino. The call had come in eighteen minutes ago. "The desk clerk remembers checking Calla and him into the hotel. Said she

was a 'delicate lady'." The General heard Daniel snicker and draw in a breath. "How close are ya, son?"

"Not close enough." Daniel remarked. "But we're getting closer. Do me a favor?" Daniel asked.

"Sure, whatever you need."

"Check around for me and see if there are any, any," he stammered, "old or abandoned buildings around the casino, will you? Let me know if you find any."

"Ok, why?"

"Just a hunch." Daniel hung up the phone and placed it back in Jack's pocket.

"They're at the casino?" Jack asked.

She was gone from there of that he was certain. Wherever she was it was cold, the wind howled through open windows and blew down empty corridors, he could hear its blustery echo in his mind. If she was on foot then she couldn't be far from wherever the casino was, she had to be near there somewhere. "No, but I guess for now, that's where we're going."

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David pulled into the driveway leading to the Norwich State Hospital, the first thing he did was drive all the way to the back looking for the most likely place for her to have emerged from the other side. Down the hill and off to the left he saw the water below him, a little further on down he saw fresh foot prints in the snow. They were scattered hither and yon, Callie had not been able to keep to an even pace as she trudged through the snow. In several places he could see the full imprint of her body where she had stumbled and fallen into the fresh snow. Tracks meandered up to different buildings and doorways and then continued on down in a helter-skelter pattern.

Holy Jesus, this place is friggin' creepy, David thought as he took note of the bars on the windows and the shattered glass as he passed. In one place there was a huge mass of toilets laying in the snow. Just toilets, that's all, about a dozen of them in various stages of broken. Strange and creepy. A chill went through him. The foot prints lead up to a ramshackle greenhouse and then stumbled up to the door of another building and were gone.

Callie was in there.

David shut off the headlights and killed the engine. He had stopped long enough to grab his kit from his duffle bag, he grabbed the black canvas bag and headed toward the door.

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Calla had just settled herself on the landing on the second floor and was inspecting the damage to her bloody swollen knee and her enlarged bruised ankle when the headlights flashed by. She pressed herself into the corner and waited until they passed, painfully she rose to peer out the window to see the Suburban going past soon the engine died. At first she thought that a good thing but then realized the car had not gone away, the Imposter had parked outside this building. He knew she was here.

“Hades!” She cried softly as she scrunched down as far as she could, her eyes peeking over the broken pane to see him walking up to the door with a black bag in his hand. What did he have there? Calla shuttered and scrambled for a place to hide. Her frightened mind kicked into Overdrive and it would not shut up.

*Daniel. Daniel. Daniel.* Over and over the one thought that rang in her mind was the name of her Master. *Please Daniel, hear me.* She thought that she felt him but she couldn't be sure, maybe it was him, the Imposter she felt now that he was near. Maybe it was a trick, a little bait for the trap.

The floors here on the second floor could only hope to be in the same stellar shape as those on the first were. They were soft and squishy, Calla tried to step lightly and quickly but her leg would have none of it. If she could make her way down to the other end of the hall and down the stairs, she could sneak out behind him, out through the same door she had come in. Like the corridor on the first floor this one was lined with barred broken windows, she tried to keep to the shadows and her eyes on the outside while she passed through as quickly as she could. She did not see him but she did see the Suburban, if she could get to that and the keys were still in it maybe she could get out of here. If. If. If.

Halfway down the empty corridor she saw the shadow emerge from the door way. Calla froze in her tracks and held her breath hoping he would believe her nothing more than a shadow in the dark. “Hi Callie.”

“Leave me alone!” She shouted at him. The Imposter drew his arms back and broke out into a sprint towards her. Calla tried to run for the stairs she had come up.

“You’ve been a bad girl, Callie.” He taunted as he came up behind her. “Such a bad girl.” David dropped the fake mid-western accent and returned to his Texas drawl. “Gots ta te'ch yu'se a less'n Mizus Jackson.” She made it to the landing before his hand landed on her shoulder, David reached down and grabbed her forearm, he yanked hard to turn her around, and there was a loud popping sound as Calla’s shoulder dislocated from its socket. Her wounded knee gave way as she tumbled forward. “Bad bad gurl.” David intoned darkly as he caught her and then shook his finger in her face.

“Who are you?” Calla stammered as she tried to wriggle out of his grasp.

“Aw, nawh, w’eres my good man’as?” David smiled at her while keeping a firm hold on the squirming woman. “Puhlese, ‘low me ta iner’duce m’self, I’m David, Danny’s olda brotha, so nice ta meet yew...sis.” The bag dropped from his hand as he reached out to trace the outline of her neck. “Been a real puh-leasure fucking yew, ya’ll know dat, don’cha? Loads and loads o’ fun. But I want you ta do sump’tin for me, right now.” David moved in closer to her and Calla tried to turn her head away from him but he caught the back of her neck and held her where he wanted her. David smiled for her. “Say it for me, right now. Master David. C’mon Callie, say it.” The hand at the back of her neck gave a harsh squeeze. “Say it.” He demanded.

“No, only Daniel is Master.” Calla tried to stay strong as her heart raced in her chest and sweat broke out on her cold body. “You are no one.” She shook her head at him. “Only Daniel!”

The hand on her forearm reached under the wool of her coat and slid over her breasts. “Danny’s

dead." David whispered hot in her ear as he pulled himself in close to her. "I killed him."

"No! You lie!" Calla pushed against him in an attempt to shove him off of her. It was no good, between her aching bleeding knee, twisted ankle, and frozen joints, she didn't have a prayer in hell and she knew it. "I feel him." Calla whispered. "I feel Daniel."

"Do you?" He threatened as his fingers closed around her left nipple, Calla drew in a harsh breath as she tried to cringe away from his touch. . "Danny was s'posed to go see the Noks ta'day, right?" David asked. "He n'ver made it to the Noks, Callie, he n'ver made it to the base this mornin'." David came in closer and licked the outline of her ear as he whispered. "I killed him, slit his scrawny throat and dumped his body in a lake." He felt her shiver and heard her cry out. David stepped away from her. "All you feel is me."

Noks? Was that where Daniel had been going today? To see Lya or Maeve? How did this one know? "I don't believe you." She hissed at him and then shoved at him again. "You're a liar, Sa'Tan Daniel lives!"

David tightened his grip on her. "C'mon, Callie, show me how bad you can be, hum? Keep fighting me. I'll show you how bad I can be." David's voice was sinister. "Danny's dead and that means I'm your Master now. So say it, Master David." The fingers twisting her nipple turned into talons as they stretched the skin to its maximum, twisted it harshly and then let it go. "He's dead. Nawh you be a good gurl and do what I tell you. You can't hurt me, Callie, now that he's gone, you need me."

"I don't want you." She cried as she tried to hold back the tears. "I'll never want you." Daniel had to be alive. He had to be, even if he was still with Maeve, no matter what she was telling him at this very moment, just so long as he was still breathing she'd be happy. He couldn't be dead. Just couldn't.

"Aw, c'mon, nawh, Callie, I want you. Dat's mo'ran enuff fo' me."

"It's not for me!" Calla hissed through gritted teeth and shoved at him one last time with both arms. Her right arm shrieked its disapproval at such harsh action but David's grip loosened and then eased altogether. Calla lost her precarious balance and went tumbling down the cement stairs to the landing below. She took the brunt of the fall on her spine as she went down the unforgiving steps. Up on the second floor she saw the look of surprise on the Imposters' face as he looked disbelievingly at his empty arms. She hit the landing hard, her head bounced off the cold cement, stars flashed across her eyes and fresh blood began to emerge from her skull. Before she could breathe or think she saw him bounding down the steps after her. Calla scrambled for the last set of stairs as his hand reached out and grabbed a handful of auburn hair but it was too late, she threw her weight forward and tumbled out of his reach and down the last five stairs to the vacant first floor below, leaving him with nothing more than a fistful of her hair.

"You best be gettin' back 'ere, gurl."

Calla clawed desperately at the broken glass and fallen plaster on the floor below her in a pitiful attempt to rise but her knee wasn't having any of it. "Daniel!" She cried softly as she crawled

through the ruins of the old building with David close behind her. "Please, Sa'Tan Daniel!"

David's hand clamped down on her neck with a vicious bite. "Danny can't help you now." David began dragging her down the littered hallway by her hair. Calla screamed and clawed at the flesh of his hand with her good arm as she tried to get away from him. "Such a bad gurl, Callie. Gots ta teach ya sum man'ers, missy."

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Daniel's head crashed back into the head rest as they crawled down the highway in the blinding snow storm. Bile rose in his throat. "Stop, stop the car." He moaned, he hardly waited for Jack to pull over before he jumped out and began vomiting in the new fallen snow on the side of I-395. Daniel stood hunched over with his hands gripping his knee caps and his stomach heaving its left over contents at his feet. The inner recessed of his mind resonated with the sound of her voice. Calla's freedom had not lasted long, David found her, wherever she had been hiding, he found her. This time she wasn't going to get away from him no matter what she tried. "Screaming," he muttered as the last of the bile issued forth and spilled onto the ground. "Oh, God, she's screaming!" His gut gave out another heaving wretch but spilled nothing onto the highway, the dry heaves were beginning to set in.

Pain. Just pure white hot pain. It surrounded him. Swallowed him. Shot through him. Daniel's stomach gave out another harsh dry heave, suddenly the entire right side of his body felt as though it been T-boned by a Mac truck. His head pounded, his back felt someone had used it for a snowboard and his shoulder felt as though it had been ripped from his socket, it barely moved when he commanded it to. The few parts of his body which did not currently cry out were so frozen with cold and stiff that he could barely move them at all. Standing in the falling snow on the side of the highway Daniel's head swirled and spun with the echo of her cries. Suddenly the biting numbing cold turned into a harsh cold burning sensation. It engulfed slowly from toes to nose and then swept back down him again in a tidal wave of heat. Daniel took two steps forward and pitched face first into the cold snow.

Cold. The cold was good. Daniel just wanted to lie in the snow bank and let it cool off his body; it blocked the pain and helped to raise his mind from the abyss.

"Get him up!" Jack shouted as he ran around the front of the Denali to where Sam and Teal'c were already standing. "Come on, Daniel, don't you give up!"

Teal'c reached down with his strong hands and rolled Daniel over in the snow. "If she is screaming, Dr. Jackson, and you wish to be heard, you must whisper to her." Teal'c pulled the still stunned Dr. Jackson to his feet, brushed the snow from his coat and put him back into the passenger seat of the Denali. "We must be close to her."

"He's right. Daniel, look!" The sign ahead read Mohegan Sun Casino Exit 79A 2 miles. "So just hang in there a little while longer, got that?" Jack ordered as he turned the engine over and pulled back onto I-395.

"Indeed, Daniel Jackson," Teal'c said as he leaned over the backseat. "You must quiet your mind, remember whatever is happening to Callestah is not happening to you. You're only a by-stander in this, you must remember that."

“By-stander?” Daniel barked as his hand rubbed the back of his head, he didn’t feel like much a by-stander at this moment. Everything felt so real.

“Whisper,” was Teal’s only response before he settled himself back into the seat.

Slumped in the passenger's seat with his head resting against the cold window, Daniel began to whisper her name inside his mind.

*"Calla."*

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David dragged Calla down the decrepit hallway to a large room with three large picture windows, or they had been picture windows when they were new, now they were nothing more than sharp shards of glass resting among the plaster, dry wall, bits of floor and a mass of trash that vagrants had left as their calling cards. In the oversized room there were three metal frame beds sans mattresses, their cold steel frames stark and shining in the moonlight like the jaws of some giant monster ready to gobble up whatever passerby happened to be unlucky enough to enter the unfeeling room.

With no words or sound at all, David dragged her to the far end of the room beneath the windows and dumped her into a pile of broken glass. "Don't move." He demanded as he loomed over her and opened the black carrying case. "Looky what I got." He produced a pair of police issue handcuffs and length of rope which he held in the same hand. "Oh, we are gonna have a hot time in the ol town tonight, yessir, missy, we certainly are." Reaching down quickly, he grabbed hold of Calla's lapel and yanked upward harshly. The small woman tumbled out of the coat. One article of clothing down, David sat his full weight on her pelvis as his greedy hands reached out and ripped off the green cardigan sweater to reveal a very lovely and lacy matching bra. "Pretty." In one quick motion the bra was gone, ripped in half, he tossed it across the room and grabbed for her wrists.

"No," she begged beneath him. "Please, only Daniel." She mumbled. "Only Master Daniel."

David chuckled as he leaned in and brought his face in closer to hers, he could see the fear in her eyes, hell he could smell it coming off of her in hot waves. "Master David." One cuff clamped down on her wrist. "Be a good gurl and say it, Callie." He demanded through gnashed teeth as he reached for the arm which lay limp at her side, it was slick with blood from her palm, his hand slipped off at first but Calla made no attempt to move it away from him and it was then he realized she couldn't. Her right shoulder lay far lower on the ground than her left, it twisted and distorted in an unnatural way. Nah, Callie wouldn't be using that arm anytime in the near future. David smiled a crooked and gnarled smile in the pale moonlight then grabbed the wounded hand and jerked it upward as hard as he could. Calla screamed below him and he settled his weight on her again. "Master David." He repeated and clamped the cuff onto her wrist.

Calla lay half-naked, his weight on her chest pushing her further on the broken glass and sharp bits of plaster, they bit into the flesh at her back and then tore downward when he moved her. It crushed the air from her lungs making it so very difficult to breathe and everything hurt, everything ached, everything was spinning too far out of control. In the dim light, Calla looked up to see Daniel's face over her, it was twisted and contorted with anger, she saw the darkness in Daniel’s cold eyes as he

carefully looped one end of the rope around the chain links on the handcuffs. There was no mistaking the danger in Daniel's voice when he spoke to her; "Stay right there. I'll be right back." Holding onto the other end he walked the two feet to the cast iron radiator under the window. The rope was just a bit too short, with both hands he yanked hard on it, Calla's body rose at the other end and she gave out another shout of agony. The rope slackened and David secured it to the radiator before returning to where she laid.

"Hey, you know what, Callie?" David swiped at the base of his nose which had begun to run from the cold and mold in this place. The Brothers Jackson both suffered from allergies and his eyes were beginning to swell just the tiniest bit as he sneezed. "Yaw dad'dy taught me a trick. You wanna see it?" David plopped down on the floor next to her as he reached for the button on her jeans. "It's a good one, I think yaw gonna like it." Greedy hands torn the denim jeans from her hips, down her waist, past her thighs and over her knees. "Ooh, now dat looks like it hurts." David commented in a dry voice as he yanked the material past the swollen knee and she gave out another cry. The sound of it made him smile. "Watch this." David tossed his own coat aside and pulled the sweater over his head, he watched her eyes well with at the sight of the clean skin on his right shoulder. Reaching into the black bag he drew out a large syringe and uncapped it with his teeth. "No." She protested and tried to wiggle away from him. The mark between her now bare and frozen breasts began to glow.

"Yeah." David winked at her in the dark. "Looks like we'se gon' have us some cump'ny, hey gurl?" His cold hand ran over her grandfather's mark, he settled the point of the syringe over it. "Maybe paw's comin' ta pay us a l'il visit."

"Don't!" Calla cried as she shook with cold and fear. Though there were shards of glass biting through the flesh at her back, between her shoulders and into the space just above her buttocks, she couldn't feel the pain only the pressure they made as they sunk deeper and deeper into her and more of her blood spilled onto the cold concrete floor. Through cold or fear, or perhaps both, Calla's body had reached a point of being comfortably numb. There was no more strength or air in her lungs left to scream with, looking up into the eyes she had once loved so much, the stinging needle settled itself into the place by her heart. What Daniel had given her was now taken away. "Danny." She mumbled as her eyes closed and her body lay still below her Master's brother. Somewhere, back there, beyond the pain and the cold, beyond the numbness and fear, there was a voice.

*Calla. Calla.*

Calla opened her eyes and looked up as the needle was removed; David capped it and put it back into his special bag of tricks. "There now, that's better, isn't it?" He teased. "Poor little Goddess, all her power is gone now." David slid his belt open and freed his hard cock. "All of her hope is gone."

"Only Danny." She whispered as she felt him settle over her once more.

"Look at me." David shook her jaw until her eyes opened again and she was staring into his eyes

Danny's eyes

"Say it, now."

*Calla. Calla. Answer me. I feel you. Answer me. Calla. Calla.*

Daniel's voice in her mind, his eyes staring back at her. Those terribly cold and angry eyes.  
"Master Da..."

In one merciless action he pinned her knees to her shoulders, and thrust himself deep inside of her.

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Daniel kept his eyes shut tight and drew in a hard breath when the pain began in his lower regions. Teal's voice in his mind, telling him he was just a by-stander and that's all, he tried desperately to keep hold of that thought as he reached out to her. It was so horrendously difficult to push past the pain and overriding sense of fear. Daniel swore that for the rest of his life he would never again say anything about 'natural selection' or 'survival of the fittest', rape was rape; it didn't matter when it happened, it was wrong and it was *brutal*.

*Just a by-stander. Not really there. Just watching.* He reminded himself while he drew in a deep breath and held tighter to the doll in his hands. *Calla, I know you can hear me.*

There was no reply to his plea but Daniel felt himself being pulled away from the car, away from where he sat moving at a snail's pace down the four lane highway. Everything around him was quiet and still, no one screamed.

*Calla?*

As though he were sitting in the last balcony row, the lights around him dimmed, it seemed as though he could see a pair of heavy red velvet curtains part, the lights on the screen came up. Only this time when they did, he was no longer sitting in the balcony but was part of a Major Motion Picture.

Wherever this very strange movie was being filmed, it was dreadfully cold. Wind which should have been outside was not, it howled through the open windows and plasterless walls around him. It smelled old and rotten in this place, the pervasive sense of being watched clung to him and he could not shake it. Daniel began to walk down the corridor in front of him; it was lined with windows which were nothing more than sharp shards of glass clinging to life. The wind howled and the snow drifted in.

*Calla?*

She was here, somewhere in this dismal place, Daniel could feel her and he needed only to follow his feet in order to find her, he let them lead the way. There was a voice coming from the end of the hallway, a familiar voice. "Look at me! Say it!" It said. Daniel recognized the voice as his own but with a heavy southern accent. Hesitantly he peered into the doorway to behold the sight of David pinning a broken, bleeding and bonded Calla to the floor, he was inside of her, brutalizing her, raping her. Calla did not cry out, just as he always knew she would not. All those nights he had held himself back from the dark thoughts in his mind, back from doing things like this to her.

David? No, not David. He was clearly enjoying himself. Daniel's legs grew more unsteady with each step he took towards where she lay on the floor looking up at his brother and seeing Daniel's face. Her arms were held up behind her head by a pair of handcuffs and length of rope, David had offered her no slack. They stretched her wounded shoulder past the breaking point. Rough hands on her knees pitched their weight forward and pushed her own weight ruthlessly onto her chest, it became so very hard to breathe. The knee which faced him was badly distorted and he could see the bone jutting from it. There was blood everywhere. There were pools of it at her head, her side, and her leg. Still, she fought against him as best she could. Her body wriggled as she pulled at the restraints on her wrists and tried to use her good leg to push him away from her. David smiled with delight as he pushed harder inside of her and pulled her body closer to him, further away from the radiator, the handcuffs bit into her wrists.

*Danny?* Her voice was small and hurt.

*Shhhh. I'm here.* Daniel brought his hand down over her eyes to close them and keep her from staring at David any longer. *Don't look at him, Calla.* It was such an incredibly selfish thing to say to her but it was the first thing which came to his mind as he looked on the scene, even Daniel saw himself over her and not David. What and who was she seeing there? *Please, don't look at him.* But Daniel did, he took a very long and hard look at his brother. "I'm gonna rip your throat out, Davy." Daniel muttered as they drove down the road.

O'Neill looked over at him and reached out to him. "Do not touch him, O'Neill, " Teal'c said, "he has found her. Leave him be."

Both in the car and his mind, Daniel reached out with both hands to grab his brother and missed. The doll slipped from his hands. It seemed that in both places he had no power, he was only a by-stander.

Sam reached over the backseat, grabbed up the rag doll, and put it back in his arms.

Just as it had begun to fade from his mind, Daniel was overcome by the reality and viciousness of the scene. He could do nothing against his brother here. But he had felt the iciness of her skin when he closed her eyes. Guilt and grief in his heart, in his mind Daniel reached down to touch her again and she was cold, oh so very cold. Her eyes opened and she looked up at him, the pain in her eyes was unbearable to gaze upon. Daniel reached out to close them again. He could do nothing to stop what David was doing to her but he could offer her comfort and hope. In his mind, Daniel settled himself on the long forgotten floor and held her as close to himself as he could.

In the car his arms reached out and he brought a non-existent woman close to his heart. Daniel's hand moved slowly up and down from his neck to chest, as though he were stroking her head. But it was only the doll in his arms.

*I'm here. It's all right, Calla. Shhhh.*

*Help me. Protect me.*

*I'm coming, I'm so close to you. Hold on. Was he really going to tell her this? It seemed so wrong. Don't fight anymore, Calla. Please don't fight him anymore, you're too weak.*

It was Daniel's voice in her head, he was alive. With her eyes closed Calla could see Daniel, he was sitting next to her, and his eyes were not cold or angry but shining and warm, welcoming her to him as he brought her close to him even though his brother was doing such terrible things to her, Daniel still brought her close to her until she rested with her bleeding back against his chest and she could hear his heart beating.  
thum-thumpa-thump-thump

*Shhh. Listen. Daniel whispered. Listen to the sound of my heart.*

Above her, with his rage far beyond his control, David continued his savage thrusting and brutalizing of the woman his brother loved.  
*It hurts. He's hurting me.* Calla cried softly in Daniel's arms.

*I know,* he began to rock her slowly back and forth. Daniel had never felt so helpless in his life, not even when he watched the cover-stone fall on his parents had he felt so powerless. The only thing he could do was to hold her and watch while David ruthlessly thrust himself in and out of her. *I know. Give it to me, Calla, all of it, give it to me. I'm strong, I can take it. Please, give it over to me. It won't hurt anymore.* Daniel looked over at his brother and saw the expression on his face, the clenched teeth and his eyes rolling back in his head. He can't hold out much longer, Daniel thought as he brought her as close as he could. Christ, just fucking cum, Davey! Leave her alone!

*I want to go home.* Calla pleaded as her body began to give up its fight. Daniel was right, there was no fight left in her but she did not want to surrender to Master David, to give in to him and let him.....

Master David was pulling out of her now and for one brief moment she thought he was done with her and that it was over and then his arms reached down and toward her pelvis and she felt the excruciating pain of being split in two as David forced his fist inside her. "How ya like that one, Callie?" He sneered with delight.

*Please, Daniel, make him stop! I want to go home!*

"Someone stop him, oh please, someone stop him." Daniel begged in a hushed whisper.

"You got something that I've just been itchin' to get me a taste of, you know that?" David shoved his fist deeper into her. yes, something more than merely sweet. Something new. Some place his brother had yet to avail himself to. "Turn over, bitch."

"No." Calla moaned helplessly. "Please, only for Daniel. Only Daniel."

"Only David." He corrected with harshness. "Mine now, Danny's not coming back." David pulled his fist from her cunt and turned over onto her stomach, shards of glass bit into her cheek and breasts as he brought her ass up high in the air and re-inserted his fist into her aching throbbing

hole. “Got me some toys, Callie, but, ah, they can wait a minute.” David’s hard throbbing cock split her ass while his fist continued its work.

“No!” Daniel screamed and opened his eyes. “Oh, God! Someone has got to stop him!”

“We will, Daniel, just stay with her.” Sam said from the back seat as she put a gentle hand on his shoulder.

Yes, that’s what he should be telling her. *Stay with me, Calla.* She whimpered to his request and offer of comfort. *I’ll bring you home soon. I promise.* Daniel wrapped his arms around her, in this position; Daniel could hold her as close as he wanted to, as close as she needed him to. *Just listen to my heart. I love you, I’ll bring you home soon.* At his promise he felt her go limp in his arms and watched the look of disappointment which crossed his brother’s face as she stopped squirming beneath him. Daniel sat there with her in his arms watching David (himself) attack Calla with viscous force, his own tears ran down his cheeks as he held her as close as he possibly could to himself trying to shield her to bring her away to some place safe, some place where David couldn't touch her anymore. *That’s it, just give it to me. I love you and nothing he does will ever change that, Calla. I love you. Don't fight him anymore.*

There was a new sensation coming to him now, no longer was he in the car nor in this cold place but he felt as though he were fading away. Fading off to some place else but there was something he had to do before he could go there. Daniel opened his eyes and looked around again. There was an odd shadow cast across the beleaguered floor, across the room were old metal frame beds which had no mattress upon them. He looked to the moonlight coming through the open windows. The windows were not open, they were broken, shattered in fact. Those strange shadows were coming from the bars across the broken glass.

“Why are there bars on the windows?”

“Get Hammond on the phone, see if he’s gotten anywhere with that abandoned building theory of Daniels.” O’Neill demanded as he drove down the highway.

There were no bars on the windows now, in fact there were no windows. No, today the sun was bright and warm and Daniel was walking alone on a little used path in the woods. Birds sang overhead as they flew to their nests, in the bushes small animals hunted for food or jumped around at play. As he rounded a bend there was a woman lying on the path. Daniel bent and turned her over lightly. Calla. Her face was swollen and bruised, her arm hung useless at her side. Daniel scooped her in his arms and walked down the path looking for help. He passed no one and the sky overhead began to darken with rain clouds.

“I’m going to find some....” he looked down at the woman he was carrying but she was no longer a woman, she was a girl of about eighteen or so and her face was no longer swollen and bruised. There was fresh blood on the flimsy gauze dress as though she had unexpectedly had a rather large period. But that was not where that blood had come from. Daniel kissed the top of her head and continued his journey down the path which was becoming increasingly overgrown and difficult to walk. The first of the rains began to fall and he noticed that the burden in his arms had become exceedingly lighter than it had been. Daniel looked down once more to see the same girl he had

met at the mall so many years ago and the one had seen in his dream just last night laying helpless in his arms. She was not bloody, she was not bruised or battered but the fear coming from her could be felt for miles around.

Fresh rain water soaked both of them through to the skin thunder rang out overhead as lightning ignited the sky a brilliant electric purple, before the path cleared itself of weeds and rocks. The torrential rain ceased to fall but the thunder rolled and the lightning continued to flash, Daniel came to an altar beside which stood people. One was Aphrodite; she stood there with anticipation on her face, her honey-blonde hair swept away from her heart-shaped face. The other made Daniel's blood run cold, he held the small girl close to himself and refused to lay her upon the altar.

"Colonel we got it! The Norwich State Hospital, it's an abandoned mental facility and it's right across the river from the Mohegan Sun Casino." Major Carter exclaimed from the back seat as she relayed the news she was receiving from General Hammond. "You're kidding?!" She exclaimed. "Sorry, sir. Is that right?" She waited for a moment for his response. "Yes, got it, thank you sir. I'll let you know when this is over." She clicked off the phone and leaned over the front seat. Daniel was sitting calmly with his head resting against the glass, his eyes closed and he looked as though he were sleeping if it weren't for the incessant way his hand kept stroking the air above his chest and the tears spilling effortlessly down his cheeks. "All right, here's the bad news." She began. "Looks like it's a complex of roughly twenty buildings. The whole place is abandoned and has been for about ten years." She dropped her voice low. "It's an old asylum. From what General Hammond was telling me it's like a small city unto itself. How we are going to find her in that?"

"We're not," Jack informed her, "he is." They passed by the sign which read Mohegan Sun Boulevard This Exit and crossed the Thames River.

## Chapter Twenty-Six

“Callie!” David Jackson shouted as he shook the lifeless body that lay battered beneath him. “Wake up, gurl!” Maybe he took too much of that stuff out of her then again there was an awful lot of blood on the floor. Maybe she was dead. Now that would be a pisser, wouldn’t it? David leaned in a listened to see if he could hear a heartbeat but stopped before he could lay his head on her chest. That mark was glowing and it was starting to, to what? Hum? Is that what it was doing? Yes, it was humming. David laid a cold hand on her ribs, her lungs moved up and down slowly, she was still breathing and that meant she was still alive.

Headlights outside caught his attention, David pulled out of her and zipped up his pants as he reached to button his shirt. There was one of those huge honkin’ gaz-guzzlers circling the parking lot outside. It looked as though Danny had made it to the party after all and he’d brought some friends along with him. “Hate to leave ya like dat, gurl, but ah, looks like dat white knight a’ yos is tryin’ to ride to the rescue. I won’t be long.” He reached inside the bag and brought out the duct tape, David cut a length of it with his teeth and fastened it over Calla’s mouth. Reaching into it one last time he pulled out the snub nose .38 and made his way past the metal frame beds to a room beyond.

“Dear God, what is this place?” Jack exclaimed as they climbed out of the Denali. “Stephen King couldn’t have done better if he tried!”

“It’s awful.” Major Carter agreed as she rubbed her shoulders to try and ward off the feeling that she was being watched. “You’re sure she’s in there?”

Daniel tossed his head over the right as he looked past the trees there. A glint of glass could be seen in the moonlight; David’s car. “She’s here. So is he.”

“All right, kiddies, time to break out the goodies.” Jack opened the back to reveal the stash of side arms there. He cocked and locked his weapon. “Time to bring her home, Daniel, just like I promised.” The tracks in the fresh snow were easy to find and follow, SG1 walked up the door that David and Calla had entered through. O’Neill turned on the flashlight before going inside. “Well this ain’t the Ritz.” He mumbled as he disappeared through the dilapidated door. A trail of fresh blood lead from the stairs at the entryway down the corridor, quietly they crept through the darkness as they followed where it lead.

The pull at Daniel’s heart was almost beyond belief, she was here, somewhere in this maze of dirty discarded rooms and corridors she lay on the floor broken and bleeding, waiting for him to come and rescue her. Waiting for him to take her out of here, take her home. The hall split off now, the trail of blood lead up the stairs but the drag marks on the floor to the left told them they were down that way. Just for the merest instant, in his mind, Daniel saw her tumbling down the stairs with his brother standing over her.

There was more blood on the floor where she landed, it was smeared into the old porous floor and stuck to the drywall. As the drag-line began, the trail of crimson spread out from it on the right and another trail lay smack in the middle where her head had been. As they walked there was no echo to their footfalls, it was as though everything in this place, even the air, were dead.

Daniel caught sight of her feet through the doorway at the end of the corridor, Jack saw her too and put an arm to hold him back from running up to her. "Wait," he whispered as he peered around the corner and noted there were two more rooms off to the left. "Go, slow."

Daniel nodded as he walked into the lead with his gun at the ready and his eye fixed firmly on where Calla lay. The rest of the team spread out behind him keeping their eyes open for David. Creeping quietly along the derelict hallway and up to the doorway, Daniel could see her now, her wrists had cuffs on them and David had tied her to an old radiator, her mouth sealed shut with duct tape. Looking around carefully he emerged through the doorway, Calla looked up at him with fear in her eyes. For a moment he thought she thought he was David coming in for a second round but that wasn't it. She kept looking across the room trying to tell him something with her eyes. Daniel continued forward towards where she lay helpless and waiting for him, she would not look at him. Finally Daniel followed her gaze to the open door, he drew the gun out in front of himself and kept a good eye on Calla as he walked toward her at what he hoped was a not-to-slow gait.

Daniel came up to the open door as he crossed the floor to her, his heart beat rapidly in his chest, sweat broke out on his forehead and froze into small icicles. Almost full in front of the open doorway now, Daniel dropped to one knee just as the gun fired and the bullet went whizzing past his head. Daniel fired. The shot hit him just below the shoulder and it sent David backward into the ancient cast iron tub behind him, the rotted shower curtain fell down, covering him with a thin layer of dust and mold. The look of surprise on David's face was one that Daniel would never forget, he thought he had his baby brother beaten but Daniel had still managed to get the best of him.

"He's down!" Daniel shouted as he broke into a run toward Calla who was lying still on the rotten floor, not moving and barely breathing. "Get this off her, please get this off of her," he begged as he pulled at the rope which held her bound to the radiator. Teal'c came forward with his knife and cut the rope. Daniel removed the tape from her mouth. "I'm here. Wake up, please wake up." He said quietly as he gently brought her arms back to her side from over her head. Daniel took off his coat and wrapped it around her; the mark between her breasts was glowing. "I'm going to take you home. It's over now." There was so much blood on the floor around her. Calla did not move toward him nor make any sound at all, she just lay there limp and lifeless in his arms. From down the corridor heavy footfalls were heard. "It's over!" Daniel shouted. "I am going to take her home now." The mark grew brighter and emitted its low droning hum. "No," Daniel held her tight to himself as the footfalls stopped outside the door.

In the doorway stood a woman he recognized, Calla's mother had come to claim her daughter and with her was the man he had seen in the vision. "Don't let him touch her." Daniel said to those around him. "Just back off. Get away from her."

The man was the same one Daniel had seen in the vision. He was dressed in black from head

to foot and wore a golden crown upon his head did not cease his pace, rather he walked straight up to where Daniel shielded Calla from his touch. "Move away from her."

"No."

"I don't know who you are buddy, but if I were you, I'd back off. Now." Colonel O'Neill threatened as he leveled the gun at the man who was threatening Daniel and Calla. They hadn't gone through all of this and come all this way just to have some one else come along and take her away. Jack was damned if he was going to watch Daniel lose another woman. Not if he could help it.

"Yeah, hey, everybody," Daniel said from his place on the floor, "why don't you meet her family. This is the Lady Aphrodite, Calla's mother and this is her dear old uncle Hades." He looked up at the man in black, "Isn't that right?"

"Yes, it is. Now move away from her."

"I won't let you touch her. You can't have her." As much as he was loath to do it, Daniel brought Calla's battered body up into a tight ball so that he could lay himself over her preventing Hades from taking her.

"Sa'Tan Daniel," Aphrodite said, "I have given you a great gift, several of them. I gave them to you because I thought you worthy and even though you disappointment me, I still believe this." She walked carefully to Hades side. "This is my daughter, you must allow Hades near her."

"Why?" Daniel asked sobbing as he stared up at Aphrodite. "Lady you of all people know my heart, please, don't take her away from me."

"She is my daughter, I love her. I am not the one who doubts your love for her. Trust me, Daniel. Move aside."

"I love you." Daniel kissed her cheek as he rolled away from her and watched while Hades hovered over her.

The God of Death did not touch Calla, his hand hovered a mere centimeter above her chest where Zeus' mark glowed bright. The light from it grew brighter and descended to engulf her ribs and stomach. Soon it was so bright that it lit up the whole room and all present could see just how bleak and desolate their surroundings were. Just how much blood....

....Ichor....

Calla had lost during her ordeal with David.

Hades knelt on the ground beside his grand-niece and whispered to her. "Come child, it's time to go."

The warmly glowing place between her bruised breasts shot its light upward toward the ceiling and

within the light the shape of a young girl began to appear, she grew more and more visible as the light faded into her until she stepped her own solid but small feet onto the pitted floor. "Danny!" She cried as she tossed her small arms around his neck and covered his cheek with soft little-girl kisses. "I knew you would come!" The little girl stepped away from him but held onto his hands. "Look at you!" She cried with delight. "Very handsome." She winked at him and then looked back over her shoulder at the woman who had carried her around for so many years. The woman who had kept her hidden and safe while she bore the brunt of the pain and sorrow so that she wouldn't have to. "She loves you," Callestah whispered to a sobbing Daniel.

"Daughter." Aphrodite spoke as she neared the little girl. "It's time to go now."

Callestah turned toward the voice of her mother and broke out into a run; she flung herself into her mother's arms while she squealed with delight. Aphrodite scooped the young girl up until her arms and spun her around in the air as she nestled her face into the little girl's auburn hair.

"Ah, Daniel," Jack said in a soft voice, "looks like we got visitors."

"What?" Daniel found it so very difficult to take his eyes off of the little girl who had emerged from Calla's lifeless body. He managed to take his eyes away from her for a short moment and look around the darkened room. Sitting on the other side of Calla were five young people who ranged in age from less than a year to about twenty or so. The baby was laying on the still glowing chest of his mother while his brothers and sisters looked on. Even though she was lost to the world at the moment, Calla's good arm encircled the baby that lay on her breast, a soft sigh came from her lips, and she wept without sound. The oldest, oh him, there was no mistaking him either, he looked exactly like his father. He couldn't not possibly be anyone other than Kanan's first born son.

They were not the only souls who had come forth to witness the scene. From every corner eyes stared back at the members of SG1, they peered around corners, out from under empty metal framed beds and through the shattered and barred windows.

"Come with me now my grandchildren, it is time for us to go." The Lady Aphrodite held her arms to her grandchildren. "She cannot hold you any longer."

Three of Calla's prematurely deceased children looked upon with him kind eyes as her oldest daughter took the baby up in her arms and crossed the room to where their grandmother awaited them. Calla's battered body reached out for the baby as he was taken from her for a second time. The oldest he didn't move towards his grandmother and he did not look upon Daniel with kind eyes.

"Orion, go to your grandmother." Hades intoned in a dark voice as he rose from Calla's side and stood by the Aphrodite once more. "Byan."

The young man rose and curled his lip in Daniel's direction as if to say 'I've got my eye on you.' and finally he made his way to his grandmother.

"Are you going to leave her like this?" Daniel asked in disbelief as he watched them all begin to head for the door.

"What would you have me do for her, Sa'Tan?" Hades asked as he turned around. "Heal her? I'm afraid that's just not my department." His voice was deep, dark and sarcastic as he tilted his head

towards his niece. "Oh, really?" Hades asked of the unconscious Calla. "This is the best I can do for you, Sa'Tan. Callestah tells me that if I offer you this one, you will let her go." Gently he cast his black gloved hand toward the open doorway, soft footfalls were heard in the hall.

Goose bumps rose quickly on his skin as Daniel's blood ran cold, he didn't need those footfalls to come around the corner to know who they belonged to. Sure enough his fear was realized, through the doorway walked Sha're, hale, whole, healthy and beautiful as she had always been. Her eyes looked upon him with love and kindness as she walked to her husband with her hand outstretched before her, waiting for him to take it, to greet her and take her into his arms.

"Stop, right there." Daniel told her as he stood on shaking legs looking down at the battered woman on the floor. "I know you'll understand." He whispered.

"You love her now, husband?" Sha're asked as she held her place halfway across the room from him.

"I do." How many times had he bargained with God that if He would just send Sha're back to him Daniel would do anything, give anything, be anything, that He wanted? Now, here she was. His prayer had been answered after all. The timing couldn't be worse. "I'm sorry, Sha're." Daniel whispered to his dead wife and then gazed back at Hades once more. "Can she hear me?" Hades nodded his dark head and Daniel looked down at Calla. "Nice try, Red." He told her and then back at Hades. "No."

"Very well, Sa'Tan, have it your way." Hades waved his hand in the air and Sha're faded from sight. "We can help you no more, nor her. From here to the end, you're on your own." Again he leaned forward and appeared to be listening to something that Calla was telling him. Hades snorted and tossed his head back. "Only for you Little One." His black eyes gazed about the room and took in all those who stared back at him. "We are leaving now and anyone who wishes to join us may come along." Hades invited to the ghostly eyes. Out from the shadows walked the apparitions to which the eyes in the dark belonged. Children, all of them were children who ranged in age from toddler to somewhere around near adulthood. They were dressed in rag-tag hospital clothes, some had casts or bandages, others had IV bottles in their arms, and all were tired and hunched over as they walked forward at the invitation to leave this place once and for all. Hades began to herd all of them toward the doorway.

"Lady, you can't leave her like this, she is your daughter." Daniel begged hastily from the floor. "Please, you must help her."

Aphrodite looked at him with sorrow deep in her blue eyes, "It is as Hades said. I cannot help her or you anymore. You must do this..." her voice trailed off for a moment as she gazed down upon the body of her adult daughter, "or not. It is up to you."

"So, so, so....what?" He demanded. "You got what you wanted from her and now you're just going to leave her behind too?" Anger rose hot and swift. "You're her mother." Daniel whispered.

"You're no better than Ares." He accused.

"Careful now, Sa'Tan, I would watch my step if I were you." She threatened in return. "She is my daughter." The Lady Aphrodite kissed the cheek of the 12 year-old girl who was still in her arms. "She is all I can save." Aphrodite tossed her head and her eyes toward Calla, "She has been twisted

and subverted beyond all recognition and hope..."

"She is not beyond hope." Daniel returned in a strong voice.

"She has not lived the life she was intended to, Sa'Tan." Aphrodite over rode him. "I can keep Callestah from her Father's grasp; it is up to you to do the same for her, for Calla. How you choose to do that is up to you. Just do it." The Lady Aphrodite took one last long look at the woman on the floor before she exited the abandoned asylum with her family and several new-found friends.

"Let's get her out of here." Daniel said as he watched Calla's mother and uncle leave her behind.

"We have to get her some place safe and warm."

"Got some bad news for ya, Daniel." Jack said as he crossed the room.

"Now what?" Daniel asked in an exasperated voice.

"David took off."

## Chapter Twenty-Seven

Thirty-six hours had passed and Calla had yet to open her eyes, although he was terrified of just who she would see sitting by her bed when she did wake, Daniel had yet to move from her side. Now here he was with her back under Cheyenne Mountain in the infirmary where she lay pale and lifeless on the metal framed hospital bed, not unlike those he had seen a day and half before in Connecticut.

Last night, Jack had kept insisting that they take her to the naval hospital but Daniel refused, he knew they could do nothing for her and there was no sense in exposing her to all the people (men) on the base. Daniel's reasoning was that if he could just get her some place safe and warm she wouldn't need the doctors at all, he would heal her. To that end and luckily for them, General Hammond had a friend, an Admiral, in the United States Navy who owned a cabin not far from the old Norwich State Hospital. Daniel and the rest of SG-1 had spent the night holed up in the cabin which was warm and homey. If she'd been awake, Daniel was sure that Calla would have loved the place with its hard wood floors and rolled log walls and large hearth in the bedroom where she had slept last night. Instead of having trained doctors and nurses at her side, Calla had Daniel, Jack, Sam and Teal'c to help her.

After getting her inside the cabin and to the upstairs bedroom, Daniel rubbed his hands together, said a slight prayer and then tried to raise the blue energy which would mend her wounds. It did not come to him, no matter what he tried he could not raise it. Finally the decision was made that they would take care of Calla in the old fashioned way. Together with his friends, they had cleaned and covered her wounds with fresh bandages and anti-biotic ointment. Daniel held onto her hand while Jack laid the weight of her limp body against his chest and popped her shoulder back into place with a might crunching sound. After they used a makeshift sling which they had cut from a bed sheet to support her arm and hold it place while she slept. The four of them had spent close to half an hour gingerly picking shards of glass in all shapes and sizes from her cold flesh. Shards of glass were embedded in her scalp, hair, neck and back, most of the wounds were small and superficial but some required stitching. At some point during her horrible course of events, David had laid her against a hefty shard of glass which had sliced deeply into her flank. Samantha sewed the wound in Calla's side, it took 28 stitches to close the wound properly. Calla also received several more stitches throughout her body. The back of her head took 17 stitches and forced the cutting of a 4 inch swatch of hair from her head for which Samantha kept profusely apologizing for having to cut and promised that it would grow back. From the top of her head to the mount of her milky white buttocks, Calla required stitching; Sam stopped counting stitches at 72. During the entire time she carefully sewed Calla's skin closed with 3-0 silk from the med-kit, the unconscious woman showed no sign that she felt the pain of the needle entering and exiting her wounded flesh.

After close to an hour Calla was finally stitched and cleaned. Daniel and Jack pushed the heavy wood bed closer to the open stone hearth. Although they all tried valiantly to do everything they could for her, all their efforts seemed inept at best and pathetic at worst.

When they had done all that they could for her and still she showed no signs of waking, Jack, Sam and Teal'c made their way to the first floor of the cabin, leaving Daniel alone with her in the bedroom. For the remainder of the night Daniel laid awake with Calla in his arms, unable to find what would appear to be a comfortable position for her to sleep in, Daniel held her the same way he saw Jack do it just an hour or so before. He laid Calla against his body with her back to his chest and her head again his heart. With his eyes open in the dark he stroked her hair while listening to the harsh sound of her off-pattern breathing and the tiny cries she let out indiscriminately as she slept. As her breathing rasped in her chest Calla involuntarily coughed and a fine mist of blood fell sprayed onto the white sheet.

During the night Daniel made several attempts at healing her broken body, he touched her, rubbed her, talked to her, prayed to whatever God was listening and began his bargaining with the same but it was all to no avail. Maybe Naganti Kanan had never healed the wounds he laid on her not because he didn't want to but because he couldn't. Was there some magick which prevented this, Daniel wondered in the dark. It was true that Daniel himself had not laid these marks but David had and they were genetically identical, maybe that was fooling whatever magick ruled her into thinking that Master Daniel had done this to her.

"You know," he said to the darkness as he held onto her slender fingertips, "we're close to New York and if you wake up, I'll take you to see the Statue of Liberty." She had mentioned going to see the Lady Liberty several times to him, he didn't know why she wanted it but it seemed important enough to her. Daniel smiled to himself at the thought, it was ridiculous to think that such an offer would bring her back to him, but then again that magick kiss always seemed to work in fairy tales. However, it did not work this time.

It wasn't until morning that the ugly bruise between her breasts met Daniel's eyes. David had not been kind about his nasty deed, the purple-to- almost-black spot between her breasts was wider than a silver dollar and Daniel could clearly see the mark the needle had made when David plunged it into her. This was why she did not heal for him, David had absconded with that ability. When they got back to Colorado, Daniel hoped that Janet would be able to correct that for both of them.

There was a light knock on the door. "Come in." Daniel called to it and watched as the door opened and Samantha stepped inside.

"She still hasn't woken?"

"Nope." The dismay was clear in his voice.

"Jack and Teal'c went back to the casino to see if they can get into David's room. They figure maybe he left something behind, you know?"

"They should have told me." Daniel grumbled and tried to let go of his anger, if not for himself then for the woman lying in his arms. "I am the one with the identification that says 'Daniel

Jackson' on it, I could get into that room."

"They didn't want to bother you or her." Sam nodded her head at Calla. "You want me to sit with her for a while?"

"No, I got her." Daniel said quietly as his eyes gazed out of the window and to the freshly fallen New England snow. "It's almost Christmas, you know." He glanced over at Sam, "I bought her a guitar, it's back at the house." Sad laughter escaped him. "I was hoping to talk her into putting up a tree and maybe having all of you over for dinner. We really enjoyed having Thanksgiving at your house."

"I liked having all of you." She didn't want to give him false hope but would not let the opportunity pass her by. "You'll get to give her that guitar and decorate that tree, Daniel. You'll see." Sam closed the door.

Colonel O'Neill was successful in obtaining entry to the room Calla had rented at the casino (a \$20.00 tip to the maid almost always did the trick) and luck was with them when they did, it seemed David had not returned to his room after Daniel shot him last night. Jack and Teal'c left with Calla's belongings and David's duffle bag, they hoped they would find something useful but it all seemed to be nothing more than a bunch of clothes and fake id's along with some assorted items that had been taken from Daniel's house. Among those items was the staff Daniel had used during Bonding Ritual and some of the artifacts he had kept from several digs on Earth. Neither of them was sure what to make of those other than to say that it was possible Calla had brought them with her because she was pretty sure that once Ares got within arms reach of her she wasn't coming back. Like the tapestry and the rag doll, maybe she had wanted something tangible to remind her of happier times in her life.

After taking everything out of the room the two of them drove across the Thames River and back to the building at the Norwich State Hospital where they looked around for anything David might have dropped. All they found was David's coat and the reason he had no returned to the hotel room; the key was in the pocket and so was his car keys. Jack looked out of the window to see the rented Suburban still sitting where it had been the night before, in it they found David's laptop and several home-burned DVDs. Jack was pretty sure of what was on those.

General Hammond had called during the night to give Jack the low-down on David Jackson and his wrap sheet. David certainly didn't sound anything like Daniel from the report he got. Jack thought of checking the local hospitals to see if they had treated any gun shot patients the night before but figured it was useless. If David had sought medical attention for a gun shot wound the police would have to be notified and his fake id was not to be seen. It was possible the cops might come back with those outstanding warrants (two of which were for sexual assault in the state of Texas) David had and arrest him before he could leave the emergency room on his own. Wherever David had gone it was some place less than reputable. And he had have gone somewhere to seek help, David had left a clear trail of blood which lead from the small bathroom he had hid in, through the adjoining door, out into the corridor, down the stairs. They followed the crimson trail through the white snow where it stopped on the side of Route 2A. David had hitched a ride from someone, poor bastard, Jack wondered if that someone was still alive tot ell of the hitchhiker they

had picked up the night before. Feeling as though they had not accomplished much of anything the two of them made their way back to the cabin where Jack was given the unenviable task of filling Daniel in on the doings of his brother over the last twenty years.

Two hours later a Navy ambulance pulled up to the front door of the log cabin and Calla was loaded into the back for the trip to the Army National Guard airport which was adjacent to the Groton-New London airport where Calla and David had landed the night before. The flight from Connecticut to Colorado was smooth, Daniel sat next to her holding on to her slender fingers for the entire trip.

That had been just under twenty two hours ago, still there was no sign of her coming back to consciousness. With every hour that passed by Calla's vital signs dropped lower and lower, even though her body raged with infection, her internal temperature (which they had finally managed to bring up last night to the point where she could be considered anything close to 'warm to the touch') was dropping. At present she was at 96.5 degrees Fahrenheit, if it dropped much lower hypothermia would begin to set in. And even though she wasn't anywhere near snow; the possibility that her circulation would drop so low and that she would begin to suffer from frost bite was very real.

Janet had confirmed what Daniel feared, David had taken the fluid which Daniel had injected into her during the ritual on Tiberia, hadn't just taken it, he'd emptied it out completely. Daniel begged and pleaded with her to just repeat the procedure! Just stick the needle in the back of his neck, draw it out of him and give back what she needed to live, then she would awaken and his ability to heal her would return to him, Daniel was sure of it but Janet wouldn't comply.

"It's too dangerous, Daniel, I just can't risk it." Janet told him. "You don't have enough left to give her. You'll be putting your own health in jeopardy."

"You don't understand!" Daniel screamed at her and balled his fists in anger.

"She said no." Jack chimed in as he entered Janet's office. "Besides, Calla wouldn't want you to do that if it was going to harm you. We'll have to find another way."

"There isn't another way, God, don't you get that!" Daniel cried in exasperation as he tossed his hands in the air. "No other way. I have to do this."

"No." Jack and Janet said in unison and then gave each other an odd glance.

"What about David? Any news on him?" Daniel asked through clenched teeth and watched as Jack just shook his head. "That's great. Just fucking great." He stormed out of the office and back to Calla's side. If he could get his hands on his brother, first he'd kill him, jut skin him alive nice and slow and then he'd use his bodily fluids to inject into Calla (without telling her of course), surely her body wouldn't notice the difference, it hadn't noticed the difference in David's touch after all. Daniel took a seat on the bed next to her and brushed the hair away from her face as he leaned in close. "Calla, Hades said you can hear me and I'm really counting on that right now." He whispered against her cheek. "I am so sorry. This is all my fault." His warm lips brushed lightly against her motionless lips. Sorry. God, it seemed like such an inadequate thing to say to her but it was all he

had other than, "I love you, please come back to me. Don't leave me, please, stay with me."

Colonel O'Neill stood in the doorway watching the scene play itself out. He couldn't believe that after all Daniel and Calla had gone through the possibility that she was going to die was hanging heavily in the air around them. Every few hours last night, he stopped outside the door where Daniel was holding vigil over her, he had wanted to knock, to go in and offer whatever comfort he could but Jack had refrained from doing so. Instead he listened at the door and waited and hoped and prayed that he would hear Daniel's voice through the door and Calla's in return. That did not happen and with every hour that passed the likelihood that it would become more and more diminished. "They're going to find him, Daniel, he's not going to get away with this." Jack said as he laid a hand on Daniel's shoulder.

"Sure he is." Daniel returned and looked up at Jack with sad swollen eyes.

"What are you talking about?" Jack sat himself in the chair next to her bed.

"He's never going to be arrested for this, he's never going to be tried or convicted in any court." Daniel had been turning this over in his mind through the night. "None of that is ever going to happen."

"Oh? Why not?" Jack asked easily as he tried to keep his voice light.

Daniel took off his glasses, squinted and pinched the bridge of his nose before putting them on again. "Because you can't do any of those things without opening up Calla's past, who she is, how she got here. You can't do that without exposing the Stargate program." Daniel grumbled and glanced away from his commanding officer and friend and then back up again. "We both know that's never going to happen. David will never pay for what he's done to her. There won't be any justice for her."

As much as Jack hated to admit it there was more than just a morsel of truth in what Daniel had said but there was more than one way to skin a cat. Looking down at the small woman lying helpless on the gurney and into Daniel's eyes, Jack just couldn't see how any God or Supreme Being would allow such a thing. "That ain't gonna happen, Daniel." Jack said in a tight tone as gazed down at Calla once again and thought of how Daniel had told him that he was jealous Calla had chosen him over Jack and how Jack had tossed off that notion. But, well, maybe he was just a little jealous of the way Calla looked at Daniel and how her hand curled around his, even now when she was caught in the gloom of unconsciousness and she didn't really know he was there. Maybe Jack did wish he had someone like that in his life but that didn't mean he was going to stand by and let this go down. "David's gonna pay." Jack rose from his seat. "Big time." He walked out of the infirmary.

Not long after Jack exited, General Hammond entered with Dr. Fraser and Daniel was ordered to go home and get some rest. Daniel protested greatly but Janet insisted that there was very little chance that Calla was going to awaken at any time within the next eight hours or so and if she did wake, Janet would be sure and call him right away. "I don't want to leave her, don't you get that? Look what happened the last time I left her alone." Daniel looked up to see Sam and Teal'c walking

through the door.

"She won't be alone." Sam said from the door. "I've got nothing to do tonight, Daniel, I'll stay with her."

"I live here." Teal'c said solemnly.

"And you need a ride," Jack chimed in from behind them, "so get in the car and let's go. You're not doing her any good like this."

At first Daniel didn't know if he should be angry with his teammates for treating him like a child or not and then realized they were just concerned about him and Calla. He was a damn lucky man to have such good friends at his side just when he needed them the most. "Yeah, ok." Even though home was the last place he wanted to go right now he agreed. Daniel promised to take her there, take her home, and now he was going to return without her, it would be quiet and lonely in the house.

"Ya know I don't have anything to do either." Jack said easily as Daniel began to walk toward him. "Maybe we can, I dunno, rent a movie or something."

As Daniel glanced back over his shoulder to take one last look at Calla for the night, he saw Sam sit on the bed next to her and gently take her hand while Teal'c stood at a guards stance behind her head almost as though he were watching over a Goa'uld Queen. Yes, despite everything, Daniel could still consider himself a very lucky man.

"Well, how is she doctor?" General Hammond asked once Daniel had rounded the corner.

Janet didn't answer right away; she wanted to be sure that Daniel was out of earshot. "There's nothing I can do for her. I keep pumping her full of antibiotics and her wounds, especially the one in her side, is just oozing." She stood on her tip toes and looked over Hammond's shoulder as if expecting to see Daniel standing there listening. Janet had yet to tell him that she was sure Calla was dying.

"Can't you give her more?"

"If I give her anymore it'll start dripping out of her pores for crimney sake." Janet tapped her foot hard against the floor in frustration. "She's lost a lot of blood. I really don't think she's going to make it through tomorrow, General."

"Janet?" Sam asked in a quiet voice as she left Calla's side upon hearing the conversation. "Her infection, is that my doing? I am the one who sewed her up last night. I tried to make sure....."

"No, it's nothing you did, I'm sure of it." Janet reassured her.

"Daniel will never forgive himself if she dies." Sam looked at her and General Hammond with questioning sapphire eyes. "You know that, right?"

"I know, Sam, I know." Janet looked down at her feet and repeated the phrase she hated most in life; "There's nothing I can do for her."

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Just as he feared, the house was quiet, cold and empty. The silence was just as deafening now as it had been two days ago when he first walked in and discovered her gone. The message light was blinking, Daniel walked past it without hitting the button to find out who had called after Calla. The hearth was empty for the first time since he'd bought the house and he felt a sense of loss as he passed it on his way to the kitchen. "You want something to eat?" He asked Jack while opening the refrigerator and perused its contents. Yep, Calla was a great house-mom all right, the place was stocked with everything you could ever want to eat and as always, she had done it online. One of the local grocery stores specialized in online orders which were delivered right to your door and since she never left the house without him it was the perfect solution. Daniel grabbed two Molson's from the fridge and returned to the living room where Jack was sitting, and wondered if there wasn't a local liquor store that also took online orders; she had to get the alcohol from somewhere. Maybe later he'd go poking around through the cookies left on her computer. Well, first he'd had to bring the monitor down from upstairs, since her computer's CRT was no longer useful. It had been a while since he had checked up on her online activities, maybe it was high time that he did just that. It would probably be a good idea to check the house for more empty bottles as well. Daniel handed over the beer. "He'll come back, you know that don't you?"

"You're kidding, right?" Jack asked as he took a long swallow of the golden liquid.

"Come on, Jack, you read his wrap sheet, you know what kind of....man...he is. He'll be back for her." Daniel took his own swallow and then shook his head. "She can't stay here." He admitted in a low voice. "If she makes it through this, I have to take her to Maeve."

"Let's not go doing anything rash, shall we? Not just yet anyway." Jack said and patted Daniel's shoulder. "If he's coming back then maybe we should have some type of code or something, you know, so we know it's you and not him."

There was a bonzer idea! If he'd had something like that with Calla she wouldn't be laying near death now. "Yeah, how about, oh, I dunno, who cares? Abydos."

How's that?"

"Abydos, huh? Good enough." Jack agreed. "Oh and by the way, not to get too personal or anything but, ah, you could really use a shower." He waved his hand in front of his nose as though the odor of last week's trash had suddenly come to him.

That was Jack, always good for pointing out the practical side of things. "I probably could." Daniel agreed and rose leaving the Molson on the coffee table. "I'll be down in a minute or two."

"Take your time." Jack said in an easy voice as he picked up the remote control and put his feet up on the table. "I'm just gonna check up on the hockey scores."

The stairs seemed daunting as Daniel looked up at them from the first floor. In the back of his mind

the image of Calla tumbling down the cement steps played itself over and over again. He didn't want to go up those stairs because if he did that meant he would have to walk into his bedroom and see her empty side of the closet. Daniel would have to come face to face with her absence. "You're being stupid." Daniel muttered to himself and ascended the steps to his bedroom. It was just as he thought it would be when he walked through the door, he was hit with an overwhelming sense of loss and emptiness. Her side of the closet was empty, her drawers had been pulled out and emptied as well, David certainly never intended for her to return here. It was the sight of the messed up bed which hit him hardest. Calla was a stickler for a neat house, she made the bed every morning and every night before he pulled the sheets back and got into it he could have bounced a quarter from it. David had stopped for a romp in his bed before taking her to the airport. Well, first thing tomorrow morning the entire thing, mattress, frame, head board and all was going out on the curb where he was seriously considering burning it.

Daniel caught sigh of the broken glass on his side of the bed and saw that at some point during the day (he didn't have to guess when) the photograph of Sha're had fallen on to the hard wood floor where the glass had shattered. Not knowing why he was doing it, it seemed so damn unimportant at the moment; Daniel crossed the room to his own side of the bed and began to pick up the shards of glass. He stood the photograph, broken frame, and all, up on the night stand. *Something's missing.* A voice rose inside his head.

*Well, duh, all of her stuff is missing!* He answered it in a huffy tone.

*Something's missing.* The voice insisted in a quiet whisper. *Something important.*

Looking around the room carefully he took in everything that was left and tried to remember what wasn't. His eye kept coming back to the photograph and the....

"Jack?!" Daniel called out in a loud voice.

"Yeah, Daniel." Jack returned from the bottom of the stairs and then began to climb up to where his friend was. "What's up?"

"You didn't happen to find the staff in with David's stuff, did you?"

"Yeah, that some clothes, some of your nick-nack stuff."

"What nick-nack stuff?" He hated it when Jack belittled his artifacts but wasn't about to argue the point at the moment.

"What do I know?" Jack pointed at himself and smiled a little. "Just stuff. Little statue things and, I dunno, stuff. It's all back at the base, in your office." He watched the look on Daniel's face, how his eyes widened and his jaw looked as though it might actually reach the floor. "What?"

Daniel didn't stop to answer him as he sprinted out of the bedroom and back down to the living room. The shelf where she had displayed most of his artifacts was missing some very key items. Along with the statues of Aphrodite and Ares, an incense burner and ceramic cup that he had dug up several years back on the same dig were gone.

“Daniel!”

“C’mon!” Daniel grabbed a small wood box from the shelf and his jacket as he headed toward the door. “S’go!”

“Go? Go where? Daniel!” Jack hurried out the door after him. “What about the hockey? Geez, Daniel, it’s always run run with you.”

“Me?” Daniel laughed as he tossed open the car door. “As I seem to recall, you’re the reason we end up running most of the time, usually from gun fire or some alien race you’ve pissed off.”

“Ok, fine,” he huffed as he jammed the key into the ignition. “But you talk too much. Let me guess. Back to the base?”

“Yeah and punch it Chewy.”

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Daniel stormed into the infirmary with Jack hot his heels. "Back already?" Sam asked as she looked up from Calla's bed side.

"What's wrong with Dr. Jackson?" Teal'c asked as he came forward to greet the two men.

"Don't look at me." Jack said in return. "I never know what's going on."

"Just, ah, give me a few moments here and hopefully everyone will see what's going on." Daniel used the rollaway tray by the bed as a makeshift altar, onto which he laid the staff, statues of Ares and Aphrodite, cup and incense burner. "I need--umm--I need--ah," Daniel looked around as he searched his mind for what he was looking for, his eyes pleading for help from those around him. "I don't suppose there's any wine or..."

"I will return." Teal'c said to Daniel's request and hurried out of the infirmary. Daniel nodded "And salt, I need salt."

"Got it," Sam said and just as quickly as Teal'c exited the infirmary to quickly make her way down to the commissary.

"This is going to work," Daniel whispered as he caressed Calla's head, "I know it is. Just hang on a little longer."

Teal'c dashed back into the room with a dark brown bottle in his hand. "I believe this will suit your purposes, Dr. Jackson." He handed it over to Daniel.

"What is it?" Daniel asked as he uncorked it and was met with the stinging scent of hard alcohol. "It is a special blend, greatly coveted on Chulak, it is called Vintayana."

"Coveted for what?" Daniel picked up the cup and poured the liquid into it.

"Medicinal and other values."

"Daniel, here." Sam rushed in with a large box of Morton salt that she had wrangled from the cook.

Dr. Daniel Jackson had spent many hours poring over the words in the small book that he kept hidden in the desk in his office. Calla couldn't drink from the cup on Tiberia again, that much was true because that cup had once belonged to Ares but the cup he had dug up so many years ago and which had sat around collecting dust for as many years, belonged to Aphrodite. It was not the contents of the cup that the Bonding Ritual had depending on as much as whose cup it had been. "All right, here we go." Daniel said more to himself than anyone else and then began to pour the salt onto the floor first making the five pointed star and then closing it in a half circle. "Slide her over here; come in where it's open." He instructed. "Bring the tray."

"Daniel, I don't think..." Janet began to protest and then dropped it when she looked into Daniel's eyes. "Let me unhook her from the monitors first."

Teal'c and Jack slid the gurney where Daniel had directed while Sam brought in the roll away tray. Daniel waited for them to exit the way they came in before he finished closing the circle that he and Calla were now inside of with the salt. Daniel opened the wood box he had brought with him and from it produced a round bit of charcoal which he lit and placed into the ceramic censer which he had dug up on the same dig and which clearly bore the marks of Zeus upon it. Onto flickering burning coal Daniel placed a chunk of blood red resin known as Dragon's Blood, when it began to melt and the smoke it created was thick and dark, he placed several leaves of dried white sage and sprigs of dried rosemary on the top. The sweet aroma which had mingled with his being since he had first dreamed of Aphrodite greeted everyone in the room.

"What is he doing?" General Hammond asked in a low voice as he entered the room with Dr. Fraser. Jack just shook his head and the rest of them remained silent. "What is that smell?"

"Just let him do his thing I guess, General." Jack said in a hushed voice and stopped Janet from moving any further towards them.

Daniel wafted the heavily scented smoke from the tip of her toes to the top of her auburn head and down again. Placing the censer back upon the tray he began to chant over her. "Eh-Ei-He. Agla." Over and over until his tone reached a fevered pitch and the marks of the Gods on her skin began to glow. Still keeping his chant, Daniel raised her head from the pillow and spilled the Vintayana down her throat with a gentle hand and laid her down once more. "Eh-Ei-He. Agla." When the marks grew as brightly as he dared them to Daniel stopped abruptly and took tight hold of the staff with both hands as he raised it above his head and began to speak to the Gods that he had called forth. "I am Daniel. I *am* Lord. I *am* Master. I *am* Sovereign." His voice grew stronger with each word that he spoke. "I *am* Daniel, I *am* Sa'Tan. The Lady Wakes Only Unto Me. "He touched the mark of Zeus with the tip of the staff. "I give you all that you need, all that was stolen from you. Mine is the only hand. Mine is the only voice. I will defend you with my life. I am Daniel, I *am* Sa'Tan." The lights all over the base flickered, dimmed and then went out. The emergency back-up lights cast a dim shadow over the man standing with the staff in his hand. The wood began to glow a bright orange at the point where his hand held it, the energy grew hot and bright as it swiftly coursed toward the tip of the staff where it met the mark of Zeus and entered her body. "The Lady Wakes Only Unto Me."

As her true soul was returned to her, Calla's lifeless body began to stiffen and jerk on the gurney. The staff in Daniel's hands grew hotter until its ancient wood showed signs of charring as though the wood were burning from the inside out and began to smoke. The light, the energy--the power--that had been stolen from her so many years ago seemed to be endless, boundless, Daniel thought the searing heat would either make him drop it or it would simply burst into flames before it could finish its work. Suddenly she drew in a harsh rasping breath and her emerald eyes flew open, Calla's left hand, the one which was still good for something, grasped onto the tip of the staff and pushed it closer to her skin. The orange light grew bright enough to ignite the entire infirmary with its ethereal glow, Jack and the rest raised their hands to their faces and turned their eyes away from the bright glare. They heard her draw in another harsh breath; Daniel grunted in pain but held onto the burning staff, the lenses of his glasses fogged over from the heat.

With a loud whooshing sound the last of the energy sprinted towards its goal and settled into Calla just before the staff turned to nothing more than ashes in Daniel's hands. They scattered to the floor around her bed. The lights overhead flickered and returned to their full intensity, everything around them seemed to be normal once more. Caution in his step, Daniel moved closer to where she laid looking up with wide blank eyes. "Hi," he said in a quiet voice and watched as her eyes turned in his direction. "Do you know who I am?"

It seemed to take forever until her eyes focused upon the voice she heard speaking to her, seemed so very hard just to move her eyeballs and make the attempt to focus. Her throat was so dry and parched that she was unsure words would come to her, the air in her lungs seemed stagnant and cold. Blue that was all she really saw at first, something, no two things, blue and bright and shining at her. Calla closed her eyes and opened them again as she felt something warm slip over her hand. "Daniel." She uttered as she demanded her throat work for her.

"Yeah, it's me, Calla. It's Daniel. Welcome back." Feeling as though he'd just dodged the biggest bullet ever to come at him, Daniel leaned forward and kissed the top of her head. "I thought I lost you."

"I'll be damned, he did it!" Jack said happily and without thinking at all reached out and grabbed Sam. He hugged her tight, just to share the joy he was feeling. Sam returned the embrace but only for a moment before she broke away from him.

"Yes, sir, looks like he did." She agreed. "Maybe we should give them some space, hungry?"

"Jell-o?"

"What else?" Sam asked and tugged on Teal's arm as they walked out of the infirmary. General Hammond followed the three but Dr. Fraser did not.

"I'll give you a few minutes but then I want to examine her, got that?" She asked Daniel.

"Yeah, sure." He agreed without looking at her. Seemed he just couldn't take his eyes off of Calla right now, she was the only thing he could or even wanted to see. Her throat was working hard but

no sound was coming and he watched while she licked her dry lips with an even drier tongue. "Thirsty?" Calla placed her good hand over her throat and nodded, Daniel poured her a cup of cold water and helped her sit up so that she could drink it. Greedily she slurped from the cup he offered. "Slow down," Daniel tilted it away from her for a moment, "you'll get sick." He raised it once more so that she could have another drink. "Better?" Calla nodded and he gave her another drink before putting the cup back on the hastily made altar.

"Thy brother," she began in a rasping voice, "Master David..."

"Was never your Master," Daniel corrected firmly as he leaned in close to her. "We can talk about all of it later, it doesn't matter right now, Calla. Just rest."

"He said you were dead."

"I'm not."

"Maeve?"

Well, David hadn't wasted any time using his inside information had he? "I saw her." With great effort she turned her head away from him. "I remember you." Daniel whispered. "I remember everything now." He took gentle hold of her chin and turned her head back to face him. "I'm not angry with you."

"You should be." Calla confessed as she lay on the gurney and began to notice that the world had finally fallen silent. The only voice ringing inside of her head was her own. "Mother..." Calla coughed as her dry throat rebelled against speaking any further. She felt the warmth of his skin as Daniel put his hand under her the back of her head and helped her to take another drink of water. He waited for her speak again. "Mother came?"

"Yes," he agreed softly. "Hades too."

"They took..." she turned her eyes away from him again.

"Yes. The little girl and all of your children went with her, they're safe, and someplace no one can touch them. You don't have to protect them any more. Rest now, Calla. Please, just rest. It's over."

"Why didn't you take her?"

"Sha're?" Daniel asked but didn't wait for her to answer. "She is not my wife anymore." Daniel soothed her creased brow with his hand while he brushed the hair away from her face. "You are." He covered her mouth with his fingers when she began to protest his claim. "I should have told you the first time I saw you by Kanan's side or when you came to me in my dream, I love you Calla." Daniel brushed his lips over hers and moved his thumb against the softness of her hand and looked down at it, the gold band met his eye. Yes, he should have been the one to place the ring on her finger and not in the way David had done it. "In every way that can possibly matter, you are my wife. I am your husband. We're going to get through this together. Right now, you sleep, I'll stay

right here. I promise not to leave you alone again.”

“You can’t love me.”

“Why not?”

“I killed Love. There is none for me.”

“No, you didn’t. Ares did.”

“No, I did it.” She insisted. It was all so long ago and so much had passed between then and now that it was all garbled in her own mind, she lay there looking up at him trying to find the words for a proper confession. “You saw my dream?” Daniel silently nodded. “Father was so angry, he was enraged.” She whispered. “I stole the blade from his belt, I wanted to stop him from hitting her anymore, from doing what he had done to me, I didn’t want him to ever do that again.” Tears began to fall from her eyes and she gasped for breath.

“Shh, we don’t have to talk about this now.”

“I meant to stab him with it,” she continued, “to stop him. Mother, Mother,” her voice trailed off and she left it for Daniel to help her finish.

“Aphrodite jumped in the way to stop you from stabbing your Father.”

“And I killed her.” Calla let out a pitiful wail as she forced her body off the gurney and reached for Daniel who swept his arms around her and brought her close to himself. “Oh, Gods, Daniel, I killed her.”

“You didn’t mean it,” Daniel tried to reassure her as he stroked her hair and kissed the side wet cheek. “It was an accident.”

“Everything is my fault,” she admitted in a hushed whisper, “everything that has happened to you and Master David. Your parents, your lives, everything would have been so different for you and him if...” she trailed off again. “You can’t love me.” Calla pulled away from him and laid down on the hospital bed once more, she turned her whole body away from Daniel. “I am a horrible person. I have killed my Mother, your parents, tricked you into taking me away from Kanan, lain with your brother. No, you can’t love me.” She whispered one last time.

“Calla, look at me.” She did not turn towards him so Daniel rose from the bed and crossed to the other side so she could see him. “If I had...” he stopped to rephrase his question, “If you had known about David, would you have said something when I started acting strangely?”

“Yes,” she whispered without looking at him.

“Then the fact that he fooled you into sleeping with him is my fault and so is everything else.” Daniel reached out with gentle but firm hands as she tried to turn away again. “As for my parents

and David, well, Ares killed them. And David would have been nothing but trouble no matter what. Even if our parents were still alive, David would still be who and what he is, you never have any control over that. As far as Kanan goes, I wanted to take you away from him, I wanted you with me and I still do.” Now her eyes did turn to look up him. “I was supposed to fight him for you, wasn’t I? But you fixed it so that he had no choice but to give you to me.” Silently she nodded her head in response. “You were more concerned for my life then your own and you still are, aren’t you?” Again she nodded. “Why?”

“I love you.” Calla whispered in a guilty admission. “Always.”

Daniel took her hand and put it over his heart so that she could feel its steady rhythm, he placed his own over hers. “Do you feel that?” Her eyes welled with tears once more as she gazed up at him. “Do you want it?” Again she nodded but this time when she did, she gave out a small sigh. “It’s yours, Calla. I love you, so please, just let me love you. Don’t turn away from this. Stay with me.” Now it was his pale blue eyes which were filled with wetness and it spilled down his rough unshaven cheeks. “Please?”

“Daniel?”

“What?”

“Will you take me home soon?”

Daniel could not hold back the wide smile that came to his face and lit up his swollen tired eyes. “Oh, yeah, I’ll take you home with me.”

## Epilogue

The oppressive night air steamed its way through the open windows of the darkened bedroom where Daniel and Calla lay deep asleep in each other's arms. Feeling the heaviness of the heat surrounding him, Daniel kicked the sheet from his naked body as he slumbered.

A sharp tapping sound, like fingernails on glass, woke Calla. Listlessly her eyes rolled open and she tried to focus in the direction of the sound that had woken her.

*Tap. Tap. Tap.*

Perhaps it was a branch from the elm tree knocking against the window, she told herself as her eyes closed and she began to drift back into Morpheus' realm. Before they closed all the way, a dark shadow blotted out the moon light which was shining through the same window.

*Tap. Tap. Tap.*

Calla's eyes fully opened now, with some effort she tossed back the thin sheet which still covered her, she looked over at Daniel who slept peacefully beside her. A wistful smile crossed her lips as she ran her fingertips along the outline of his cheek. Silently she placed her bare feet on the warmed wood floor, her eyes opened a little wider, her mind drifted back up through the stages of consciousness, coached onward by the annoying occurrence coming from the window. Without a sound, Calla rose from the bed and began to cross the room to the window where she expected to find the offending branch knocking against the outer glass pane. With one hand she rubbed the last bits of the sleep from her eyes.

*Tap. Tap. Tap.*

Almost to the window now and the fingers which had been rubbing the sleep from her emerald eyes now moved to the pain beginning in the small of her back. Calla was not allowed out of the bed any longer, Dr. Fraser had told her that she was to stay on 'bed rest' until the child was born, which was another four weeks. Dr. Fraser had been very upset when Calla turned up pregnant. So had Daniel but he hid it well. The hand which had been soothing her back now reached up to touch her brow in an attempt to ward off the coming headache brought on by the thoughts in her head which were beginning to turn dark. A sharp pain shot from her swollen belly to under her rib cage as the baby stretched inside of her, Calla doubled over and pulled in a hard breath. She shot a guilty look at the sleeping Daniel Jackson and began to straighten and soothe her tummy by rubbing her hand lightly over the painful area. "Now, come on," she whispered in the dark, "that's not nice to do to your mama." Calla rubbed and gently pushed until the small limb reached a place which was more comfortable. "Thank you."

At last she reached her destination and peered through the clean glass at the elm branch which was a good safe distance from the window. The moon overhead was half full, stars shone bright in the cloudless night sky, the street below was empty and quiet. Calla noticed that the sound had

stopped, perhaps she had only been dreaming. As she turned away from the window to make her way back to the bed, the silvery light of the moon was blotted out once again and she turned back to see the cause.

*Tap. Tap. Tap.*

Outside their bedroom window a man with bronze skin and golden wings hovered before her widening eyes. He raised a slender finger to his full lips to silence the woman inside. "Eros," she whispered in surprise, "brother."

"Go downstairs, open the door and let me in, sister." Eros smiled brightly at her then watched as she turned away from him and toward the sleeping Daniel Jackson. "Do not wake him." Calla reached out to open the sash, she was not to go up and down stairs on her own any longer. By the look on his face Eros was insulted by her action. "I am a proper guest, you will let me in through the front door." Eros fluttered his golden wings and landed softly on the green grass below him. Calla grabbed her robe and drew it around her shoulders before she crept out of the bedroom, leaving Daniel to sleep. With her right leg still giving her problems and her center of gravity seriously off kilter, Calla held tight to the banister she put one foot in front of the other and very cautiously made her way down the stairs to the first floor, flicking on the kitchen and then living room lights as she went. Expecting to find the waiting arms of her brother, Calla opened the door to the cold night.

No one was there.

As she stepped barefoot onto the front porch, Calla looked around. "Eros?" She called softly to the night but there was no reply. "Eros? Brother, where are you?" Again there was no answer from him. A fleeting shadow caught the corner of her eye, it came from the right side of the house where Eros had been but a few moments before. Carefully, she padded barefoot down the three steps to the front yard and she stood under the light of the summer moon breathing in the fragrances of the flowers she had planted earlier in the year. "Eros? This is no time for games, brother." She whispered to the dark as she made her way the side yard and stood where Eros had been. The newly mown grass held the impression of his foot prints which were easy to follow in the light of the half moon above. They lead from her bedroom window, around the house, through the backyard. At the end of the yard, Calla turned back to look at the darkened house and knew she should go back. Perhaps this was all just a dream after all and Eros had never been here this night. "Sister, come with me."

Calla looked up to see Eros floating above the Earth and nearing the train tracks which ran behind the house. She did not immediately follow.

"Sister, you must leave him." He brought his bronze arm out in front of his body and waved for her to follow him. "If you want to save your child you will trust me, you will come with me. Come."

Damp eyes looked up at him with guilt and shame, she wanted to tell her brother that Daniel would never hurt the baby, that he loved and wanted this baby. Her throat would not obey her order.

In the bedroom, Daniel's eyes opened as he reached for the woman beside him only to find himself

alone in his room. 3:17 am read the clock by the bed. "Calla?" He called out as he sat up, she did not answer. Daniel swung his legs over the side of the bed began to walk down the hallway to see if she had gotten up to use the bathroom but there was light coming from downstairs. Taking a backwards glance into his bedroom he noticed that her robe was missing from its customary place, draped over the chair in the corner. A sense of urgency began to rise inside of him. "Calla?" Daniel found himself sprinting down the stairs and into the brightly lit kitchen, the lights in the living room were also burning bright but before he could make his way there movement outside the sun porch caught his eye. Daniel opened the door to the back porch and saw Calla wadding quickly through the open field towards the tracks. "Damn. Calla!" He called out harshly as he exited the porch into the overly warm Colorado night. She did not turn to look at him. "Calla!"

Suddenly,

WONK...WONK...WONK

The deep booming sound of an oncoming train whistle cut through the soundless summer night.

"Come sister, come with me." Eros called as he floated beyond her reach. "Hurry, Little One, you must hurry."

"Please wait. Eros, please!" She cried as she stumbled through the brush, stepping on pebbles and feeling the biting sting of the wild Blessed Thistle's transparent thorns as they bit into the soles of her bare feet. Paying no mind to pain, Calla followed the command her beloved brother.

As Daniel raced after her he could hear her words rising and floating back to him on the wind, she was speaking in Greek and calling to her a brother. Daniel looked up and saw no one but Calla in the trotting past the backyard, through the field, in the dark of night.

WOMP! WOMP! WONK! The train whistle sounded its warning as the lights from the engine rounded the bend. She was heading straight for it.

"Calla!" Daniel called out in a sharp voice as his legs went faster. "Wake up!" She had to be sleep walking, there was no one else out here but the two of them. Who could she possibly be talking to?

Floating through the air at a height where it was easy to see past her, Eros watched as Daniel struggled to catch up with her. "Hurry, sister." He encouraged. "Hurry."

In the dark summer night, Calla made her way across the empty field which separated their home from the train tracks beyond heeding the call of her brother and taking no heed of Daniel's voice straining behind her.

The rails before them began to let out a low groan which quickly grew to a high pitched whine. The conductor must have seen her nearing the tracks, he leaned hard on the whistle. WOMP! WOMP! WOOOONK!

As the blaring noise cut through the silent night once more, Calla did not stop at its warning, in fact, she did not hesitate whatsoever.

Sweat breaking out on his forehead, Daniel's heart thundered in his chest as he raced through the

sultry August night, trying desperately to catch up with her before she could reach the railroad tracks. Again and again he called her name, she did not respond. Did not even turn her head in his direction, as far as he was aware, Calla couldn't even hear him screaming for her to stop before she ran headlong across the tracks into the path of the oncoming locomotive. All he could hope for now was that he could catch her before the train did. She was within spitting distance of the metal tracks now, Daniel watched as her feet slipped upon the rocks which lined both sides of the tracks, molding themselves upward into a small grade. A grade that only a few months ago she would have been able to skip over, now held her back from whatever it was she was chasing. It was enough to slow her down.

Strong arms threw themselves around her as they both crashed to the ground. Daniel shielded her with his body as the train roared past their heads, mere inches above them. Dirt and debris kicked up all around them. Together they laid there and shook under the half-moon of the hot summer night until the train was past them. His heart in his throat, Daniel held her tight even after the train was gone. Calla made no move to get away from him. He raised his head and looked across the tracks.

“You can't keep her forever, Jackson!” A spiteful voice shouted at him. “She's mine. I will have her.”

Lisa Beth Darling  
2003

### ***End Daughter of the Gods: Every New Beginning***

This story continues with the novel *Daughter of the Gods: Dark Illusions*

## **About the Author**

Lisa brings us complex multi-layered stories rich with the trials and tribulations that make up the world in which we live. Not one to be pigeonholed into any single genre, Lisa's stories revolve around the intricacies of couples from range the intimacy of lovers, to mothers and sons, and brothers and sisters.

Lisa Beth Darling is 56 years-old, lives in her hometown of New London, CT with her husband of 36 years, Roy. She is the author of more than fifteen original novels along with several short stories and non-fiction books.

If you have enjoyed this story please return to <http://www.lisabethdarling.com> for her original novels or more in her "Daughter of the Gods" series of SG-1 fanfiction.