

Memory Lane

by

romansilence

(romansilence@yahoo.de)

Copyright: The characters of the shows "Stargate SG-1" don't belong to me but the lucky guys at Showtime Productions, Gekko et al. I just take them out to play. No copyright infringement is intended. No profit will be made. The story however is mine, archiving only with my permission.

Rating: R-13, no sex but some remembered violence – and there's also a lot of hurt and angst; so, be warned.

Warning: This story depicts a loving relationship between two consenting adult women.

Pairing: Sam/Janet (established relationship)

Timeline: Season seven; just before Heroes; thus: Heroes-fixit, with a lot of flashbacks.

Language warning: This story is some sort of experiment. For the first time I used phrases of a language I know next to nothing about. I claim full responsibility for the German parts, but I know next to nothing about the Russian language. When the internet didn't give up any satisfactory solutions I asked for help and was answered. Svetla and Jen saved me from total embarrassment. You'll find a list with translations and the pronunciation of the Russian parts (provided by Jen) at the end of the story.

Thanks: So, this time my thanks go to Pam and Mary, my beta readers, and my valiant language knights Svetla and Jen. You guys rock and I would have been totally lost without their help.

~*~*~*~*~*

Summary: Did you ever wonder why Samantha was not part of the first Abydos mission? Did you ever wonder why General (sh. Script für Tantalus) and not General Hammond was the one in charge? Here's an answer. – And while fixing SNAFUS: well, just think of Heroes.

Doctor Janet Fraiser jumped up and glared evilly at the computer screen that just had jolted her out of a very sensual dream about her lover of six years by announcing, "You have mail!"

Janet had fallen asleep at the desk in Samantha's lab at the base, a place to which she often retired when her blonde partner was on a mission. She blinked the sleep out of her eyes and stared at the insistently flashing mail icon.

Samantha usually re-routed her private account to Janet's station when going off-world. The brunette automatically opened the mail program and found that the message was addressed to an account she never had seen before.

The message was marked urgent. There was no sender identification and no subject header. It was not signed and consisted of only a few words.

Она умирает. Приезжай как можно скорее.

Janet was at a loss. The letters were Cyrillic but her lover had never mentioned having friends in Russia.

SG-1 was scheduled to stay on M3X-997 for another three days. Janet had cleared them for light duty only, and so, Daniel had a shot at the temple ruins the MALP survey had brought up.

A quiet but insistent voice told the doctor to simply ignore the message but her gut feeling was of another opinion. So, she transferred the few words to her PDA and went to the control room. She would be just in time for SG-1's daily report.

Daniel obviously was in an archaeologist's heaven, while the others seemed very relaxed and genuinely bored, even Teal'c. Samantha had an indulgent smile on her face when Jack told the General about the prodigious fishing grounds next to the ruins.

While the Colonel still was bragging, Janet sent the message to her lover. Samantha's smile disappeared in a flash and a dark cloud fell over her face,

"Janet, when did the message come through?"

“About five or ten minutes ago, Sam.”

“General Hammond, I request permission to return to Earth, immediately.
– Janet, please show the message to the General.”

General Hammond’s face rarely showed what he was feeling but after taking hold of Janet’s PDA, he looked as if some prehistoric monster just had raised its head. He whispered,

“ Она умирает. Приезжай как можно скорее. She’s dying. Come fast.”
He whispered and then added in his command voice. “Permission granted, Major Carter. Colonel, do you want a replacement for your XO or can you manage on your own?”

The smart-ass remark Jack probably had had in mind died on his lips when he saw Samantha’s stormy blue eyes.

“No, Sir. It’s a rather quiet little moon. T and I have everything under control.”

“Then proceed. Close the gate, Siler. Doctor Fraiser, prepare to make Major Carter’s post-mission check-up right here, and send her to my office as soon as you’re done.”

Without waiting for her reply, the General was gone, with her PDA still in hand.

~*~

Janet grabbed the emergency med kit and rushed down to the Gate room. The metal ring whooshed to life the moment she entered the big room. A few heartbeats later, Samantha stepped through the event horizon.

Her face was a closed off mask, but over the years the small doctor had learned to read her lover. She knew that Samantha was deeply troubled. She was fighting not to lose her outer calm; but despite her best efforts Janet could see the pain in those incredibly blue eyes. She longed to take her in her arms and to comfort her; instead she busied herself with a superficial check-up that only barely followed the guidelines she had personally enforced.

Janet knew her lover well enough to be certain that she now needed distance and not cuddling to keep from breaking down in front of the whole SGC. But she also was unwilling to let her go through whatever was to come all alone. So, she whispered in her ear. “Let me be at your side, Sam.”

For a split second the mask slipped and surprisingly the blonde nodded. Janet’s surprise grew when she didn’t have to resort to some basically phoney medical reasons to get the General’s permission to accompany her lover.

He simply said, “Take all the time you need Majors – there’s nothing important scheduled and the reporter the President wants us to talk to will just have to do with your XO’s.”

~*~

They quickly changed into pilot jumpsuits, grabbed their always prepared bags with changes of clothes and other necessities, and were driven to the USAF airport outside of Colorado Springs where an F-16C was being prepped for them.

Though an Air Force Major herself, Janet had never seen the inside of one of the Fighting Falcons up close and personal. She could have written up a report about the injuries one could sustain from the special make-up of the cockpit, but she never had experienced it first hand. And now she would sit in the back seat to fly to the other end of the continent, to Nome, Alaska. At the base there a helicopter would stand by to bring them across the Bering Sea to the port-town Prowidenija in Russia. A car would be waiting to take them the last leg of their journey.

This much she had learned from General Hammond who had startled her by squeezing her shoulder and quietly telling her to take good care of Samantha. She still didn’t have the faintest idea where they finally would end up and why.

Janet couldn’t help but feel a great deal of apprehension about the whole situation. However, her need to be with her lover, to offer any support she could as soon as the blonde was ready to accept help was stronger than her misgivings. What Samantha now definitively didn’t need was a cartload full of questions.

Except for the blonde fighter pilot reassuring her that flying the powerful aircraft was easier than riding her Harley, they had not spoken much. So, the brunette idly studied the numerous buttons and lights in front of her and tried to make sense of them in a doomed attempt to keep her mind from speculating.

Samantha and General Hammond obviously hadn't had any problems to decipher the message. On a rational level Janet understood that it could be quite a tactical advantage to understand your (former) enemy's language. It was even greater an advantage if your enemy didn't know you had this skill. The small doctor didn't have access to General Hammond's complete personal file, but Samantha's didn't mention any knowledge of foreign languages other than Spanish and German; and as far as she remembered her service file she never had been posted anywhere near Russia or the USSR prior to joining the SGC.

Yes, the Russians now were their allies, officially and in the Stargate Program; they even had their own team, but still... She didn't trust them. Janet was honest enough with herself to admit that her dislike of every thing Russian had nothing to do with residual effects of the cold war or some other political reason. It only had to do with Samantha's nightmares.

With everything her lover had been through over the years, the doctor was surprised that she slept at all. Her dreams often were troubled and Janet had to calm her down or even wake her up. Whenever she had to work closely with the Russian team, the dreams tended to get out of hand, to the point that the usually brave and stoic blonde dreaded to go back to sleep.

Janet closed her eyes and remembered the first time this had happened. It had been after the incident with this weird water planet when the team had shipped out to Siberia to help the Russian scientists. After their return, they had had to stay under observation in the infirmary to make sure that there were no lingering side effects from the contact with these strange life forms.

~~~~~

Janet checked on her favourite team every hour; everyone knew that she was extremely protective of all four of them. Even Warner who had the

sensibility of a frozen mammoth wouldn't dare to suggest that the CMO was wasting her time by personally watching over them, though for once they all seemed to be okay.

Jack and Daniel were sleeping, Teal'c was in a deep state of Kel'no'rem, and Samantha was pretending to be asleep. The small doctor used the eerie quiet of the night shift to fight the ever growing mountain of paperwork. Every now and then she looked up to make sure that every thing was still alright out there. When Samantha suddenly began to thrash around in her sleep and cry, she was at her side in the blink of an eye and hastily closed the flimsy privacy curtain around the bed.

Janet made sure that all the security camera would catch was her silhouette looming over the bed. She gently stroked Samantha's face and whispered endearments. Usually this was enough to ease her lover back to a more peaceful sleep. But this night soft touches and tender words could not break through the hold the nightmare had of the blonde. She continued to whimper and thrash around and cry.

"Sam, Sammy-baby, come back to me," Janet said while nudging her shoulder. "Wake up. Open these baby-blues for me. That's an order, Major." And the blonde obeyed. "It's all right, Sam. You just had a bad dream."

"Please hold me, Jan."

Samantha never showed weakness when on base. It must have been a very, very bad dream. Without hesitation the small doctor scooped her lover in her arms. The blonde gratefully cuddled against her. For long minutes, Janet gently stroked her back and Samantha's breathing slowly returned to normal.

"Don't let me go back to sleep, Janet. I don't want to dream."

The brunette was shocked speechless by the pleading tone and the fear in her partner's voice, and held her tighter. She was tempted to ask about the dream but knew from experience that the taller woman would never open up if she prodded her now.

"Let's go to my office, baby. The couch there is more comfortable to sit and talk. I'll tell you about my day and then we can play a round of Scrabble. You don't have to go back to sleep if you don't want to, baby."

They got the board and the letters out but in the end, Samantha had

started to talk to keep from falling asleep. She had talked about her childhood; how her mother had been her best friend and playmate and what it had felt like to lose her.

~~~~~

Janet returned to the present when she felt a sudden change in velocity. She observed with baited breath how Sam manoeuvred close to a freighter and expertly connected with a filler pipe while making small talk with the captain of the other aircraft. They quickly were back to their previous cruising speed.

“Great show, Sam.”

“We aim to please, Janet.” The words were meant to sound light and carefree but Samantha’s voice was far from it.

Janet sensed the younger woman’s pain and decided that it was time to distract her lover from her obviously disturbing thoughts. “So, did we need to refuel or did you only want to show off, Sam?” she asked teasingly.

“If you want me to show off, I can do a few loops and rolls. But yes, we needed to refuel. These babies are fast but they’re not really made for long distance runs. It’s close to 3,000 miles from Colorado to Nome, and our flight plan adds another 150 miles. Maximum speed is Mach 2. We’re going at Mach 1.7, that’s 1,275 miles per hour. We’re about to cross over into Canadian airspace.”

“Is this why we had to refuel this early?” Janet wanted to keep her lover going. She probably would learn more about F-16 fighters than she ever wanted to know, but she also loved to listen to her lover’s voice and it would keep Samantha from brooding too much over whatever awaited them at their destination.

Two and a half hours after their take-off at Colorado Springs, Samantha landed the Viper at Nome’s Air Force base, and five minutes later the helicopter that would bring them to Russia was air borne.

Janet positively hated helicopters. *They could take your head off and were far too loud.* The actual mechanics and physics involved in flying were just too close to the surface to let her keep her comfort zone. They

made her feel vulnerable and mortal, and just outright scared her.

She grabbed Samantha's hand like a lifeline and held on for dear life. The blonde squeezed back, knowing of her lover's aversion to helicopters, and Janet immediately felt better.

~~~~~

From the very beginning Cassandra had been fascinated by all things technical. She wanted to use them, wanted to know how they worked and why they worked. Her favourite toys were the tools in what once had been Janet's two-car garage and now, a month after Samantha had moved in with them – supposedly to help the doctor raising the alien pre-teen – now gave a good impression of a cross between a working shed and a high-tech car repair. Cassandra loved to take things apart but on top of her list was everything remotely connected to flying.

So, to indulge the girl and give her lover a treat, Samantha had arranged a helicopter joyride over Colorado Springs and the Garden of the Gods. It should have been a surprise but Cassandra knew all along that something was up and was bubbly with anticipation. Neither Samantha nor the girl saw the expression of dread crossing Janet's face when the colourful sign 'Babington aviation Surveys and Fun Rides' came into view.

They stopped the car next to an office building. Janet openly stared at the steel-bodied incarnation of impending doom only a few dozen paces away. She considered simply waiting it out on the ground, but in the end she wouldn't have been able to stand Samantha's and Cassandra's disappointed puppy dog eyes.

They were greeted by a tall woman, tall enough to tower even over Samantha. Janet suspected that she would have been able to see eye to eye with Teal'c without craning her neck. She closed her arms around the blonde and swung her around. This greeting distracted her enough from the metal monster in front of her to hear Samantha introducing Cassandra and her.

"Mickey, meet Cassy and Janet, my family."

~~~~~


“You alright, Janet?” Samantha asked and motioned for her to activate the microphone of the headset she was wearing. “You were squeezing the life out of my hand, and now you’re smiling that wonderful smile of yours. What’s up?”

“I was just remembering the first time you took me on a helicopter ride. I was so insanely proud when you introduced Cassy and me as your family,” the brunette answered after double-checking that their conversation could not be overheard by the pilot. “I could have kissed you right then.”

“Could have fooled me. I thought you wanted to kick me into next week when we returned from the ride,” Samantha answered with a smile that didn’t reach her eyes.

That was what Janet reacted to by reaffirming her grip on the blonde’s hand. “Everything will be okay, baby.”

Samantha turned intense blue eyes on her smaller lover and answered. “Yes, eventually it will be, Jan, but right now I hurt.”

“I’ll be with you, every step of the way.”

They fell silent for the rest of the 300 miles’ flight to Prowidenija.

The closer they came to their destination, the more rigid Samantha sat in her seat. The usually imperceptible lines around her eyes were now clearly visible; her jaw was set, and her mouth was close to snap in a tight line. Janet’s lover rarely showed this many outward signs of stress and exhaustion, not even when everyone else would have collapsed hours ago.

Janet really longed to know what from her past had the power to haunt her strong partner to such a degree. No one at the SGC, not even her team mates, would believe that the strong, controlled, unflappable Major Carter was even capable of assuming such a facial expression; no one with the possible exception of General George Hammond.

The General was friends with her father and had known her lover for her whole life though both of them successfully kept their private relationship out of the base and everyday life. He knew about them. He probably had known before either of them had been ready to admit to their feelings.

His support was why she now was sitting where she was sitting and holding the hand of the most important person in her life.

~*~

The helicopter began to descend and Janet chanced a glance outside. What she had seen of Nome had given her the impression of a quiet little town with a somewhat rural feeling in a sea of green. Prowidenija was grey, countless shades of grey. The sun was shining, and yet everything seemed dull. A patrol ship was cruising under them, unmoving cranes, and an ugly, supposedly utilitarian architecture didn't do anything to improve Janet's state of mind.

They touched ground at the military harbour. A uniformed man stood next to a big, black limousine and greeted them – at least that's what Janet thought he was doing. Samantha answered in Russian.

They exchanged a few sentences, and the small doctor witnessed as the quiet desperation her lover had settled into during the flight was replaced by anger. She snapped a few words that every soldier in every army of the world would recognise as an order. The man cast an uneasy glance in her direction, saluted, and opened the door to the back seat.

Janet had no idea how good her lover's mastery of the foreign language really was but to her ears it was sexy as hell. Samantha's voice gained a new musical quality that went straight to her heart.

When the car rolled from the dock, she became aware that they were still holding hands. Not that she minded but she also couldn't shake the feeling that the short argument had had something to do with this. Janet considered asking the blonde what it really had been about but she also knew her lover well. She knew now was not the time.

The windows of the car, though pitch black on the outside, allowed an unimpeded view from the interior.

They left the dock area, drove past office blocks, and living quarters with freshly laundered clothes on small balconies. At the checkpoint, they simply were waved through without having to stop. Someone very high up on the food chain must have authorised their journey. The rest of the town turned out to be more colourful, with advertising signs, Chinese and American cars, and of all things a MacDonald's. There were lots of

people hurrying along or ambling around.

This sign of normal, everyday life made Janet feel better but it surprisingly also made her more sensitive to the rigid tension emanating from her lover. So, she did the only thing she could think of: she put her left hand on top of Samantha's left holding her right and began to gently stroke its back with her thumb. Sometimes, she did things like this in debriefing sessions that had the potential to hurt her partner.

By then they had left the town and were following a smooth path lined by fields.

Samantha turned towards her lover and simply shook her head. The brunette immediately stopped the caress and removed her hand. The small gesture had told her more about Samantha's state of mind than any of Mackenzie's psych evaluations ever would.

For now, Samantha needed to distance herself from her feelings. She needed to feel in control to keep the tenuous hold she had on her emotions.

Her rigid posture and tightly controlled breathing reminded Janet of the surprisingly short debriefing after Orlin's ascension.

~~~~~

She and Cassandra had been on a short mother-daughter-vacation when the alien had decided to follow Samantha to Earth. With O'Neill and Hammond paying more credence to the blonde's word than the NID or Mackenzie ever would, she and Cassandra had temporarily ended up at the General's house. It had been a very nerve wrecking time; her mind didn't stop speculating about what Samantha was doing with the alien male. She didn't fear losing her lover, but that didn't keep her from worrying.

Even after the remnants of the one-time-one-way Stargate had been removed to be studied at Area 51, their house, especially the basement, was still a mess and General Hammond extended their temporary sanctuary at his home.

Samantha had held up the façade of the good little soldier during the debriefing but as soon as the door to the guest room closed behind them

she had broken down in sobs. Janet had cradled her in her arms. They had cried together; and Samantha had told her about the mind meld and other things not mentioned in her official report or the illegal surveillance tapes of the NID. It had taken more than one night of tears and long, repeated conversation to let the blonde successfully deal with the feeling of guilt she had over Orlin's death.

~~~~~

The small doctor couldn't shake the feeling that this time the fall-out would be far worse, and her lover would need more than just a couple of days to cope with whatever was waiting for them.

The limousine slowed down, and with the next turn the asphalt road changed to gravel. Janet heard the distinctive crunching of the tyres on the small stones. A few hundred metres later it came to a stop. The car door was opened and they climbed out.

A woman with long dark brown hair hugged Samantha and then stretched her hand out to greet Janet. "Doctor Fraiser, I presume. Nice to finally meet you. I only wish it could have been under better circumstances. My name is Svetlana Markova."

"I remember your name, Doctor Markova. You are the one who irritated the hell out of Colonel O'Neill during the mission in Siberia a couple of years ago."

"Be assured, it was the other way round, and please call me Svetlana, Janet. – Samantha, she's waiting for you." The woman had warm brown eyes, and Janet instantly liked her, despite her heavy accent.

The blonde nodded, and they went inside of the 19th Century stone mansion. As soon as the door opened, Janet knew that they were in a hospital; and judging by the abundance of uniforms, a hospital run by the military. No one seemed to pay any attention to the three women, but she still had the feeling that they were under close observation.

Svetlana led them to a room at the end of a rather quiet corridor. She closed her fingers around the handle and turned towards them.

"She only stopped working four days ago. It took a lot out of her. The radiation inhibitors are no longer working; there are a lot of lesions.

Please, be kind.”

“I owe her my life, Lana. I never would hurt her, and I know what to expect.

“Would you mind giving us some privacy?”

“Of course not, Samantha. Take all the time you need. We’ll be three doors down. There’s a lounge with a kitchenette. Would you like some coffee, Janet?”

“Yes, please. It’s been quite a journey.”

It was more than just a bit strange to have travelled more than 3,000 miles just to sit and make small talk with a potential stranger, Janet thought.

The stranger’s eyes, however, reflected the same pain she had seen in her lover’s eyes. – Perhaps the Russian scientist also felt the need to distance herself from overwhelming emotions.

“The phone call from Nome, telling us that you were on your way, surprised me. I didn’t expect Sam’s arrival before late tomorrow.”

“General Hammond authorised the use of an F-16. He knew that time was of the essence.”

“I read her papers and reports. I saw how she reacts under pressure. Despite all I know about her, I constantly forget that Samantha also is a fighter pilot and combat soldier.

“When we were stuck on the mini-submarine, the only thing that kept me from following Doctor Jackson’s example and being a nervous wreck was her visible calm. On the way back to the airport, she told me that she knew everything would work out because she had someone waiting for her. You’re a very lucky woman, Janet Fraiser.”

So, this woman obviously knew about the real nature of their relationship. This had the potential of getting them into deep trouble but under no circumstances would she deny her feelings for the blonde.

“Yes, I am, Svetlana Markova.”

They fell silent and after a couple of minutes the taller woman made

another attempt at some light conversation. “So, was it your first time in an F-16?”

“Oh, yes. It was a thrill. I’m not too fond of flying but this really was fun. At least it could have been, had I not been so worried about Sam.”

Janet fell silent, her mind wandering back to all the times she had spent worrying about her lover, especially the times when the uneasiness she usually felt whenever the blonde was on an away-mission morphed to anxiousness and full-blown panic.

“I’m sorry. I just can’t do this. I can not sit here, drink coffee and make idle conversation when I know that at the same time only a few doors down, Sam is hurting.”

Janet started to pace and her mind wandered.

~~~~~

She stood in the control room, watching SG-1 and Martouf step through the event horizon. Her hands gripped the backrest of one of the chairs, her knuckles white with the strain and her face almost as pale.

Janet knew her lover didn’t have a choice but to go after her father and to try and get him literally out of hell. Samantha wouldn’t be the woman the doctor loved if she had been able to decide otherwise. The blonde was not the least interested in the information Martouf and his symbiote Lantash wanted to retrieve, but she would have made a deal with the devil himself to get her father out of harm’s way.

In this case they just had to outwit the devil; and to do this it would be necessary to delve deep into Jolinar’s memories – memories that still were liable to give Samantha horrible nightmares. Their plan was based on so many what-ifs it gave her the creeps.

The small doctor knew that her lover was afraid, not of the possible danger on Netu, but more of all the things this Tok’ra memory device could bring to light. She feared of losing herself in her former symbiote’s memories and Janet had tried to reassure her. She had told her that she only had to think of her and their love to come back to herself, and the flicker of bone deep trust she had seen in the blonde’s eyes had made letting her go bearable.

But now she was gone and Janet couldn't help the cloud of despair suddenly settling over her mind. She felt General Hammond's hand at the small of her back.

"Go home, doctor. Be with your daughter."

"Cass is at a sleepover. She'll not be back before tomorrow evening and she..."

"She would know that you're more worried than usual, and you don't want her to worry."

As an answer the Air Force doctor only smiled at him. "Come, doctor, we'll both call it a day. Our shifts are over and at the moment we are not needed here. Let's go to O'Malley's and get something to eat."

And so they did. They ended up in General Hammond's house, sitting side by side in his living room and going through some of his photo albums in which a certain blond haired genius was immortalised almost as often as his own daughters. Both of them tried to ignore the two enormous pink elephants sitting in the middle of the room, one of them with the letters 'Air Force Regulations' stamped on its forehead, the other one with worry and fear written all over it.

Ten days later the team had returned, for once in a reasonably good physical condition, but she never forgot the gut clenching fear she had endured during her lover's absence – though the Artic cruise Jacob Carter had invited them to and the fact that he wholeheartedly approved of their relationship had made it more easy to cope with.

~~~~~

"Believe me, Janet. I know how you feel. The woman dying over there is my sister. She raised me; she taught me everything I know." The Russian's voice snapped her back to reality and brought Janet to a halt.

"I'm sorry, Svetlana. I wouldn't have complained had I known. Sam wasn't exactly forthcoming with the reason of this journey."

"But you still came, because you knew that at some point I would need your support," Samantha said from the doorway.

“Come, Marina wants to get to know you; and don’t be surprised: she knows about us, about Cassandra, the Stargate program, about everything. We’ve been in regular contact for a very long time.”

When she saw that Svetlana was still sitting at the table, she added. “You too, Lana. You’re forgiven for calling me.”

~*~

When they stepped through the door, Janet didn’t find the simple hospital room she had expected to see. This was a fully equipped science lab, similar to Samantha’s own at the base but with a bed and a few surveillance monitors.

When they reached the bed Janet was once again grateful for the trauma surgeon who had taught her how to control her facial expressions in the second week of her residency.

The human being lying there was thin, extremely thin, almost emaciated. The skin was stretched taut over the bones; bandages covered two thirds of the visible skin. For the fraction of a heartbeat she was back in her own infirmary, standing helplessly next to Daniel’s slowly failing body. She brought herself out of the painful memories by snapping into doctor mode. Janet instinctively searched for her penlight, in a lab coat she was not wearing.

“Don’t Janet. I don’t need you as a doctor. I need you as Samantha’s partner. I will die in less than 48 hours, and there’s nothing anyone can do about it. I had a good life and leave a great legacy.”

The woman’s voice was a carbon copy of her sister’s but with only a hint of an accent.

“Come around and sit down. Over the years, дочь моего сердца, the daughter of my heart, has told me a lot about you. According to her you must be the best thing, next to cold fusion.”

“Better than cold fusion, Rina, much better. Janet, may I introduce Professor Marina Markova. A long time ago, she saved my life and my soul.” Samantha said.

“If you insist on dwelling on the past, then concentrate on the good times, Samantha. Пока влияние у прошлого на вас, будет настоящее болезненное.” The dying woman answered.

„ Для того чтобы держать мои памяти, я оплащу цену,“ the blonde said, her voice still unusually deep and sensual, “моя вторая мать!”

“I know, Samantha, no one asks you to give up your memories. But let’s stick to English, we are rather rude.” She then turned her attention back to the small doctor, “I told Samantha that she has to let go of the past to enjoy the present and she stubbornly answered that she doesn’t intend to give up her memories. But now lets talk about something else.

“Come around and take a seat, Janet, and tell me about the first time you met Samantha. She told me that suddenly the world stood still and shrank to two brown eyes.”

Samantha blushed.

“That must have been after we literally ran into each other in one of the base corridors and landed with our behinds on the cold concrete floor.”

The brunette answered with a smile and took a seat next to her lover at the other side of the bed. From this angle she had a better view of the woman. This side of her face was almost free of lesions and despite her thinness the resemblance to her sister was stunning. She looked like Svetlana would in about 15 or 20 years.

“We climbed back to our feet, made our apologies, and introduced ourselves. Our hands touched and I looked up into the deepest blue eyes I have ever seen – and I thought that I wouldn’t mind having a stiff neck for the rest of my life if she were the cause.” Janet continued and squeezed her lover’s hand.

“You choose well, daughter of my heart. I can tell that she’s beautiful, bright, and has a sense of humour.”

Now, it was Janet’s turn to blush, and it wouldn’t be the last time. Marina really knew a lot about them and she had a real knack for teasing them. Samantha visibly relaxed and successfully pushed the harsh reality aside, at least for a few hours.

When the older woman finally fell in a light sleep late in the night, the others retired to an adjacent room where three cots were waiting for

them.

~*~

A couple of hours later, Janet woke to the sound of suppressed coughing. She quietly rose and padded to the next room to check on Marina.

She was in full doctor's mode, but the woman had other ideas. "Please close the door, Janet. I don't want to wake them. Tomorrow will be hard enough."

Janet found herself obeying but quickly snapped back into her role. "Let me check on you, Marina."

"Doctor's instincts, I understand. Have a look at this. It will answer your questions."

She indicated a chart on the bed-stand with medical information. More than a few minutes passed in silence while Janet scanned the text and tried not to wonder why it was in English. What she read was nigh on impossible. According to these documents eight years ago the woman had suffered acute radiation poisoning, being exposed to a dosage of 8.5 Sieverts. For all intents and purposes, she should have been dead for years; such a high dosage usually was fatal two weeks after irradiation – but she somehow had survived all these years.

What the diminutive doctor had in front of her was obviously an abridged version of her real medical file, but it gave a fairly accurate account of the woman's health. It seemed she owed her life among other things to two bone marrow transplantations, the first about a week after the exposure, the second four years ago. Both times the donor had been a certain Samantha Carter.

Janet had known about the second transplantation, but had been told that it was for a patient in Canada. In fact she had personally made the preliminary tests to make sure that neither the protein marker nor the naqada in her lover's blood would influence the process. She couldn't help but feel a pang of disappointment and anger that her partner had not trusted her enough to tell her the truth.

She kept a firm hold on her facial expression and continued her reading.

When she came to the most recent tests, however, her face became white. She checked the monitors. The woman was holding on by pure willpower alone. Her internal organs were all but gone, and she had to be in extreme pain. Janet estimated that at this rate Marina had about 16 to 18 hours left, at the most.

The brunette looked up and found the older woman's eyes. She seemed to know exactly what the Air Force doctor was thinking.

"It's all right, Janet. The past eight years have not been easy, but they also were a gift I hadn't expected. I don't mind dying."

Janet now openly stared, then something clicked and the small doctor said.

"You were angry with your sister for calling Sam because you didn't want her to see you die. And if you would have found a way, even your sister would not have been informed of the seriousness of your condition, right? Sam would have arrived tomorrow afternoon at the earliest if not for General Hammond authorising the use of an F-16. She would have just been in time to see you die. You wanted to protect her."

"You're good, Janet, more than just good, but I shouldn't be surprised. The research you did over the years on the effects of staff weapons and on radiation poisoning kept me alive, especially after Daniel Jackson's ascension.

"These last two years, you made my life worth living. When Samantha sent the specifications for the experimental treatment you devised after the incident with Daniel Jackson, I had been bedridden for almost two months; I had been unable to work for more than half a year.

"I thought that I would die, soon. You gave me another chance; you gave me two more years. You gave me the chance to do what I do best; research and teach. I'm in your debt, Janet."

"No, I'm in your debt, Marina. Sam said that you saved her life; so, I'll always be in your debt."

"She didn't tell you about us, about what happened." It wasn't a question but a simple statement of facts.

"She will, as soon as she is ready. I love her and I trust her." Janet said with conviction. "You mean a lot to her and she soon will need all the

support I can give. Being with you, right now, might even help to heal a few wounds from the past.”

“She was right. You really are свет ее души, the light of her soul.” The older woman’s body was raked by another fit of coughing and Janet supported her upper body to ease the pain. “Thank you, Janet. Go back to bed. You don’t have to keep me company.”

“I’d rather stay. I don’t want you to be alone. And I don’t mind staying up; with Sam and the rest of SG-1 I’m used to pull all-nighters.”

“The drugs I took for the pain, keep me awake. I’d love the company. Might I ask a personal question?”

“You already know so much about me, Marina. Let’s make a deal. I’ll answer your questions if you’ll answer mine.”

“You have a deal, Janet. Please, call me Rina. When did you know that you had fallen in love with Samantha? I mean really knew it, with all your heart.”

“You really go for the hard stuff. I was attracted to her the first time we bumped into each other. It was those blue eyes and the shy smile while she introduced herself. But I didn’t know anything about her. When I got to know her better and found out how brilliant she is, I was intimidated, and I thought she had a crush on the Colonel. We became friends.

“After the incident with Hathor she kissed me. I had been totally freaked out by the whole thing and my shoulder was hurting; suddenly I felt soft lips on mine, right in view of a security monitor I later learned had been disabled by a certain sneaky astrophysicist. A few weeks later Cassandra came in our lives. She was ready to give up her life so a young girl wouldn’t have to die alone. She even spoke of resigning from active field duty to care for her. It was then that I knew I no longer cared for Air Force regulations or DoD policy.

“So, in a way it was love at first sight and also falling in love with my best friend.”

Marina laughed, a deep belly laugh that had her coughing in no time. Janet slipped into doctor mode, but the dying woman refused her help.

“I’m fine, Janet. Don’t worry. I’ve spent years waiting for my body to finally shut down. I know what to expect.

“Samantha said almost the same about you. She said that she was mesmerised by your sparkling brown eyes and when she got to know you better she was awestruck by the way you treated your patients. She was convinced that someone like you never could be interested in an air-headed geek like her.”

“Sam, a geek? Did you ever see her on the back of her bike? Yes, she can get lost in her work, but she also is an adrenaline junkie if I ever saw one. She’s a very complex woman.”

“That she is. So, what do you want to know, Janet?”

“Sam said that you communicate regularly. Since when?” The small doctor wanted to know.

“Do you remember the incident when Samantha and Colonel O’Neill ended up in Antarctica after the Gate overloaded about six years ago?”

“That long?”

“Being stuck out there brought back a whole lot of dark memories and I was the only one who understood what she had been put through. I suppose she still has these horrible nightmares from time to time, right?” Janet only nodded. “Samantha had a pretty good handle on what happened when we first met, but with her superior officer to worry about and the cold it all came back to her, even the parts I was sure she had forgotten about.”

“Please, Rina, stop. I can see that it brings back dark memories for you too. Sam will tell me everything I need to know when the time is right.”

“You’re right, Janet. This is Samantha’s story to tell, but you don’t have to worry about me. Due to the radiation poisoning it’s no memory for me but part of my everyday life. Samantha was stumbling from one dangerous situation to the next, but I had enough time to put the whole thing into perspective. Now, let’s talk about something more pleasant. Tell me about Cassandra, please.”

~*~

At 16h48 local time Professor Marina Markova’s heart stopped beating.

She was surrounded by friends and former students and died with a smile on her face; her right hand being held by her sister, her left by Samantha Carter – with a highly decorated Russian General standing vigil at the foot of the bed.

They had spent a pleasant day in each other's company, talking about everything and nothing. All four of them determined not to think about what would inevitably happen but eager to maintain the illusion of an ordinary day spend in the company of friends and family.

The illusion faltered whenever one of the Professor's students or friends arrived because most of them didn't have as tight a hold on the expression of their emotions.

When General Etkind arrived, Marina asked them to leave for a while. Half an hour later, they were called back and found the General standing at the foot of the bed. He stayed there unmoving, but Janet had her share of stoic soldiers to deal with and could tell that the older man was shaken to the core.

Samantha had tears glistening in her eyes but refused to let them control her, not now, not yet. Instead, so the slightly unfocused orbs told Janet, she drew on what she had learned from Teal'c to keep from falling apart.

Two nurses came in with a wash basin and some clothes to wash the body for the last time but were ushered out. At first Janet didn't understand, but when all the men, except for the General left the room and one of the women pulled the cover off, she began to understand. She started towards the door but her tall lover held her back.

"I need you, Janet," Samantha whispered and stood next to the General with Janet at her side, letting the others care for her second mother.

Every muscle of the blonde's body was rigid with tension. She stood with her feet slightly apart and her hands clasped behind her back; the picture perfect of outward composure – but the small doctor knew the truth. Only an iron will kept Samantha Carter from losing it.

A few minutes later, the door was opened and a woman rushed in, she was as tall as Samantha but with midnight black hair. The blonde Major moved swiftly and intercepted her before she had a chance to reach the bed. She was practically glowing with barely contained anger.

"Kriech zurück in dein Loch, du elender Feigling!"

Having spent some time as an intern at the 'Tropeninstitut' in Hamburg, Germany's research centre for tropical diseases, Janet knew enough of the language to recognise a few words, but she never had heard so much disdain, so much hatred in the voice of her lover, not even when dealing with one Gao'uld or the other. Why did Samantha think that the newcomer was a coward?

Svetlana intervened, "Samantha, no!" The Russian scientist put a hand on the blonde's shoulder who then turned blazing blue eyes towards her, "Anna had a good reason to do what she did at the time. Let it go, Major Carter."

"No, she's right, Lana. Marina is dead because of me. I have no right to be here. I will wait outside," the woman answered in English with a slight German accent.

Before Samantha had a chance to answer, the door once again opened and a dark-haired girl slipped in, still in the process of barking to someone outside. "Я должна быть с ней."

She took in the confrontational scene and quietly stepped in front of the other newcomer. She visibly wanted to say something, but then she saw the still figure on the bed and went over. The body had been dressed by now and laid out on top of fresh sheets with the hands folded as if in prayer.

The girl climbed up and sat at the edge of the bed. She rearranged the hands so they were lying to the left and right of the body and then bent forward to kiss the pale, unresponsive lips.

"Я вас люблю, моя вторая мать," she whispered with tears running down her face.

Anna stepped next to the girl; and even a blind man two rooms over would have seen that they were mother and daughter. The tall woman closed her arms around the slender body and let her chin rest on the crown of the girl's head.

Silence settled in the room and Janet used the momentary distraction of the others to hug her partner. Samantha gratefully squeezed back and then turned her attention back to the bed. Mother and daughter had both given up on holding back their tears and took comfort in each other's touch, and the tender scene brought a lot of memories back, of the first

time the blonde had seen the tall German scientist.

Samantha remembered opening her eyes and seeing worried brown eyes looking down on her. She remembered a deep voice asking her if she was all right. She remembered answering that she thought so.

~~~~~

A cool hand was touching her forehead and gently closing her eyes while the deep, accented voice whispered, "Be quiet and don't move."

At the same time a door close by opened and a male voice boomed in. "How are our newcomers? Already awake?"

The answer came quickly, but she thought not too quickly. "Not yet, Sir. Give it a few more hours; whatever your men hit them with had quite a punch."

The door once again closed, some kind of bar was pulled from the outside and Samantha was sure to hear someone entering a code on a panel.

"You can open your eyes now, both of you. They said that you would come but I had hoped that you would not; anyway, we have to prepare you for the Commander's first inspection." Samantha obediently opened her eyes and looked straight into the brown orbs. "What's your name?"

Military training reasserted itself when Samantha answered. "Captain Samantha Carter, United States Air Force, matriculation ..."

"I'm not your enemy, Captain Samantha Carter."

Strangely enough the blonde officer believed the woman whose name she didn't even know.

"Call me Sam then," she answered in a slightly raspy voice, forming the strange German sounds she had not used for a long time.

~~~~~


They had cut her hair. At the time it had been falling quite a bit over her shoulders whenever she chose to wear it open. Short hair had not been something the leader of the facility she had landed in fancied; so she had been mercifully left alone.

Samantha remembered Anna's even then long, thick black hair – and only now, looking at her next to her daughter, began to understand the price the German had willingly paid to keep the rest of them from the unwanted advances of the Commander. In comparison, what happened later no longer seemed to be of much importance.

Why hadn't she been able to see it earlier?

The raven-haired beauty slowly regained her composure and retreated from the bed. She looked at Svetlana and said. "We'll be waiting outside. Call us when it's time for the funeral service."

"Anna, stay, please," Samantha found herself saying. "The men will be back soon for the wake. Stay with us. You belong here, you and your daughter."

The German turned towards the blonde and looked at her with big disbelieving eyes. She asked, "Are you sure, Samantha?"

"Yes, I am, Anna. Please stay. Bitte verzeihe mir, daß ich so lange gebraucht habe, um es zu verstehen."

„Es gibt nichts zu verzeihen.“ The woman answered with resignation in her voice.

"Ich..., ich..." not finding the words she wanted to say the blonde resorted to a more familiar language. "Yes, there is. I held you in contempt for so long. I let one single moment erase all the months you sacrificed yourself to keep all of us safe, and even then all you did was to try and keep another life from harm. Bitte vergib' mir."

Janet could hear the pain and self-mortification in her partner's voice and instinctively stepped closer, throwing caution completely to the wind. Samantha needed her now.

"Thank you, Samantha," the woman answered and returned to her daughter's side.

Silence still permeated, even when one after the other the men who had

left the room earlier started to come back about a quarter of an hour later. They took their places around the bed as if in a choreographed dance.

~*~

But the wake didn't stay this eerily quiet. After some time the door to the room Samantha and Swetlana had spent the night in was opened, nurses and doctors brought large chandeliers with white candles and placed them around the bed. There was a cold buffet waiting next door and over the evening the mourners escaped there in pairs or small groups.

Though she didn't understand a word; she could hear them talking and crying and laughing. On a certain level she could understand what they were doing. They were sharing their memories of the dead woman; it was their way of keeping her alive, of keeping her memory alive. She remembered attending the funeral of an old Irish friend of her grandfather to which he took her when she had been barely out of high school. But then it had been the other way round: They had buried the body and the coffin and then met in the house of the deceased to remember his life, to eat and to drink, to cry and to sing. When they had returned, late in the evening, she had had the feeling that she had known this man she never had seen in life and that she would miss him.

A part of her longed to take part in this mourning ceremony, but there was something more important. Janet stayed close to her lover; she didn't care what anyone might think about her presence or their closeness, and she didn't care if her actions could have any repercussions later when they were back in their own country.

She only knew that her lover needed her right next to her, needed to feel her presence. Part of her marvelled at the inner strength of the stubborn blonde; part of her dreaded the moment when all her reigned in emotions would come tumbling down. She silently vowed that she would be there for her partner when the time came, if she wanted her to or not.

~*~

A couple of hours before sunrise Svetlana led Samantha and Anna to the

adjoining room. Janet and a very sleepy dark haired girl instinctively followed. The Russian scientist gave each of them a letter. They read it and then stared at each other, completely oblivious to everyone else in the room.

“Will you do it?” Svetlana finally asked but got no reaction from the two of them.

The girl almost instinctively stepped closer to the small doctor who couldn't help but sneak a protective arm around her shoulders. Svetlana smiled at them but then refocused her attention to the still ominously silent women.

“Will you do it, Samantha?” The impatient woman once again asked.

Anna and Samantha exchanged another meaningful look and then they both nodded slowly.

“Yes, we will sing for her.”

“Samantha...”

“Yes, I will stay. I owe her this much...” The blonde turned her head towards the German, “I owe you both this much, Anna. I cut her short every time she wanted to talk about you. I didn't give her the chance to make me understand. Janet, I... I can arrange for you to return to Colorado Springs if... if you want to.”

“Do you want me to go?” the brunette asked softly, careful to keep her hurt feelings out of her voice.

“No, my love. I want you to stay. I just thought that with this reporter coming to the base you wanted to be there. And then there's Cassandra.”

“Then I will stay. You are more important than any reporter, Sammy, and Cassy is a big girl. She can look after herself, and she has any number of devoted uncles waiting for the chance to care for her.”

Janet's free hand lightly touched the blonde's cheek and Samantha closed her eyes with a deep contented sigh. Shortly after, they snapped open again, signalling to her lover that she was not ready to let go of her tight control.

The girl next to Janet stifled a yawn, and her mother got down on a knee and said. "Warum isst du nicht eine Kleinigkeit und legst dich da drüben aufs Sofa, Mari? Ich wecke dich, wenn die Zeit gekommen ist."

"Ich will aber nicht allein hier draußen bleiben, Mama."

Samantha stepped closer to her smaller partner and translated what they were talking about. She told her that Anna wanted her daughter to get some rest and that she would come for her when it was time for the funeral service but that Mari, the girl, didn't want to stay alone.

Janet then turned her attention to the girl. Knowing that she understood English, she said. "Mari, I'm a bit hungry. Would you keep me company? I don't want to be alone out here with all these people I don't understand."

Mari nodded enthusiastically and led the Air Force doctor to a table where a variety of different dishes were waiting for consumption, most of them unfamiliar to the American woman.

Only minutes after they had cleared a plate with a selection of finger-food the dark-haired girl curled up at Janet's side and fell asleep with her head in the brunette's lap.

From time to time Cassandra still slept this way in the comfort of their living room. It usually happened when she had had some kind of trouble at school or with a friend, or when her blonde mother was overdue on a mission and Janet's own restlessness influenced her.

Janet remembered a time when they were sitting this way on the rather uncomfortable chairs in one of the observation rooms, waiting for Samantha to wake up after the entity had taken over her body.

~~~~~

The doctor in Janet knew that her lover would be all right. Her physical responses were normal and she had recognised all of them, had even given one of her special smiles to her. She had been sedated to help her get over the trauma – and now, sitting next to her Janet had to admit that she still was in shock herself.

She almost had lost her to the entity; almost had killed the love of her life

by stopping her life support. Had it not been for Colonel O'Neill asking her to wait and for Daniel who recognised that her lover's mind had been transferred to the computer mainframe the entity had built, Samantha would have died.

The small doctor sat at the blonde's bedside, monitoring her vitals, holding her hand and waiting for her to wake up. After the first tests to make sure that the Major really once again was herself, and the surprising discovery that the whole time she had been aware of what was going on, Samantha had fallen into a deep sleep. Janet knew that she needed the rest to get over the physical as well as the mental trauma.

*If not for O'Neill and Daniel I would have lost her.*

Janet was still in the middle of berating herself for giving up too easily on her resilient lover when she heard loud voices coming through the only half-closed door. She immediately recognised her daughter's voice closely followed by the exasperated tone of Daniel telling her to slow down and that everything would be all right.

"I don't care Daniel. I want to see them, now!"

The door to Samantha's room burst open; Cassandra stormed in, and stopped dead in her tracks. Her eyes fell on the tall woman's still form, her closed eyes, the monitors she was hooked up on, the IV-line going in her arm.

"Mum?"

"Sam will be all right, sweetheart. She's just sleeping."

"Daniel said she almost died. I didn't want her to be alone, without her family," the teenager said in a quiet haunted voice that told the doctor more than enough about the level of her worry and exhaustion. She knew from experience that Cassandra didn't sleep whenever she and Sam had to stay at the base unexpectedly.

Janet closed her arms around her daughter and held her tight. She murmured soothing and comforting words, well aware of the fact that the girl only really could be reassured by Samantha opening her eyes. So, she signalled Daniel who was hovering at the door that she would take care of Cassandra. She pulled her down to sit on the second chair, left from O'Neill's earlier visit with her arm still around her shoulders. Her

daughter needed to feel that she would not lose another parent.

“Keep me company, would you? We’ll wait for Sam to wake up.”

“Daniel said that a computer virus almost killed her. Will she really be okay?”

Having long ago learned that the alien teen tended to worry more if she felt that someone didn’t tell her the whole truth, Janet related the whole story of the entity and its artificial intelligence. She told her how it took possession of Samantha’s brain and how it saved her after Colonel O’Neill threatened to send more damaging radio probes to its planet.

With Samantha’s regular breathing and the accompanying rhythm of the EEG and EKG the girl soon succumbed to her fatigue and fell asleep with her head in her mother’s lap. Surprisingly Janet’s self-recriminations abated at the contact, with one hand stroking the girl’s hair and the other curled around Samantha’s fingers. They were far from the comforts of their living room but nevertheless she felt at home.

They still were in this position when the blonde Major opened her eyes a couple of hours later and smiled at them.

~~~~~

A quiet voice talking to the girl brought her back to the here and now. Anna told them that it was time for the ceremony and that they had to go now.

They returned to the dead woman’s laboratory. The body had been wrapped in light blue cloth straps, criss-crossing each other and following an intricate pattern that vaguely reminded Janet of Ancient Egypt. General Etkind reverently placed a square piece of cloth over her face and head, and the six men in the room lifted the corpse onto their shoulders. A procession formed with the Russian General in the lead, followed by the six men, followed by Svetlana, Samantha, Janet, Mari, and Anna with the girl holding tight to Janet’s as well as her mother’s hand.

They left the hospital through the front entrance, rounded the house, and entered a big, well groomed park. In the middle of a freshly cut lawn a man-sized, thigh-high stack of almost identical pieces of wood was

waiting. The General took position at the other side of it and the six men gently posed the body on the even surface of the funeral pyre. Though Janet had never seen one before, she was sure that this was what the wood pile would be used for. She scanned her cultural knowledge for hints on this type of funeral traditions being used in Russia or with the Orthodox Church but came up empty.

“Ich möchte, daß du bei Janet bleibst, Liebling. Sam und ich müssen zu Onkel Grigori. Janet wird gut auf dich aufpassen.“

Surprisingly the girl didn't protest but just reaffirmed her grip around the doctor's fingers. Samantha whispered to her lover that Anna and she would have to join the General for the ceremony and begged her to keep an eye on the dark haired girl.

The brunette would have felt infinitively better if she had a better idea of what was going to happen but all she could do was stand her ground and wait.

Her lover's body language had told her that the proud blonde was a good step closer to her breaking point than she had been a couple of hours earlier, but there was another change in her that wasn't as easy to pinpoint. *It was almost as if she had made some kind of peace with herself*, and though the doctor didn't know any specifics she was certain that this had something to do with the German scientist and her daughter.

People were arranging themselves in a half circle around the pyre. Janet quickly scanned the crowd and found not only the people she had seen before in Marina's rooms in attendance but a good three to four score more, some in dress uniforms, some wearing lab coats, some in pyjamas and robes. It was as if the whole building was assembled to pay their last respects to a very special person.

Janet could feel that the tall girl at her side was inching closer and seeking bodily contact; so, without letting go of her hand she slid behind the slender body and draped her other arm around Mari's shoulders. The girl immediately accepted the physical comfort and relaxed slightly but she still stood proudly on her own. The small doctor couldn't help but be impressed with this girl who visibly had inherited her mother's genes for height.

The woman lying on this pyre had been very important to her. She had been an essential part of her family, and yet she held herself straight and tried to keep her composure. It reminded her of another girl who years

ago had sought the comfort of another tall body and had attached herself to a slightly overwhelmed Captain Samantha Carter.

~*~

Janet was brought out of her musings by a male voice effortlessly filing the whole expanse of the garden. She trained her eyes toward the General who now had Samantha and Anna standing to his left.

“Для некоторых родной язык не язык их сердец. Сердце Марины говорило язык Shakespeara и Whitmana, а это мы будем уважать.”

Then he switched to English. His voice was heavily accented but easily understandable.

“Today we say our goodbyes to a friend, a mother figure, a sister, a mentor, a colleague. We say goodbye to a fiercely loyal but independent woman. We say goodbye to an incredibly brave human being. Marina herself chose the words that will guide her body out of this world; they were written by one of her favourite poets.

“Dust are our frames; and gilded dust our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes and was found no more.”

Then he once again switched to Russian.

“Пусть всегда свет вашей души освещает наши жизни,” and repeated in English. “May the light of your soul always illuminate our lives.”

The General nodded towards two torch carrying attendants who had appeared seemingly out of nowhere. They stepped closer to the pyre, lowered their torches, and ignited it. The wood immediately burst into flames and the girl instinctively sought more contact. The wood must have been soaked with some kind of accelerant for the flames to engulf the body this quickly.

Janet’s instincts were screaming at her that this simply was not real, but it took her a couple of minutes to realise that what was wrong was the

smell. Burning human flesh had a very distinctive, sickening scent no one ever would be able to forget; and on behalf of the once again stiffening young body in her arms the physician was more than glad that this time they were spared the experience. She tightened her arms around the girl and stroked the back of the hand still holding her own with her thumb in an effort to calm her.

The sound of a single flute began to be heard over the roaring of the fire and behind the flickering curtain she could vaguely make out that it was Anna playing. Her daughter evidently recognised the melody and tears began to drop onto their joined hands.

A few heartbeats later a voice rang out, emitting something that closely resembled the death cry of an animal. Janet's eyes opened wide in surprise when with the next few syllables she identified the voice as Samantha's. She never had heard her lover sing, not in all the years she had known her, not for joyous occasions, not for sad occasions, not even at Christmas. Samantha had always claimed to be musically numb but this unmistakably was the blonde's voice.

Part of her was happy that the proud Air Force Major had found such an outlet for her emotions. Another part of her, however, couldn't help but feel hurt that her long-time lover and life-mate had never opened up enough around her to let her see this side of her personality.

Mari's tears had turned into sobs and the doctor followed her mother's instincts. She once again stepped around the girl, pressing the young face against her chest. Her until then tightly gripped hand was let go and the tall girl encircled her waist with surprising strength.

At first the voice and the flute had been at counterpoint to each other, but soon they mingled and rang out in harmony. The doctor had to admit that it sounded as if they were made to be heard together. It was as if the voice was answering the flute and vice versa.

Finally, the girl's reserves of strength ran out and she bonelessly dropped to her knees. Janet followed suite – as much as she wanted to dwell on the music and her lover's uncharacteristic behaviour, the girl's desperation was a much more immediate concern. The rest of the people watching and the brightly burning flames receded from her awareness. So, she also completely missed it when the voice and music stopped.

Soon after, she felt a familiar presence at her back. She saw Anna in the

process of kneeling down behind her daughter, and without letting go of the girl, she relaxed into Samantha's touch, well aware of the fact that her partner still was only a breath away from losing her precious self control.

~*~

The four of them stayed in this position for a long time. Janet opened her eyes when she felt the girl's grip shifting slightly. She found the lawn deserted except for the General and Svetlana. The pyre had been reduced to mere embers and it was in the middle of the night.

When the Russian physicist saw that they were stirring, she left her place at the right of the General and helped all of them back to their feet. She led them back to the front entrance where the same limousine that had brought Samantha and her to the hospital was waiting for them. They all piled in and the vehicle began to move. Anna and Mari were in the back seat with the girl ensconced in her mother's embrace. The girl seemed asleep, but at the moment Janet couldn't care for her.

All she could care about now was the despondent, almost catatonic blonde she held in her own arms. She had felt her lover's strength waning when they walked towards the car. Samantha wasn't crying but she held onto her partner as if to a life-line. Only once in all of their years together Samantha had acted like this – after Jolinar had taken over her body.

During the first few hours after regaining consciousness the tall Major hadn't reacted to any kind of stimulation. Only after the small CMO had thrown caution to the wind and climbed onto her cot, she had started to react, if only infinitesimally. It had taken Cassandra to bring her all the way back. Janet could only hope that this time would be different.

So, she concentrated on the woman she loved. She shut out their environment, the lights and trees passing by the window, their fellow travellers, the condition of the road. For the second time this day, the brunette doctor lost her usually accurate sense of time. But it was still in the middle of the night when they considerably slowed down and turned left into a gravel covered driveway.

They stopped in front of a large two storey wooden structure. Anna and Mari immediately wandered off, ascending a staircase and then

disappearing in a corridor. Svetlana ushered them also upstairs and led them to the third door on their right. She told them that they should rest and take all the time they needed.

Janet led an unresisting blonde to the king-size bed and somehow managed to undress the taller woman. She quickly followed suite and slid into bed beside her. She pressed her body against the slender form and took her in her arms, making sure that Samantha felt loved and cared for.

Experience had taught her that though her partner was not yet ready to open up to her; she now needed physical contact more than anything else.

Janet woke from the first rays of morning sun shining through the windows. To her surprise they still were in the same position in which they had fallen asleep, with her arms and legs wrapped around her taller lover and Samantha's head nestled between her breasts.

The doctor looked down and studied her face. What she saw had her worried, to say the least. Usually, the blonde's face took on a childlike, innocent quality in sleep, but this morning she still looked almost as drawn as she had the previous evening. Despite the absence of nightmares, sleep had not been as beneficial to her as it should have been.

Janet was reluctant to let go of her lover but the call of nature could no longer be ignored. She disentangled herself carefully and placed a pillow in Samantha's arms before entering the bathroom. She hurried through her morning ablutions but still was not fast enough to keep her lover from slipping into a nightmare.

Samantha was still asleep when the small brunette once again gathered her in her arms. She could feel the tension emanating from the other body and wrapped a blanket around both of them. The blonde clung to her and then the tears started. At first there only were single drops but that quickly changed; soon Samantha was awake and openly sobbing.

Years ago, at the beginning of their relationship the proud woman would have done everything in her power to get herself back under control as soon as possible. She wouldn't have let anyone see her vulnerable or weak. Janet was gratified that this no longer was the case. All the trauma they had lived both through since joining Stargate Command had taught them both to trust the other on a more fundamental basis than they did

anyone else, on a more basic level than she had words for. Janet also knew by experience that she would have to let the emotional storm pass before her beloved partner would be in any kind of condition to talk about the demons still holding her in their grip – and consequently about what had happened all those years ago.

~*~

When she finally was cried out, the doctor led her lover to the bathroom and into the shower. Samantha was standing on her own, but she relied on Janet to wash her and wrap her body in a thick towel. By then the taller woman was composed enough to dress herself and they sat down on the small couch situated in front of the double window.

“A few weeks ago, Daniel asked me how I was able to build and program the dialling computer without knowing that the Gate really was. I answered him that it was magic but it wasn’t. I knew what the symbols meant. I think I found out almost the same way he did, but before I could start with a series of tests I was called away.

“The Pentagon sent me to Russia, officially on behalf of the United Nations. It was a tour supposed to make a survey of the security of their military nuclear reactors. They also were supposed to be working on a new, clean, and secure propulsion system for their missiles. I was to be the technical observer for the US military.

“I’m still not sure why of all people they chose me; perhaps it was because I had studied Russian physics at the Academy and gained an at least superficial knowledge of the language. Not enough for every day conversation but enough to understand their manuals and stuff. Even then I thought a CIA special agent would have been a better choice, but one doesn’t question one’s orders, especially a lieutenant doesn’t question a general.

“Marina was part of the welcoming committee or so to speak. We hit it off from the start. She was the first human being I was able to speak to about my mother. I felt comfortable with her.”

Samantha fell silent and snuggled closer to her smaller partner.

“Only a few days into our visit, on the way from one facility to another we ran into an ambush. We only had a standard escort who turned out to be

no match for our well-prepared attackers. Suddenly, there was some kind of gas filling the interior of the car in which we were riding, and the next thing I knew was that I was lying on a military issued cot and a woman with dark eyes and long dark hair was bending over me and speaking to me.”

Janet had long ago learned to respect her partner’s occasional bouts of silence when speaking about her feeling or bit of her past.

“From the whole score of scientists only Marina and I had been taken; the others were left at the side of the road, unconscious or dead.

“We were being held in northern Siberia in an underground research lab, an abandoned military facility. Our captors were acting under orders of the Russian mob. The man in charge, he called himself Commander Petrov, Jurij Mikhail Petrov, a former KGB agent. It was rumoured that before the collapse of the Soviet Union he had been one of the main players and he came out of it with a lot of influence and even more money.

“The whole operation started out about seven or eight months before Marina and I had been captured. They abducted women scientists from almost all over the world: physicists, astrophysicists, electrical engineers, computer specialists, specialists in rocket science and reactor technology. They assigned us to work on a whole range of projects and made sure that we really did the work.”

Samantha once again fell silent, and this time the flood of memories couldn’t be held at bay with words alone. Janet felt the change in her lover and knew from experience that now the blonde was dealing with extremely painful memories and feelings, similar to the day when she had been forced to build a naquada enhanced bomb, the day when Colonel O’Neill had ordered her to make a bomb out of a reactor to supposedly save the Encarans and other traumatic orders she had had to follow.

Every time, her despondence had been fuelled by feelings of guilt or at least responsibility.

The doctor put her right hand over her partner’s heart, and the frantic heartbeat considerably slowed down but the tall Major was still in the firm grip of her memories.

~~~~~

“I want the result before the midday meal!”

“I told you, I’ll need more than just few hours to finish these equations with the equipment you gave to me,” the short haired blond answered impatiently without looking up to the man bullying her for results.

A big hand descended on her shoulder, spun her around, and landed her with her back on the desk she had been working on. The man pinning her down bent over until they were almost nose to nose. It was the first time in the three days since their capture that she saw the master of the facility up close and personal.

“I know you’re new here, American, but you should be intelligent enough to understand the rules: You do what you are told to do, when you are told to do it – and in the amount of time allotted. But you women have to be stubborn; you always have to learn the hard way, don’t you?”

Commander Petrov was smiling, a smile that didn’t reach his eyes and made her more than slightly uneasy.

“ Проводите американки в камера. Тридцать шесть часов.”

Before she even had a chance to try to resist or understand what he just had said, two burly men dragged her out of the room and along a corridor. They took an elevator.

One of her captors said. “Get out of your clothes, American, or we will do it for you.”

Samantha nodded and they let go of her arms. She raised her hands as if to undo the zipper of the jumpsuit she was wearing, but instead of complying with the order, she hit one of the tall men in the face, breaking his nose. He staggered backwards and she followed up with a knee to his groin.

She managed to avoid the first counter-attack of the second guard but doubled over when his fist hit her midsection. Then, her head was rammed against an armoured knee and she lost consciousness.

~

Samantha came to from an overwhelming feeling of being cold, very cold. The ground she was lying on was icy cold; the air she was breathing was cold. She opened her eyes and saw a square of blue sky right above her, quickly obscured by dark clouds. The ceiling around it was white as were the walls.

She jumped to her feet and found herself naked in the white cell. There was no visible door and no window. She quickly found out that floor and walls were entirely made of ice; the ceiling was probably too, but it was too high up to make sure.

She couldn't help the fear creeping up her spine and only barely kept from panicking. Samantha recalled Petrov's words and tried to make sense of them: Тридцать шесть часов, *that meant 36 hours*, в камера *could mean prison cell or something*. Finally realisation hit, and if she hadn't already been cold, it would have chilled her. She somehow had to survive 36 hours in this freezer and she didn't have the slightest idea how long she had been unconscious. All she knew for sure was that she had to keep herself occupied – her mind and her body.

*A soldier's first duty when captured was to try to escape.* That's what she had been taught at the Academy and in basic training, but that, as she knew now, was easier said than done. The other women had made it perfectly clear that there was no way to escape – ten stories underground with guards in every corridor and room, guards with sidearms and batons.

*But now she was topside: she had at least to try to get away.*

So, Samantha started to check the walls for cracks and seams or any other weaknesses. The more rational part of her mind, however, asked what she would do even if she were able to find a way out of this cell. Wherever they were, it was cold enough to keep the ice around her from melting. She was naked, without any clothing or other resources, alone, without any idea where the hell she was. But still she kept searching, unsuccessfully.

Her feet and fingers were so cold she was barely able to feel them now. She wriggled her fingers and toes. She rubbed her hands against each other. It worked but it didn't help her feet. Sitting down on the icy ground was out of question; so, she balanced on one foot while massaging the other. She desperately tried not to think about how ridiculous she must

look doing this.

Samantha knew that she had to keep moving, that she couldn't afford to fall asleep. She knew she had to keep her blood flowing if she wanted to avoid permanent damage but it was hard, very hard. She put herself through every drill, every hand-to-hand combat routine she could think about but it became harder with every passing hour.

The blonde could feel her movements and thought processes gradually slowing – and she didn't even have the slightest idea of how much time had passed since she had awakened.

She wanted nothing more but curl into a ball and fall asleep. But she wouldn't let them win this easily. She wouldn't let him win; she wouldn't give up, not now, not ever. So, she kept on moving; running around in circles, doing jumping jacks, doing push-ups, trying to keep her fingers and toes working. Doing anything she could think of.

When night fell, the section of clear sky she could see through the opening in the ceiling got her mind working. She was not entirely sure but now she had at least a pretty good idea of the general area they were being held. It didn't make the night any warmer, and it didn't make moving any easier, but nevertheless it gave her a fragment of hope.

The night sky slowly changed to dawn, and soon after the same blue sky she had seen the day before was back. At midday her chilled, weary bones had a short period of reprieve. The sun was finally high enough to shine through the ceiling opening. Nightfall, dawn, and midday probably were the only way she had to measure time in this icicle. The faint rays not only warmed her, they also helped her to readjust the mental map she had made of the nightly star pattern.

It wasn't much, but it gave her at least something to occupy her mind with while her body went on autopilot to keep from freezing. Judging from the dimming light, the sun was once again about to set when a platform of sorts was lowered through the opening with one of the security guards on it. He threw a folded jumpsuit at her and she almost stumbled backwards when she caught it.

“Dress, turn around, and put your hands behind your back, American.”

Samantha was too relieved at the chance to get out of this room or whatever it was to even think of questioning the order. She felt handcuffs closing around her wrists and was pulled backwards. Her feet touched



the surprisingly warm platform and it immediately began to ascend. When they left the confines of her prison, she saw that it was attached to some sort of crane. They moved sideways and then descended. She saw the entrance to the compound and despite herself was relieved at the sight.

The platform touched ground, but the blonde hesitated to step to the icy ground. The guard scooped her up in his arms as if she were a mere child and carried her inside. He didn't let go of her when the escalator began its climb down. She tried to tell him that she easily could walk on her own, but he didn't react and proceeded to carry her through the corridors to the communal holding cell.

He sat her down at the door, freed her of the cuffs, and disengaged the electrical lock and the bar. When it swung inwards, Samantha automatically took a step forward but her legs gave out, and she would have hit the floor if not for Anna and Marina catching her.

She never would have thought that one could grow this weak in less than two days. They led her to a cot and tucked her in. She could see the concern on Marina's face and there was so much to tell her and the others, but her body simply didn't cooperate. She fell asleep.

~

Samantha woke to the feeling of something cold being put on her forehead. She wanted to move to get away from the cold but her arms, legs, and head were as heavy as lead. She felt a hand on her shoulder and opened her eyes. Brown orbs were looking down on her, and she easily recognised relief in them. She tried to talk but a finger was put over her lips.

"No, Sam, stay calm. Your fever broke only a couple of hours ago. Take it easy and try to drink something."

Samantha obeyed and then croaked out, "What happened?"

"You were ill, Samantha. For the last three days you ran a high fever but you'll be all right now."

"Have to get up. Can't let them win," the blonde insisted, but the hand easily held her in place.

“You need to rest, Sam. You didn’t let them win. Actually, you threw Petrov for a loop. No one ever was out there this long. They usually bring us back after no more than ten or fifteen hours. You were very brave, Samantha.”

“My mother always said that.”

“When you staggered in here you were very agitated but you calmed down when Marina said. ‘Your mother was right, you are very brave, Sam.’ And now, try to get some rest. Tomorrow will be a new day and a new battle. Close your eyes. You need all the strength you can get. But remember, you are not alone in this. Close your eyes, Samantha.”

~~~~~

“It wasn’t the last time, I was sent to that so-called cell. We called it the freezer. I gradually learned to keep track of the time when I was in there, and I learned how to keep from freezing without exhausting myself. I even stopped getting ill. During the last month of our capture Petrov found a new way to get me to obey. Instead of punishing me, he sent one of other women in my place.”

Janet was shocked to silence by her lover’s hesitant report, and she felt the same anger that always bubbled up whenever Samantha was hurt by the hands of others, be it some alien or the other, or one of their superiors. Images flashed through her mind, images of putting this Petrov in one of the isolation labs and let him slowly freeze to death.

The blonde somehow picked up on her lover’s anger and sought her eyes. “Petrov is dead, Janet. He has been for years. General Etkind and General Hammond flushed him out of hiding and took care of him. Revenge will not change what he did to us, what he did to Anna. Let it go, Jan. It’s in the past.”

“I’m glad that he’s dead.”

The small doctor surprised herself with her words. She had sworn an oath to do no harm, but this time she knew the words to be true.

“How did you all get out, Sam? Did General Hammond find you?”

“Not really. He flew to Russia to search for me. There, he quickly hooked up with General Etkind who was in search of Marina. It took them more than four months to find out who was behind our abduction and another one and a half month to find out about his secret facility. They were about to mount a rescue mission when there was an accident in the lab. There was an explosion and all of our reactor specialists instantly died. The lab was burning; there was a radiation breach.

“Petrov and the guards ran, but Marina knew that we had to get it under control. We had been able to approximate the location of the compound. We knew we were in the Siberian Mountains, the Putorana massif. The next big city, Norilsk, was less than 150 miles away – and if the reactor we had running, blew it would have contaminated an area three times as big. We had to stop it.”

Samantha fell silent and suddenly a voice from the other side of the room said. “There were two radiation suits, and I had had the most experience of the three of us, but I was too afraid. I froze. I just couldn’t go in there.

“Marina grabbed the suit that should have been for me. She told me to go and get the others out. I’ll never forgive myself for not doing my job.”

“She wouldn’t have wanted anyone to die to preserve her own life. She wouldn’t have wanted you to die for her, under no circumstances. I’m sorry that it took me so long to understand, Anna.”

“It should have been me dying in this room, Sam,” the raven-haired woman insisted.

“No, Anna. I know that’s what I thought for a long time, for too long. There was no way to know that the radiation suit was faulty. It never should have ripped that easily. It was wrong to hold you responsible for what happened. It was an accident.

“Marina tried to tell me more than once, but I didn’t listen. It was simply easier to have someone to blame, I think. I’m glad that you lived and I think that you’re very brave. Mari is a very bright girl. You can be proud of her, Anna.”

“I am, Samantha. She’s the bright light of my life and always will be. – Lana has prepared a light lunch. I wanted to ask you if the two of you want to join us.”

“We’d be honoured, Anna. I really am sorry for my behaviour.”

“I told you yesterday, Sam: there’s no need to apologise.” The dark haired woman said with a sad smile, “Let’s go.”

Despite all the tension the day before and the emotional turmoil they had been through, they spent an agreeable lunch. It didn’t take Janet long to be included in a friendship that had been born in a time of direness and need – and was now allowed to flourish once again. They talked and remembered the woman they had lost, all the time making sure to include Mari and Janet.

~*~

“Dieses miese kleine Wiesel!”

Janet had fallen asleep in the living room, but the loud exclamation brought her back to awareness in an instant. The grandfather clock next to the mantle told her that it was early afternoon. She followed the voice to the study and found Anna, sitting in front of a computer screen, still cursing colourfully. She stepped round the desk and saw the screen filled with a maze of lines and numbers, she knew from Samantha were the schematics of a naqada reactor.

The dark haired woman finally sensed her presence and looked up. “Janet, I’m sorry. I didn’t want to wake you up but he really is..., he’s infuriating and now I know that he has been deliberately sabotaging our work. He’ll definitely get a piece of my mind as soon as I’m back in Moscow.”

“Does this ‘weasel’ have a name?” Janet asked with a smile.

“Mackay.”

The amusement disappeared from the brunette’s eyes almost faster than the speed of light and was replaced by a frown. “Don’t tell me that you have the misfortune to work with this miserable, arrogant, self-delusional, misogynist, primitive, pain-in-the-butt rat bastard.”

“You evidently know him.”

“You can say that. He almost killed Teal’c and called Sam a dumb blonde. I never got the chance to pay him back for that. – Speaking of

Sam; where is she?”

“Grocery shopping with Lana and Mari. Lana wants to make borscht; it’s Mari’s favourite. Sam didn’t have the heart to wake you up, and I wanted to have a look at the schematics she called up for me.”

“Oh, I heard you two talking shop when I drifted to sleep. You said he sabotaged your work?”

“Yes, judging from the information Sam gave me, Mackay didn’t give us all the information needed to build our own reactors. There are at least half a dozen schematics in there I’ve never seen though the Russians were promised full disclosure.”

“How did a German scientist end up working for the Russian government?” Janet suddenly asked.

“I was taken when I was on my way to attend a conference in London. When I returned almost a year later, my job at the University had been given to another. I was pregnant; and no one wanted to give me another chance. When I was about to give up, Marina contacted me and brought me in on an international research project. That was the beginning. Mari and I went where the projects led us.

“When Svetlana called and told me about the naqada reactor project, and unofficially also about the Stargate, I knew that I had to be a part of it – at least as much as I could. It was the only way I could make some amends, to pay my debt.”

“You got it wrong, Anna. I am in your debt. If you had not sacrificed yourself, if you had not focused Petrov’s attention away from the other women, I shiver what would have happened to Sam, what would have become of her and me.”

“Samantha is a very resourceful, strong woman. She would have found a way, and I only did what anyone would have done.” Anna answered defensively.

“No, Anna, almost anyone else would have taken the chance to refocus his attention to someone else.” Svetlana’s voice asked from a few feet away, “Years ago, I asked Marina about it. She didn’t give any details, but she told me that she never would have been able to do what you did, that she would not have been strong enough. So, don’t minimise what you did.”

“Lana is right, Anna.” Samantha suddenly had appeared next to the Russian scientist. “What you did for all of us would have destroyed me. Janet is right, I am in your debt. Without you I would not be the person I am now. I never should have treated you the way I did, Anna.”

“It’s in the past, Sam, and despite everything I can’t really regret what happened. I got Mari out of the deal and this I never will regret. Besides, where is she?”

“In the kitchen. She almost threw us out; she said she had a surprise for Sam, and that she had to prepare it on her own. She’ll call me as soon as she’s finished.”

“Do you care for some help in the kitchen, Lana?” the doctor asked in an effort to lighten the atmosphere.

“I’d love to have another pair of hands as long as Anna stays out of it. She can build the most complicated machines with her eyes closed but in the kitchen she’s a walking disaster zone.”

Janet chuckled and decided to stay in tune. “Well, let me tell you about the time Sam tried to simply warm-up a pot of pasta sauce. It took more than three hours to clean up the kitchen...”

The other two women rolled their eyes but were wise enough not to offer any kind of protest.

~*~

Janet could but wonder about the easy friendship the four women and one girl developed over the course of the evening. The easy going atmosphere prevailed the next day but in the early hours of the afternoon General Etkind unexpectedly interrupted.

“I’m sorry, ladies, but I have news from Colorado Springs. It’s not good. General Hammond wants to speak to you. I have arranged for a video conference. Could you prepare your toy in the study, Svetlana?”

“No problem, Sir. Follow me to the study.”

The connection made, the others retreated back to the living room.

“Sam, Doc, I need you back at the base ASAP.”

General Hammond looked haggard, to say the least. Janet didn't need to be a physician to see that he was under a great deal of stress and suffered from lack of sleep.

“What happened, Sir?”

“SG-12 ran into trouble on P3X-666, an ambush by Anubis. Sergeant Wells was injured and I sent Doctor Warner and SG-1 to bring him back. Things went downhill from there. We had a lot of injured. Wells will be okay but Warner received a lethal staff blast to the chest. Colonel O'Neill is seriously injured, and we have to prepare for a large scale attack. I need both of you, and I need you now. An X-302 is waiting for you. Hammond out.”

The screen went black and the two Air Force Officers stared at it, only slowly understanding what they just had heard. Samantha blinked a few times. This was just too unreal, and she really didn't want to think about it. She long ago had accepted that every time she stepped through the Gate she risked her life. What was disturbing was the fact that under normal circumstances Janet would have been the logical choice to go and help Wells.

If it had not been for Marina's death Janet would have been sent to P3X-666. She would have been hit by the staff blast. She would have died. No, Samantha sternly chided herself, now was not the time to dwell on such thoughts, but she couldn't help it: She would have lost her lover. She would have lost the other half of her soul.

She had to concentrate on the here and now. There was too much to do, even if she didn't think about the possible political repercussions of the latest events.

They said their good-byes to the others and promised to stay in contact. “Marina's last words were: Любовь будет твоя направляющая звезда. Всегда. Love shall be your guiding star. Always.

“We hope to see you both soon under better circumstances, and Anna, let me know immediately should there be any more problems with Mackay.”

They hugged each other and the two US Officers followed the General

outside where an X-302 was waiting for them.

~*~

A few days later Samantha and Janet were cuddled against each other in their bed. It was the first rest they'd had since their return from Russia. General Hammond had sent them home to get a good night's sleep. There wasn't much they could do but worry while waiting for the Pentagon to come up with a plan to fight off Anubis' slowly approaching fleet. The next day, SG-1 was scheduled to check out a planet where one of the other teams had found something that closely resembled one of the Ancient's knowledge repositories.

"Sam," Janet said from the cocoon of her lover's arms, "there's something I have to tell you."

Instead of giving an answer the blonde sought eye contact with the small doctor and raised her left eyebrow in question.

"Sam, Я тебя люблю."

„I love you too, Janet."

THE END

Please send feedback to: romansilence@yahoo.de

APPENDIX:

Translations from Russian and German in order of appearance:

<i>Russian / German:</i>	<i>English translation:</i>	<i>Russian Pronunciation (stress in bold):</i>
Она умирает. Приезжай как можно скорее.	She's dying. Come as soon as you can.	Ah- nah oo-mee- rai -yet. Pree-yehz- zhai kahk moz h-nah skahr- yay -

		yeh.
дочья моего сердца	Daughter of my heart	Dohch-kah mai-yeh-voh syehrd-tsah.
Пока влияние у прошлого на вас, будет настоящее болезненное.	As long as the past has a hold of you, the present will be painful.	Pah- kah vlee- yah -nee-yeh oo prosh -lah-voh nah vas , boo -dyet nah-stai- yah -shtyeh-yeh bahl- yez -nyen-noy-yeh.
Для того чтобы держать мои памяти, я оплащу цену.	In order to keep my memories I'll pay the price.	Diyah tah- voh chtoh -bwee dyehr- zhat mai- ee pahm -yah-tee, yah oo-plah- choo tsyeh -noo.
моя вторая мать	my second mother	mai- yah vtah- rai -yah math.
свет ее души	the light of her soul	svyet yeh- yoh doo- shee.
Kriech zurück in dein Loch, du elender Feigling!	Crawl back into hiding, you pitiful coward!	
Я должен быть с ней.	I have to be with her.	Yah dahlzh- nah bweet snyay.
Я вас люблю, моя вторая мать.	I love you, my second mother.	Yah vahs lyoo- blyoo , mai- yah vtah- rai -yah math.
Bitte verzeihe mir, daß ich so lange gebraucht habe, um es zu verstehen.	Please forgive me that it took me so long to understand.	
Es gibt nichts zu verzeihen.	There's nothing to forgive.	
Bitte vergib' mir.	Please, forgive me.	
Warum isst du nicht eine Kleinigkeit und legst dich da drüben aufs Sofa, Mari? Ich wecke dich, wenn die Zeit gekommen ist.	Why don't you eat something and get some rest on the couch over there, Mari? I'll wake you up when the time has come.	
Ich will aber nicht allein hier draußen bleiben, Mama.	But I don't want to stay out here all alone, Mom.	
Ich möchte, daß du bei Janet bleibst, Liebling. Sam und ich müssen zu Onkel Grigori. Janet wird gut auf dich aufpassen.	I want you to stay with Janet, sweetheart. Sam and I have to join Uncle Grigori. Janet will take good care of you.	

Для некоторых родной язык не язык их сердец. Сердце Марины говорило язык Shakespeara и Whitmana, а это мы будем уважать.	For some people their mother tongue is not the language of their hearts. Marina's heart spoke the language of Shakespeare and Whitman; and we will respect this.	Diyah nyeh-kah-tah-rweekh rahd-noy yah-zeek nyeh yah-zeek eekh syehr-dyets. Syehrd-tsyeh Mah-ree-nwee gah-vah-ree-loh yah-zeek Shyehk-speer-ah ee Oo-eet-mehn-ah, ah eh-tah mwee boodyehm oo-vah-zhat.
Пусть всегда свет вашей души освещает наши жизни.	May the light of your soul always illuminate our lives.	Poost vsyehg-dah svyeht vah-shyay doo-shee ahs-vyeh-shtai-yeht nah-shee zheez-nee.
Проводите американки в камера. Тридцать шесть часов.	Bring the American to the cell. 36 hours.	Prah-vah-dee-tyeh ah-myehr-ee-kahn-kee vkah-myeh-roo. Treed-saht shayst chass-of.
Dieses miese, kleine Wiesel!	Weasel, rotten little weasel!	
Любовь будет твоя направляющая звезда. Всегда.	Love shall be your guiding star. Always.	Lyoo- bovh boo-dyet tvai-yah nah-prav- lyai-yoo-shtai-yah zvyez-dah. Vsyehg-dah.
Я тебя люблю	I love you.	Yah tyeh-byah lyoo-blyoo.