

~ Sunset Over Atlantis ~

by romansilence

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TIMELINE: After season 10; an SG-1/Atlantis crossover; ten years after "Heroes".

SEXUAL DISCLAIMER: None needed; though the story implies that same-sex relationships are nothing to be ashamed off. There's nothing graphic but if this kind of love offends you, or you're not old enough, please go away.

WARNING: Character death!

Summary: What a way to die, the tall woman thought. It was ironically fitting. - Though taking place at Atlantis, this is basically an SG-1 story.

What a way to die, the tall woman thought. It was ironically fitting.

The love of her life had been killed when she had ventured out in her world, having been shot by a staff weapon under a foreign sky. And she would be dying on a hospital bed seeing the sun go down on a horizon that had become as familiar to her as the back of her hand, succumbing to a virus aggressive enough to initiate the self-defence mechanism of the City of the Ancients and isolate her from her friends and colleagues.

The only saving grace was that before the quarantine had been activated, Carson had diagnosed her with a simple cold and had made her stay in a room with a window and not in one of the proper isolation rooms, cut off from natural light, deep in the bowels of Atlantis.

Sunsets in the Pegasus Galaxy, here on this planet with its two moons, always were beautiful, but to the retired Air Force Colonel it seemed as if the one today, her last one, was particularly brilliant.

A coughing fit shocked her tall frame and she heard Cassandra's worried voice coming from the speakers.

"Please, Sam, let me come in. We adapted the hazmat suits. I should be safe for a few minutes."

"No, Cassy, I want you to stay away from me. I don't want you to risk yourself. You have to think of more than yourself now."

Another coughing fit but this time there was no reaction.

Samantha sighed in relief; Cassandra would be safe.

She smiled when she thought back to the orphaned child from Hanka, a child she would have loved to take care of herself - a child she had given to the only human being she trusted completely, the only human being she always would trust, even though she had been dead for ten years.

Another irony, she thought bitterly: today was the tenth anniversary of Janet's death.

This day seemed to be ripe with endings and beginnings:

On the fifth anniversary they had come to Atlantis. The Ori had finally been defeated; Teal'c had been named the leader of the surviving Jaffa; and Daniel had returned to the Ascended, citing that his work here was done. Vala and Cameron were still with the SGC, riding shotgun for difficult missions.

With the Ori threat gone, Samantha had become depressed with the familiar corridors and scents - and the knowledge that regardless of how long she would roam the base, the one person she still was expecting to see would never appear.

Cassandra had come to the Pegasus Galaxy to work under Carson Beckett; Samantha to stay with the young woman who in her heart at least had become her daughter - and though retired from the Air Force she had ended up with heading the science department of the Ancient's city as Mackay had managed to get himself killed shortly after their arrival.

Three years ago on this day the young woman who had followed her adoptive mother's career choice had married an Athosian, but now she never would get to spoil the grandchild of her heart - the tiny life growing inside of Cassandra's womb who would carry the name Janet Samantha Fraiser.

Janet, the blonde's mind wandered further, the name had become popular with the families of the SGC after Airman Wells had named his new-born daughter for the doctor who had saved his life and given her own.

Janet; ten years ago, on the day of her death, only minutes before they had gated to P3X-666, they had shared their first and last passionate kiss, promising more upon their return. Samantha's shaking hand touched her lips as if she could still feel the pressure of her beloved's lips and tongue on them.

They had lost so many years; years to be together, years to share, years to be happy together - regulations be damned.

The then Captain Samantha Carter had been fascinated by the tiny physician from the very first moment she had laid eyes on her. They had become friends; and during the Hathor incident she

had fallen in love with the brunette. Janet's eyes had told her that she felt the same, but they had held themselves to the expected code of conduct and channelled their sensual and sexual energy into their jobs, their friendship, and in raising Cassandra.

For some time they had even been closer. While working through his grief over Sha're's death. Daniel had searched and found emotional support with both women - and until his first Ascension they had shared each other by sharing him.

She had loved the lanky archaeologist like a brother. She still did; but he had been right when he had told them that their affair had not been fair to him. It might have been easier, if it had been a real threesome, a triad. He had told them in no uncertain terms to finally act on the voice of their hearts.

It, however, had taken her almost being killed by one of Anubis' Super Soldiers and getting her brain fried on board of the Prometheus to get through to both of them, to make them understand what was really important.

O'Neill almost had caught them in the middle of this one kiss.

Brigadier General Jack O'Neill was the man she always had felt more comfortable calling 'Sir' than anything else. After he had left the SGC to head up Homeworld Security, everyone including O'Neill had expected her to hook up with him - her unrequited love.

If only they had known.

O'Neill even had asked her to go with him to Washington but instead she had surprised them all with her transfer request to Area 51, all - but Teal'c and Daniel who both had known that Cassandra had been having a much harder time dealing with her adoptive mother's death than she would have been ready to admit.

Spending time with the young woman had become Samantha's topmost priority - and had the growing threat of the Ori and their repressive dogma not coincided with the return of Cassandra's telekinetic abilities and the start of her abbreviated stint at the Air Force Academy, she doubted that she would willingly have returned to Cheyenne Mountain where now another fiery tempered doctor had taken command of Janet's infirmary.

Carolyn Lam - one day, in a fit of exasperation she had told her that she was sick and tired of being continuously being compared to the other woman. That had brought a first genuine smile to the blonde Colonel's face, and then she had told her that Janet would have liked her successor. Coincidentally it had been on the second anniversary of Doctor Janet Fraiser's death.

Samantha was aware that her mind was rambling, wandering aimlessly from one association to the next. She knew that this was mostly due to the high fever she was running.

The sun had gone down by now and the artificial illumination let the window appear like a squared black hole. Hours ago, Samantha had started to cough blood - that was what had

activated the quarantine program in the first place. The first attempt of the medical team to reach her had nearly led to disaster when the hazmat suits had started to deteriorate soon after entry.

She knew that the automated security system would sweep the room with fire as soon as it no longer could detect her life signs. There would be no body left and no ashes. It was some sort of poetic justice: they also had not been able to recover Janet's body.

More than once Samantha had prepared so-called "last messages" to her loved-ones. And one day, during a mission, she had told Teyla and the other members of her team that she didn't want a memorial service.

Over the years, Elizabeth and Teyla had become part of her new family, just like the members of the original SG-1 had been. The diplomat and the Athosian leader would take care of Cassandra and help her grieve.

Cassy, Cassandra, she probably still was sitting glued to the view screen with the strong hands of her gentle husband on her shoulders in support. Janet would have approved of him wholeheartedly.

Samantha didn't want the young woman to see the only maternal figure she had left take her last breath; so, the blond woman gathered her strength to get up.

Turning out the lights was the only way to keep her spiritual daughter from witnessing her agony. Under normal circumstances it would not have taken more than a simple voice command - the voice command the quarantine had disabled.

Samantha had wrestled herself in a sitting position but that was as far as she would get - and she knew it.

"Please, Sam, let me come in."

"Forget it, Cassy! Extinguish the lights, please. I want to see the stars, Cassy."

The room went dark and she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Thank you, Cassy. I love you, and remember: you're very brave."

"I love you, too," the young woman's voice was thick with tears. "I love you, Mum."

Samantha smiled and turned her head towards the window.

She knew that it would take another two hours for all the stars to appear in the night-sky, and she felt that she did not have that long.

Instead, her mind conjured up the memory of the first time Cassandra had told her that she loved her, at the lowest, subterranean level of an old nuclear facility while she still had been convinced

that they both would die in a few seconds.

Everyone except for Daniel had accepted her pseudo-scientific rationalisation.

Somehow the girl had got under her skin from the first moment she had seen her peeking out from between the bushes of her dead home world.

Oh, Janet, you should see her now. You would be so proud of her, the feverish woman thought.

I'm proud of her, Sammy - and of you. You were a good friend and a good mother for her - whatever she needed most.

Janet, I love you.

I love you, too, Samantha Carter. And now give me your hand, my love, it's time for the both of us to watch over our daughter and granddaughter to be.

The infrared camera showed a red dot ascending from the surface of the mattress and half contract around something.

At the same time the monitor surveying Samantha Carter's vitals started to beep frantically and then settled to the annoying flat whine signalling her heart's arrest.

The woman, the then Colonel Jack O'Neill had called an 'American Treasure' had ceased to exist; the heat sensors disabled themselves and the cleansing of the room began.

T H E E N D

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