

Disclaimer: The characters portrayed within these stories don't belong to me. If I'd own them we would enjoy s12 by now and Jack and Daniel would sometimes be an incoherent puddle of lust because of "THING". Or they'd visit TW 3 during their down time and take a little lesson in case of open displayed affection and relationships. But see Stargate SG1 belongs to MGM, Gekko, Brad Wright *ewwhh* and Jonathan Glassner and so it's only FF here. My Credits to Dr Daniel Jackson, Jack O'Neill, Teal'c, Sam Carter, Gen. Hammond plus Cam Mitchell and Vala Mal Doran plus their respective actors doing such a great performance!!

Category: AU, H/C, not slishy-slashy, Pre-Slash

Warnings: To the question "*how do you like your archaeologist*" - well, emotional and physical whumped!!
faul language, lack of respect, kinda graphic violence in some parts, Danielcentric

Special thanks: To Lyn from the H/C zone for the BETA on grammar and typos. I apologize for all my nagging and questions and for the stress.

Some words I used might be old fashioned but I promise you, they really are existent.

I tried to keep the American English throughout the FF, but I might have slipped into UK English from time to time. Sorry for that, I am just more familiar with it.

Summary: A man is found behind a coffee shop. He does not remember who he is, but witness says he's murdered several people in a cruel way. It's up to his advocate George Hammond and his friend Private Investigate Jack O'Neill to solve the riddles around the stranger.

Timeline: it's AU but so far s1-3 are involved characters of origin and new SG1 team

Spoilers: A Lot s1-4 mainly! There are references to some of my most favourite scenes from the show

Rating: NC-17/18, since there is some violence involved, just to be sure. Pre-Slash, this FF is entirely sexless - ya how depressing I know, no nudity or anything like this, it's just the violence.

Size: 150kb **Word Count:** 11.599

Author's Notes: Actually this FF is dedicated to July 8, which is Danny's b'day.

But I too want to make it a little tribute for the recently passed away Don S.Davis, who portrayed the character of Gen. George Hammond in such a amazing and great way. We will all miss him, but never forget his fantastic work and the great personality he was.

Dictionary: 1) lekker: dict.leo.org = delicious, yummy, mouth watering
2) Säggsorr - nickname for someone you do not know but instantly like, the relation to the language will be explained in the next part.

The 17 ³/₄ lives of Daniel Jackson

He was freezing. Not just cold and chilly, no, certainly downright freezing. He couldn't feel most parts of his body - maybe there were even some missing by now - he surely wouldn't be that surprised to find himself with not all his fingers and toes. Yet why this was so, he couldn't quite tell... just a feeling he had.

He tested himself. Legs - there, both of them, arms too, including hands and fingers, but they were certainly frosted, head there too. That part of his body hurt too much to be frozen off or be just a phantom pain. It felt rather like it would explode, the throbbing behind his eyes did a pretty good job of contrast to the dead silence that his ears offered. He could hear nothing, and to complete the feeling of being helplessness his vision was totally blurry.

His tongue was still there too and it had a horrible taste on it, and suddenly nausea was all that occupied his mind and body. Forgotten was the cold and the pain in his head, he could only work on autopilot, turn and start to throw up.

When he was done with his dirty business, he started to crawl to get away from the stinking fluids. Not that it changed much, if he considered that he was somehow lying in an equally stinking and wet alley. So, his nose was still in working order.

Out of nowhere, there hands were suddenly on his face. They felt almost hot on his frozen skin and he flinched away, wincing. But before horrible scenarios of his death could start to flood his mind, someone started to speak.

„Youngster, you are in need of assistance, I mean you no harm,“ said a deep calm voice next to his ear. He was lifted up with strong arms and his world started to spin in all possible and obnoxious directions. Nausea welled up again, but he opened his mouth and managed to take some deeper breaths, because he was sure he wouldn't give the best first impression by puking on the helping hands around him.

„What is it with him? Gods the cutie looks miserable, so help him up Muscles, get the kid inside and let me take a look at him. Make it snappy.“

They were entering something. He was more dragged than walking on his own. His legs hurt, especially his left ankle, and his ribs threatened to burst his lungs. The pain brought tears to his eyes but he blinked to keep them at bay, - willing them to stop from falling. And he noticed his vision was still not in functioning mode, but still the world kept its merry-go-round-impression.

Comfortable warmth hit him and it smelled delicious and familiar in here - wherever here was - coffee. It certainly smelled like coffee. He remembered it too well. A mixture of different brands, but still lekker* .

The strong arms pushed him down, so he did, wincing again, since his ribs were protesting the motion.

„Acquire me some hot water and the blanket from the shelf in the storage room,“ the deep voice said to the second person with the funny female voice.

His head felt too heavy so he tried to support it with his hands, flinching when they came in contact with his jaw.

„It appears to be heavily bruised. I advise you to not touch it. It would maybe help to lean back to ease your pain.“

Before he could follow the advice, he was gently pushed against a high old fashioned backrest of a late 60th seat row, wincing again when his back came into contact with it. He looked up in time to see the man's left eyebrow raising almost to his hairline - if there had been some hair. The head was shaved smoothly. He took a closer look at his helper who had a strange tattoo on his forehead and was a mountain of a man. A black man, but his brown skin had a somewhat golden shine to it. His pink shirt was in total contrast to the build of his body. His dark eyes were looking back at him showing concern. Why was a total stranger showing concern for him? He couldn't remember anyone showing true concern for him in his entire life...

A woman with long black hair appeared from behind the mountain-man. Her eyes were sparkling and she gave him a wink.

„Here.“ She gave the man a pot with steaming water and a cloth and took the blanket down from her shoulder where she'd placed it.

„But be careful, big guy, he looks like a deer caught in the headlights.“

„Indeed.“ His helper started to clean his wounds.

„We might call the doc, what do you think? He really doesn't look too hot and he was flinching a lot. Ill just go give her a call see whether she's still on duty.“

The cleaning was hurting him. But he gritted his teeth together and tried to keep his hands and arms still while the stranger was washing them.

To distract himself, he started to look around. Vision was still blurry but it had gotten a lot better and he could make out the room he was in. It was obviously a coffee shop... the big shelves in front of him that were filled up with different brands of coffee in all kinds of tins were proof enough. The walls were full of posters and autographs from Abba, Kiss, the Bee Gees and other such musicians. A big jukebox stood on the left wall next to the entrance. There were old records on the green, yellow and pink walls and those old fashioned seat rows, round orange plastic tables, and a big, light green plastic counter. On the window, to the right of the entrance was mirror writing that read 'Arabic Coffee Baum'. The name certainly was not fitting with the decor. It sounded old and traditional, but foreign too.

Someone was pulling on his shirt and he was dragged back to his current plane of existence. The man urged him to lift his arms and he did, shuddering from pain and coldness in the progress. He heard a whistle when the shirt was pulled over his head, and when he was able to see again, the woman with the long black hair was standing in front of him - leering. He shook his head, no, that must have been imagination or the result of the blows to his head. Surely she was not leering. However his helper was sending her a admonishing glance, that was causing a chill to run down his spine. The woman, however, just shrugged and turned her eyes back on him.

„So Sweetie what is your name and why was someone trying to beat you to death in front of our rear exit?“

He stared at her.

„My name is Vala - well Vala Mal Doran actually and this is Teal's Murray, the owner of the *'Arabic Coffee Baum'*.“

He kept staring.

„Don't you wanna tell us your name? We just want to help you, you don't have to be afraid or something, we are not freaks.“

He couldn't seem to stop staring.

He was aware that Vala Mal Doran was taking another breath to resume her talking when ... Teal's Murray put one of his big hands on her arm.

„Maybe you should give him the feasibility, to answer ValaMalDoran,“ he said, looking expectantly at him.

He blinked and broke the staring, starting to shake his head in disbelief. Thoughts were crushing down on his brain like a flood wave, spinning around in a never ending maelstrom. That was what he was missing the whole time that felt wrong and strange about him - amongst other things. His name? He couldn't remember his name... couldn't remember any name. His name, what name had been given to him? Nothing was coming to mind. He kept shaking his head.

„You don't know your name? Teal's, take a look. Maybe he's got papers with him or a driver's license.“

„He has not.“

The woman - Vala - bit her lip. „Okay, so maybe you know where you live, so we can find out who's searching for a young, hot looking man, with electric blue eyes that got lost, hm?“ She patted his shoulder, but he didn't feel it. He only felt numb - where he lived? Another thing he couldn't remember. Had he lived before, must have. You don't suddenly appear in existence. Yet where, he had no idea. Lived. Nothing came to his mind... no street, no town, no number, not even a room or someone he'd known. He stared again.

„Where?“

„Uh we? Cicero Avenue,“ answered Vala.

He frowned in confusion.

„No. Which city?“ His voice sounded raspy in his ears, as if he'd either not used it for a long time or shouted too long and too loud.

Teal's eyebrows shot up. Both this time, while Vala's mouth dropped open.

„Chicago, Illinois,“ Teal's said.

„Oh.“

„Are you not from here?“ He stared blankly at the two figures in front of him.

„I don't know,“ he whispered.

Someone was knocking on the glass door and he jumped.

„Shhhh, that's just the doc. She's here to check your wounds,“ Vala told him while patting his arm. Teal'c moved to the door to open it.

„Janet Fraiser, we appreciate that you have been able to come and assist.“

„What's happened? Vala didn't tell me a lot, just that you found someone with lots of injuries.“

„We do not know. It appears he can't remember.“

„Oh, so maybe it would be better to bring him to a hospital and run some tests.“

At the mention of 'hospital' his stomach was suddenly clenching and the feeling of cold fear was grabbing him with cold hands.

„No!“ he nearly shouted, trying to move away. All three were now staring at him.

„Please,“ he continued in such a small voice, that it was almost missed.

Janet Fraiser held her hands up in a calming gesture.

„Okay, okay, so I'll just check you. Would that be all right with you? But if I find signs of concussion or other serious injuries, you'll have to get more medical attention than just what I can do. You heard I am Janet Fraiser, I'm a medical doctor and you are?“

„He doesn't know, Janet. Actually he seems to remember nothing.“

He was back to staring. Should he trust her to check him... he didn't know any of these people, but he too did not get the feeling he was in any danger with them. He was feeling fine with them - and he couldn't remember he had ever before harboured such a sensation. Had there ever been people around him he had felt like this with, as if he'd known these strangers, feeling familiar with them - though it was obvious they had never met before this day? How could he have forgotten?

He nodded at the small woman with the slightly reddish shine to her hair, still wearing a white lab coat, who had put on some rubber gloves, thus giving her permission to examine him.

Her hands were cold from the low temperatures outside and he started to shudder.

„Sorry saggsorr* , the Doctor apologised.

He looked at her, perplexed.

„Ahh don't worry, she does that often - using the language of her grandfather, no one of us understands it.“ Vala said, smiling at him.

Janet Fraiser took out a penlight, ready to shine it into his eyes.

„Ohh my god.“ She took several steps away.

„What, what is it, is he hurt, have you found some serious injury?“, asked Vala in an overly concerned voice while Teal'c was looking equally worried.

Janet Fraiser had a look of fear on her face. He flinched away when he saw it, shaking his head to show her that he didn't know what he'd just done wrong.

„Janet, say something“, Vala demanded.

„I... I saw him on the news, no, actually not him, but his eyes, they were searching for someone with exactly his eyes. There is even a special investigation team out there searching.“

„So someone is missing him!“

„No, you don't understand. They're not searching for him because he is missing – well, at least, not in the way you think. They're searching for him because he's suspected of murdering a bunch of people.“

He was again shaking his head – this time in disbelief, no, he couldn't have done such a cruel crime, he couldn't have murdered someone, not to mention several people. His eyes widened and he got up, still shaking his head, mumbling „No, no, no!“ again and again, while retreating to a corner of the coffee shop. „No, no, no,“ he whispered while sliding down in the corner trying to melt himself to the walls around him. „No, no, no, not done that, not done that.“

Tears were welling up and running down his cheeks, but the prior friendly faces in front of him had changed.

Vala was looking downright furious and ready to jump down his throat. Teal'c almost growled, looking as if he was very angry that he'd helped such a person, scum that he must now be in the man's eyes, and Janet was still staring at him, fiddling with something in her hands.

„Call the police Vala. Teal'c, hold him down. I'll give him a sedative so that he won't hurt any more people. I saw what he did, it was horrible.“

„No, no please, don't give me that!“

But strong hands were holding him down – a feeling that felt suddenly very familiar – but he was sure he had not killed anyone. On the other hand, how could he be sure, he didn't even remember his own name, not to mention where he came from and what he'd done until he'd woken, lying in that alley behind the coffee shop.

A sharp sting was the last thing he felt before his world went black.

„Hey, nameless scum, your assigned counsel is here. Drag your ass up from the bunk and sit yourself down at the table, – will ya?“

He did as he was told, knowing already too well what consequences would follow if he even dared to hesitate. He stood, walked the short distance, sat and was immediately cuffed to the chair.

An elderly bald man entered his cell. He did not appear very happy to be there, rather grim. Or was this lackadaisical?

„You are the one who's been charged with murdering Professor Jordan and his two assistants, using ancient Egyptian sacrificing rituals.“ It was not a question.

He blinked.

„I am Hammond, your assigned counsel. I hope we can agree on you confessing the murder and stating that you are sorry about it, so that we can at least get a compassionate death sentence for you.“

Hammond waited as if expecting him to answer – but what was he supposed to say to that?
„So you don't wanna talk? Well, you don't have to, but it will prompt the judges to impose a more drastic punishment.“

He paused again. Writing down a note into a file – his file.

„I can only advise you again to say something. But it is within your right to remain silent. Have you at least remembered your name?“

At this, he looked the man – his advocate.. in his old eyes. No one had cared to ask him in all these days. He was the first person that had – and he'd not been in this room for more than five minutes.

But he couldn't - not his name, not where he'd come from, not where he'd wanted to go. The questions had tormented him every single minute since Vala had asked for his name - well, every minute he'd been conscious. But no answer, no idea, no theory had come to him. And he was obviously not the only one, since not even the intelligence of the police had been able to find out who he was. No matches for his finger prints, or teeth; no data base had offered an explanation of his being.

So what was he to answer? Someone had seen him in the immediate vicinity of the crime and a camera had taken blurry pictures of him. Well, actually only his face, and the only real thing one could identify were his eyes, but obviously that had been enough to charge him. It certainly had been enough to make Janet Fraiser able to identify him and bring the pure expression of horror to her face.

So maybe he'd done these things, killed those people, dismembering their limbs in a certain order... he couldn't remember... and then removed their brains with a hot needle through their noses; and deserved to be punished with death for it himself. Who was he to deny it if he couldn't even remember his own existence?

Hammond was clearing his throat.

„Well, as you wish. The hearing will be in three days. But I tell you, I won't be able to do much for you if you remain silent.“

He turned his gaze down to the table, studding the notches on its surface.

Hammond left.

„Hello, Kynthia, this is Hammond, George Hammond, could I talk to Jack O'Neill. Sure, I'll wait.“

„George, what's up?“

„Jack, how are you? How is retirement?“

„Ahh, just peachy. Lots of fishing and relaxing, ya know me, George, and shouldn't you be too by now?“

Hammond smiled.

„Almost, Jack, almost. I have my last brief this week. Not one I'd wished to end my career with, I have to say - and I need your skills.“

„George you know, I'm not in business any longer.“

„But you're still the best man for this job. Come on, Jack just this one time.“

„Why? Isn't the case kinda clear? From what I read, the guy can be happy if they give him a nice way to die.“

„Yeah.“

„But...?“

„Just a feeling that something isn't right with him.“

„Ya think? Carrying out old Egyptian sacrificing rituals sounds certainly like the guy is all nutso...“

„That's not what I mean, Jack.“

„So what?“

„It's too easy. The man obviously can't remember a thing. No one knows who he actually is, where he'd come from, and I am not even sure they really tried very hard to find out. The police governor seemed more than happy to be able to present a potential suspect. From what I saw in the cell... well, either he's a real good actor and can control people by portraying himself as totally innocent or he really does not remember a thing and keeps his silence for that reason, or because he's afraid of something else.“

„Whatcha mean, not talking?“

„He's not giving any statement, he didn't say a single word, but his eyes were haunted. You could actually see him thinking in all directions, and the startled look he gave me when I asked if he remembers... there is more to it. I'm sure, Jack.“

Silence.

„Come on Jack, at least take a look at his file. Not that we have a lot, only some witness accounts and a medical examination, actually. You can always turn it down and you don't have to meet him.“

„Pfhhhhh. But only because you asked me, and only if you still have that 23 year old scotch hidden in your desk.“

George Hammond grinned.

„Sure I do Jack, I just kept it for you all these years.“

„Good.“

The advocate hung up.

He was sitting in his car outside of the 'Arabic Coffee Baum'. How had George had convinced him to do this? He must have lost his mind.

He could be at home by now enjoying his retirement with Kynthia... or better, he could be in Minnesota on a fishing trip. But no, Jonathan 'Jack' O'Neill, couldn't keep his hands from snooping around for his old friend, George Hammond.

Yet he had to admit, he wasn't quite sure whether it was all Hammond's doing. There had been something about this man in the cell. Not that he'd seen him there, no, just the picture that had been taken when they'd arrested him... and those photographs from the security camera with those intimidating blue eyes. No wonder that the woman, he glanced at the notes in his hand, Doctor Janet Fraiser, had recognised them.

And besides, the police governor Woolsey was an ass and Jack would be delighted to make his life a little harder.

Jack sighed, grabbed his cell phone from the fitting and climbed out of his car. He crossed the small distance to the coffee shop, glad it was already open. When he opened the door, he froze in his stride. Instead of the usual doorbell, doorbell announcing a new guest, someone was singing. 'Ding, ding, ding, dang' and it sounded awfully similar to ... ABBA.

The big, black man of a mountain behind the counter greeted him with a measuring, yet friendly look.

God he felt like he'd just entered another dimension that had been stuck in the late 60s or early 70s. There were some young people ♦ obviously students and some people who must have been doing sports in the nearby park from the outfits they were wearing. All in although, the coffee shop wasn't too crowded.

„Hey, Sweetie, why don't you sit down and I'll bring you the special Jaffa of the day, huh?“ a good looking woman with long black hair and a uncommonly deep voice asked him, while putting her hand on his backside and shoving him towards a pink seat.

„Err no, thank you, though actually I could do with a coffee. But I have to talk to your boss.“
The woman pouted, than pointed behind the counter.

„Owner is there and he's not my boss, he's my hubby.“ She winked at Jack whose mouth had just dropped open. Did the man know that his wife was checking out - with hands, not eyes - the backsides of his male customers?

He shook his head and went to the counter.

„Hi Mr ... Teal'c?“

„Murray.“

„Huh?“

„My given surname in this country is Murray.“

„Ahh, okay, Mr Murray. Name is O'Neill. I'm the private investigator for George Hammond...“

„Hammond? Isn't that the advocate of the murderer with no name?“ said the woman with the black hair who had suddenly appeared next to him. She was certainly kinda creepy, no one managed easily to sneak up on Jack O'Neill.

He looked at her, surprise crossing his face for a second.

„Exactly. That's the one.“

„Why do you wish to investigate on his behalf?“, the shop owner asked.

„Because I was asked to do so. Now will you answer some of my questions?“

„Very well.“

„You have a security camera up there, was it turned on when you found the guy?“

„Why would this be of assistance?“

„Look, I read the file with your statements already. I don't think you can tell me more than you already did. But maybe I can find an indication that will help to find out where this guy actually appeared from all of a sudden.“

Murray's left eyebrow rose in consideration. The man had an incredible way of expressing himself without words.

„We do.“

„So no one has asked you about the tape?“

„Indeed.“ He turned to his wife. „ValaMalDoran you will see to the comfort of our guests while PrivateInvestigatorO'Neill and I inspect the recording.“

Vala pouted. „Why is it always you that has the fun.“

„Because I am the first prime.“ Murray gave her an expression that looked like the hint of a smirk. „Ya, ya.“

„You may follow.“

Jack couldn't quite understand why the police had not asked for the tape. If they'd really wanted to find out who the stranger was, they should have used and checked every single trace they could get. So maybe George had been right and there was way more to the story than the obvious.

„So you found him in the alley?“ Jack said rather conversationally.

„Indeed.“

„What was he like? I mean before you found out what he'd done?“

The man seemed to consider his question carefully before answering.

„He seemed lost and severely injured.“

„But you still called the police when this .. Janet Fraiser said she'd seen him in the news.“

Murray gave him a short bow.

„There was no reason for me to believe that she was not telling the truth. She's a well known friend.“

„You may sit while viewing the tape.“

„Uh, ya thank you. Not as young as I used to be.“

So Jack sat down on a not too comfortable plastic chair air, starting to watch the tape from July 8th.

George had a point when he'd said that the man must be an incredibly good actor if he could get total strangers to help him and care for him in such a tender way. He looked totally lost and shocked to the core when Vala was asking him for his name. Not to mention that he was beaten up quite badly. Either his victims had defended themselves hard before he could get the upper hand, or he'd had an unwanted meeting with a truck while escaping from the crime. Though there were certainly shoe prints visible on his ribcage.

Jack could see him struggle when the Doc started to talk to him. That must have been the time when she was stating that he might have to go to the hospital. Jack couldn't hear anything. He only had the reports in the file and guessed from his reaction what they were currently talking about.

The man had almost jumped out of his skin - which meant either he hated needles and the antiseptic smell of hospitals as much as Jack did, or there was something else behind it.

The next Jack saw was the stranger jumping up and hiding in the corner of the coffee shop. Tears were running down his cheeks in a never-ending stream, and he was shaking his head while clearly repeating the word 'no'.

The look on his face when the 'subject' recognised the needle caused a torn feeling within Jack. Could someone with such a horror for needles stick a hot one up someone else nose to remove their brain, like the old Egyptians had done when preparing someone for mummification? Not to mention dissipating bodies after an... whatever it was sacrificing ritual. He'd forgotten the legend that was referred to in the police file. Still, he couldn't believe for one second that this man was able to do it. The look was that of... betrayal? On his face when Teal'c Murray had held him down so that this flea-sized doctor could give him the sedative was a total contrast to the portrait the police had broadcasted.

The only way he could think that this man would have been able to act like he accused of acting was if he'd had at least two different personalities, but so far no one had reported something that indicated that they were dealing with alter egos, or such things.

The man sank into unconsciousness, his arms, that had been tightly wrapped around his torso were now limp.

But there, Jack hit the pause button and squinted at the screen. Where was the damn function for magnification - there. He pressed it three times to get the maximum magnification, but it actually didn't help a lot. It certainly was not much, but on the left wrist of the stranger, he could see the outline of... some marking? As if he'd worn a watch, just that it was not the usual form of a watch on his wrist. Jack got the impression the small cuts around the white skin indicated that whatever had been there, had been removed forcefully.

He hit the 'stop' and removed the tape, putting it in a case. Jack O'Neill had come to a decision.

He was standing in the alley behind the coffee shop. So this was where they'd found him. Jack glanced around the area. Of course, the chance of finding something, after the sweep-teams of the police had already turned every stone upside down, was teeny-weeny, especial since this place was surprisingly clean for an alley, only the smell was a bit obtrusive.

Still, he had better start with this, it wasn't as if he'd have a lot of time to find a clue to back up George's and his own doubts.

Two and a half hours later he was ready to give up, Nothing. He'd got nothing out of his search. Vala had visited him several times, watched him, asking whether he'd no other hobbies, or god beware, a life he could spend his time on. Sure he had, but once he'd made up his mind, he was not easy to stop. Still it was useless. He'd searched every inch of this alley more than once and couldn't find anything of significance. Jack sighed and walked over to the container where he'd placed his jacket. He took it and glanced down for a last time. Hmm, wasn't there something stomped in the remains of a puddle? He knelt down, wrinkling his nose at the smell. Okay, just a puddle but he'd better investigate further, of what. Jack fetched a rubber glove from the inner pocket of his jacket and put it on, holding his breath when reaching down to pick up the little thingy. It was a piece of a fabric with a number on it. The colour was faded... but he'd seen such things before... if he only could remember where.

The dry-cleaners, the dry-cleaners when he was still in the army had put those badges on the clothes to identify to which unit which clothes belonged. Every number stood for another unit... and it worked like this in all kinds of big honkin' dry-cleaners. Maybe this was his clue. Not much of one, for sure, and the odds were against him but, well, he could give it a shot and at least dig a little deeper.

Jack stuffed the little piece in a plastic bag and shoved it in his jacket, removed the glove and threw it in the container.

„Have you discovered something of interest, Private Investigator O'Neill?“, asked Teal'c Murray, walking across the coffee shop to leave the place.

„Err, no“, Jack answered. Maybe a little too fast, because the shop owner did not even try to look convinced. Instead the left eyebrow was doing its rising again.

Jack hesitated a moment - should he say something?

Uhh, thanks for the help. Ill go now, spend some time with my life ♦, he continued while grinning in Vala's direction and pointing at the door. Jack turned and left the coffee shop. This had turned out to be a long day.

* * * * *

„Ladies and gentlemen please raise.“

„Bailiff Makepeace, would you bring forward the accused and seat him to be heard.“

He was led in a court of justice filled with audience and lay judges. The room was filled with deafening silence. The judge entered the room and motioned the people to sit.

He was shoved down into a chair.

The State Attorney was talking again after the judge had officially opened the hearing, reading his accusation.

„... the character of unknown origin and name is accused of triple murder to Professor David Jordan and his two assistants, Sarah Gardener and Steven Rayner in an horrific manner. Therefore, the Public Attorney's Office postulates death penalty to set an example against such horrific acts...“

„Sir, do you want to answer the accusation of the State Attorney to defend yourself?“ the judge asked.

„No.“

„So you admit your crime, well, I had never a doubt that you were guilty. Don't think just because you pretend you can't remember that this jury here will be blinded and distracted from the truth...“

„State Attorney Kinsey,“ the judge's voice boomed. „It's the right of every accused person to keep silent at a hearing, but whether he's guilty or not, well, let us first hear the attestors and check the proof before making final conclusions.“ He turned to his right.

„Advocate Hammond, have you anything to add to defend your client?“

George Hammond shook his head.

„No, Judge Landry. The client has not spoken to me either.“ His eyes settled on him displaying some kind of... sadness?

„Young man is it really your wish to remain silent about the reproaches of the State Attorney? Can you really not remember anything about your person?“

George almost pleaded to whatever Deity there might be to change his client's mind at the last second.

„Yes“

„You heard him, can we proceed, so that we can get it over with,“ a cutting voice interrupted. Hammond ignored Kinsey. He'd always hated this kind of State Attorney, clearly using their position to gain power, but never getting caught with it.

„One more thing,“ Hammond continued - Kinsey gnashed his teeth.

„Would you allow me to keep my cell phone on during the hearing? I am still waiting for some information on this case that might help.“

„Ha, you should have retired 5 years ago, Hammond, when you still had instinct for what is right and what is wrong! No information you can come up with, if you can get some at all - I remind you we investigated in every direction, even internationally about the subject, will come to another conclusion than the only true one. That this man is guilty of murdering three of the best academic forces of this country.“ The last two sentences were shouted.

The room was silent and everyone was staring at the man in the middle of it. State Attorney Kinsey seemed to be satisfied with his effect, because he was wearing a predatory smile, sat down on his desk and proceeded to fold his hands.

„I admit the cell phone, Advocate Hammond,“ Landry answered as if Kinsey had never spoken. „Sir, would you take the seat next to your counsel.“

He did.

„Then the judge calls Linea Ke'ra to be heard.“

A blonde woman entered. He could not remember to have ever seen her. She was young and good-looking, he sure would remember if he'd seen her before...

„...what is your profession?“

„I am the secretary of the historical department of the University of Chicago,“ the woman said. He did not recognise her voice either.

„Can you tell us what happened on the early afternoon of July 8th?“

„I was checking some experiments as usual for Professor Jordan and his department. You know, whether the costs were still within the set limits. When I came out of the office, I saw him,“ she turned pointing in his direction, „running across the small parking lot.“

„Next to the entrance where the victims were found a little later..“ Kinsey interjected.

„Yes, this is right.“

„Did you notice something special about him.“

„He was limping, his clothes were torn and there was blood on his shirt.“

„And you didn't think of calling a doctor to help him, the police?“ Hammond asked.

„Well no, he looked young. I thought he was one of the students that get beaten up from time to time, you know, the flakey ones - it happens.“

„Anything else, Miss?“

„No.“

„Then the judge calls Mr Louis Ferretti to be heard.“

„Mr Ferretti, please tell us what happened on that afternoon, that I guess you will never be able forget.“

„Well, I was doing my rounds as usual when I saw that a small door... I had actually never noticed this door before... was standing open. I just went down the steps to close it. I was not expecting anything unusual.“

„...but...“

„Well, when I came down, it stank horrifically in there. I remembered that kind of smell from my classes at the morgue, believe me, I'll never forget it.“

„...and...“

„So I radioed my colleague, Kowalski, to get him down there too. I waited until he'd arrived and we entered.“

„Go on.“

„We opened the door wider, the stench intensified even more, and I was searching for a kerchief to put it over my nose... then I saw it.“

„What?“

„Blood. There were endless puddles of blood on the floor and small gobbets in it we couldn't identify at first.“

„But you did.“

„Yeah...“ Louis Ferretti paled slightly.

„You don't have to name it again, Mr Ferretti, the composition is written down in all it's details in the medical record.“

The man was obviously relieved.

Next to Advocate Hammond, the young man shook his head slightly, while staring down at his fingers.

„Just to point out some details for the jury to understand,“ he heard Kinsey say. 'No.' He still couldn't believe his hands could have done such a thing - that just was not, not possible.

„We found remains of skin and internal organs in the blood. Mr Ferretti, would you continue?“

„Well, we, we were searching for a light and.. Kowalski finally found one... I wished he'd not.“

„Why?“

Ferretti took a deep breath.

„Well, there were several wooden boxes with strange carvings on them... Hieroglyphs or something...“

„Yes.“ Kinsey interjected again.

„According to the forensic department the Hieroglyphs stand for the cardinal points north, south, east and west.“

„Go on, please.“

„They were clean from the outside but... but the stench seemed to come from there so we... we did what our task was and called the police since this was obviously the site of a crime. We just checked whether the pervert was still down there or not...“

„Mr Ferretti, I advise you to watch your tongue,“ Judge Landry said.

„Yes sir, sorry, sir.“

„Go on. What did the police find?“

„...Body parts,“ Ferretti said in a loud and angry voice.

„They found the body parts in the boxes, sorted accurate.“

„You heard that?!“ Kinsey exclaimed.

„You claim you can't remember such a thing... No, mister, I don't believe you for a second. Nobody could forget how he'd accurately dispatched the bodies of three humans and sorted their bodies in boxes with Egyptian hieroglyphs of the cardinal points, like in the legend of the Egyptian god Osiris. WHERE YOU PLANNING TO BURY THEM LATER?“

„State Attorney Kinsey,“ Landry warned.

„Objection,“ Hammonds voice boomed.

But Kinsey was on a roll.

„Say it, admit it you wanted to bury them in those directions out of vengeance. [*he didn't know*] Or were you planning to send the single body parts to other people to get your insane mind satisfied, [*NO! he didn't know*] like the Egyptian kings had done with their competitors and enemies to shock them? Why? [*he couldn't explain*] Why these three innocent people? Have you been rejected to become a student of archaeology or ancient Egyptian studies [*had he?*] and therefore decided to kill them? TELL ME! Or was it just by chance that you chose them, because they were easy targets?“

„I DON'T KNOW! Hell, I just don't know,“ he shouted out, suddenly standing, though he really couldn't remember moving.

„State Attorney Kinsey enough is enough, stop it.“ Landry interjected, his voice furious.

„And you, sir, sit down.“ He started to tremble but he did as he was told and sat down. Kinsey had the dirty smile back on his face.

„So a reaction after all.“

„State Attorney Kinsey, I don't want to hear another comment until the next hearing, is that clear?“ Kinsey sat and ruffled through his papers.

„Son,“ Hammond whispered - he stared at him.

Had he heard this right? No, he must now be really losing his mind since it couldn't be that his advocate - a total stranger - had just called him 'son'. He swallowed the lump in his throat.

„You sure you really don't want to say a thing?“

„Yes.“ No hesitation.

Hammond sighed.

„Listen, my friend, O'Neill sent me a message. He'll be here soon, but he needs a bit more time.“ He nodded.

„You need a break, some water, food?“

„No. I'm fine.“ He almost choked on his words.

„Advocate Hammond,“ Landry said, raising both of his eyebrows - he seemed to meet a lot of people lately doing this.

„We can continue with Mr Murray, Judge.“

„So still no word?“

„No.“

„Then the court calls Mr Teal'c Murray to be heard.“

Teal'c and Vala Mal Doran entered. Vala took a seat on the left side of the audience, while Teal'c sat down in front of the judge.

Kinsey started his hearing.

So far Teal'c had just told what had happened as far as he could tell. He'd abstained from judging the man or making any snide comments, but to be frank ♦ though he really didn't know Teal'c, he hadn't ♦ imagined him to be such a kind of character ♦

v ♦ Mr Murray ♦ Landry addressed Teal'c after Kinsey was done, ♦ what kind of impression did the accused person make on you? ♦

♦ The accused person's name Judge Landry.. ♦

Landry was ready to explode and opened his mouth to tell the interjector off.

What kind of Twilight Zone was this court hearing anyway? A supposed serial murderer that was not talking and pretended not to remember who he was, an overzealous State Attorney he hated to deal with and an advocate with his very last case who was barely asking questions, since he didn't know how he could defend his client without knowing the client's story and ancient Egyptian sacrificing rituals including barbarous executed scholars...

„Daniel!“

That was yet another voice. Why was it that his hearing had turned out to be an official market.

A blonde woman was just shoving - Jack O'Neill - ha who else could have stormed into his hearing - aside and started to run towards the advocate's desk.

„Daniel, Daniel, I can't believe it's you.“ She knelt in front of the accused while State Attorney Kinsey opened and closed his mouth like a fish.

„We thought you were dead, god, Daniel, they told me you were dead.“ She shook her head in disbelief. Tears were welling up in her blue eyes.

„Daniel, please, don't you know me anymore? Talk to me.“ She'd taken his trembling hands in hers and was darting her gaze towards George Hammond, who shook his head.

The tears started to fall.

„Daniel?“ she whispered.

He - no, 'Daniel', the woman said his name was 'Daniel' could it be right? It sounded familiar, this name.

The young woman squeezed his hands to get his attention, to make him look at her. Who was she? He couldn't remember, was she his wife? His lover? Maybe, his sister? Daniel frowned but he just didn't know...

„Sorry,“ he whispered back, shaking his head.

„Sorry? Daniel, why are you sorry?“

„For being such a head case.“

Kinsey was starting to say something but Landry stopped him in his tracks.

„What do you mean?“, the woman asked.

„Can't I... I can't remember you... so sorry.“ The last word was whispered only to her while tears were starting to run down Daniel's cheeks too.

Jack O'Neill seated himself on the right side of his friend George Hammond, who cast a questioning look at him. He shrugged

„Oh Daniel, it's me, Sam, god I thought you were dead,“ she repeated.

„Not to interrupt the happily family get-together, but who the hell are you?“ It was Kinsey.

„State Attorney, do I have to repeat myself in view of your behaviour and way of interrogation?“ He turned to the blond woman.

„Though if there are no further questions to Mr Murray, I would be willing to hear the young lady. It seems she could help us answer some questions about the accus - about Daniel. Questions that couldn't be answered by the united forces of our police and special investigative teams of different sorts.“

„Ma'am, would you agree to answer to this court?“

Yes, yes, of course sorry, sir. I couldn't believe it until I'd seen Daniel myself. ♦

„Good. Please take a seat.“

„Does the State Attorney agree?“

„Yes.“ Yet Kinsey's tone was anything but enthusiastic.

„Does State Attorney agree to Mr O'Neill joining the court to bring forth further findings in this case?“

„Accept under reserve.“

„So, ma'am, could you please tell us your name and your current place of domicile,“ Landry started.

My name is Samantha Carter, I am a doctor of theoretical astrophysics and my current location is New York. I am not related to Daniel.“

So, not his sister as he'd hoped, not even related in anyways to him. Daniel felt a feeling of sadness washing over him. His first instinct was that the two of them must have been close...

„And who is the accused? From where do you know him?“

At the word 'accused', her eyes darkened, but she kept herself calm. Samantha turned and looked at Daniel as if she was talking to him only.

„His name, sir, is Daniel Jackson.“ She smiled at Daniel.

„You're a PhD of anthropology and linguistics and you are now 27 years old, but when I saw you last, you were 25 and working on your doctorate in archaeology. You've grown up with me, my father and brother, after your parents... died in an accident in the New York Museum of Art when you were eight years old.“

She was gripping the table in front of her but she continued to look at him. Daniel stared back at her, pale with haunted eyes and a sadness she'd hoped she'd never see again on him.

Apart from a gasp that came from where Vala had taken her seat, the whole hall was filled with deafening silence.

„I am sorry, Daniel.“

Jack O'Neill had flinched slightly when hearing about Daniel's parents, but then, who wouldn't, so Samantha did not give it a second thought.

„My father took you in since we'd been friends from the day you and your parents had moved into our neighbourhood. They called us the brain-siblings.“

Samantha flashed him a smile, filled with memories.

„We both attended a special school for skilled kids but after your parents died... well, you buried yourself in your studies, and though you are three years younger than me, you overtook me and joined university two years before I did.“

„What happened?“ Landry asked, after a long minute of silence.

„I don't know, sir. We had some good years. Daniel was doing well. We shared projects and theories. Daniel discovered something about some findings in Egypt and planned to join a dig there. He was often on the dig sites in Europe, so why not Africa this time? Daniel studied and saved the money he earned with his translations and assistance for the lecturers.“

On September 16th, Daniel was supposed to fly to Egypt on flight '200'. However the flight crashed and almost all passengers died.“

She paused and took a few breaths to calm herself, then locking eyes with her friend, her 'brother'.

„Daniel, they told us you died in this crash. This Maybourne person was standing on our doorstep two days later and he told us you were dead.“ Tears were falling again.

„I... I couldn't believe it but I had to. You were supposed to be on this plane and the list of passengers from the airport said you'd checked in.“ She was shaking her head. „I am so sorry.“

Daniel looked back at her, while the rest of the room was still immersed in silence, all eyes on him.

„Why now?“ Daniel asked, so low that she'd almost missed it.

„Mr O'Neill had called the department you'd worked for. Cam Mitchell, a friend of mine from college who is now working there remembered your story. He called me, telling me that obviously someone had asked for you, claimed you were still alive. And gods you are, holy Hannah, you are alive indeed.“

„And he who is currently accused of having murdered three people.“ Kinsey stated with a cold voice that broke the shocked silence.

„Errr, Judge Landry, that's my point to join in, right?!“ O'Neill stated.

Landry hoed up his hand to stop him.

„Only, Mr O'Neill, if there are no further questions for Dr Carter. And I'll have to ask her to bring me the file of Dr Daniel Jackson and his family. We will continue after lunch. Dr Jackson, you will remain in custody, no visitors apart from Advocate Hammond.“

* * * * *

„We continue the hearing in case of the State Attorney of Chicago against Dr Daniel Jackson.“

Daniel felt miserable. He'd not been able to eat anything. Thousands of questions had flooded his mind, because yes, he now knew his name and the vertices of his biography but he still couldn't remember anything apart from this. He couldn't feel anything about it. Dr Sam Carter seemed to be a nice, caring person, telling them all the truth, but he'd not even had a hint of familiar feeling when she'd hugged him before they had placed him back in custody. But it didn't felt like hugging a total stranger either. Daniel's head was pounding and he couldn't stop his hands from trembling.

„Please sit.“

„The analysis of Dr Jackson's file has indicated no abnormal behaviour, or previous criminal records. According to the analyses of Dr Lam, the character profile gives also no indication of schizophrenia, which weakens the character analyses that were done after his arrest and were used as basis for this hearing and the reproaches of the State Attorney.“ Landry looked up from his report, while Daniel felt a wave of relief washing over him.

„Any further questions or requests?“

„Then the court calls Mr Jonathan O'Neill to be heard.“

„Mr O'Neill, can you tell us what your occupation is and why you are here?“

„I am retired, Kinsey. But my old friend, George Hammond, called me and asked me to use my skills to help him with his last case before he will join me in retirement. My former occupation, however, was private investigator.“

„So what could you find out that the official forces could not? And I hope,“ Landry added with raised voice, „you did not use any illegal means to get your information.“

„No, sir. I am very well aware that this wouldn't help. I obviously just dug a little deeper than the State Attorney did.“

„Proceed.“

„I went to Mr Murray's coffee shop and asked him for the security tape. I was surprised to learn no one else had. I handed the tape over to you as proof, but there was nothing special to be seen. Mr Jackson was acting the way Mr Murray and Vala Mal Doran had told me. The only thing I wondered about was a little marking on his left wrist.“ O'Neill turned to the desk where Hammond and Daniel Jackson sat.

„Would you pull up your left sleeve a bit, please.“

Daniel did, though he didn't know how this could help him.

„See there, I mean his skin is white but the skin within those little cuts is even paler. So I thought of the things that could have been there but couldn't quite come up with anything.“

„Get to the point, O'Neill.“

Right. The point is that it prompted me to sweep the alley where Jackson had been found. I mean, after your slack investigation within the coffee shop, who knows how well your special forces worked there. ♦ O'Neill grinned at Kinsey in triumph.

„I found a little piece of cloth with a number - in a puddle of something. Which, I too, added to the listing of proof. The cloth belonged, as I found out to a laundry bag, to be more accurate to a laundry bag of the Chicago Lakeshore Hospital - a hospital for mental care.“

A shocked hitch escaped Daniel Jackson, at O'Neill's last statement. He looked at O'Neill in disbelief and pure horror.

„Yeah, I was kinda surprised too about the padded cell thingy. But there is more.“

„So I visited the Lakeshore Hospital and arranged an appointment with one Dr MacKenzie, Chief of the Mental Health Department and specialised in tada - schizophrenia.“

Jack pointed and glanced at Daniel, wanting to know how the young man coped with the news he was delivering. He'd his arms wrapped around him, as he'd done it on the tape and was now starring at the desk.

„However, as we just heard, and as Dr Lam will sure confirm: Daniel Jackson does not have schizophrenia. And according to Dr MacKenzie, none of his patients is missing.“

„So I had to leave since this seemed to be a dead end.“

„But while passing the nurses' station, I could hear two nervous voices discussing their missing co-worker and the disappearance of a young patient named Machello. Now I found it very strange that Dr MacKenzie was assuring me that no one was missing, while in reality, two people from his institution had gone astray.“

„Hold on,“ Judge Landry said. „I want to hear this Dr MacKenzie, no matter what else you tell us. Bailiff Makepeace would you ask Dr MacKenzie to join us for a hearing. Thank you.“

„Please, Mr O'Neill, continue.“

„So, I met with the nurses, told them who I was, and to my surprise, they were willing to help me, told me where I could find the file of the missing patient. They showed a lot concern about the missing nurse. Her name was Sha're.“

He looked at Daniel Jackson again, who flinched visibly.

„Do you remember her name - Daniel? Do you remember her and who she was?“ Jack O'Neill asked with a surprisingly tender voice.

„Wife,“ Daniel whispered back. He'd started to shake his head, as if in disbelief.

„Missing.“ Daniel looked at O'Neill.

„I know. I'm sorry,“ answered Jack, getting up and handing Daniel a photograph. „Oh my God,“ Sam Carter breathed.

„Please, Mr O'Neill, no exchange of things between the involved persons.“

„Sorry, Judge, but I think this is an acceptable exception. I added a copy of the same photograph to the proofs.“

Daniel was pressing the photo to his heart rocking slightly in his chair while George Hammond tried to calm him down.

„I'm fine,“ was the only thing Daniel said, though he was so obviously not.

„What is it with this picture? Allowance of inspection, Judge Landry,“ Kinsey demanded impatiently, getting up even before the judge approved his request.

„Yes, State Attorney, since I can't stop you anyway.“

The picture was of a young couple and someone had written something on it in a foreign language.

„What is written on the photograph? We'll have to find someone to translate this. It might be important.“ Landry said.

„Soon we will be free,“ Daniel answered in a small voice from next to Hammond.

„That was the last message Sha're gave to me, before she disappeared from my life,“ Daniel Jackson continued.

„And this was one week before Daniel was found by Mr Murray and his wife,“ Jack said while turning to Daniel again, looking curiously at him. Hammond placed a hand on Daniel's shoulder. „I am sorry, son, so sorry,“ the older man said.

Daniel couldn't quite think of a reason why his advocate felt sorry for him. But gods, he remembered Share. Everything was falling into place.

„I went to the store room where, according to the nurses, the files were kept. I know with this I kinda left the legal part aside. I searched for the file, 'Machello' because that was the name of the missing patient. It turned out to be Daniel's file. The label was taped over several times and on the top was written 'Machello, Nikolas' I was feeling generous so I made you a copy. I know it's not working as proof this way but I was kinda afraid that this file could suddenly disappear too.“ The word 'disappear' was marked with two quotation marks by the private investigator.

Judge Landry checked it anyway.

„Well, Mr Kinsey, you will certainly find some interesting points in here and I hereby request we officially investigate the affairs of this institution. Mr O'Neill, go on.“

„According to this file, Daniel was brought to the mental health almost 2 years ago by a man called Harry Maybourne. Ring any bells? Exactly the same person who told Dr Carter and her family that Daniel had died in an air crash, on his way to Egypt.“

„According to the records in this file, Daniel was declared schizophrenic and given heavy sedatives. I could not find out why he had to be kept alive - there is obviously something they needed him for,“

„Judge Landry,“ a voice interrupted. It was Makepeace.

„Sorry to interrupt, sir, but Dr MacKenzie was caught packing his stuff and destroying records and was therefore arrested.“

„Thank you, Officer Makepeace. Seems there's even more to this case.“

„Mr O'Neill, is there anything else?“

„Yes sir, unfortunately.“ Jack O'Neill took a deep breath.

„There was some dried blood on the rack where Daniel's file had been kept and when I took a closer look around the storage room, I found more. Now I know the cleaning personal does not dust there on daily a basis, but from time, to time so it couldn't be that old and I ... followed the trail.“

„What was the result?“

„Mr O'Neill?“

„I...“ Jack scrubbed his hands over his face.

„There was a small, almost hidden entrance - some kind of old fire door, I think.“ He glanced at Daniel again.

„... And behind this door I found the missing nurse... I... I found Share.“ There was silence and seconds seemed to last hours.

„No.“ Daniel had gotten to his feet, retreating the few steps to the back of the hall, leaning heavily against the wooden wall. Shaking his head, he cried: „No, no, no, no, no! It wasn't planned like this! No!“

Heaving and sobs escaped him. Daniel started to tremble heavily and Jack was sure his legs would give out any moment.

George Hammond was trying to calm Daniel down but the man didn't even recognise him.

„It wasn't planned like this,“ Daniel repeated in a whisper.

Maybe if he hadn't been insane all those years, maybe now that he'd learned the news about his wife, he was going to lose it, Jack thought. The photo had at least had the result he'd wished for - Daniel Jackson remembered and Daniel Jackson was talking now.

„We'd been married for one year. Sha're had found out about me being there for no other reason than someone had me wanted there. She'd found the files - my file - while searching for something MacKenzie had wanted.“ Daniel stared at Jack, fighting the tears that were welling up in his eyes. The room, jury and the few witness that had remained were waiting for him to continue.

„She'd changed my medication after the first few times there and I became aware of my surroundings again. I... I had to play Machello, I had to act as if I'd lost my mind, thanks to all those damn drugs they'd given me during my first months there. We couldn't come up with another solution. I couldn't remember my family or how I'd ended up there, apart from the name Maybourne, nothing was in there and Sha're did not have the money to give us the chance to just run. We needed new identities and a place to go first. So we stayed. She, as the chief nurse. I, as the patient, Machello.“

Daniel took a breath.

„We once tried to call in the officials to help us, but Sha're almost got caught and she had a hard time regaining MacKenzie again. Giving me the ... photograph was the sign - she'd said I would know when things were a go. And she was right. I did. I was to wait some days, not longer than six, while she was taking a holiday. But on July 7th, the last possible day - she never came.“

Silence.

„So what happened?“

Daniel stared into the space only he could see, when he resumed talking.

„I don't know, I think I gave up. I thought she'd betrayed me, left me. So I bit my guard and stuck a needle in MacKanzie's stomach. I have no idea how I managed to get out of there. I just remember that when I was aware of my surroundings again, I found myself in this damp hall between laundry baggage. Someone was talking in a hissing voice and there were all kinds of noises. I don't think I'd ever heard so much noise in my life... not that I can remember a lot things. They never stopped but I could hear steps going back and forth and I buried myself deeper into the laundry bags, repositioning some of them over my body.“

O'Neill took a piece of paper out of his jacket and wrote a note, then gave it to Landry. Daniel didn't even notice.

„The person with the hissing voice was still talking and cursing a lot when something red dropped on one of the laundry bags. He removed it and I was sure he'd seen me.“

Judge Landry motioned Makepeace to come to his console and gave him yet another note, while nodding towards Jack O'Neill.

„Then a cover was tightened over the edges around me and the room started to move. That was when I realised that I was actually in a van and that this van was inside this big hall. We were leaving. The noise of the streets was almost deafening but when I thought it was quieter, I opened the flap and rolled out. Next thing I knew after that was Mr Murray helping me up.“

When Daniel was finished with his story, it seemed as if every last ounce of strength had left him all of the sudden and he sank to the floor, so fast that no one was able to prevent him from hitting a chair hard on his way down.

„Hey, sleepy head, wakey, wakey“

Something was ruffling his hair and Daniel started to open his eyes.

He managed to get them in working order eventually. Well, sort of, considering he was greeted by blurry vision and a friendly yet strange face.. or not so strange“

„Jck ill?“

„Yep the one and only. Come on, Daniel 22 hours sleep are enough. There are some people that have been waiting for you to wake up for some time - and they all bear good news.“

„Dun'o 'ny 'ple.“ Daniel mumbled, closing his eyes.

„Ohh, yes you do, Danny-boy, you do.“ Now the man was slapping his face.

„Kay. kay, just stop beating me. Never heard of someone being brought back to life by getting beaten up.“

„Wow, the man can talk whole sentences if he gets challenged a bit.“

„Wasn't challenged.“

„Were too.“

„So not.“

„So were,“ Jack O'Neill sing-songed. Daniel seemed irritated and frowned.

„What happened?“ Daniel rolled his eyes and felt the pressure behind them.

„You collapsed during the hearing,“ a female voice said. Daniel frowned.

„Sam?“

„Yes!..“ Suddenly Daniel's hand hurt too due to almost unbearable squeezing.

„OW!“

„Oh sorry... I mean, yes, Daniel it's me.“ The blonde, good looking woman was beaming at him and then hugging the stuffing out of him so that Daniel started to cough.

„Sorry, sorry, Daniel, I am just so glad you remember this time.“

„Me too Sam.“ Daniel turned a serious face to Jack.

„So when will the hearing continue?“

„Ohh, uhhh, never...“ Jack raised his eyebrows. Daniel missed the twinkling in them.

Daniel paled visibly staring in shock at the people in front of him. So the jury had already decided and this was the last kind gesture they were willing to give him. Seeing his ...adopted older sister one more time...

„Daniel, what is it, are you hurting? Shall we call a nurse, the doctor?“

He started to laugh - it sounded slightly hysterical.

„Why, for what reason when they have sentenced me to death?“

„What?!“ Four voices were saying at once.

„Daniel, what are you talking about?“

„No, Dr Jackson.“ This was... George Hammond his advocate, who was ready to retire. Daniel concentrated on him.

„There will be no further hearing, because they have found the true killer, thanks to you and Jack O'Neill's famous skills. What you remembered of the laundry gave the police enough information to finally investigate in the right direction. The laundry service for the Lakeshore Hospital was easy to find, and with it, the true serial killer.“

Jack O'Neill could actually see the wheels turning in Daniel Jackson's head.

„But this K'era, she'd seen me?“

„No son. The only thing she was right about, was that he was young and that his shirt was smeared with blood.“

„Judge Landry and the jury have already acquitted you of all charges unofficially. Now the only reason for you to return to court is to make it official. And maybe, later one day to give evidence against Dr MacKenzie. You are free, Daniel.“ Jack O'Neill was practically beaming at him.

Yes, that he was! But what price had he paid for this freedom? Gods, he was still tired.

„But without Sha're, she was my family, my life.“

„I know. But maybe with time... you will see...“

Daniel blinked and tried to stifle a yawn. He failed.

„... that we are now in your life Daniel Jackson.“ Daniel glanced up seeing the mountain of a man in front of him who was Teal'c Murray and managed to blink the tears away that were caused by his friendly words - or maybe he could blame it on the medication.

Daniel closed his eyes - which was sure not a good idea. He knew he wouldn't be able to fight sleep any longer.

„Actually...“ Ahh Vala, Daniel forced his eyes to open again.

„We came to apologise, but if you are willing to give us a second chance, or so, Muscles and me would be happy to invite you all for some coffee when you're outta here,“ she finished in a rush.

„So that you can check out my backside again?“ Jack O'Neill said and Daniel mumbled half asleep in unison, which was followed by a lot of laughter and a raised eyebrow from Teal'c.

When the group of visitors had calmed down again, Daniel Jackson had finally given in to Mr Sandman. Sam Carter bent down and kissed her friend who was finally back in her life on his left cheek then sat down.

„Sleep tight Daniel.“

TBC

LOPETA

