

Disclaimer:

The characters portrayed within this story belong to the guys that own the Rights to Stargate SG1 so MGM, Gekko and unfortunately obvious SciFi too...! Those aforementioned characters inspire a lot of people watching and adoring Stargate SG1 so be indulgent. Many thanks to Gekko and MGM, Daniel Jackson, Jack O'Neill, Sam Carter and Teal'c plus their respective actors doing such a great performance!!
Skyffi sucks!

Category: AU, H/C, kinda slashy, Holiday Fic

Warnings: My English has it's limits!

Jack is fairly whumped, Daniel does have emotional whumping, mild language, Danielcentric

Summary: The unforgettable fairy tale about Daniel, who is going onto a dangerous adventure to unban his friend Jack from an evil spell.

Timeline: none

Spoilers: since this is AU, kinda all episodes of every seasons are somewhere in the background

Rating: Sorta tricky, PG-13, though being based on a fairy tale there is nothing graphic, but mention of nudity, well sort of .. language, some kissing - but just a bit

Size: 92kb

Author's Notes: I hope Hans Christian Anderson will not haunt me for stealing his brilliant fairy tale - which has always been my most favourite. Thanks D for the brave beta-reading and sorry for dragging you back into childhood! Until I started this project I had actually never read "The Snowqueen" myself. I had listened to my grandpa reading it or to the audiobook or later I would watch the movie during Christmas - every year. So I was kinda .. well disappointed when I finally read the origin. So I hope you do not mind that I mixed up the origin with the audiobook and the movie.

The Snow Queen - The true story about friendship, love, adventure and evilness

Schnipp, schnapp, schnurre burre, baselure!

„Wonder at my words? No you shan't! Aren't there many things we do not know yet, riddles that are still have to solve and professions you do not know yet? Yes there are smiths, tailors, teachers or bakers. Me? I don't do such things. My profession is to handle words and their magic to bring brightness into sad hearts. I have seen a lot in these and other worlds, I have travelled far and met many people and beings because I am a storyteller!

So believe me when I say Schnipp, schnapp, schnurre burre, baselure!. And listen closely because today, I'll tell you the story of Jack and Daniel.“

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Jack and Daniel were living in a very small attic under the roof of an old house in an even older town. They shared their small space with their grandma. Well actually their granny was only Jack's grandma, but, Daniel and his parents had lived on the other side of the same house, and during the summers Jack and Daniel had played together, sitting on the roof, watching the people, listening to Jack's grandma's stories and sharing a weird kind of mutual humour and understanding. Until Daniel's parents had died in a very cold winter, when snow lay so heavily on the roof of a church that the roof grumbled and caved in, burying Daniel's parents.

Grandma Catharine had not had the heart to give Daniel away, and she saw that her grandson Jack loved him so very much that it would have broken his heart, and thus hers, so she took Daniel in and cared for him as if he was her grandson too. What they did not have in food, furnishing or money - they had in their love, respect, kindness and fantasy. And there was one more thing. Grandma Catharine had a magic hand for roses. Even during the winter there were always roses in their humble home and during the summer the roses were placed on the roof, so that everyone could see and enjoy them, and very often rich people came and would pay a lot of money to have them.

„Hei Daniel, what's up, watcha doing?“

„I'm reading, Jack.“ Daniel glared at Jack wanting to be left alone and for Jack to get this hint. Jack did not move an inch so Daniel continued.

„Grandma has so many books and I only have the winter to read, so leave me alone, go play or do something useful to help Grandma.“

Jack pouted, until he heard heavy steps coming closer.

„Danny, hurry that's Grandma Catharine we could play a joke on her.“

Now Daniel was a nice, good boy who enjoyed to read or explore old buildings or places, but he couldn't resist the temptation Jack offered, considering it meant having fun. So they hid quietly under the old table and the room was immersed in total silence. The door opened with a creak and both boys jumped out of their hiding place shouting „wuahh“. But were shocked when they realised that it wasn't their Grandma Catharine standing in front of them.

„What is it that you shout at me... you naughty scum?“ Said a man with a cold face, greyish hair and wrapped in fine linen, a high hat on his head.

„Uhh... we thought you were our Grandma“, said Jack.

„Do I look like a grandma?“

The boys shook their heads.

„This is A) unbelievably naughty, B) inexcusable and C) you should both be punished for that!“ Counted the cold voice.

That moment Grandma Catharine and I entered the room.

„Good day, my Lord what is it we can do for you?“ Grandma Catharine asked, while moving in front of Jack and Daniel, though they were already bigger than her.

„My name is A) Kinsey, I am B) the richest man in this country, I sell ice and C) want to buy your roses.“

„Oh they are beautiful aren't they?“ I said.

„And who would you be?“ Asked Kinsey, sniffing a little when pronouncing the „you“.

„Ohh, this is our dear guest, who lives with us during the winter. The storyteller of Hammond, don't you know his magic tales?“ answered Grandma Catharine.

„You may take a seat, my lord.“

„Nah, I have to rush, time is precious and costs a lot, so hurry I want the roses now. I will give you 1 taler.“

„Oh my lord, you really must love roses!“

„Love, no! I just want them because I am A) rich, they are B) rare in winter and I C) collect things that are rare.“

Grandma Catharine smile faded, her shoulders straightened and she stepped forward.

„If this is the case, my Lord Kinsey, then I can not sell you my roses. They only grow when loved not when merely wanted.“

„Ha, don't be foolish I give you 200 taler, - 500 taler, - 1000 taler, that is still not enough! What a greedy old fool you are. But I am willing to trade 5000 taler! This is enough to take care of you and those useless brats for a long time!”

„No my lord, I will not sell you my flowers. My grandsons are more precious to me than any money you could give.”

Daniel wanted to cheer his Grandma Catharine, but the look on the man's face was colder than the ice he sold, so Daniel kept quiet and stood close to Jack, willing the strange man to go.

„Go home man, you can't buy us!” Jack said.

The eyes of the Kinsey narrowed first toward Jack and Daniel, than they zoomed in on Grandma Catharine.

„Ohh you will regret your disrespect! I'll go and talk to my Queen, she will teach you, what the price for impertinence is!”

With this he left.

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„Are you alright, sons?”

„Yes, yes nothing to freak out about.” Jack said.

But Daniel still had a worried face.

„The queen he was talking about, who is she?” He asked, biting his lower lip. He had read about the things queens could do in these times in which they lived.

„Oh for sure, it's the Snow Queen! She lives high in the north were it is only ice and snow and never the sun is shining. Only in winter she visits our lands and towns, and often the cold wind of the east is her companion.”

„Shh, shh storyteller of Hammond! Enough of the dark tales you know, they are frightened enough already. Come let us eat.”

But before we could heat the stove, something seemed to knock on the window. The knocking grew louder until the glass shattered and wind as cold as ice swirled throughout the room.

Suddenly a woman appeared. She was beautiful, her clothes all white and made of fine material, her eyes were glowing, her hair long and golden and formed with ice crystals and her skin was so pale one could think she was made of snow.

„My lady, huh, where did you appear from so suddenly?” Grandma Catharine asked. „Oh my pardon, I fear the window is broken, Jack go fix it so that the lady does not freeze.”

„No, no, old woman, the coldness suits me just fine.” Answered a hollow, but deep voice in a mocking tone. The lady made a flicking gesture with her hands.

„I've come to see dear Jack and take him with me to my palace.” She continued her eyes never leaving the her desired one.

Daniel stepped closer to Jack, taking his hand, squeezing it.

„You can't just come here and take Jack with you, he belongs to us, this is his home, how dare you make such demands.” He said forgetting about the fear that seemed to have clutched his heart in it's hands

An evil loud laughter answered him.

„How cute you are beloved, but nothing serious for my Jack. In my palace he can have all he desires, perfect things only, without bothering about anything. He will have servants just for him, he'll be powerful and feared! What could you offer?“ She shook her head, mocking Daniel. „Besides it would be much more easier for the old woman, if she just had to feed one hungry mouth.“

„No!!!“ Daniel cried.

„I don't mind to share what little I have. My Lady.“

The woman looked at Grandma Catharine convinced - NOT.

„You can't take Jack away from his grandma! If anything you shall take me, I am not their blood. I live here, because grandma Catharine took me in. It's me who is the burden.“

„Daniel would you shut up. No one is going anywhere. I don't want a palace or servants. I have everything I want, already.“ He looked meaningfully into Daniel's eyes. „So I am sorry Ma'am, you'll have to find someone else.“

The woman sneered, at Jack, shooting what could have been a hateful stare at Daniel - if she would had possessed the ability to feel.

„As you wish, for now. I am sure you will change your mind, young Jack. Before I leave however, you shall give me a kiss at least. Don't you think I at least deserve a kiss, beloved?“

Jack rolled his eyes but his Granny beckoned him to do as the lady wished so that she would leave.

Jack kissed her, and felt a strange cold sting in his heart and eyes.

„Jack are you okay, you look pale?“ Daniel asked, concerned.

„Ya, Daniel would you just stop the whining, it makes you looking ugly anyways.“

A cold smile crossed the lady's face, then, she was gone.

„Oh my lord that... that... she... was it - her“

„Who was what?“

„The Snow Queen,“ I whispered in answer.

„Wh.. what, why didn't you tell us, warning Jack not to kiss her.“ Daniel cried out.

„I wanted, but I couldn't she made me freeze up, all I could do was just stand and stare, I'm sorry.“

Jack laughed out.

„Ohh my, Granny, did I ever tell you, you look awful crawling like you do, even with the cane that Daniel gave you. It's pretty much ridiculous, you shouldn't move at all.“

„Jack! Stop playing this game. Don't you know you hurt Grandma Catharine's feelings. You should be grateful, I think I don't know you anymore.“

„Ha, Dannyboy you never knew me. Don't you know that? I thought I was pretty obvious, but you wouldn't see the fire when it had already burned you.“

Daniel swallowed, blinking against the brightness in his eyes.

„Jack what is it? What did she do to you? We are friends, we've know each other a lifetime.“

„No Daniel, you think we KNOW each other I just thought it was a good way to make time pass faster during the winters, nothing else. We have nothing in common, have you never noticed that? Don't you see that I have friends in town, and each one of them is a better one than you ever could be, Because we have a foundation - a thing I can't say about you and me.“

Daniel swallowed, too shocked to speak on the one hand, and too afraid of what he might say once he started to speak.

„Ohh glory look at the roses! The buggers wither. Was an ugly shrubbery anyways!“

With that Jack left, leaving three very confused and concerned loved ones behind.

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The next day, Daniel and Grandma Catharine took some linen to exchange for more food and the last 3 roses to sell, down into town, while Jack had decided to go sleigh riding with his friends, Harry and Simmons.

The boys who were brave enough tied their sleighs to the fast carriages, racing with them over the market and through the narrow streets.

Daniel looked sadly in Jack's direction, wishing they could sit on the sleigh together, as they had so often. Grandma Catharine smiled at him encouragingly.

„Don't be sad Danny, I am sure Jack will be himself again very soon. Maybe the kiss has gone to his head. Come help me deliver these. I can buy new shoes for you if we sell these for a good price to the noblemen...“

Meanwhile Jack had tied his sleigh to a white carriage. A very big one with fast and sharp runners.

„Ho, ho go faster,“ Jack shouted while enjoying the ride across the market.

„Make way, make way you slow ducks.“ He winked at Harry and Simmons who gaped at Jack's fast ride.

But when the market was left behind and the streets became more and more empty the carriage did not stop, though Jack asked them to do so. They left the gates of the town and the carriage was still running fast until Jack thought he would freeze to a lump of pure ice.

Suddenly the carriage halted and Jack crawled towards the front. The wind was freezing his eyes, nose and lips.

„Hey, you know how far we away from town, it will take hours for me to walk back and I'll freeze with that...“

He stopped in his tracks when he saw the woman that was sitting in the carriage. She smiled at him sweetly.

„Hello Jack. Did you enjoy the ride? You were faster than anyone else. Now my beloved, why would you want to go back, mhh? Don't you want to come with me to my palace? The offer is still open.“ She sing-songed.

Jack shivered. He was cold, but he nodded.

„Now that you ask me again, why not! But like this, it's cold and some essential parts of me seem to be made out of ice after that ride, not to mention that I can't feel my feet or fingers any longer.“

„Ohh, you need not worry about that my Jack. Hop in and join me under the thick coat. It is warmer than anything you know.“

Jack did and the Queen gave him a kiss when he slipped under the coat. Suddenly he could feel the sting in his heart and eye again, but just for the fraction of a moment, then it was gone and he didn't feel cold any longer.

„You are right, it is warm in here.“ Jack said.

The Queen smiled her cold smile at him.

„Now shall we go see the palace and prepare the frost to come to our countries.“ She said and kissed Jack again while flicking her hands so that the carriage started to run again.

By the end of the second kiss Jack had forgotten all about Daniel and Grandma Catharine.

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Grandma Catharine was worried about her Daniel. When they had come back from the noblemen, Jack was gone. He had just vanished, no one could say where he was, not even his friends Harry and Simmons. It had shocked Daniel to the core, she had seen the tears threatening to fall, but they never did.

Weeks had passed, the winter was colder than anything Grandma Catharine could remember but Daniel had gone out every morning, after helping her, searching for Jack until it was too dark. He wouldn't give up on him, even though the town's folk said it was no good to search any longer.

Daniel became thinner and thinner, he wouldn't eat properly and was so sad that never a smile crossed his beautiful face any longer. His intelligent eyes were no longer shining, they were equally sad and dull. So lifeless, that Grandma Catharine feared she had lost both of her grandsons. He never talked, only when something had to be said, never told her about the riddles he had solved or speaking about the books he had read, or asking thousands of why-questions like he used to do. Daniel's spirit was gone with Jack.

Then fisherman told that Jack was the boy they had found in the river - drowned. She had been in the church while Daniel waited outside - never entering a church after what had happened to his parents. He had overheard the fisherman talking and the news had taken his breath away. The boy didn't seem to remember how to breath even, when she shook him and shouted at him and someone slapped him hard in the face. Nothing was helping until Grandma Catharine pleaded with him to not leave her and that she believed that Jack was alive, and was not the boy from the river.

After that Daniel had collapsed. Now lying in his bed to recover. Sleeping, occasionally sipping some hot soup and apologizing to her for being a burden.

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It was 8 days after his collapse when Daniel felt strong enough to start his quest. He was sick of searching without results and he knew he had to get into action to find out about Jack. Someone had to know, and he would find out who did.

So he got up, put on his shoes they had brought the day Jack had vanished, and sneaked out of his room. He couldn't take food with him, no, that he would leave for Grandma Catharine. He felt ashamed about leaving her with all the work, but now that the spring was finally knocking on the door she would be okay.

He kissed her goodbye when she was still sleeping and left without a note.

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Without knowing where his feet were taking him, Daniel suddenly stood in front of the river. The one that the fisherman had claimed had taken Jack from him. Daniel sat down and stared at the water.

„Hei river, tell me, have you taken my Jack from me? Please give him back to me, he is my dearest one. I only can give you my shoes in exchange, would you like to have them?“

The waves seem to agree. So Daniel started to take his shoes off.

They are almost new and I really value them, but Jack means so much more. And Grandma Catharine is so sad, he is her only real grandson, her whole family, and she misses him so much. He always fixed everything for her, made her laugh and played silly jokes. It is not right to take that joy away from her. Grandma Catharine's roses do not grow any longer because she is so sad, they only grow when love and joy surrounds them. Please give him back.“

With this Daniel threw his shoes in the river.

But he didn't seem to have done it right because the waves brought them back immediately. So Daniel took them and clambered into a boat to be able to throw them further. But the small boat was not tied up, and when Daniel moved the boat loosened from the river bank and started to drift away. When Daniel realised what was happening, he ran back and tried to reach the bank, but it was already too late and the water was too cold to jump in and swim back. He would have been frozen after only a few seconds.

So Daniel sat down and looked out for help. His shoes were following the stream as well, but he couldn't reach them.

After a long while he could see a house on the left riverbank. Soldiers were standing at the gate and he shouted out for help. But they did not move to help him. They didn't even seem to hear him crying for help. But suddenly a woman came running out of the house, coming to help him.

„Ohh, dear what are you doing alone in a boat without a oar, sweetheart?“

She took a long stick and was able to catch the boat before it was too far away again. Then she pulled it to the bank and helped Daniel to get out.

He almost fell into her arms when sudden dizziness overwhelmed him. No food and his still recovering body seem to have had enough adventure for one day. But he caught himself and straightened.

„Thank you. I've been in this thing for what seems an eternity.“ He said sending the woman a weak but sincere smile.

She had raven like hair, was almost as tall as him, slim, and had a beautiful catching smile. Her light eyes were shining bright. And on her head she wore a big sunhat with all kind of flowers painted on it in every bright colour that seem to exist.

She had neither stopped holding his hand, nor taken away her other one from his backside - but sure that meant nothing.

„Oh, no problem sweetie, my pleasure actually. Are you okay, you're shaking a little? So come in, rest and eat something and tell me what a darling like you was doing in that boat, alone and without a way to steer it.“

She stopped holding his hand to push open the door, but never left the hold of his backside.

While walking towards the tiny house Daniel noticed that the soldiers next to the gate were made of wood and not real ones - he felt a little silly.

The garden around the house was nothing like anything Daniel had seen before. Not at home and not in any of Grandma Catharine's books. She would love it. The garden was full of flowers and trees and the play of the colours were overwhelming.

„So come in, hush. You shall eat my cherries, they are the very best, sweet and rich. And I have them throughout the whole year. They sure will help you to feel better. There you go.“

Daniel stepped into the house. The windows were coloured too, in the same colours like the lady's hat and the sunshine was playing with them, casting coloured rays through the house making it shine in beautiful lights.

„Here sit. Eat.“

„Thank you, you are so kind.“ Daniel frowned. „May I ask what is your name - sure I have to know who rescued me from this boat.“

„Oh dear, my manners! My name is Vala Mal Doran and this is my residence, and you are very welcome here, sweetheart.“ She grinned.

„So thank you very much Vala Mal Doran! My name is Daniel, Daniel Jackson.“

„So Daniel what is your story? Tell me all about it, but first, eat the cherries.“

And Daniel did. They were sweet indeed, he never had eaten such good cherries, and, he was allowed to eat as much as he wanted. Daniel wished Jack was with him. Sadness overwhelmed him again, and he leaned back staring at the bowl with the cherries.

„What is it darling. You want something else?“

A sad smile flickered over his face.

„What I desire I fear you cannot give me. I am searching for Jack, have you heard of him?? Was he with you or have you heard someone talking about him?“ Pleading eyes looked hopefully into hers.

„No my dear, I have never heard of Jack, I am sorry. But share your story with me. I don't have a lot visitors and I so miss company, I long to know about the beloved that you search for.“

And Daniel started to tell Vala Mal Doran about his Jack, and Grandma Catharine's, about their life, their roses and the Snow Queen that had visited. And while he told his story, Vala was combing his hair with a golden comb, and with every stroke she made, he forgot more and more about his journey to find Jack.

Now Vala was not an evil woman, she was just lonely and wanted to have company so she made a bit of use of her magic and made Daniel forget.

When he had fallen asleep she went out in the garden and made the roses disappear. They all shrank back into the warm earth so that Daniel could not see them. Vala feared he would remember Jack and his grandma when seeing the roses and leave her too soon.

The next day Daniel ate more cherries and went out in the fair and beautiful garden to explore it more. He learned about every flower that was there, but in the back of his mind felt that something was missing. But he didn't worry too much, and so the days grew into weeks.

One day Vala was sitting outside under the cherry tree and wearing her sun hat to shade her eyes from the hot sun. Daniel was still fascinated by the flowers and kept staring at the hat. Suddenly he was hit as if the lightning had struck him. A rose!! On Vala's hat there was a rose! But there were no roses in the garden! How could the 'Queen of Flowers' be missed in such a perfect garden.

Daniel started to run. He searched in every corner of the garden yet there still were no roses.

„Tell me Vala, are there no roses in your garden? Where are they? How can you have no roses in your garden?!“

Vala said nothing, just cursing her stupidity that she had forgotten to make the rose on her hat disappear.

Daniel sat down. He was shaken to the core. How was it possible that he had forgotten about the roses, about his Jack, and the search for him! What would Grandma Catharine think about his unreliability?

One single tear dropped on the earth where once had been a beautiful rose. It was awoken by the hot tear that was burning itself through the layers of soil. The rose started to grow again and within minutes was standing in the sunshine enjoying the warmth of the summer.

Daniel kissed the blossom of the rosebush.

„Huh I have lost the track of time! I wanted to search for Jack and what have I done instead, stayed at Vala's house and being lazy, eating cherries while Jack is still out there. I have to go I have to find him!“

„Tell me rose, do you know whether Jack is dead?“

„Dead? No, I was down in the earth, to this place all the dead go, but Jack was not among them. I haven't seen him so he surely can't be dead.“ Answered the rose.

„Oh I thank you so much, dear rose!“

Daniel stood up and walked over to the other flowers, asking them whether they knew where Jack was, but none of the others knew it. They only gave him riddles as answers.

„Do you hear the drum? It's making boom, boom. Just those two sounds.“ Whispered the tiger lily.

„A man that is large can not hide himself in the grass.“ Answered another one.

„Can the flame of your heart die in the flames of the stake?“ Queried another flower. Daniel grew frustrated.

„Wh.. What I don't understand, what are you talking about?“

„It's just my story.“ Said the flower.

Daniel went on asking all the other flowers, but every flower did only tell its own story. So Daniel rolled up his trousers, so that he would be able to run faster, and started racing towards the gate, almost flying over the flower-beds.

The gate was closed. But Daniel jiggled the old lock until it gave in and fell apart. Then he started to run as fast as his bare feet would carry him. Three times he looked back, but no one was following. When he finally stopped Daniel sat down on a big stone. His feet hurt and his heart was racing, he needed to catch his breath.

When Daniel looked around he saw that it was already fall. Shock was overwhelming him, he hadn't known he had lost so much time in the garden, where the sun was always shining.

„So there is no time to rest. I have to move, too much time is already lost and Jack is still out there.“ Daniel said to himself. Then he got up and started walking into the world.

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At one point Daniel had to rest again. So he sat on a log to keep away from the small layer of snow.

Suddenly a crow was hopping in front of him, wishing him a good day.

„Tell me, 'krah' where do you go young man 'krah'? And why 'krah' are you alone? 'krah'“

Daniel had to concentrate to understand the crow.

„Good day to you too, Master Crow. I am searching for Jack, Have you seen my Jack??“

And then Daniel started to tell his story and about Jack and about his search.

The crow was silent for a long while, but nodding its head, finally it spoke.

„Maybe, 'krah', maybe I have seen your Jack. 'krah'“

Daniel's head shot up. „Really??“ He hugged and kissed the crow out of a sudden joy, almost crushing it.

„Careful, careful!“ said the crow.

„I think it could be your Jack, but now he sure has forgotten about you, because of the princess.“

„Is he now living with the princess?“ Daniel asked.

„Sure he is, I, crow of Kowalski will tell you. Can you speak the language of the crows? It would be easier for me to tell you in my language.“

Daniel nodded.

„So, I'll tell you.“

„The princess of your country is a smart one! She has read every paper that is in the world - and forgot what was written, so smart she is. Recently, she was sitting on her throne, which is not so easy, I have heard, but she is a power monger our princess, and she was humming a song. A carol about a wedding and so she decided to marry. But our princess wanted a man that would answer when talked to, not only one that was looking good. So she called her court ladies and told them that she was going to marry.“

„Every young man was invited to come to the castle and talk to the princess. And if he did well and spoke wisely, she would marry him.“

„Many came. And sure, they could talk on the streets! But the moment they entered the castle and saw all the gold and silver, the pompous halls, they seem to forget how to speak, and all they could do was to repeat the last word the princess had spoken. She dismissed them and was disappointed.“

„So what about Jack? He can speak well I know it! And he is never impressed by wealth!“ Said Daniel.

„Slowly, slowly, I'll tell you.“ Answered the crow.

„On the third day however, came a young, saucy man with a knapsack on his shoulders.“

„No you mean a sleigh for sure. Jack had a sleigh with him when he left.“

„Mhh, that could be right, I didn't look too closely.“

„However he greeted the guards with a bow and some kind words and climbed the stairs, never stopping to look at the gold or silver, not being afraid of anything. His boots were loud on the floor making it creak.“

„That sounds like Jack, I am sure. Grandma had given him some new boots and they made our floor creak too.“ Daniel clapped his hands with joy.

„He walked straight toward our little princess who was sitting on a pallet observing what was happening. Around her servants and the servants of the servants were staying and waiting and observing too what the young man would do. And he walked up to her and greeted her. Actually he had not come to marry, he just wanted to know whether she was as bright as everyone said. And what he saw he liked, and what our Princess heard she liked too.“

„I am sure it was Jack. Tell me crow of Kowalski can you lead me the way to the castle?“

„Oh, well that's easier said than done.“ Replied the crow.

„I will see whether I can arrange something, it's not easy for a common young man like you to visit the castle.“

„Sure it is. When Jack knows I am here, he will bring me forward and hear me.“

„Wait there at the railings Daniel. I'll do what I can.“ Said the crow, wiggled it's head and flew away.

Only when night had already fallen the crow came back and gave Daniel a piece of bread.

„Here eat this, sure you are hungry. You can't enter the castle through the gate, but my bride knows a small staircase at the back of the castle. It will lead you to the bed-chamber.“

So the crow led Daniel through the garden and to the small staircase. Daniel's heart was hammering in his throat. Would he finally find Jack? He was afraid and hopeful at the same time.

At the staircase stood the bride of the crow, she wiggled her head. Daniel bowed and wished the bride a good day.

„Oh what a beautiful human being you are indeed young master. My husband spoke so wonderfully of you, that I had to help. Here, would you carry the light so I can show you the way.“

The narrow staircase was empty, but Daniel got the feeling that something or someone was following. Suddenly something passed him.

„What are those?“ he asked pointing at white shadows that were formed like hunters or court ladies.

„Oh these are just the dreams of the rich people, do not fear them.“

They passed many halls and one was more beautiful than the other, until they finally reached the bed-chamber.

It was a big hall with high golden walls and in the centre there were two lilies, a white one for the princess and a red one for the prince.

Daniel climbed the red lily and bent one of its petals.

„Jack?“ he asked with the strongest voice he could muster.

The dreams with horseman and hunters disappeared and the prince turned around.

It was not his Jack.

He was young and handsome, but he was not Jack. Daniel was disappointed.

On the other side of the lily, the small princess peered around her petals, asking what had happened. So Daniel told them why he had come to their castle, entered their bed-chamber and interrupted their sleep in such a rude manner.

„Oh you poor dear.“ Said the princess, wiping the tears from her face.

The prince left his bed and offered it to Daniel.

„You shall rest Daniel Jackson. You have had a long journey and require some recuperation.“

Daniel was asleep as soon as he lay down. The prince covered him with a warm blanket. The dreams came and let Daniel dream of Jack. About the adventures they had shared, the laughter, the dreams and the sadness.

The next day Daniel got new clothes. All made of warm velvet, and new boots too. The prince asked him to stay with them in their part of the castle, but Daniel refused, he wanted to search for Jack.

But he told the prince and princess to make peace with the old king, and stop separating the castle in two parts. Because that was the case, only one half was for Princess Janet who was always friendly and in a good mood, the other half was for the old king who was snarky and often in a bad mood. Daniel said they should invite him and ask him to share their castle again, because this too would be better for their subjects and the country. And the princess and the prince promised to do so.

Daniel got a carriage and horses for his journey. Actually he had only asked for a small cart and one horse, but the princess wouldn't hear of it and gave him a carriage made of gold, a coachman, servants and , and even a muff so that he wouldn't get cold hands anymore.

The princess and the prince waved their goodbyes and the carriage started to move slowly.

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Meanwhile the iceman Kinsey planned his revenge against Daniel. So far his plan had worked just fine. Jack was with his queen and he had gotten a big reward for it. He was now the vice-iceman and got unlimited supplies of ice, which meant every king and noblemen and thus their money and power was in his hands.

But this Daniel was a threat. This boy just didn't give up, and even more disturbing, he got help from the people and even animals he met.

Yet now, now his chance was here to get rid of him. A golden carriage was slow and at a disadvantage. The bandits would have their fun to take it and would made mincemeat of little Daniel no doubt! He had promised the chief looter all the gold and everything that was in the carriage, if she would hand over Daniel - dead or alive, it didn't matter. And she had agreed.

Icemen Kinsey sneered and a golden smile graced over his face.

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The carriage moved slowly through the dark woods. Daniel was sure he would have been a lot faster walking, but well, it was an accepted gift and it was cold, and after walking so many days through the world, a little rest really couldn't hurt. So Daniel leaned back and closed his eyes.

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But the golden carriage was observed closely. Behind every 5th tree a bandit hid waiting for the right opportunity to strike. They all looked horrible, with no teeth or very bad ones, eye patches and bent noses and backs.

Their patience wore a little thin seeing all the gold in front of them, moving so slowly and being not allowed to take advantage. They had sworn to the boss to wait for her sign. What sign they didn't exactly know, but she had told them they would sense it.

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The precursor was waking Daniel from his slumber.

„Young sir there is a big tree lying on the track and we will not be able to move it. We will have to take the unsecured old route.“

Daniel had no clue about where they were going anyway so he trusted the precursor to show him the right way to cross these eerie woods and nodded.

„Do what you think is best, Walter. I trust you.“

So Walter spoke to the coachman, and he agreed to the plan, though he was afraid of the unsecured path.

When they came to a small clearing all hell broke loose. From everywhere came horrible looking men killing first Walter, and then Harriman who'd had to halt the carriage because the bandits had a hold on the horses. Everywhere was hooting and hollering so that Daniel thought his ears would explode. He tried to run away, ignoring the deaths of his poor servants, but the bandits were too many and too fast for him.

They caught him between some broken trees and dragged him back to the clearing.

„What a green little boy we have here.“ Said one of them.

„I could have my fun with him, Ba'al,“ agreed another with red hair and a big nose, while moving one rough finger over Daniel's left cheek.

„Let go of me!!“ Shouted Daniel.

„Huh, what passion!“ said the first bandit with delight.

„You are indeed handsome, Daniel Jackson.“ Said a female voice suddenly, „But, be sure, just because you are enjoyable piece of flesh does not mean that you have a hint of a chance against the NID-bandits. We are the best, you should know that!“ She took his chin in her hands moving his head first left than right.

„What a shame we will have to hand you over!“ Said the woman with a sigh.

„Me?? Why would anyone be interested in me, I am not worth anything“ Daniel said in a sardonic tone. „You will get no money from anyone!“ He continued, biting in the hand that was holding his face.

The chief looter stepped back and roared wildly at him, while the robber called Ba'al hit his face hard and slung his arms around Daniel's body so that he couldn't breathe properly any longer.

„Let go of him.“ Said an icy voice suddenly.

„He is mine, that was the deal!“ Then he turned to face the chief robber. „Linea, prepare our little Daniel, so that I can take him with me.“

From behind the chief looter a slender girl stepped forward. „Holy Hannah, Mummy who is this laughing stock? Why don't you just shoot him?“ She said pointing at iceman Kinsey.

„For Daniel is mine.“ she continued „and I want that muff and the clothes and he will have to sleep in my bed and tell me good night stories! He is cute I want to keep him! Please Mummy he will be fun for me to play with!“

„Mhh.“ grunted Linea.

„If this is your wish Sammy. Sorry vice-iceman Kinsey, but if my daughter wishes to keep Daniel, I can't deny her this wish. Kids are in this world to get spoiled proper, I fear I can't give you Daniel after all.“ She grunted again in amusement when she saw his face. Than she gave a little sign and her robbers started to drive vice-iceman Kinsey out of the woods.

„Oh come with me Daniel, and believe me they won't touch you now that you belong to me“ Sammy said and took him by his hands. „I'll show you where we live you will love it and you have to play with me, the robbers are always tired when they come home, that's so boring and they don't understand what I tell them anyways, they are way too dumb, just interested in the gold and silver or coins, but never in the magic behind those precious materials.“

Sammy continued her rant and seemed never to take a breath. But Daniel knew and understood some of her words - he had read them in Grandma Catharine's books. That thought made him sad again and he swore at himself. Again he had failed Jack.

Somehow he needed to get away from those bandits.

„Now tell me where do you come from are you a prince - oh that would be cool, my own prince to play with!“

„No.“ Daniel answered flatly, but after Sammy looked him in the eyes with her silver blue orbs, he kinda felt that he liked her and her thirst for knowledge, and so he told her his story - and about his Jack.

They came to a small castle that was built into rock. Trees and small bushes were growing everywhere and filling the holes in the old walls. Daniel was fascinated.

When they entered the housing there was a big bonfire placed in the centre of what must have been the entrance hall once, and pigeons fluttered through the air. A very big hall, it must have belonged to a powerful and rich king, Daniel mused.

An even larger cauldron was hanging over the fire and small rabbits and ducks were roasted on a long spit.

Behind him the bandits brought in the golden carriage and the horses were led to a close by chamber.

Sammy started to climb an old half broken stone staircase dragging Daniel behind her. Then they slipped through one of the holes in a wall and entered yet another chamber. It was only a bit smaller than the other hall but seemed to be excavated later as an addition to the castle.

„Tonight you will sleep here with me and all my pets,“ Sammy beamed at him. On several poles were sitting even more pigeons, crows and ravens.

„Come,“ she called and hustled Daniel up to an alcove that turned out to be a cosy accommodation.

„They are all mine,“ she said proudly pointing at the birds. Then she took one by the legs so that the pigeon fluttered wildly.

„Here give Danny a kiss,“ she shouted and smacked the pigeon in Daniels face.

„And this is my old friend Morgan.“ Sammy clicked with her tongue and suddenly an antler appeared.

The reindeer wore a cupreous ring around it's neck and was tied to the far wall. Daniel cast sad eyes on it.

„It must be tied otherwise it would run away. I tickle it every evening with the edge of my knife.“ She giggled. „It's so afraid you won't believe it!“

Sammy took her long knife and ran it over the throat of the reindeer. The poor thing lashed out and started to tremble. Sammy laughed. Daniel turned his head away.

When she had calmed down again she let go of Morgan and shoved Daniel down on the bed to sleep.

„Uh, are you going to keep the knife while sleeping?“ Daniel wanted to know.

„Oh yes, I always have my knife with me while sleeping,“ she said. „You never know what will happen during the night.“

Sammy laid her arm around Daniels neck and held her knife in the other and fell asleep in no time. She snored loudly, but that did not bother Daniel much he couldn't sleep anyway - he was thinking about Jack and puzzled about a solution as to how he could escape the bandits and Sammy.

Suddenly the pigeons started to speak. „Kurre, kurre, Daniel we have seen your Jack.“ Daniel tried to sit up but he couldn't due to Sammy's arm so he settled for nodding that he understood.

„The sleigh was carried by a white hen and he was sitting in a white carriage with fast runners. Kurre, Kurre. He was sitting next to the Snow Queen and they were racing to the north.“

„Oh my, y... you know where to the north they went?“

„Sure, they have gone to Lapland, because there is always snow and ice. Just ask the reindeer it knows for sure.“

„Ya, Lapland is cold with ice and snow, it's beautiful there.“ Morgan answered in a dreamy tone. „There I was free and could jump through shiny valleys. There the Snow Queen has her summer house. But her castle she has on the North Pole were the island Svalbard is.“

„Oh poor Jack, it's so cold there and he is all by himself, so alone.. no one who listens to his wisecracks,“ sighed Daniel.

„Lay still Daniel,“ Sammy growled, „or Ill stick my knife into your stomach.“

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The next day Daniel told Sammy what the pigeons and Morgan had told him and pleaded her to let him go.

„Hah, for all I care - hell go! So you know where Lapland is?“ Daniel shook his head.

Morgan stepped forward „I know. I was born there, it's my home. I travelled the fields of snow there for years.“

Sammy nodded. „We will have to wait. The men are all gone but Mummy is still here and she won't let you go. But she will drink from the big bottle after lunch and than she will nap. That will be your chance.“ She stroked Danny over his face and smiled a sad smile at him.

When Mummy Linea slept, finally, Sammy went to fetch Morgan and said „Mhh, actually I would love to continue to tickle you with my knife, you always look so funny when I am doing that. But for my sake I'll free you so that you can take Daniel to Lapland.“

Daniel climbed on the back of the reindeer and tried to find a secure position. Then he looked down to Sammy and thanked her for her help.

„But your muff I'll keep, the thing is too cute. Here take the gloves from my Mum, they are warm and big enough. And now make a little more of a happy face Daniel, after all I let you go, so I want to see you happy.“

Daniel smiled.

„There you go I'll pack you two loaf of bread and some ham.“

Sammy opened the wooden doors and started to cut off the rope that was still holding Morgan.

„Now hurry up,“ she shouted and smacked the reindeer on it's backside. „And look out for Daniel!“

Daniel waved his goodbye - which was not an easy task with those big gloves and then Morgan started to race towards the land where it is almost ever dark and cold.

They flew through the woods and over fens, over velds and fields as fast as Morgan could run. Wolves were howling and ravens were crying.

„There Daniel, do you see the northern lights. Look how bright it is!“ And Morgan started to run even faster.

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It was almost unbearably cold when they stopped in front of a small hut. Daniel could only see the roof, which reached the ground. The back wall of the hut was immersed in deep snow. The door of the hut was so low that the people that lived in the hut needed to crawl into it on their stomachs, Daniel thought.

No one was to be seen apart from an old funny looking man who stood next to the fire, frying some or the other type of fish and was talking in two different voices..

Daniel was so tired and cold from the frost, that Morgan started to tell his long story to the Lap'pe.

„Oh you poor Danny“ he said in a strange tongue, that Daniel almost couldn't understand. The language of the reindeer had been much more easier.

„You still have a long way to go. Hundreds of miles until you reach Finnmarken. There the Snow Queen is having a holiday to regenerate, and every eve she's lightning the blue northern light.

I'll write you a little note on some skin. That you shall give to the Finn that is living there in a hut. He'll help you to find the right location. His name is Pauli.

When Daniel had rested a bit and eaten something, the Lappe gave him the note on the skin and helped him to climb on Morgan's back and said „Fix, fix.“

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During the nights the blue northern light illuminated the way for them and soon they had reached Finnmarken and the hut of the Finn, Pauli.

Daniel jumped down from Morgan's back and knocked on the smoke stack of the hut, because he couldn't find a door.

Inside of the hut was a heat beyond all bearing. Daniel thought he would suffocate. It also caused the Finn to running around naked and Daniel had to admit he was neither small nor grubby.

He immediately started to open Daniel's clothes and tried to undress him as fast as possible, took away Daniel's gloves and boots and explained that otherwise it would become too hot for Daniel.

Then he placed a huge piece of ice on Morgan's head and started to read what was written on the skin.

Again the reindeer told Daniel's story - it was far easier for it to form the words in the even stranger tongue. Meanwhile the Finn said nothing. He just blinked at Daniel, listened and nodded sometimes.

„You are so wise,“ said Morgan finally. „Won't you help Daniel to find his Jack. Give him your magic potion so that Daniel will get the strength of 12 men, so that he can fight the Snow Queen.“

„12 men you say, well maybe that could help.“

He stood and walked over to the far wall, then took an old skin down and spread it on the floor. When Daniel looked closer he could make out some strange lettering on it, but it didn't made any sense.

The Finn read what was written until the sweat was running from him. After a while Daniel looked up to him and pleaded with his eyes to help him, since he couldn't form the words he needed to beg.

Pauli blinked again and than dragged Morgan into the corner of the hut and started to whisper.

„But Jack is with the Snow Queen, he thinks he has everything he needs there. I'd rather keep Daniel here with me - anyway Jack's heart is frozen. He's got chips from the devil's mirror in his eyes and heart. They must be removed otherwise he'll never be the same Jack that he was before.“

„But can't you help Daniel? Give him some powers to have better chances against the snow queen.“

The Finn shook his head. „Daniel already has all powers he needs, don't you see it. He just will have to find out how to use them. Don't you see how human beings and animals help him, how he fought his way through the world with only his feet, words and character? All the power he needs is in his heart and mind. He has to do the rest of his journey all by himself.“ By these words the Finn was illuminated by a bright glow and suddenly a feminine face looked into the reindeer's eyes.

„The border to the Snow Queen's empire is only two miles away. You can take Daniel that far, but no further. Then you shall come back to me.“ The old form returned.

They both went back and Pauli helped Daniel to climb Morgan's back and the reindeer started to run.

Daniel suddenly wanted Morgan to stop. „Morgan, I don't have my boots and also not my gloves, we have to go back please!“

But the reindeer was not allowed to stop or turn and so it just ran on and Daniel had to bear the frosty coldness of the northern winter. It stopped by a bush with red berries and Daniel jumped down. When he turned big tears were running over Morgan's cheeks. Daniel kissed it and the reindeer started to race back down.

Daniel stood there, half frozen without his boots and gloves in the middle of Finnmarken and was sure he actually did not know what to do next. He started to move further north. The snow started to fall and the wind grew faster. Blasts of snow smacked his face and hands and he couldn't see anything.

It seemed that they had their own mind and tried to stop him but Daniel continued his way through the snow and storm, he wouldn't give up now that he had reached the outposts of the Snow Queen.

Daniel started to sing the songs he had sung with Jack and grandma Catharine. and then he continued to say out loud the stories Jack had told him when he was little. Out of the steam that was coming from his mouth small figures were formed and they shaped a shield so that Daniel was sheltered from the Snow Queen's freezing outposts.

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Meanwhile Jack was sitting in the palace and didn't waste one thought to think about Daniel.

The walls of the palace where made out of the flying snow, the doors and windows where formed from the cold winds. The palace had over hundred chambers and the biggest one of them spanned over a hundred miles. Their lights were the northern lights.

There was never amusement or guests or dances. The only things that existed were silence and coldness.

In the middle of this empty snow chamber lay a frozen lake. It was disrupted in a thousand little pieces, but every piece was identical to the next, and in the centre of this lake was seated the Snow Queen - if she was at home.

Jack was frozen blue from the coldness, but he didn't feel it. He was sitting over a puzzle made of ice and trying to solve it. He took his task very seriously and tried to form perfect patterns and figures. He was almost the master of the game, but one word was still missing. One word he still didn't know how to form.

The word 'eternity'.

But the Snow Queen had promised that he would be free and that she would give him the whole world and new skates if he could form the word, and so he tried and tried again, never getting tired of it.

„Ill whiz towards the warm countries now, Jack“ said the Snow Queen and was gone.

Jack kept sitting in the middle of the lake and tried to form his puzzle, while thinking. He was sitting so still one could be mistaken for thinking that he was already frozen to death.

In that very moment Daniel entered the big chamber with the lake, between the frosty winds that formed the gate. He was still telling himself the stories he had shared with Jack, and because of it, the winds fell asleep.

He saw Jack and was shocked. He run forward and hugged him, but Jack didn't move. He hugged him again calling out his name and shaking him but Jack still was just sitting there.

„Jack, oh my beloved Jack I have found you, I have found you,“ Daniel cried out with joy.

Jack sat there. Still, rigid and cold.

Daniel couldn't hold back his tears any longer. So long he had fought them but now he did not have the powers to fight and stop them any longer. Daniel hugged Jack and cried his hot tears.

The tears were soaking Jack's clothes and burning themselves through the frozen layers his skin and right into his frozen heart. And the more Daniel wept the more Jack's frozen heart melted.

Suddenly Jack was looking up, taking Daniel's face in his hands and looking into his eyes. Some single tears were running from Jack's cheeks and the tears also melted the ice chip in his eye.

„Daniel, oh Daniel my ice monkey you are here,“ he cried out with joy and finally was hugging Daniel back. Daniel couldn't speak.

„Where, where have you been all this time .. and even more importantly where have I been for so long??“ Jack asked and looked around.

„It's freezing in here, Daniel and empty.“ And he held fast onto Daniel who helped him to get up while laughing and jumping around out of joy.

Suddenly Daniel grew still and after a long moment he gave Jack a kiss, pouring all his love, concern, fear and joy into it. It stopped all too fast and Daniel looked expectantly into Jack's eyes. And Jack gave him one of his most beautiful and deepest-a-thousand-words-saying-smile, but said nothing.

Daniel kissed Jack's cheeks and they started to glow, then he kissed Jack's eyes and they brighten, he kissed Jack's hands and they started to warm up again.

Then he took Jack by the hands and started to wander out of the palace. When he looked back he could see that the pieces of ice had formed the word 'eternity'.

Daniel told Jack about grandma Catharine and about the roses. They reached the bush with the red berries and Morgan was already waiting for them. They climbed on it's back and Daniel did never let go of Jack's hand.

They reached the Finn and they could warm up in his sauna, while Daniel introduced his suddenly growling Jack to Pauli. Then they came to the old Lappe and he gave them new clothes and a sleigh and Daniel introduced his Jack and said goodbye. When they reached the border, they waved the reindeers farewell. They wandered through the deep woods and suddenly a golden carriage appeared in a clearing and Daniel recognised Sammy, who had decided to leave the bandits and to rather explore the riddles of the world.

„Hah, there he is the fella that disappeared into the wide world and made my Daniel sad! I really would like to know whether you are worth it to run to the end of the world and be rescued,“ Jack was casting an questioning look towards Daniel, who gave him a shy smile whilst ducking his head.

„Ill explain later,“ was all he said.

He told Sammy the ending of his adventure and introduced his Jack.

They continued their way and reached the castle of the prince and the princess.

„It is good to see you well DanielJackson.“ Said the prince, while the tiny princess was jumping around in joy hugging Jack and Daniel and wishing them all the best. The old crow had tragically died after a snake had bitten it, but his bride was now already on her way to spread word that Daniel had finally found his Jack.

They told Daniel that the empire was not any longer split and that made Daniel smile.

„See now you don't have to fear that the old king's ghost will haunt you after he's died.“ Daniel grinned, while Jack shook his head and raising an questioning eyebrow towards Daniel.

„Ill explain later,“ was all he said and they continued their way.

They took a boat and when they came to the house with the magic garden, Daniel dragged Jack through Vala's gate and introduced Jack to her. And she was not longer alone. A gardener named Mitchell was now with her and they seemed to be happy.

So Jack and Daniel continued their way home.

When they stepped into grandma Catherine's housing she was casting a sad eye over her flowers and I was sitting on her table telling her one of my best stories to brighten up her mood.

Suddenly she cried out in joy and flew towards the door where she was hugged and kissed by her two grandsons.

„And look at you, how grown up you are,“ she repeated over and over again and then wanted to know their story and Daniel told it and Jack finally found out, why Daniel knew so many people in the whole world.

And what is there left to say for me? Well let me put it in this way „Schnipp, schnapp, schnurre, burre - baselure.“

LOPETA