

Spoilers: Probably more than I think

Warnings: None really. Nothing overly graphic (at least in my opinion. If you think something's a bit more than the rating indicates, let me know.)

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Feedback: Please, please, please

Archiving: Penemuel's Nest, anyone else just ask first.

Summary: Daniel goes missing on a milk run and Jack tries to deal with the consequences.

Beyond Transgression

by Leviathan

"No, he just found the chamber today," Major McGuire told the crew at the SGC. "He looked at the writings on the wall and opened the door, just like that."

"So where is our intrepid archeologist now? Oh, I see him. Tell him to get his butt over here," Colonel O'Neill told the major. As McGuire called the young man over, O'Neill could see his joyous expression. He was glad he had recommended Daniel to assist this team. Not only had he managed to cut their search time down considerably, his relaxed demeanor was a welcome change from the tense young man O'Neill had sent to this planet 2 days ago. A few too many rough missions had come close to burning them all out, but Daniel seemed to carry the weight more heavily than the rest of the team.

Daniel's flushed, smiling face came into view on the MALP's camera. "Hi, Jack! This is great! We're going to be mapping out the chamber tomorrow. I can be back before Friday. I'll be ready for our next mission."

"Better be sure of that, Daniel."

"How's Sam?" The team's physicist had sprained her hand badly on the last mission. It was the reason SG1 wasn't on a mission at the moment which had afforded Jack the time to send Daniel out on this milk run.

"She's fine." He watched as Daniel's gaze settled on something he was turning over and over in his hands. "What's that?"

Daniel held it close to the lens for a few moments. "It's a puzzle box. I found it in the inner chamber. Isn't it beautiful?" To Jack, it appeared to be nothing more than a little wooden box. He had to admire the craftsmanship, though. Not a single seam showed and the writing, which just looked like little pictures to him, was exquisite. "Ah ha!" Daniel cried and slender fingers pulled quickly at the box.

The box popped open and silver dust flew into the archeologist's face. For a moment, everything was tense in the SGC, then laughter broke out. The silver dust had covered the

young man's hands, face, hair and glasses, making him look like a very bizarre android. He spat out some of the dust and pulled off his glasses.

"Leave it to Jackson to get the booby prize!" someone guffawed in the background.

"Better wash that off," O'Neill told him. "If you start feeling funny at all, you're gonna to get your butt back here."

Daniel waved at him distractedly and turned towards the river the team had camped beside. McGuire turned back to the MALP. "We'll be sending in our next report..." a wash of static and feedback made the signal jump "...check it tomorrow."

"Didn't copy that, McGuire, got some static. Is the equipment all right?"

McGuire bent over the machine, out of range of the lens. In the distance, Jack could see Daniel kneeling on the bank, rubbing his hands to clean off the dust. A couple of the youngsters were talking to him while he washed. "Sir, the equipment checks out. I'll have Suarez take a closer look at it tonight."

"We'll talk to you tomorrow," O'Neill said.

That was 4 weeks ago...

Four weeks of worry. Four weeks of fear. When the SGC failed to receive the next day's report, they had dialed up P3X59J to find that the MALP was not receiving their message. Another MALP had immediately been dispatched.

The image they received confirmed the encampment had been attacked. The blast patterns, few as they were, bore the signature of staff weapons. However, there was only 1 casualty. Smith, Brenda - a young airman the SGC had just recruited. Like the majority of the team there, she had been sent on this "milk run" to gain some off-world experience. It wasn't supposed to have ended in a firefight! O'Neill sighed and ran his fingers through his grey hair, watching the images that the 2nd MALP and the subsequent "rescue" team had taken. They told him nothing he hadn't already figured. A Goa'uld's team of Jaffa had ambushed the team and taken most of them away. Who the Goa'uld was, he had no idea. However, the Goa'uld *in toto* had made threats against any "Tau'ri" they found away from Earth. But Daniel had a separate price on his head that had been set by Sokar. Though that particular Goa'uld, happily, was quite dead, they hadn't heard that any of the bounties set for the members of SG1 had been removed. As a matter of fact, he could imagine that Apophis, who had reaped the bounty of Sokar's death, would probably have jacked them up even higher.

He prayed Daniel was dead. The alternatives were unbearable. One of the possibilities - the

role of hostage - had become remote, since no demands, no gloating diatribes had been sent to Earth. It wasn't as if the Goa'uld didn't have the address. Four weeks of silence had removed the hostage scenario out of the picture. Daniel could have been changed into a Jaffa but not likely. Though the military had managed to muscle up the archeologist somewhat, he was not the powerful, perfect specimen that the Goa'uld demanded fill the ranks of their warriors.

The last and most likely was that Daniel had followed the fate of Sha're, his still-lamented wife. The information they would immediately obtain from him - how to broach the Terran Stargate iris - had already been changed. SOP. Daniel would have told them that. However, Daniel knew the Stargate addresses of all their allies. In most cases, those people would never survive an out-and-out attack by a Goa'uld force. The ones that could were already places shunned by the Goa'uld. Of course, the Tau'ri had already contacted everyone they could, informing them of Daniel's capture. Also SOP.

Daniel would have told them that, too.

The military commander in O'Neill balked at the fact that his concerns mainly fell on one man, considering that the team had consisted of 15 people, including his friend. Only one of them had been recovered. The rest had probably suffered the same fate or been changed to Jaffa. The only 'good' that could be salvaged was the fact that, with the exceptions of Daniel and McGuire, all of them were too new to know much. The Stargate program had been a plum assignment they had all recently drawn. They would probably not have suffered too much before their final fate had been delivered.

Without thinking, he stopped the tape on the one image he had frozen again and again. Daniel. His eyes lit up with the joy of discovery, his hands occupied with the beautiful puzzle box that now resided in Jack's home. It was the last thing Daniel had touched. After the scientists had announced it safe - it was, after all, only a wooden box - he had asked for it. Hammond never questioned it. It had taken him 2 days to reassemble it and now it remained the only memento he would ever have of Daniel Jackson. Gently he touched the image on the screen.

Enough of this! his mind screamed. *We've listed them all as MIA now. The next time we see any of them, it's probably going to be on the wrong end of a weapon.* He knew that General Hammond had already sent the letters to the families of all those young people. McGuire and Daniel didn't have any family to send a letter to.

Not quite true, he mused. Daniel had his grandfather and in-laws. However, all of them had been on the list of people to warn of Daniel's compromised status. They were all too-aware of their chances of seeing Daniel whole again. His own heart ached at the thought that he would never see the young archeologist. Too long he had waited to say anything to Daniel about how he felt. Too aware of where they worked to say anything. He turned off the depressing image. To banish his musings, he deliberately took the tape from the machine, placed it in its case and

filed it where he never wanted to look again.

Goodbye, Danny. He turned out the light and locked the door behind him.

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The next day, SG-1 prepared for their first mission since the ill-fated expedition. As its surviving members waited at the bottom of the ramp that would send them through the Stargate, a young woman hurried up to join them. Her fatigues and helmet hid most of her features from O'Neill's scrutiny, though he noticed that she was kitted completely in accordance to regulation. She saluted him smartly.

"Lt. Renee Turner reporting to SG-1, sir!"

"At ease, Turner. You've been apprized of why you're here?"

"Sir, yes, sir. I am replacing Dr. Jackson, sir."

The chevrons of the Stargate began to light suddenly. "Incoming wormhole, sirs!" Simmons reported. Although O'Neill didn't hear the order given, the iris scoped closed as the last chevrons lit. "I'm receiving a Tok'ra signal, sirs."

The iris retracted. Moments later, Skaara stepped out of the event horizon. As if he'd expected him there, his brown eyes found O'Neill's. He cried out the Colonel's name and launched himself down the ramp. A moment later, 2 members of the same group walked through. O'Neill did not see them; however, Skaara was chattering at him rapid-fire in his native tongue, obviously too excited to notice that O'Neill did not understand a word of what he said. He tugged at O'Neill's flak jacket, pointing back at the Stargate.

"Whoa! Whoa! Skaara! English! English!" The young man suddenly blinked. He apologized profusely and started again, haltingly.

"We attacked a System Lord holding Tok'ra hostage. One of the people with this Goa'uld was one of yours, O'Neill. A Tau'ri! We think maybe he is missing person. We are still fighting, but we think you want to come. If others are there, you will recognize them and we save!"

Jack turned his sights up the General, listening quietly in the control booth. "Sir?"

"Well, you were getting ready to go, Colonel. I'll send another squad as soon as they can prep for it." With that, he ordered the Stargate activated with the coordinates Skaara supplied them.

The gate they walked out of sat alone on a hill. Below them, they could see a small city with a very large villa attached. No doubt where the Goa'uld lived. Indistinctly, the sound of mayhem reached their ears, letting them know that the villa was under attack. Leaving one of the Tok'ra at the gate to help the next SGC squad, they moved as quickly as possible to the outskirts, Skaara's other companion whistling and calling to their people to warn them they were on their way to the fun.

Turner clutched her P-90 to her. O'Neill knew that she hadn't been combat tested, but her physical and psychological profiles indicated that she could probably handle conflict of the variety that SG-1 encountered. It wouldn't be the first time working with SGC that he had taken someone into their virgin battle.

Don't go there, O'Neill...

She kept close to her team which O'Neill silently cheered. However, he noted with amusement that she kept closest to Teal'c. At least he was big enough to hide behind.

Teal'c and Carter trotted along grimly. He knew his own thoughts were echoed in their heads. If one of their missing people were here, maybe...He shook his head. The job. That was all he could afford to think about now. There were still no guarantees he wouldn't be facing Daniel on the wrong end of a weapon. The team ghosted past the houses, the sounds of whimpering and whispering letting them know where the citizens hid. They were not accosted as they scrambled down the tidy, flower-lined streets. The sounds of zats and Jaffa staff weapons became louder.

Skaara suddenly signaled to O'Neill, to bring him over to his side of the street. Watching every shadow, O'Neill sprinted across the street, leaving his team waiting for him. Skaara pointed down to a body laying behind the corner.

"Oh shit, McGuire." Obviously a staff weapon had caught him right in the chest. Eyes wide in surprise, he lay at an angle that left no doubt of his status. *2 out of 15...*

"He was hosted, O'Neill. We would not have thought anything of it, but we saw the remains of the jacket he wore. Dan-yel..."

O'Neill moved his hand over Skaara's mouth. "Later." He moved back over to his team.

At the end of the large boulevard they traversed next, they could see the end of a pitched battle. Outnumbered, the Jaffa were retreating into the villa. The Tok'ra slid in and out of the shadows, harrying the enemy and O'Neill was absurdly reminded of the English redcoats against the guerrilla tactics of the Colonials. The Goa'uld never seemed to realize that they lost a lot of their battles by marching en masse at their enemies and trying to overwhelm them. He

just hoped they'd never clue to it.

The ornate doors closed behind the stragglers. One of the Tok'ra lobbed their version of a grenade, smashing it into flinders. However, the delay had afforded the enemy time to entrench in the hall beyond. As if anyone would have been stupid enough to come charging in.

Energy blasts filled the air as the sides traded fire. Skaara signaled to O'Neill, indicating that the Tok'ra were only setting up a distraction. The rest of the Goa'uld enemies were drifting over to other areas of the villa, penetrating defenses while the attention was drawn to the front. O'Neill and the rest of SG-1 followed him and another Tok'ra through a window into a room. At first glance, O'Neill took it to be some kind of library with a lot of furniture to hide behind. Skaara drifted quietly over to the door and listened. Obviously he heard/felt nothing beyond because he quietly opened the door. The other Tok'ra drifted out of the room. The humans followed. Their boots squeaked on the marble floors of the hall, making them step as deliberately as possible to avoid detection.

O'Neill spared a look at Turner. She was definitely more pale, but she still held her weapon at the ready. *Yeah, kid, the sneaking and waiting are a real bitch...* He gave her a wink when she finally glanced his way and she visibly relaxed.

They had actually managed to make it to the 2nd floor when they finally met resistance. The P-90's sounded like cannons in comparison to the other weapons, but the humans still managed to make some dents in the little group hiding behind pillars. The length of the staff weapons made cover a liability which worked in favor of the invaders. The Jaffa were soon dead. As they moved into the position the Jaffa had maintained, Carter and O'Neill hurriedly checked the Jaffa for their missing people. Carter shook her head. O'Neill had not found any of them either. They ran from cover to cover down the hall, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

A distant explosion and the rattle of P-90's heralded the arrival of the Earth forces to the fracas at the front. O'Neill cheered silently and hoped that this would soon be finished.

A sweep of the 2nd floor revealed only bedrooms and parlors. No Jaffa other than the small group they had run into were to be found. Slowly, Skaara and one of the other Tok'ra began checking the walls, searching for secret passages. There was a small **snickt** and one of the panels slid silently into the wall. A dim light showed the stairs below.

"We have lost the element of surprise," Teal'c intoned solemnly.

Cautiously, the Tok'ra peered down the stairs and shrugged. No volley of fire greeted his brief appearance. The gently sloping small staircase would only fit a single file. It was much longer than O'Neill expected for, even in the dim lighting, no bottom landing could be seen. Wherever it led, it was some distance from the villa. The group pulled a little back from the opening and

crouched down, ready for any bad guys.

"Ok, people, we really don't have any options here except to go down there," O'Neill informed them. "There's no cover and I don't have any idea what this turns into. For all I know, we're just going to be chasing this goon back to the Stargate. Carter, I'm givin' you point cause you've got the most experience," the Tok'ra bristled a bit, "that I know of. And you're a little smaller than most of us. Most of the Jaffa are strapping lads and they'll probably be aiming high."

"Yes, sir!"

O'Neill sent them slowly down the stairs, watching their backs as Sam, then Teal'c, followed by Turner carefully crept down the passage. He and the Tok'ra who had taken offense at his "experience" took the anchor point. For several hundred meters, they slowly stepped, looking for enemies and booby traps that might lie in wait.

Nothing.

O'Neill felt his own scalp crawling at the lack of impediment. Surely the enemy couldn't have had the stupidity to assume that this staircase would go unnoticed. But Goa'uld arrogance was a well-known trait and O'Neill found himself thanking a universe that made them so blind.

Gradually, the tunnel swung towards the left, leaving the group confused as to where they were in reference to the village on the surface. Nerves left them jumpy. Any echo, any whisper of noise froze them in place until they were certain the way was still clear. They had traversed a great distance before the staircase finally ran out at a large natural cave. Although the stalactites still hung perilously from the ceiling, all the stalagmites had been removed, taking away any natural cover in the cavern. And though they could not see the source, the sound of water underscored all other noise. The cavern, like the staircase, was dimly lit, but O'Neill could see 3 exits from the room they now occupied.

One of them was directly to their left, seeming to parallel the way they had just walked. However, the passage was small, moss overgrown and damp. Unlikely that it had ever been used or at least not for a long while. One was directly ahead, lit with stronger light than their current location. The third lay near it, dimly lit like all the other spaces. O'Neill opted for it.

Three shots and two cries greeted them when they stepped into the passage. Not checking to see who had been hit, O'Neill and Teal'c lay down covering fire in the hopes of hitting their targets. Two more cries and no one else challenged them. The Tok'ra was down, his arm a bloody mess. He waved them off, telling them that his symbiote would heal him soon enough. The 2nd victim was Skaara. However, he'd only been grazed in the thigh. Both of them indicated they were fine to continue.

However, as soon as they had gotten a few feet down the corridor, the group heard a sound familiar to all of them, save Turner.

"Transport rings!" Carter cried. They charged to the location, but found nothing. They had even missed the telltale light of their departure.

"I think we can assume that the head honcho just got his rusty dusty out of Dodge," O'Neill quipped. "Ok, people, we found one of our guys, maybe we can find another. Turner, you go with Teal'c. Carter, you and uh...uh..."

"Haf'rek."

"...Haf'rek are together. Go down the other corridor, next to this one. Skaara, you're with me. Don't be shy, boys and girls. Scream if you see anything nasty."

The dimmer corridor ended in a T-intersection. Glancing down both halls, O'Neill could see nothing other than arches that must have led to more rooms. Signaling to Teal'c and Turner to take the right, they took the left branch. Skaara took one side of the hall, peering into the rooms as they passed. Unspoken agreement had O'Neill checking the left. Skaara skittered ahead of him, glancing a bit more quickly than O'Neill felt was necessary. Just as he was about to call the young man back, Skaara backed up and stared into the room he had just left.

"O'Neill." Horror stained the one word. "No...no...no..." Before O'Neill could reach him, the Abydonian ran into the archway. O'Neill pelted into the area. He found Skaara kneeling on the floor as if in supplication, mumbling in his native tongue, his eyes fixed on a point above them. O'Neill's vision swept up.

"Teal'c! Carter!" he hissed into his com unit. "Oh my God! Teal'c! Get down here immediately!" He couldn't answer any of the questions coming across the com. He felt his brain trying to shut down, fought it, knowing that Skaara was already gone. Footsteps heralded Teal'c and Turner's arrival. When her gaze fell onto the sight above them she gasped.

Teal'c bellowed in rage.

As if the sound had brought them in, Sam and Haf'rek skidded into the room. Her eyes didn't even see her teammates. "Oh my God..." she cried.

Time seemed to slow as they stared at a nightmare none of them had imagined. Hanging in Maltese cross fashion a few feet from the floor of the room was the missing member of SG1. Metal cuffs held his upper arms outstretched while the majority of his weight lay against a small platform at hip level that was the only cover his captors had afforded him. Tubes and wiring of some kind had been placed at various points into his body. His ribs stood out in his gaunt

frame. Red-rimmed azure eyes stared at them from a grey unshaven face. No one could move.

He blinked at them.

"He's alive," Jack gasped. "Sweet Jesus, he's alive..."

Jack's announcement sent his team into motion. Sam immediately headed behind Daniel to check out the origin of the various devices invading his body. Teal'c began surveying the area immediately around him to ascertain whether or not he could find a more comfortable position for Daniel. Skaara struggled off of his knees and walked up to his brother-in-law. Reaching as high as he could, he touched Daniel's face, murmurings softly in Abydonian. Daniel didn't seem to hear them, didn't seem to see them. Skaara kept trying to coax Daniel back from wherever the pain had taken him.

"Haf'rek, please check and see if any more of our people have arrived. If they're here, they're going to need to get Dr. Frazier from home. Or do you have someone here?"

Haf'rek shook his head. "No, Colonel. A healer is waiting at the other side of our Chappa'ai. We bring our wounded to them."

"Then Dr. Frazier it is. I don't dare try and disconnect him without knowing what the hell they were doing to him." Haf'rek nodded then disappeared. "Turner, keep an eye out. I don't want any surprise visitors." The young woman acknowledged and stood at the entrance.

"O'Neill, I think I have found a table upon which we may lay him," Teal'c told his CO. He pushed forward a rolling padded slab. It was obviously where they lay Daniel when they didn't have him hanging around. It had been designed for someone to lie face-down. Moving over to Teal'c afforded him a view of Daniel's back for the first time.

Two tubes leading from Daniel's groin and anal area were obvious. Bizarre needles marched up Daniel's spine like some kind of highway markers, all attached to a network of spider webbing that terminated into a signal sphere near the ceiling. Sam was attempting to get the damned thing started, but she could find no obvious means to trigger it. A long wire was sunk into Daniel's brainstem.

A gasp was the only reaction Daniel had when Teal'c and O'Neill pushed up on Daniel's shoulders, lifting him up and off of the metal cuffs. With a gentleness that made Carter blink back tears for all its inadequacy, they maneuvered Daniel onto the table. Free of the exertion of breathing in an awkward position, Daniel passed out. Skaara touched Daniel's hair, all that could be seen without crouching down to the level of the table. Sweaty and limp, it clung to his fingers as he tried to gently comb it out, still speaking to his brother in his native tongue.

Sam spotted a depression nearly invisible in the wall, nearly impossible to see in the dim light. She waved a hand at it. Suddenly the area under the ball came to life. A holographic representation of Daniel appeared in mid-air, accurate even to the fact that he was lying down on the table as opposed to suspended on the apparatus. The monitors even showed Skaara's hand, though it left the rest of him out of the picture. The detached hand continued to try and bring Daniel back to consciousness. Symbols appeared under the figure, though she couldn't make any sense of them.

"Teal'c, can you read any of this?"

The Jaffa joined her, staring at the hologram. "I recognize the Goa'uld text, Major Carter, but I am afraid that my knowledge of what appears to be medical terms is extremely limited. The other set of symbols I do not recognize at all. They are completely alien."

Running steps echoed in the hall. The group drew their weapons, Skaara covering Daniel.

"Don't fire, SG1, it's SG8!" Major Cameron called to Turner, making sure she recognized him before he moved farther. "Everything's secured, Colonel. Looks like they fled via transport rings. Chased a bunch of Jaffa. They gotta have a ship in orbit, cause no one went anywhere near the stargate."

"Did Haf'rek get the message to you?"

The older man removed his helmet, running a hand through his extremely short, salt and pepper hair. "Yeah, we sent a call to the guys we left at the Stargate for the Doc to get here asap. Got down here by another tunnel, chasing those Jaffa. They all got away, damnit!"

"Not all of them, Major."

Cameron nodded unhappily. "I'll go get Doc Frazier." SG8 took off, leaving their companions alone to ruminate.

Part of O'Neill was ecstatic to find Daniel alive but not hosted. He assumed from the postures of his teammates who could feel these things that Daniel had not been taken over. But still he asked it and was answered in the negative by 3 voices. *Oh, that's right*, he thought, *Skaara knows all about it, too*. But, it still didn't relieve him much. What had they done to Daniel?

"Can you make any heads or tails outta that?" he asked Carter, waving a hand at the display.

She removed her cap, peering at the display. "No, sir, not really. Judging, though, by the things in his back, I'd assume his nervous system was what they were mainly interested in. Other than that, I think Janet is our best bet for figuring out what all this is for." She still continued to stare

at it rather than the subject of it. Jack noticed that of all of them, Skaara was the only one who stayed with Daniel. Out of guilt, O'Neill thought, they could not bear to be near Daniel. He knew they were all kicking themselves that they had not come sooner, that Daniel had had to suffer like this. Logically they knew they could have done nothing until this point, but it did not soothe hearts that had grieved and lived in fear of finding him in the clutches of a parasitic snake. It also didn't help that they had only shifted his position, not removed the source of his pain.

Skaara coughed gently as his voice became rough from constant talking. Jack walked over to them. "How's he doing?"

"I don't know, O'Neill," he answered. "He won't wake. Will he die from this?"

Jack shook his head. "Naw, Daniel's tougher than that. If he's lived with this this long, he'll be okay. Just need to find out what they did, damned Frankensteins..."

Skaara stared at him uncomprehendingly. Unlike Teal'c, he did not ask what O'Neill meant, affixing whatever meaning he chose to the phrase. Silence descended then, only broken by the whir of machinery that did...whatever, to Daniel.

After an eternity, the sound of running feet echoed down the hall. Teal'c leaned out to bring Dr. Frazier and her team into the room. She moved immediately to Daniel's side, noted the attachments and began her examination by feeling for Daniel's pulse. Her stethoscope gently touched his back. She went over to where Sam stood and looked at the hologram.

"Well, at a guess, not knowing the language, I would say that whoever did this was mapping Daniel's nervous system. What, precisely, they were mapping or what they were planning to do with the information, I couldn't tell you. These probes are very precisely aligned along the medulla spinalis. I..." she peered more closely at the holograph. "My god! Why did they do *that?*"

Jack was instantly more alert. "What? Did what?"

"They drilled a *hole* in his *vertebrae*, Colonel. In his first lumbar disc. It's extremely precise. They don't appear to have damaged any of the nerves in his spine. My god, if he was awake for this..."

"Most likely he was," Teal'c informed her. "They would probably want him awake to observe his reactions."

Janet paled. "Who would do something like this?"

"Specifically, I cannot inform you. Most humans captured are either killed, enslaved, hosted or

made into Jaffa. I know of no Goa'uld who would do this to a captured human. Unless they had a specific project in mind, this is a waste of an individual who could serve another purpose for the Goa'uld, especially since he has a price on his head."

"And on that note, people, I need to know if we can move him," O'Neill said. "I don't want to be sticking around here just in case they're regrouping for an attack from the ship. We need to get him out of here."

Janet walked back over to Daniel, carefully examining one of the needles. Telling Sam to keep an eye on the monitor, she carefully touched it. Nothing. She pulled on it gently. No change on the monitor. Smoothly, she extracted it. For a moment, the image blanked, then re-formed, showing now the absence of the needle, but not changing the entire picture. Heartened, Janet carefully removed another. With the same result on that needle, she proceeded to remove the entire set from him. She paused as she came to the largest of them. Deciding to leave it for last, she looked at the tube that fed directly into his stomach from the back. This she took a scalpel to, slicing it about 6 inches over Daniel's skin, then packed the entire area with sterile cotton. The 2 meant for waste removal were extracted. The thin one in his left chest received the same treatment as the stomach tubing. She stared at the needle embedded in his brain.

"Colonel, I'm not sure what the removal of this device will do to him. With any luck, it's like the other ones - a monitor, but I can't be 100 percent sure. I might kill him."

"For all we know, we might all be dead soon if we don't get out of here," O'Neill said quietly. "It's ok. If anything happens, I'm sure Daniel would thank you for freeing him from this...thing."

"Skaara? You are Daniel's brother, you're his family. If you don't agree, I won't do this."

Skaara stared at them, only torn for a moment. "Free him, please."

Carefully, Janet began to pull on the needle. The hologram died completely, but her stethoscope and her fingers confirmed that the removal had not hurt Daniel any more than the others. At least, not in any way that impeded his autonomous system.

"Ok, people, let's move! We've got a patient to get back home!"

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Ten hours later, Jack found himself in the infirmary, watching the dead come back to life. *More lives than any cat and he's using them up too quickly.* Dr. Frazier had left him on the bed they had taken from the lab at the villa, letting Daniel sleep on his stomach until they could tell whether or not the position was uncomfortable. The monitors on him now made a little more sense to Jack than the ones back on the planet. However, the rhythm was familiar to him.

Daniel was recuperating, despite the fact that he looked like hell. He couldn't see Daniel's face, but his body told Jack enough of the story. His ribs and spine stood out in skin that looked like dried paper. The muscle tone their physical lifestyle had given him was almost gone. But he was still fighting. Still hanging on.

Janet gently lay a hand on O'Neill's shoulder. "I'm about to give the General an update, Colonel. Wanna come?" She noticed his eyes flick towards his downed comrade. "He's not going to wake up any time soon, Colonel."

O'Neill walked with the petite woman through the grey halls until they reached the briefing room. Already, Teal'c, Carter and Skaara were there, silent as monks. All eyes turned to Janet as she took her place to the right of General Hammond.

"First of all," Hammond started. "I would like to thank the members of the Tok'ra for their help in this rescue. We couldn't have done it without you. Please let them know, Skaara, when you return." The young man nodded. "I'm sorry to hear about McGuire, especially the fact that he was hosted. We have no idea just how much information they may have obtained from him, but I'm afraid we'll just have to assume the worst. Fortunately, all protocols were observed, for which I will thank our support teams, and we may have minimized the consequences of McGuire's hosting. However, we still have 12 other people out there, who, though relatively new to this operation, still have information. Again, we assume the worst case scenario. The Tok'ra may want to keep this in mind if they happen to run across anyone else in an SGC uniform."

"I will tell them," Skaara promised.

"Doctor, I assume you have happier news?"

Janet opened the file she had in front of her. "I'm not entirely sure, General. Although I can say that Daniel will definitely live, I'm not completely sure of what may happen to him." She looked at his teammates, all of them hanging on her words. "We're still running tests, but I've got the results of some of them. According to his blood work, Teal'c is right. Daniel has been awake for all the procedures they performed on him. Adrenaline, endorphins, the works have been pumping through his system over a long period. I'd almost say the entire 4 weeks he's been gone. Toxicology, on the other hand, turned up negative, which means they gave him no drugs, no other substances in his bloodstream that might have mitigated any of the pain. All 4 of the tubes in him were meant to remove fluid from him. They were obviously concerned about pulmonary congestion and possible cardiac arrest. The tube in his stomach removed acid. Why this was necessary, I don't know. There was, fortunately, little in the way of blood loss which is rather surprising, given the invasive nature of the procedures.

"EEG, EKG - normal, for a stressed human. Nothing on the MRI, especially of a Goa'uld origin, so we know for certain, besides Teal'c and Major Carter's sense, that he wasn't hosted. No

additional marks, besides the equipment we accounted for, so I assume no hosting took place - aborted or not. Certainly he was not treated well. He was extremely dehydrated and malnourished, both of which are being rectified while he sleeps. Electrolyte imbalance - I don't think I need to give you the whole catalog on this.

"The only real anomaly is the hole they drilled in his spine. It was incredibly precise, but I have no idea why it's there. I found some kind of substance on it when I did the tests, but the hole's been healed for at least a week. I'm having the substance analyzed right now. I assume the drilling was the first thing they did to him, considering the time table. However, for all I know, the hole may have been made just yesterday and some healing device has been applied since then. I just don't understand why, beyond just torture, they would have done that to him."

"Yeah, I find it kinda weird, too," Jack agreed. "I mean, any normal snake would have just turned Daniel over to Apophis or anyone else who had an interest. Why go through the trouble?"

"Trouble, Colonel?" Hammond queried.

"Well, think about it. Daniel's worth some money on the Goa'uld market. You'd think they'd either be selling him or at least using him to piss someone off, rather than making him some kinda lab rat. Actually, what most of them would probably do is give him his own snake so they'd have all his intel. Doesn't make any sense to waste him like that, especially when there were 13 other people they could have played with. Why torture just him?"

"It could be worse than that, sirs," Sam said quietly. "This could have been aimed directly at Daniel. Everything the Colonel says makes a lot of sense. Goa'uld are arrogant, blind and full of a number of flaws, but true stupidity isn't one of them. They make mistakes, but this, as mere torture, is just illogical. I have to believe that there was another reason for it. The only conclusions I can come up with are that this was done to him specifically because of who he is or was done to him to cause problems for SGC or SG1. However, until he wakes up, I don't think we're going to be able to guess."

"And when will that be, Doctor?"

"At least another 12 hours, General." Janet closed the folder and leaned back in her chair, feeling almost as tired as the rest of the team looked. "He's completely exhausted, so I really expect him to be out quite a while. My staff is checking him every hour. Quite frankly, I think we should all take the hint and get some rest ourselves."

"That, Doctor, sounds like very sage advise. I suggest all of you get some rest. Skaara, I'm sure Dr. Jackson wouldn't mind you staying in his quarters tonight. Teal'c can show you where they are."

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A few hours later, O'Neill lurched out of nightmare that featured a dangling Daniel quite prominently. He shuffled through his morning routine, letting his mind become as blank as possible to erase the remains of his grisly visions. Walking into the canteen, he spied Carter picking at her food. Weirdly enough, it was dinner. That was one of the vagaries of gate travel. You just never knew when you were coming back and you might just wake up to lunch or dinner rather than breakfast. The varying lengths of days played havoc with the body, too, especially for a recon team like SG1. Unless something warranted more than a day's recon, they were usually back before nightfall on the other planet. Many were the times that they were just returning from a mission in the wee hours of the morning. Never enough time to adjust to the weird numbers of hours of another planet's day. And, considering their own facility was far underground, you never saw enough of the sun to know what time of day it was anyway.

"Carter," he greeted her as he sat down.

"Sir. I see you got the 'surprise'."

"Yeah, and it's making me lose my appetite just thinking about what it might be." He poked at the brown stuff lying in too much gravy, then dropped his fork into it. "Make that 'lost'..." He stared at Carter who was, like him, ignoring the contents of her tray. "Any word?"

"Yeah, Janet says his fluid and electrolyte levels are getting back to normal. They're pumping vitamins into him to take care of some of the malnutrition. Still hasn't woken up, though. Oh, hey, there's Skaara and Teal'c." She waved to the 2 men to come to their table. Although Teal'c gave no sign of having as bad a night as the rest of his team, Skaara's face was nearly haggard with exhaustion. "Did Dr. Frazier throw you out?" she asked them.

"'Throw us out'?" Skaara asked, his numb mind refusing to translate for him.

"Yes, she told us to leave," Teal'c told her. "She is letting Daniel Jackson rest on his back, but nothing else has changed."

"You ok, Skaara?"

The young man stared at her. "Ok, no, not ok." He shook his head. "Not sleep well. See Daniel, like in the bad place."

"Nightmares," O'Neill said succinctly. "Yeah, had my share of 'em, too." Carter nodded her own confirmation.

Renee Turner slid into the chair beside Carter. "Good evening, sirs." She, like Teal'c, dug into her dinner with an appetite which promptly turned the others' off. They didn't even pretend to play with their food any more.

"Hey, Skaara," O'Neill said gently, "are the Tok'ra ok with your staying here?"

The young man nodded. "They understand Dan-yel is my brother. He is a friend to the Tok'ra, too. They want him to get well. They also want to know who did this, who they were attacking."

"They don't know?" Carter frowned. "They should've known who caught their people."

"No, they got a message that was cut off. The planet, Chiadra, is a Tok'ra exchange place. We go there to get information and supplies. Not owned by Goa'uld. Should not have been a Goa'uld there. The message said that the group was not large, but fully armed. They were surprised."

"None of the captives knew who had captured them?"

At Skaara's negative gesture, Teal'c turned to his comrades. "This matter becomes even more confusing."

"Yeah, curiouser and curiouser," O'Neill mumbled. "Well, people, go on and finish your meals, I'll see if the Doc has anything more on Daniel."

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"He started muttering about 5 minutes ago. He hasn't stopped," Dr. Frazier told him.

"What's he saying?"

She shrugged. "I have no idea, Colonel. However, it sounds almost like he's saying the same thing over and over again. The pattern of his speech seems to repeating. I haven't had the time to really try and listen to him."

O'Neill leaned over Daniel's face which was no longer grey, but still beard-stubbed. His eyebrows were knit in concentration. Whatever it was, he wanted it out badly enough that he was disturbing his sorely needed rest to tell them. "C'mon, Daniel, wake up and tell what you're saying." The voice whispered on, oblivious to O'Neill. The officer leaned in closer, turning his ear towards Daniel's mouth. He listened very intently. "It's numbers...and names...and, yeah, he's trying to let us know what happened. C'mon, Daniel, wake up!" He squeezed Daniel's right shoulder, hard, trying to give him a physical link to the world outside his skin.

The blue eyes flew open. His gaze settled on O'Neill, then his eyes flicked around to take in his location. "What happened?" he croaked.

"We were kinda hopin' you'd tell us."

Janet gently pushed the Colonel aside, smiling down at her patient. "How do you feel, Daniel?"

The archeologist thought for a few moments. "Hurts. Everything...hurts." His hand stole up to his chest where the tube had been, rubbing it. "Head hurts worst. Feel like crap. What happened?" he asked again. "Did that powder do something to me?"

The doctor and colonel exchanged worried glances. "What do you remember, Daniel?"

"The puzzle box and that weird silver powder. I went to rinse it off in the river, but it was very clingy. Couldn't get it out of my hair, but it came off my face and glasses easily enough. I got up and Brenda was asking me what I was going to do about my hair.

Then...that's the last thing I remember." "You don't remember the attack?"

"Attack?" Daniel echoed uncertainly. Fear began to cloud his eyes. "No, I don't remember any attack. Where is everyone else?" He looked around the infirmary but saw he was the only patient. "Are they ok?"

O'Neill sighed. "McGuire and Smith are dead, Daniel. The rest of them are missing."

"We have to find them. They're just kids..." He made to get out of the bed, but weakness kept him from getting farther than a partial sit-up. Trembling, he lay back down, the fear now greatly magnified. "What happened to me?"

"We found you on a planet Skaara called Chiadra. You've been a prisoner of the Goa'uld for 4 weeks, Daniel." Saucered eyes digested that information. "No, you didn't get hosted and you're not a Jaffa. They were doing some kinda experiments on you. We don't know what kind," he told him, anticipating the next question. "We found Smith dead on P3X59J. McGuire was killed by the Tok'ra on Chiadra. He'd been hosted."

"Why didn't they...?"

O'Neill shrugged. "The \$64,000 question. Doesn't make any sense. Nothing about this whole thing has made any sense since we got to Chiadra. No one knows who the Goa'uld in question is. No one knows why they made you a lab rat."

Daniel slumped into the bed further, his face extremely pale. "I don't remember any of it. I just remember P3X59J. The box, the powder. Nothing else...afterwards. You found me...?"

Movement at the entrance to the infirmary stilled Daniel's questions as the rest of SG1 and their guests peered into the room. Upon seeing Daniel conscious, Skaara rushed in. The young man tenderly gathered his brother into his arms and babbled at him in Abydonian. Daniel stoked his hair, assuring him in the same language. Reluctantly, Skaara let him go, feeling the quivers of exhaustion in Daniel's too lean body.

"Well, that answers one of my questions," Dr. Frazier said. At O'Neill's raised eyebrow, she told Daniel, "I was wondering, especially since you reported you had a headache and considering what they were mucking around with, if your memory was intact. Daniel, do you know everyone in this room?"

Squinting at all the faces, he said, "No."

"Who don't you recognize?"

"Her."

"Oh, sorry, Dr. Jackson, this is LT Renee Taylor. LT, this is Dr. Jackson." They shook hands briefly. "You recognize where you are? What year is it? Where is your grandfather? When did you last beat Colonel O'Neill in a wrestling match?"

"Yes, I'm in the infirmary. It's 2001, I guess, unless I've been gone longer than you said. My grandfather is off-planet with Queztacoatl. And never, except in my dreams..."

Yeah, I wrestle you a lot in my dreams, too, Danny-boy, but it's not quite the same. O'Neill plastered an innocent look on his face that even had Daniel laughing, albeit quietly and with little energy.

"On that note, I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you all to leave. I need to do an assessment now that he's conscious and Daniel needs rest which he's not going to get with the lot of you hanging around." She shooed them out of the room and began her examination.

"So what happened?" Carter asked as they stood around in the hall.

"Nothing. He doesn't remember anything."

"He does not appear to have any problems with his memory, O'Neill."

Jack sighed and leaned against the far wall, rubbing a hand across his tired face. "No, just whatever happened to him on P3X59J and Chiadra. Y'know, when I walked in, though, he was mumbling. He was rattling off numbers and names. I think he was trying to tell us what happened to everyone."

"Numbers and names, O'Neill?"

"Yeah, the ol' name, rank and serial number routine. Y'know...geez, I guess you don't. I don't think we've ever done that. Weird. Well, anyway, I'm betting that each one of those kids rattled off their spiel and Daniel memorized it. We know he can do it. Hand him any set of coordinates we've been to and he knows exactly what planet it is. Even knows the designated names for them."

Carter stared at him hard. "If that's true, that means that Daniel was in a position to see everything. Daniel somehow knew that he'd be coming back or that he'd be left alone."

It was O'Neill's turn to stare. "I don't like where that's going, Carter."

"Well, it also means that Daniel really does know what happened to him, but for some reason isn't accessing it. Trauma will do that. Fear, terror, too. When he gets better, he'll probably start remembering. If he doesn't, we could try hypnotherapy. I don't know, though, if he's able to be hypnotized. He wasn't with us the last time..." She couldn't bear to dig up those memories again, especially since they were faced with a situation that was, in some ways, similar.

"We'll keep it in mind. Let's just see what happens."

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"Doctor, your updated evaluation?" General Hammond leaned forward, resting his forearms on the table.

"Daniel Jackson woke up at 18:54 yesterday evening. He's quite lucid, but he doesn't remember anything about what happened to him after we spoke to the group on P3X59J. His memory seems to be completely intact otherwise. He still retains his knowledge, as far as I can tell without getting hours of lectures. Physically he's still weak, but he'll be fine with rest and food. Hopefully I'll be able to give him solid food in the next couple of days. We reran all of our tests. We also checked for any type of bombs or devices like Cassandra and Rya'c had implanted. Nothing. Everything else is normal, for a slightly less stressed human. I still have no idea what the Goa'uld were doing to him. He'll have to do some PT to get his physical strength back. I'm not going to advise counseling of any variety, which I'm sure will make *him* very happy, until he starts to get his memories back. I don't think we can push his memories out by bullying him into Dr. MacKenzie's office. So, I'll take a wait-and-see attitude until I see signs

that he's remembering."

"Do you have any idea when we may see those memories re-emerging, Doctor?"

"No, none. It may start, though, with body memory. Physical feelings, especially in cases of trauma, will sometimes appear before actual memories surface. I noticed earlier that Daniel was rubbing his chest a lot. His body remembers the tube was there even though he doesn't."

General Hammond shifted some of the papers around. "What about the substance you found on the hole, Doctor?"

"Analysis was inconclusive, General. The substance is definitely alien and organic, but we couldn't begin to tell you what it was."

"Keep me posted, Doctor Frazier."

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Three days later, Skaara requested to leave. With Daniel on the mend and still unable to name who had attacked them, he couldn't stay. Reluctantly, he said goodbye to all of them, giving O'Neill a neat salute, as he had on Abydos so long ago. O'Neill found it hard to watch him go, knowing he was closer to the fight than they were, but he knew he had no right to tell him what to do. Skaara's years with Klorrel in his head had aged him more than the mere 3 years. He was no longer the child playing soldier in a very large sandbox. The gate snapped shut and the group wandered out.

As if their feet had been programmed to do so, SG1 found themselves in the infirmary, watching their recovering teammate. He had managed to woo someone into getting some of his work from his office. Papers and books covered the bed, the tray in front of him and the night stand beside him. If he'd been allowed to, all the medical equipment nearby would probably have been swamped, too. He peered myopically at the text on the tray, comparing it to his notes in his hand. He had no idea they stood there, watching him fondly, as he did what he loved most.

"Daniel, you are the only person I know who can cram every bit of space with paper." O'Neill waved a hand at the mess on the bed. "Where are you planning to sleep tonight? Doc Frazier doesn't have enough beds to keep you and your work here."

"Oh, Jack, sorry, didn't see you. Hi, Sam, Teal'c. Did Skaara get off ok? He said he had to go tell the Tok'ra that I don't know anything." For the first time since the whole thing started, Jack felt like Daniel was truly back with them. Part of him knew there was going to be some kind of fall-out from what had happened, but at the moment, he was content just knowing that Daniel

had somehow, miraculously, had been restored to them.

Determined to make Daniel follow the doctor's orders, Jack swept up an armful of papers. "Jack, you're messing everything up!" he cried, trying to stop him, but getting nowhere near him as he stepped away from the bed.

"'Messing'?! This is already a mess!" "You know what they say," Daniel said smugly, "a cluttered desk is the sign of a cluttered mind. What does that say about an empty one?" O'Neill glared, but still he didn't give him the papers. Teal'c and Carter took their CO's hint and began to remove the rest of the materials.

"Do what the doctor tells you, for once, Daniel. Sleep," O'Neill ordered. As he and the rest of SG1 trooped out, arms full of papers and books, he turned back to watch as the archeologist grumbled, but complied. "Hey," he said gently, waiting till Daniel turned to look at him, "welcome back, Daniel."

The archeologist smiled and mumbled his thanks before he rolled over into sleep.

The End
To be continued in "Skaara's Wedding"