

September 18th – Late Afternoon  
Sandy Plains  
Px3-908

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Daniel had woken the moment he couldn't breathe anymore. Disorientated, suffocated - part of his brain realized, in a split second, that he was buried alive. He wanted to flail, wanted to move the great weight that crushed his body, but he couldn't. He was pinned down. Summoning up all his will, he thrashed as best he could, his feet making the best impact. He felt something touch him ...

Soon the feeling of being crushed was replaced with the sensation of falling. With his lungs no longer suffocated, he instinctually opened his mouth to draw breath only to swallow sand. Before he could react he hit the ground once more, landing face first into a hard bed of sand. He gave a low, pain-filled moan as he attempted to move while sand poured around and onto him once more, but his beaten body had no fight left within it. As he laid there his lips parted, a word was whispered: "Jack", before he passed out once more.

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Jack sat perfectly still, his eyes never leaving Daniel's lifeless form far below him in the gully of sand. After what seemed an eternity, he heard a noise and realized that he'd been hearing that noise a while now. Soon he registered what it was.

"O'Neill!" Teal'c's voice was now thick and harsh with excess use. He'd been calling to his immobile friend for a while.

The colonel twitched one shoulder but he didn't make any attempt to respond to the cries to him.

"Are you alright?" The voice drifted down, as did some sand that had been shifted from the noise. Jack looked around now, trying to get his bearings. He waved his hand over his head to indicate to his friend that he was okay as he looked around and tried to find Teal'c up on the high ledge above him. There was a noise, like water over a fall, and Jack foolishly looked up.

"Do not look up!" The warning came, almost too late.

Jack managed to cover his head with his arms and curl his body into a ball as the first of the sheets of sand hit him, pounding his body cruelly. Now it was he who was buried alive. In a better physical state than Daniel had been, Jack managed to fight his way to the surface once more and broke through, lifting his face up and drawing in a lung full of clean air. He tried spitting out the sand from his mouth, and he blinked rapidly, his eyes filling with tears as the grit scratched at his eyeballs. On unsteady legs he managed to stand, looking around once more to see down into the hole where Daniel was. But the new sand had covered all traces of where Jack thought he was. He looked up, throwing his arms wide and indicating

to Teal'c that he had no idea where the body was once again. The Jaffa pointed it out for him, able to see the outline of the mound in the ditch still.

The futility of the whole thing burned within Jack's stomach, making him feel sick. Daniel was down in that ditch and if Jack threw himself down there again there was every likelihood that *\*neither\** of them would survive this mission. Still, with abandonment as his only other choice, Jack did what he knew he shouldn't. He toppled himself over the edge once more, falling, falling, until he hit the ground with a bone-shattering crunch. Somewhere in the distance he heard a deep voice call to him, but he was unable to get up again. He remained there, sand filling in his pockets in his pants, weighing him down. He knew he had to get up, had to find Daniel, to free him again, but he couldn't catch his breath. Soon, everything went black.

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He awoke with a start. The air was darker and chillier. He could still see Teal'c, high above him, ever watchful. The slightest movement by Jack gained him a cry of, "O'Neill!". Rolling onto his knees, with much pain, Jack gripped across his ribs with one arm as he held himself up unsteadily on his other.

"You have not been out long. However, you must uncover Daniel Jackson or it will be too late..."

Too late. The words echoed around Jack's brain. Too late. It was already too late! Jack shuffled over to where Daniel should be, while he constantly checked his positioning with the watchful Jaffa. When he was in position he situated himself over the mound that should be Daniel and, with pain, he eased himself onto his rump, his arm tightened across his stomach and ribs, but the jarring still chattered his teeth. A few thoughts crossed his mind as he pawed, lackadaisically, at the sand. How long would it take Carter to return with the others? How long did he have to fight to keep Daniel alive before someone was able to help him? How long before he, too, could be saved?

"Come on, Danny, don't die on me here!" Jack growled through gritted teeth as he tried different ways of moving the sand out so that it might stay out of the hole. Eventually he sat back onto his heels, his hand resting on his thigh as he sighed despondently. He looked up, seeing that Teal'c was watching him, and he knew that he was the only hope Daniel had of surviving. Tugging his sleeve up his arm he tried doing what Daniel had done earlier, he slipped his hand into the sand, trying to wriggle his fingers to feel a shoe or something of Daniel deep under the surface. It was a fruitless search, of course, but Jack was not aware of that as he repeatedly plunged his hand through the shifting sands searching for the body of his friend.

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September 18th - Early Evening  
Cave  
Px3-908

Hands were tugging at him, or at least, it felt like hands were tugging at him. Daniel wasn't fully awake yet but he came to with the realization that he could breathe, and that he wasn't inhaling sand whenever he did. Slowly his eyelids opened, the grit scratching painfully within his swollen eyes. He gave a strangled cry as the pain ripped through him. The image before him was too distorted to recognize. Perhaps that was a fire burning; the rest of the room was dark. A shadowy figure was beside him but he couldn't see any kind of detail.

"Yenstolf," a soft, gentle male voice reassured him as a hand pressed lightly on his shoulder.

Despite the gentle tone and touch Daniel scrambled backwards from the blurry source. Placating noises rose to echo around them as Daniel shied from the unknown and the 'unknown' tried to console him.

"Yenstolf, Yenstolf!" The voice pleaded. Daniel could tell only that from the tone – that whatever the thing in the dimness was, it was trying to calm him. Another touch to his shoulder made Daniel flinch, though, and his head slammed hard against a rocky outcrop behind him. With a yelp the injured archaeologist folded his arms over his head and leaned forward in pain.

"Kustof!" The hand began to soothe down Daniel's shoulder and arm. "Yenstolf!"

The searing pain subsided and Daniel blinked to open his stinging eyes. The sting shot through him. Still unable to see clearly he held out a hand tentatively to the air and said, "Who?" His voice constricted in a jab of pain as the sand embedded down his throat rasped with the word. Daniel coughed violently, resulting in vomit.

Scuffling sounds indicated that whoever was with him made it out of the way before being hit by the sand and bile mixture. The stench stung Daniel's nose and he gagged momentarily. No words were spoken but Daniel felt the calming caress along his arm again. Soft cooing sounds filled his ears and he realized that comfort knew no language barrier. Whoever was with him was trying to calm him, to help him. Daniel made a signal that he needed a drink, but whether it went unseen in the dimness, or unacknowledged, he wasn't sure as no drink came. He tried to swallow and his throat constricted again. He coughed, this time controlling the spasm of his stomach.

The trickle of water being rung from a cloth came moments before Daniel felt a wet rag swipe his forehead. He grabbed the cloth and sucked on it, swallowing down the cooling water. In a breathy sigh he asked, "More?" and he heard the trickle again, fumbled in the dark with the other's hands and pressed the dripping cloth to his lips again.

Gently his head was cradled and he felt himself being guided forward then something touched his lips, and he realized it was the bowl of water. His hands fumbled to hold the vessel and he tilted his head back slightly, carefully guided by

the stranger, and he swallowed the water in large gulps. He knew he was meant to only sip but he couldn't help it. He craved the refreshment and he needed to dislodge the sand down his throat. After he'd drained the bowl he passed it back. "Thank you.." He hissed tiredly as he slumped against the rock behind him.

"Harm you not," came a soft response.

Daniel tilted his head and asked, "You speak English?"

"Harm you not, you have kustof. You must yenstag." "You must yenstag."

Daniel realized that whatever the stranger might know, it wasn't going to be completely English. He tumbled the words in his head, trying to work out what they meant. Was the stranger talking oddly, or had he forgotten what words meant?

"Harm you not," the voice said kindly and Daniel felt a hand tilt his face upwards. Seconds later a warm, sticky fluid hit Daniel's eyes, making him blink rapidly. He gurgled and gasped, trying to struggle but the stranger held him firmly. "You are in kustof, I harm you not.."

Daniel spluttered until the liquid stopped pouring into his sensitive eyes. He felt a cloth wipe away the remnants of the liquid and found blinking a little easier.

"Have faith.." the stranger said, then he pried Daniel's eyes open and dropped a bead of viscous gel into each eye. Daniel's head jerked back and soon he realized that the fire was fading until he couldn't see it any more. He was blind.

He recoiled in terror and slammed back into the wall of the cavern behind him again. Gripping his head, he doubled over; drawing his knees to his chest as he felt the spongy bump appear on the back of his head.

"Yenstag. You must cease!" The voice pleaded loudly now.

Daniel peered out from behind his arms, blinking but unable to see anything. "Who?" he managed to ask.

The stranger shuffled closer. "You .. kustof."

When Daniel's cough got worse, the stranger slipped his arm around him, and sat him up, bringing a vessel to his lips. "Miggs. Tregal.." He brought some drink to Daniel's lips and, albeit warily, Daniel sipped the warm liquid. It tasted familiar but he couldn't work out what it reminded him of. "Hum-coff your kustof..."

Daniel wet his lips as he leaned back against the wall behind him. "Thanks.." he whispered softly.

"Hum-coff," the stranger placed his hand behind Daniel's head and assisted him to drink more.

Sitting back once more, Daniel blinked, finding that it no longer hurt to do so. Nor could he see anything left of the dim images around him. "I'm blind."

"Blind?"

Daniel lifted his fingers to his eyes.

"I am hum-coffing your orbs."

"Orbs? Daniel recognized that word. "I'm blind!" he repeated, growing more fearful as he realized how vulnerable he was. The stranger placed his hand on Daniel's shoulder again, settling him down.

"It will pass. I am hum-coffing you..."

Daniel's mind searched for the reference of hum-coffing. It wasn't anything he recalled.

"Who are you?"

"Trepur. Third in the House of Lords. Who... are you?"

Daniel thought for a moment then his lips parted as he said, with frightened astonishment, "I have no idea-"

"You do not know your House?"

Daniel's heart rate quickened. He didn't recall anything. He tried searching his mind for memories of his life up until now, but nothing came to him. "I don't know anything.." Blind and now unable to recall who he was, he felt terrified and extremely vulnerable.

"Not know how you came to be here?"

Daniel shook his head. Sand snowed down upon him. "Where did you find me?"

"You fell through a cave I was yukking in..."

Daniel didn't know much at that point but knew that falling through a cave was not something he'd ordinarily do.

Trepur went on. "I was yukking..."

"Yukking?"

"Yukking. For food..."

“Hunting?” Daniel wondered aloud.

“Hun-ting?” the stranger tried the new word. “For food. You do that?”

“No, not me personally. Or at least I don’t think so...”

“You do not know what you do?”

Daniel shook his head. And more sand dislodged from his long strands. “Though ‘words’ come to mind..”

“Words?”

“Yeah, like I had something to do with words,” he said, then sighed softly. “Though what?”

“You should miggs...”

“Miggs?”

Trepur guided Daniel’s head into his lap, his hand ruffled through the stranger’s hair gently, combing out what was left of the sand.

“Rest..” Daniel drew his own conclusion as he started to drift off to sleep. Trepur smiled down at the face in his lap.

“Will you teach me your kemlah?”

“If I knew what kemlah was,” Daniel muttered.

“We will kemlah after your miggs,” Trepur said, resting back against the rock behind him then he dragged an animal skin over Daniel for warmth.

“Kemlah after miggs..” Daniel said sleepily. “Talk after my rest..” He yawned. “That sounds like a great idea..” He muttered before drifting off to sleep.

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September 20th - Late Evening  
Cave  
Px3-908

Strange images, feelings of suffocation and a loneliness that gripped his heart like cold, gnarly talons haunted Daniel for the past few days as he had drifted in and out of sleep, lost to the world around him, unable to see or understand anything, except the hospitality of the stranger, Trepur.

He woke at one point to the sensation of being cleaned. The stranger was washing down his arms and neck with a cloth. Gently, and unaware that he’d woken the

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anthropologist, the stranger lifted Daniel's t-shirt and brushed the cloth over the skin inside. Daniel stirred now and asked what he was doing.

"You are plektart."

"Plektart?" he whispered groggily, his throat dry from days of sleep.

"Miggs. You must."

Daniel didn't need to be told twice. He closed his eyes and drifted back to sleep.

End of part 2