

September 30th – early evening
Cave
Px3-908

Daniel's eyesight had been improving daily, however it was still not perfectly clear. The young amnesiac had resigned himself to the fact that he might never see clearly again, that the grit had damaged his eyes permanently. Still, he could see well enough to assist Trepur with peeling the bark off the cous-cous root and wringing it between his hands to extract the juice that flowed within the plant. The juice was known to them both now as tregal, or plainly, drink.

He could also see well enough to know, finally, what his kind stranger looked like.

The alien was obviously of human descent, although Daniel didn't make the connection. His skin was as white as alabaster, and almost transparent, despite the many hours of exposure to the harsh sun. His eyes were golden, and in the sunsets of their world the orbs glittered magnificently. His nose was straight and small, his lips rosy and large. Without hair, the brow line was dominant but not obvious. To Daniel, the alien had a kind face, befitting the man he'd well imagined him to be. To Daniel, Trepur was beautiful, inside and out.

He was not – however – the face Daniel had been imagining, but once he'd seen the real Trepur, Daniel stopped thinking of that other face.

Together they perched on the top of a dune, drank tregal and looked towards the setting sun. In the apricot glow of light, Trepur's skin was pink. Daniel had to touch it it looked so amazing. The touch brought their gazes together. "You were.. saying.. Genkel-" the alien said, careful to learn his new friend's language and apply it properly to his everyday conversation. Daniel tore his eyes off the sight of the man beside him and faced the sunset.

"That the sun, or orb, doesn't go out.. it sets.. on the horizon.."

Trepur seemed as awestruck by Daniel in the light as Daniel had been of him. He took a moment and looked towards the shimmering haze. "Hoe-rizon?"

"The.." Daniel implied a curve with his hands. "Your world is curved.."

"Our world," Trepur reminded him. Daniel smiled.

"Yes, our world, it's curved, so the sun goes around it and comes back the next day.. or cycle, as you call it."

A gentle smile curled the full, rosy lips as Trepur looked on at him in amazement. "How do you know this?"

Daniel looked at the sun then back at his friend. He shrugged. "I don't know.. I just.. do."

"Could we follow the orb one cycle?"

A soft laugh bubbled within Daniel. He screwed up his nose slightly and shook his head. "I don't think it's that simple."

"No?"

"No. Don't ask me why, I just.. have this feeling.." he said, rolling his hand before his stomach as if implying a gut feeling. Trepur nodded once.

"You still do not know your House but you know the orb sets?"

"Yeah, weird, huh?"

"I hope that one day we find your House, Genkel."

Again Daniel shrugged. "So do I, one day."

Trepur smiled gently as he studied Daniel's features in the dying light. "Blacktime is almost upon us."

Daniel had thought about the kiss they'd shared after the beast's attack days ago, but he had never tried again to kiss Trepur, because the other man never seemed to give him any kind of signal that he'd welcome another kiss. However, the sweet memory of it played over in Daniel's mind often, and right now, it was foremost in his thoughts.

"We should return to our cave, Genkel," Trepur said. Daniel wet his lips as he nodded mutely then allowed the alien to help him to his feet. The sand was hard to walk over, each man's thoughts were purely on making each step successfully, in order to scale the steep dune and then down its other side.

**September 30th – Early Evening
Daniel Jackson's Office – SGC
Earth**

As Sam picked up one of Daniel's journals she thumbed it open and read the inscription. It reminded her of a time passed, when she read one of his journals in his apartment before being reprimanded by the colonel for invading his privacy. This time there was no coming back for Daniel, she knew that. She still found it hard to accept it. She closed the book with a soft thump and caught the attention of the man beside her.

"Are you all right, MajorCarter?"

"Yes, Teal'c," she said in a thick voice. "I just.. " She waved the book as she sniffed

back her tears. "It just reminded me of Daniel, that's all."

"It is his diary."

"Yeah," she said, dropping the book into a box, unaware of the secrets it held within its pages about Daniel. "Do you think the colonel will come by?"

"I do not. He made it clear to me that he wanted no part in cleaning out this office."

Sam looked around the space that oozed Daniel Jackson. "I guess we're pushed for space so there seems little point in leaving all of his stuff in here."

"Major Harrowman will occupy this office, I believe."

Sam brushed the back of her wrist beneath her nose and nodded. "Yeah, so I heard." She looked around at the artifacts and papers then back at the Jaffa. "So I guess we ought to get this done, sooner rather than later."

Teal'c bowed his head and resumed his task of boxing up Daniel Jackson's office.

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October 1st – Early morning
Cave
Px3-908

"What else do you recall Genkel?" Trepur asked as he passed over a flat stone with meat on it. Daniel took it and then shifted to make room on the animal skin for his friend to sit beside him. Resting his 'plate' on his raised knees Daniel used his hands when he recalled images from a dream he'd had the night before. So vivid were the images that Daniel was sure he was recalling actual memories of his life, not just a dream.

"The place was big. I mean huge. It was at least five times higher than this cave."

Trepur raised his face towards the ceiling of their dwelling. "That is.. big."

"And there was a..." Daniel frowned as he tried to recall the image in his head. "A wall with strange symbols on it, like this.." He drew several symbols from the Stargate into the sandy floor. The last one was Earth's. Dusting off his finger onto his garment, Daniel looked at the man beside him. Trepur tilted his head slightly.

"I know this one," the alien said, pointing to Earth's symbol. Daniel's eyes widened.

"You do? How?"

"You have it on your garb," Trepur said, passing over his food to Daniel and getting to his feet. He went to the corner of the cave and pulled out Daniel's green jacket

from the pile of material that they kept there. He passed over the jacket as he sat again. Daniel studied the silver-thread patch. He looked at the drawing then at the patch again. "Perhaps this is your House?"

Daniel frowned. "But what does it mean?"

Trepur shrugged. "I do not know, Genkel. Eat. Your food grows cold."

Daniel laid the jacket beside him as he started to eat, often glancing at the sleeve then at the drawing he had made in the sand.

"Do you have other memories of your House?" Trepur asked.

Daniel's golden brow furrowed together. "No," he said, looking disappointed then he turned to see his friend. "No."

Trepur smiled kindly at him. "They will come."

Daniel studied the slightly blurred face then shrugged. "Maybe I don't want to know my house anymore. Maybe.." He stalled on his thoughts, blushed as Trepur tilted his head to query his hesitation then he continued on to say, "Maybe this is my House now.."

Growing more serious than Daniel could ever recall him being before, Trepur said, "I wish that it were so, Genkel."

The candid confession caught the anthropologist off guard. "You do?"

Trepur's eyes scanned the handsome face. "Very much so."

Daniel stared at his friend a long moment then moved forward slowly, pressing his lips tenderly against Trepur's mouth. As he pulled back he blinked and said, "Then... I think it is, Trepur."

The alien smiled before cupping the back of Daniel's head and bringing him closer for another kiss.

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October 1st – Late evening
Daniel Jack's Office
Earth

A lone figure stood in the doorframe of Doctor Daniel Jackson's emptied office, his outline silhouetted by the light in the corridor behind him. Colonel O'Neill allowed the structure to support him as he looked at the centre counter, now so clean and tidy whereas it was often overflowing with Daniel's books, notes and papers. The desk in the corner was bare also, the coffee cups removed and cleaned, the photo of Sha're boxed away somewhere for .. what? For the future? Who would bring it

out again?

Jack sighed and entered the room, his heart heavy in the sterile surroundings. He touched one of the empty boxed shelves and tried to recall what had been there when Daniel was around. A skull, perhaps, or an artifact? Now it didn't even contain dust. Carter had been thorough, that was for sure. Jack went to the drawer and pulled it open. One or two pens rolled as the drawer stopped moving, and an eraser blocked their path, but nothing remained of the notes and tablets of writing paper that Jack knew Daniel kept there. He swallowed hard as he closed the drawer again then he glanced around the room before leaving the darkness via the back door, heading towards the elevators that would take him home once again.

He had one day off then they were back again, back to the routine of planet hopping and alien investigation, all without their fourth member. Jack wondered if he knew how to soldier on this time but as he saluted the Lieutenant guarding the main elevator before stepping inside it, he knew he had it in him to keep going despite his loss.

No one would ever know. No one, but him.

<End Book One>