

SGX 28 Resolution

As soon as Thanksgiving was over, Christmas rushed at them with a speed that seemed to validate the idea of reindeer circling the earth in twenty four hours with stops for gift deliveries. The stores were full of decorations and luxury goods, the television advertised present ideas from the sublime (and unaffordable) to the ridiculous.

Adam thought long and hard about what he should buy. In the end he decided his mother would not appreciate the postage that he would have to spend on sending her a worthwhile gift. Instead, he contacted one of her cousins, a woman who lived in Tynemouth, on the coast near his home, and asked her to choose something appropriate. He enclosed a cheque. He knew he could trust her, and more important, trust her taste. She was the 'aunt' who had always bought him books he really wanted instead of the lurid socks and useless gadgets that his other relatives had given.

Emma could be crossed off his small list. He would send her a card and would buy her a wedding present. He hoped there would be a list to choose from. If Emma's mother had anything to do with the arrangements, he was sure there would be. He had already emailed his congratulations and had not, he hoped, sounded too relieved. He hadn't mentioned Vlad. No need, for now. Maybe ever.

Vlad. He had no idea what his lover would like for Christmas. At least, not in the form of something gift-wrapped. Well, not that could be opened in front of other people. Vlad had made it quite clear that he expected Adam to spend virtually the whole holiday in bed, with him. They had already agreed to have a Christmas meal with Niki and all three had carefully told other people they had already made arrangements. No more turkey, or pumpkin pie. Though it was possible that Americans ate Christmas pudding like the British. The Russians didn't, but Adam had never been particularly fond of the traditional festive fare and he was looking forward to a quiet meal with friends, whatever the menu.

He had made cautious enquiries and gathered he need not worry about gifts or even cards for his team mates. They would have the equivalent of an office party with some of the other teams before they all went their separate ways for the holiday. Even Stargate Command wouldn't keep them at the base over Christmas, though they would all be on emergency stand-by in case of Goa'uld, and Adam had been warned not to leave the country. He could have a holiday in England, but not over the Christmas season.

He had no intention of going home. Colorado Springs held his heart for the time being. He was acutely aware that Vlad might be recalled to Russia. If that was to happen, he wanted to have spent all possible time with him first.

He would consult Niki about a gift. Which brought him to Niki, but a moment's thought told him that a couple of bottles of vodka would be more than acceptable.

Niki suggested something that would be a permanent reminder of America and between them they came up with the idea of something related to Mesa Verde. Adam managed to find a book that was full of stunning photographs and fairly simple text, on sale at the local site he'd visited with Emma. He asked the girl at the checkout to gift wrap it and was amazed by the dexterity with which she finished off her work with curling ribbons. It looked suitably impressive and in fact had cost a lot. But then it was for Vlad.

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The team had a couple of off world missions before the holiday. Routine assignments on empty planets that all sane life, including the Goa'uld, had deserted long ago. No discoveries, no surprises, just another couple of gate addresses to tick off as visited. Business as usual.

They saw very little of SG1. Adam was aware of the talk that Daniel Jackson had returned. He knew the 'first' team had their hands full coping with that and with their work, which was not on hold. He'd heard rumours about Jackson's mental state but when he saw Sam or Jack or Teal'c in the commissary, it never seemed to be the right time to ask questions, and he wasn't particularly friendly with Jonas. He and Vlad speculated about Daniel's comeback and about his previous 'ascension' or death but could come to no conclusions. In a world where a ring of waving fluid led to other planets, anything was possible, but they had little information to feed their discussions and soon ignored the entire matter.

Cards began to appear in offices on the base. Decorations festooned the commissary. Someone hung a swag of mistletoe over the Stargate, to most people's amusement and Hammond's outrage. The outrage, Adam thought, was probably for show.

Sharon and Ron were going home for the holiday and were talking about their families and the probable gatherings, fun and misery. Jean-Pierre, like the other foreigners, would remain in Colorado Springs. He had accepted everyone's congratulations and had grinned at Adam.

'Got myself an English partner,' he told him. 'Thanks for bringing her to my attention!'

He refused an invitation to join Adam, Vlad and Niki, to their secret relief. He and some of his fellow scientists were taking a holiday chalet in the mountains and going skiing. The snow capped peaks were looking like traditional Christmas cards and the weather promised to stay crisp and dry.

The party was a riotous affair on the last evening after work, the day before Christmas Eve. Everyone got drunk; even teetotallers like Bob Somerfield seemed drunk on the atmosphere and the Russians, Niki in particular, were worse than Adam had ever seen them. He somehow dragged Vlad and Niki into a cab and got them home. Then he had to

get Niki into one flat and Vlad into the other without either of them simply falling unconscious in the street. In the end he got them both into Niki's flat and let them collapse on the beds. He had had too much himself to relish the thought of undressing them or administering water or coffee. He spent the night on their settee and didn't even notice the discomfort. And in the morning all three had hangovers but agreed it had been a good party.

'A party to remember,' said Niki.

'You are remember?'' asked Vlad and Adam agreed that it seemed unlikely.

'Am remembering a lot of vodka,' Niki told them with dignity. 'And am remembering is no more work. Four days is no work. Sleeping.' And with that he went back to bed.

Adam and Vlad returned to their flat, where Vlad drank copious amounts of coffee, never once asking for tea. Neither of them was in any mood for food until the evening when they had recovered enough to ransack the freezer for pizza and the fridge for salad. Accompanied by orange juice.

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They sat quietly, not even bothering to turn on the television. They exchanged information about traditions at Christmas in their respective countries and in their families. Vlad had grown up under Communism with little knowledge of the festival but his grandparents had reinstalled old ways once the iron curtain came down. The main thing, he said almost apologetically, was that the Russian Christmas was celebrated about a fortnight later than the Western one. Adam was apologetic about England's commercial approach to the season and nostalgically recalled some experiences of carol singing in his teens. In any case, he told Vlad, the border counties, like Scotland, tended to make more fuss about New Year. Christmas was for families.

'You are being my family here.' Vlad smiled and ran his hands through Adam's hair. 'But I thinking is not for much long.' His face was serious again.

'Have you heard anything?' Adam dreaded the reply but Vlad had no definite news, just a rumour that the New Year would see changes.

Their love making was thoughtful and gentle. Vlad's touch suggested Adam might be made of porcelain but Adam soon persuaded him that he wouldn't break and by the time they had undressed each other and got as far as the bed they were both tense with anticipation and hard with desire. There was nothing gentle about the firm hands that raised Adam's legs and twined them round Vlad's waist, nothing delicate about the questing fingers that readied him, and nothing in the least gentle about the cock that penetrated him till he felt as if their bodies were fused. And then there was, after all,

some gentleness in the thrusts that drove both of them closer to climax and the hand that added a rhythmic friction to Adam's cock until he broke, in spite of his protestations, into tiny pieces, saved from shattering by the strong arms that held him close and the murmurs of love.

Later, as they lay half asleep and sated, Adam started to voice the worries that had been plaguing him for a while.

'What will we do when ...? How can I ...? If ...' He didn't need to end the questions, and for once Vlad seemed disposed to answer him seriously, not just sweep all concerns into the future.

'English, I am loving. Always I am loving. But you are not come to Russia, I think. And if you are is no good. I am military. Not in one place.' A quick vision crossed Adam's mind of the look on his supervisor's face at GHQ if he asked for leave to follow a lover, a male lover, to Russia.

'If you are ever coming then we are meeting. But I think we cannot being able to living for sometimes meetings. We saying goodbye and we are still loving in hearts. And I maked you knowing what you wanting. Is good.'

He was right. Of course he was right. That didn't make it any easier. Adam thought about the last few words. Six months ago he had been living a repressed and frustrated existence. Now he was confident in his new-found sexuality and as a result more able to make friends and enjoy life. Vlad was right. It was good. And for now, Vlad was here, a very real presence in his bed. They needn't spoil tonight, or the rest of the holiday, with what might be. He burrowed into the waiting arms.