

SGX 29 Epilogue

New Year came and went. Adam persuaded Teal’c, as the darkest man he knew, to act as ‘first footer’ over the threshold of his flat, bringing good luck in the form of coal and bread. If Teal’c was bemused by the role thrust on him he didn’t say so, but he did question Adam closely about the customs of his country. Adam also insisted on toasting the New Year in scotch, not vodka, and turned up his nose at American whiskey. He initiated the Russians into the pleasures of singing Auld Lang Syne and enjoyed his Hogmanay celebrations almost as much as if he’d been in Newcastle. Probably more so, because Newcastle was, to the best of his knowledge, short of Russians who would hug him and kiss him and wish him a Happy New Year in Russian which he half understood and wholly appreciated.

January saw everything back to normal. Adam and Teal’c spent time sparring with their staffs. Niki got hopelessly drunk at least once a week. The team had missions and paperwork and more paperwork. Jonas left, to nobody’s disappointment. And the winter rolled on towards spring.

It was early February when Vlad’s orders came through. He had been in America for just over a year and someone thought it was time he returned to Russia. So his papers recalled him to Moscow, en route for some other part of his country.

Adam was devastated.

Knowing something would probably happen and having it actually happen were two very different things. He tried to show a brave face, and to remember Vlad’s words from Christmas, but it was hard. Especially as Vlad was philosophical about it.

‘English, I having six month of you that I am not having if not here. Is good,’ was all he would say. When his bags were packed Adam felt the flat was too empty to tolerate. He flung himself out to walk in the cold streets for an hour or more while he pulled himself together. When he got back, Vlad was nursing a glass of vodka and the bear that had contained his liquor supply in the infirmary at the start of their relationship. He held it out to Adam.

‘I thinking he does not liking barracks, Adam,’ he said. Then as Adam snatched the bear, burying his face in its fur, Vlad grabbed him and made love to him one last time.

‘Love you, Adam,’ he whispered and the use of his first name rather than a nickname or endearment brought home to both of them that this really was the end.

They said their goodbyes in the flat. Vlad would be picked up with some of the other Russians, who were returning home, from the base, and the team would be there to see

him off but that would be an official farewell without room for private emotions. And the airport departure would be a military affair.

Adam watched as the jeep drove out of sight, taking his lover out of his life. They would write, or at least email, but it was unlikely that they would meet again for a long time. He steeled himself to remain calm in front of his colleagues. Sharon and Bob were watching him with concern but to their relief he walked back to his computers with no outward sign of strain.

Jack looked into his office later. Commiserated, even though his eyes said, 'I told you so.' Talked to him about how hard he was finding life with a returned Daniel and his new partner, Paul. Nobody else understood and he unburdened himself a little to the Englishman. He was staying with Paul, he said. Less chance of ascension or other nasty surprises. Less excitement, perhaps, but a smoother life. He hoped Daniel would find someone else. It was probably too early to hope the same for Adam.

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And so February wore on until Valentine's Day. Adam knew Americans celebrated it but wasn't certain about Russians. Niki didn't seem too sure. He was still working at the base and was a fairly frequent caller at the flat with offers of vodka or a shoulder to cry on. So far, Adam hadn't cried. Not when anyone else was around.

So February 14th brought no cards and Adam left for work in a sombre mood. His desk was full of requests for computer help, and he was aware that SGX would be going off-world later in the week. In the middle of the morning someone brought him an artefact that they thought might have a Latin inscription. It wasn't Latin or even anything related and Adam was irritated as he went to the commissary for coffee.

He found himself grumbling about the artefact, and the idiocy of whoever had brought it, to Sharon and whoever else would listen. Then a deep voice behind him suggested that maybe, just maybe, its owner could help.

'Artefacts and languages are my special preserve, after all,' the voice went on, amused and confident.

Adam turned and found himself looking up at impossible eyes, eyes someone could drown in, dark hair that was trying to curl, and lips that looked – well, if they had belonged to a woman, bee-stung might have been an appropriate description. As it was, they belonged to at least six feet of very masculine good looks. Who on earth ...?

It was Sharon who realised.

'Hey, you two haven't come across each other yet, have you?' she said.

'Adam Fenwick, meet Daniel Jackson.'

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