

~ Who Talks Of Victory? Enduring Is All ~

by romansilence
(romansilence@yahoo.de)

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: The better part of the characters of this story do not belong to me but to the guys at Universal and Gekko, and who ever else. I just borrowed them to play. No copyright infringement was intended and no profit will be made. The storyline, however, is mine. If you want to do anything else but read it, I'd like to be asked.

TIMELINE: The story branches of in an alternate universe after "Heroes" (Stargate: SG-1, season 7). It's some sort of SG-1/Atlantis crossover. I inserted and modified a few scenes from "The Siege, pt. 2" (Stargate: Atlantis, season 1).

SEXUAL DISCLAIMER: There's none needed really. Aside from a few kisses nothing happens but it implies a loving sexual relationship between two adult women. If this kind of love offends you, or you're not old enough, please go away.

PAIRING: Sam/Janet (first time), Elizabeth Weir/Teyla (implied).

WARNING: The O'Neill of this AU story is a vindictive bastard. I know it's not fair but the story needed it, and really sometimes the guy is just too perfect to be true.

SUMMARY: Samantha saves Janet's life but the price she has to pay is very high and she learns whom she really can count on as a friend.

"Samantha, do you have a few minutes?" Doctor Elizabeth Weir asked after having knocked at the metal door frame. The sliding door that had been there the last time was missing and there was a heavily armed Airman standing just outside.

The blonde looked up from her computer screen; a surprised smile graced her weary face. She visibly had lost weight in the four months since Elizabeth had taken over the Antarctica facility.

She silently motioned her in.

"If you're doing something important, I can come back later."

"No, have a seat. I'm just killing time before I have to go back to my 'room'. I heard you're going to lead the Atlantis expedition. Congratulations, Doctor Weir."

"I thought we were on a first name basis the last time we spoke, Samantha."

"It has been pointed out to me that I shouldn't expect to get any kind of special treatment just because I managed to cut a deal with the Pentagon. 'This might not be Leavenworth but you are still a prisoner and will be treated like a prisoner.' End quote. This obviously entails how I am to

address others."

Elizabeth didn't miss the sadness and pain in the other woman's voice, veiled by a thin layer of contempt, and she was more determined than ever to realize her plan. But she also was angry that someone on this base was able to hurt this heroic woman so deeply.

"What the hell is that supposed to mean? And who came up with that crap? You saved this world over and over again; that should count for something."

Samantha smiled at her outburst.

"I knew what I was getting myself into when I took Doctor Fraiser to the Knox, Doctor Weir, and I still can't bring myself to regret my actions. So, don't worry; I'm all right."

"Well, you don't look all right to me." Elizabeth retorted.

Before the blonde had a chance to reply, the Airman's voiced barked from the door. "It's time, Carter."

"I'm sorry, Doctor Weir, I have to go." Samantha said with an apologetic shrug of her shoulders. She stepped to the threshold and held out her hands. The Airman left his post against the opposite wall and snapped handcuffs around her wrists.

"What the hell is going on here?" Elizabeth angrily asked the man.

"I'm sorry, Madam, I'm only following orders. But as a former base commander you could order me to take these things off." He offered in a much softer voice.

"Don't Jerry," Samantha's voice was barely above a whisper. "It's not worth the trouble. Just bring me back, okay?"

"I'll be with you." The brunette decided; well aware that she was far from getting the answers she needed. "We can talk on the way to your quarters."

"I'm not allowed to speak outside of my lab or my quarters, Doctor Weir," came the quiet reply.

Elizabeth's temper was close to burning over, but she had to keep a lid on it if she wanted to find out what really was going on here. She followed them through the eerily quiet corridors of the SGC until they reached the crew quarters.

The Airman opened the door with a key card, Samantha stepped in, and he undid the cuffs.

"I'm going in there, Airman Saunders. If someone objects, tell them it was a command decision."

The man only nodded and closed the door behind her.

~*~

"Would you now please tell me what's going on?"

"You shouldn't have done this, Doctor Weir. It will only get you in trouble with the base commander." Samantha stated quietly.

"What happened, Sam?"

"What happened? O'Neill woke up and took over the base. I guess I shouldn't have counted on his friendship. He made it clear that you had been far too lenient with me and instituted a few new rules." This time there was a certain amount of bitterness in the blonde's voice.

"If General O'Neill acts according to form, he will be here in a few minutes. You had better tell me why you came now, Doctor Weir." At the brunette's questioning look, Samantha pointed to the surveillance cameras scanning every square inch of the room. "General O'Neill sees fit to check regularly, if I'm locked up in time."

"I want you to head the science team on the Atlantis mission, Samantha."

The blue eyes lit up for a split second and then lost their shimmer.

"Even if you could get the approval of the Pentagon, the base commander would never agree, and he's still my superior officer."

Samantha cocked her head as if listening intently and then continued. "He's on his way. Could you do me a favour and call Cassandra. Tell her I'm sorry that we couldn't speak this week."

"Of course, Sam. Why..." She didn't get the chance to finish her question because the door burst open and a fuming Brigadier General burst into the room.

~*~

"Hammond."

"General Hammond, Elizabeth Weir here, I'm sorry to disturb you this late, but I need your help. I went to see Doctor Carter, and asked her to head up my science team. General O'Neill blatantly refused my request without even bothering to hear me out. He told me that, and I quote. 'She screwed up; she disobeyed orders; she attacked a superior officer; she disregarded regulations, and I will make damn sure that she pays for it. If you want to reward her, you'll have to do it over my rotting corpse.' End quote."

"The words sound like O'Neill, but I thought that he would be happy for her. He cares for Samantha; I thought he would be interested in her well-being." The bald man at the other end of the phone answered.

"No, General. General O'Neill did everything in his power to make life as uncomfortable for Doctor Carter as possible."

She then proceeded to tell him what she had found out during a long talk with Cassandra Fraiser and Airman Saunders who had met with her in a local pub.

Soon after Brigadier General Jonathan O'Neill had taken over Stargate Command, he had ordered all personal belongings removed from Samantha's quarters with the reasoning that inmates of the high security wing of Leavenworth were not allowed any kind of personal possessions, including pictures or books or music; and Leavenworth, in his opinion, was where she by right and law should be.

She had to address all personnel by rank and last name. She wasn't allowed to talk outside of her lab or her quarters which now had an uncanny resemblance to a prison cell. O'Neill had personally supervised the upgrade of the surveillance system in her room to make sure that she didn't have any privacy; that's also why he had the door to her lab removed.

She also had to be handcuffed whenever she left her lab or her quarters. She was forbidden to enter the gate room or the commissary, and had to be under the constant surveillance of two guards whenever she had to go to the infirmary. As a privilege she was allowed one phone call a week, a privilege taken away more often than not.

Elizabeth simply didn't see any rhyme or reason in his treatment of her. She had been instrumental in bringing him back. She had effectively neutralised Anubis when he had infected the Russian Colonel, had found a new planet for Ishtar's Amazons, had found a way to create Tritonin without using countless Gao'uld larvae. And yet, O'Neill treated her like some kind of traitor and forced the whole base to do the same. It was a wonder that she hadn't lost her mind under the circumstances.

"I fear that for the first time in his life General O'Neill is of one mind with Senator Kinsey and the NID: they want the most brilliant mind this country has to be uselessly locked up for the rest of her life."

Elizabeth knew that she was taking a big risk by comparing O'Neill and Kinsey but the man she had spoken to today and the man she had read countless mission reports about and who had willingly sacrificed his mind and his life to save Earth; they simply were not the same person.

General Hammond greeted her statement with silence, a silence she didn't dare to break in order to let the seriousness of her words sink in.

~*~

Elizabeth knew that she had been more passionate about the whole situation than she possibly should have been, but while she was at the head of the SGC the talks with the tall blonde had been an enormous help to her, even though there had been some restrictions in place.

By order of the Joint Chiefs, Samantha was not allowed to leave the base. She was not allowed to go through the gate or even be on level 28, except when needed, but that had been about all the Pentagon had asked for after she had disobeyed General Hammond's order and saved Doctor Fraiser's life by bringing her to the Knox home world.

When asked why she had done it, Samantha had simply answered that she couldn't imagine a life without Janet Fraiser. There never had been any kind of written confession, but when Kinsey and the Pentagon demanded a clarification, the blonde had not explicitly denied that she felt more for Doctor Fraiser than regulation allowed - so everybody assumed....

During a late night at the commissary, she had told Elizabeth that she had done it because she was in love with the small doctor but that Janet had rejected her declaration of love while they still were with the Knox. Samantha also had told her that she didn't regret her actions and would do it again because no power on Earth or anywhere else in the universe could change her feelings for the brunette CMO.

~*~

"Why would he do such a thing?" General Hammond mused and brought her back to reality. "That's well beyond everything the Pentagon agreed to."

"I have a theory, but I'm sure you don't want to hear it, Sir."

"Shoot. Perhaps I can change his mind if I know why he's acting this way. It would be easier with his support. That just isn't his style."

"Do you remember the Zatarc incident, General?"

"Yes, Major Carter had to kill Martouf."

"Yes, and before, everyone thought that she and O'Neill were the involuntary assassins. Anise's machine had first singled them out because they didn't tell the whole truth about the events on Apophis' experimental ship.

"I found a videotape of the second testing in your desk one day, in a hidden drawer. O'Neill finally confessed that he cared more for Major Carter than the regulations allowed. They agreed to ignore his confession and continue on as friends and as commanding officer and XO. A few years later, she goes and breaks every possible rule, including that stupid don't-ask-don't-tell thing to save a woman's life. Samantha wouldn't break the rules for him, but she did it for Janet Fraiser, Sir."

There was silence at the other end, and Elizabeth began to berate herself for not keeping her mouth shut in the first place.

"Doctor Weir, are you still in Colorado Springs?"

"Yes, I'm staying at the Ramada Inn, Sir. I'll have to go back to the base in the morning to recruit some more of O'Neill's men. He sure won't like this any better than my attempt with Doctor Carter."

"You already have the permission of the Joint Chiefs, right?"

"Yes Sir. Samantha would still be a prisoner but I would decide on the terms; so it would be in name only. The only thing they insisted on is to implant some sort of tracking device. I don't see how this should work at the other end of the galaxy but I didn't see a reason to argue about something like that."

"Good. Hold off with your visit. Talking directly to General O'Neill probably won't do us any good. I will have to go over his head. I'll talk to the President in the morning and if everything goes according to plan you will have a Presidential order by midday, ordering O'Neill to give you free reign with your choice of personnel, including Doctor Carter. I really hope she accepts, because I will have to call in a rather big marker to pull this off."

"I appreciate your help, General Hammond. I'm sure she will accept."

~*~

It had taken another four weeks to get everything packed up and ready to go. Four weeks, O'Neill insisted on keeping Samantha locked up as much as possible. The President's order was not sitting well with him, but he was a man who knew when he had to call a strategic retreat. Samantha didn't take anything with her but a couple of photos Cassandra had given to her. The day before their big jump, Samantha was escorted to the infirmary to receive her implant. To her surprise, Janet was there to also give her a complete physical.

The small doctor closed the curtain to give them a modicum of privacy. She wanted the handcuffs to come off, but the gruff voice of General O'Neill ordered her to 'work around' them.

"You're too thin, Sam. You should better take care of yourself."

"I didn't have enough blue Jell-O these last few months, Doctor Fraiser." Samantha answered, trying to keep her emotions out of her voice. She tried to make light of the awkward situation, but it didn't work.

Janet retreated behind her professional mask. The rest of the physical was carried out in silence. When she made the cut at the blonde's right upper arm to insert the chip under the corium, she whispered. "I'm sorry that you have to go."

"Don't be," Samantha whispered back. "There's nothing left on this world to look forward to. No, Janet, I don't blame you. For me it was love at first sight, but I never should have told you. I'm sorry that I lost your friendship."

"I will always be your friend, Sam. The General ordered me to stay away from you. He

threatened that he would take Cassandra away from me. He was rather convincing. I have to play along until she's 18 and they no longer have a hold on her."

"I'm sorry that he's taking it out on you, too. My feelings are not your fault."

"I'm sorry I let you down, Sam." To the benefit of the listeners on the other side of the curtain she said. "That's it, Doctor Carter. Keep the cut clean and everything should be fine in a couple of days. I hope everything works out well for you."

"Thank you, Doctor Fraiser."

~*~

They had been running for what seemed like the whole day and now they were hiding. The planet had appeared safe, the indigenous people were willing to talk about a trading agreement - and suddenly the Wraith had appeared.

If not for Teyla's uncanny senses, they would have walked right into an ambush. John and Aidan were on their way to the gate to get some reinforcements; and Samantha and the Athosian leader had taken over the part of getting the population to security.

They had lost ten of their charges to the Wraith on the way and now had taken position at the entrance of a cave system the Minhiri used to hide away from their stalkers. The 'ghost faces', that's what they called the Wraith, for some reason were leery to enter the narrow passageways of the caves. Samantha longed to find out if they somehow could use whatever it was in their own fight against them, but for the moment she was just content to quietly sit, her weapon at the ready, and stare in the growing darkness.

The boys should have called in by now. That could only mean that they had some problems of their own. Teyla was to her right, listening and waiting for the sick feeling that always told her that the enemy was close. She suddenly tensed and pointed to the tree line to her left. Samantha brought the modified Wraith weapon in position and waited for her target to appear.

In their third week of their stay on Atlantis the blonde had found a way to modify the enemy's weapons. They now were stronger than any staff weapon or even a ribbon device, and the Wraith had learned to fear them. They were capable of bringing down their darts with one good shot.

Samantha readjusted the power of the blast she intended to send out, pulled the trigger, and a stream of white light cut the Wraith and the tree it had been hiding behind right in half. Teyla took out his two companions and calm returned to the small clearing in front of the entrance.

They were reasonably sure that they wouldn't search for their scouts. In the past they always had left to search for easier prey, and both women hoped that this time would be no exception.

"Why don't you try and get some sleep, Teyla?" Samantha asked some time after the sun had dropped under the horizon. "I'll keep watch."

"I'm not really tired, Samantha. I think there's still too much... what do you call it? ... yes, adrenaline running through my veins. By the way, thank you. You once again saved my life out there; this time you even saved me twice. I'm in your debt."

"You're welcome, Teyla, but I was just doing my job."

"You're a scientist not a soldier, Samantha."

"I was a soldier for the better part of my life. Some habits die harder than others. It's still part of who I am and I don't see this changing any time soon."

"I heard rumours that they kicked you out because you were in love with a woman."

That got one of the rare but always sad smiles from the blonde, and Teyla had to fight the urge to introduce who ever had hurt her to the business ends of her fighting staff. In the beginning Samantha had been very cautious in her interactions with others but now she was slowly opening up, even though the jury was still out on whom Sergeant Bates held more in contempt Samantha or herself.

"I'm sorry, Samantha, I shouldn't pry."

"Call me 'Sam' please." Her blue eyes searched Teyla's in the faint light of the two rising moons. "No need to apologize. Bates certainly would put it this way. No, they didn't kick me out because I'm in love with a woman. I broke the rules, a whole lot of rules to save this woman's life when she was hit by a staff weapon in the chest. I succeeded."

"I expected to be sent to prison for what I did, but our military leaders decided that they still needed my skills. They imprisoned me at the base; this way I was always available when something went wrong and needed fixing. I was rather surprised when I was allowed to leave Earth with Elizabeth's expedition, but I'm glad that I'm here."

Teyla would not have been a good leader of her people if she hadn't picked up on all the emotions hidden in Samantha's surprising confession.

On a practical level it made perfect sense that the leaders of Earth would try to gain as much as possible out of someone like the blond scientist who handled any kind of weapon with an ease born out of practice and who had an innate understanding of any thing technical.

Teyla had been told that it had been Samantha who had found and triggered the fail safe mechanism, letting the city ascend from the bottom of the ocean just seconds before the force field protecting it down there broke down. It had been Samantha who made the naqada reactors compatible to the energy systems of the Ancients.

When they were exploring the city, the blonde was like a child in anticipation of the harvest festival and the new toys it would bring. It was always a joy watching her when she figured out

one thing or the other. It was the only time the veil of sadness and loneliness fell from her beautiful face.

The Athosian knew it probably was a mistake but she said it anyway. "This woman must be the most stupid living being in the galaxy not to reciprocate the love of someone as perfect as you, Sam."

Samantha flinched, but graced her with another smile. "I can't order my heart to stop loving her, but I never would want her to force hers to share my feelings. I don't regret what I did, and I never will. This way her adoptive daughter didn't have to lose another mother, and the SGC still has one of the best medical doctors caring for them."

"I would like to hear more about her, Sam."

Samantha didn't react to her request, and Teyla began to seriously fear that she had hurt their growing friendship.

"Her name is Janet Fraiser; she should be a Lieutenant Colonel by now. She's the Chief Medical Officer of Stargate Command, just like Carson is here. She's tender and caring, and every time one of her charges dies despite her best efforts it is as if a part of her dies with them. She saved my life and everyone else's lives over and over again.

"She's about five foot one and she changes her hair colour more often than some people change their clothes - no, that's an exaggeration, but not by much. Her eyes are brown, a light brown, and one can read the mood she is in by the colour of her eyes. When she's angry, they change to a dark brown, almost black and when she's happy, there are tiny golden sparkles dancing in the iris."

Samantha was painfully aware that she was starting to daydream and decided to stop before she embarrassed herself any further. "I'm sorry, that's probably not what you wanted to know, Teyla."

"That's exactly what I wanted to know, Sam, because now I'm sure that I would never stand a chance with you." The dark haired woman answered honestly.

For once Samantha's face showed honest surprise. This obviously was not what she had expected, but the blonde saw a chance to help out one of her friends. She wished that Daniel would be here. He was so much better with this sensitive-talk-stuff.

"I always thought, you and Elizabeth would one day come together. You hit it off from the start. She always searches for your eyes, before and after one of our jumps."

"But what about Simon?"

"You'll have to ask her yourself but she told me that she set him free before we came here. For all intents and purposes, this still is a one-way-ticket. Regardless of how many naqada reactors I

manage to built, they don't give out enough power to gate back to Earth. We'll need a ZPM to do that."

Samantha deftly changed the subject away from the emotional mine field in which they'd found themselves. The seed had been planted; what Teyla would make of it was entirely up to her.

There wasn't much more talking done this night. Each woman was following her own train of thought without getting any sleep. Carson, Aidan, and John came the next morning. The Wraith had disappeared during the night, and so ended another mission in the Pegasus Galaxy.

~*~

"General Hammond, come on in. I didn't expect you to come personally." Janet said while she led the bald man with the three stars on his epaulettes in her living room.

"It's not every day that such a strange set of requests finds its way on my desk, Doctor Fraiser." He sat in a comfortable leather armchair and denied her offer of a drink. "Let's get the business part out of the way first; then I'll probably need a drink. Is Cassandra home?"

"I'll call her."

A couple of minutes later.

"Uncle George! It's so good to see you." Cassandra bent down and embraced him. "You have lost weight. It looks good on you." When she straightened up again, he saw that she had had another growth spurt. She now was as tall as Samantha.

"Please sit down. I came personally to make sure that the both of you really know what you're getting yourself into. You're about to fly headlong into a war zone. You should be going to college, Cass; you should be dating."

"It's what I want, General Hammond," the young woman answered. "I want my other mother back. I'd rather face the Wraith or the devil himself than being under the constant scrutiny of Jack O'Neill.

"Whenever I speak to a girl, the goons following me pull out their spy gadgets to find out if I somehow have been infected by Sam being gay. I tried to talk him out of this paranoia, but one only has to start speaking her name and he falls into a raging fury. Half of the SGC would gladly volunteer for this mission, just to get away from him.

"But that's not the only reason, General. It's hard to explain but I need to go there. Yes, I easily could be the All-American-Girl but that wouldn't be me. I tried to fit in and I was good at it. It's not who I am and it's not who I want to be for the rest of my life.

"I know the risks, General Hammond. I know I might never be able to come back, and I know the Wraith might already hold the city when the Daedalus arrives, but I feel that this is what I

have to do."

"Thank you, Cassandra. You can go back to whatever you were doing. I want to speak with your mother, alone."

The young woman looked at Janet as if she wanted to ask 'Will you be okay, Mom?' and then reluctantly climbed the stairs to her bedroom.

~*~

"How does the work at the Academy Hospital go?"

"Fine, General, but I'm sure you have more urgent questions to ask." Janet answered in an effort to suppress her nervousness.

"You're right Doctor, but I don't know how to ask without asking." The older man said with a bit of embarrassment.

"You want to know if my decision to resign my commission at the earliest convenience has something to do with Samantha, right?" He only nodded. "Yes, it does. With the Knox, when she told me that she was gay and in love with me, I was shocked and I over-reacted. I've done a lot of soul searching since she's been gone.

"Since Sam has come into my life, none of the men I have dated made me feel like I do when I am with her. I didn't have the guts to be honest with her or even with myself then but this could be my only shot at another chance with her.

"I turned my back on her like some dim-witted inhabitant of the bible-belt, and I want to make it up to her. I can only do that when none of us has to fear any kind of military backlash. I don't know if I'm gay, but I now know that I'm in love with Samantha and probably always was. I was just too stupid to see it."

"Then why didn't you just apply as a civilian doctor?"

"Please wait a moment. I'll show you."

She stood from the couch and disappeared into what Hammond knew was her study. She returned with a few pieces of paper in her hands.

"I still have some friends at the SGC and one of them gave me these. These are copies of General O'Neill's unofficial orders to Colonel Everett, detailing among other things how Sam is to be treated and to permanently replace Dr. Weir as the chief commanding officer - among others. See for yourself. O'Neill finally has taken the plunge, and I thought I would be better able to protect Samantha if I stayed with the Air Force for the time being."

General Hammond studied the photocopies in his hands carefully. When he looked up, there was

sadness and determination in his eyes.

"I hope you don't mind if I use your office to make some calls, and I really would appreciate this drink you offered."

Three hours later someone knocked on the door, asked for General Hammond, and handed over a thick envelope. He returned to the study and closed the door, moments later Janet heard him on the phone and decided to start dinner. She was getting more nervous by the minute and in her mind's eyes saw all her carefully laid plans swim down the river and to crash over a water-fall.

Another half hour later, General Hammond joined her in the kitchen and quietly refilled his drink. Janet invited him for dinner. "There's enough for a small army. I tend to go overboard when making pasta sauce."

"Thank you, Doctor. I hope you don't mind if Doctor Jackson joins us in a few minutes. He knows Jack O'Neill better than anyone else."

Dinner was quick and quiet, and the two men soon retired to Janet's study. She tried to occupy her mind with reading, but gave up on it when she found that she had read the same page twice without being aware of it. She instead took to pacing the length of her living room. Her whole life now was in George Hammond's hands and though she knew that he could be trusted, the situation still didn't sit too well with her.

~*~

"Obviously, you gave them something to think about, Sam." John said with a slight smile.

His delight didn't find any echo. "If they get here in two hours or two days, doesn't change the fact that we're out of options. We can't hope to fight them. So unless either of you have any more ideas..." Elizabeth said.

"We still have one option left, aside from the self destruct." Teyla offered. "Samantha's plans usually work. I don't see why we shouldn't give this one a try."

Elizabeth angrily looked at her lover of three months. "We already discussed this, Teyla. It's too dangerous. What she wants to do needs careful monitoring, and if it doesn't work the gate will be destroyed and she'll be stranded or worse, killed."

"I'm still willing to take the risk, Elizabeth." Samantha quietly answered.

"That's a command decision, Sam. And now, let's get this done."

John and Elizabeth took their places in front of two laptops and simultaneously entered the command codes required to set the self-destruct.

"Self-destruct armed. Sam, dial the alpha site. Let's get out of here." John reluctantly said.

Before the blonde had a chance to finish the sequence, the gate activated. She automatically stated. "Incoming wormhole, SGC identification."

Her face registering shock and surprise in equal degree, the tall brunette ordered. "Lower the shield."

A wave of marines was the first to leave the event horizon; they all were armed to the teeth and acted more like an invasion force than reinforcements. While men and equipment poured onto the ramp in a seemingly endless stream, a man wearing the wings of a Colonel made a beeline for Elizabeth.

"Colonel Dillon Everett, United States Marine Corps." He cut her off before she had a chance to even greet him. "General O'Neill sends his compliments on a job well done under extraordinary circumstances." He saluted her but the expression in his eyes told her enough to doubt the sincerity of his respect. "You are relieved."

They tried to explain to him that they were about to evacuate, but the man obviously wasn't prepared to listen. He simply ordered them to disarm the self-destruct and told them that Atlantis would be defended at all cost. He handed General O'Neill's orders over and grinned condescendingly while Elizabeth read them with growing uneasiness.

John once again tried to argue with the man but to no avail, while Samantha muttered to herself that they somehow must have gotten their hands on a ZPM to even be able to dial in from Earth.

Everett's head turned with the swiftness of a snakehead. "What's this 'woman' doing here, without any restraints? Marine, go and find some cuffs or something. I won't have her running around and causing havoc." Elizabeth tried to interfere, but Samantha stopped her with a shake of her head.

"So, I'm right. Where did they find it? In Egypt?" She asked without showing any sign of being intimidated by the heavier man.

"Damn thing's been under our noses the whole time." He muttered, slightly impressed with her quick thinking.

On the other hand she shouldn't have been surprised. General O'Neill had warned him that the woman was extremely smart.

"I presume you will install the ZPM on board the Prometheus as soon as all your men are here, right?" Samantha asked, now really interested.

"The Daedalus, Carter, our new battle cruiser, designed by your good friend McKay. It's not as vulnerable as the Prometheus, and it's filled with Asgard shields and weapons." Everett answered cockily. "With a ZPM boosting her engine, she should be here inside of four days. That is how long we have to hold this base. Major Sheppard, dial the Pegasus alpha site; recall all military

personnel, as well as any civilians who'd like to return and help take part in damage control."

He stormed up the stairs and simply took over Elizabeth's office and the conference room, issuing orders left and right.

~*~

A few minutes later, John and Elizabeth joined him with the news that the self-destruct had been shut off. He barely acknowledged their presence.

"Did you contact the Alpha site, Major?"

Elizabeth answered for the visibly uncomfortable John. "I asked Major Sheppard to wait until I had a chance to talk with you."

Though she had no intention of alienating the man this quickly, these were her people he was ordering around, her responsibility. So, when he repeated his order, she stopped John with a shake of her head and said.

"Colonel, you've been here all of five minutes. Now, I have been responsible for the lives of the people on this base, both military and civilian, for the past several months. I'm not about to put those lives in jeopardy until I at least know how you intend to defend this city."

This got a typical, very military response from Everett. "I don't need to explain myself to you, Doctor, and I don't need your cooperation."

"That's where you are wrong, Lieutenant Colonel." A soft feminine voice came from the door. "I had hoped that we could wait with these new orders from the Pentagon until the current crisis is over, but your behaviour doesn't leave me any choice."

"What the hell do you want, Doctor Fraiser? General O'Neill warned me that you could be a problem when you somehow wormed your way in this mission." Everett angrily retorted.

Janet only smiled and shrugged out of her overcoat. "First of all, that's Colonel Fraiser for you, Lieutenant Colonel Everett."

"As we speak, General O'Neill is relieved of his command and all his decisions are being reviewed by the Joint Chiefs. His decisions have been clouded by his personal wishes and needs."

"Doctor Elizabeth Weir, the President insists that you keep command of Atlantis. To make the chain of command clear for everyone, you have been recruited by the United States Air Force and will be accorded the rank of Brigadier General, effective immediately."

Elizabeth looked at the other woman and then simply fell in one of the chairs in front of her desk. John and Everett were not less dumbstruck.

"They made her a General? They're making me report to a woman? They've done this all, right under my nose." Everett half whispered.

"Two women, Colonel. I'll be General Weir's second-in-command, oh, and Major Sheppard will be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. And now could we go back to business and try to keep this city in one piece."

The situation really didn't warrant the twinkle in her eyes, but she couldn't help but enjoy their surprise, though she still didn't know how General Hammond had talked her into accepting her new position.

Before the others totally regained their senses, the alarm klaxon sounded and a woman's voice ordered. "All hands evacuate the gate room, immediately."

The men and women in uniform, conditioned to obey a certain tone of voice, obeyed without delay. Doors began to shut and before they even could leave the office the gate room had been completely cut off from the rest of the base. Teyla motioned them in the conference room where one of the monitors showed what Samantha was doing.

She held one of the empty ZPM's and placed it next to the gate. She went back to the dialling computer and entered a series of commands that were far more complicated than the seven or eight symbols needed for a gate address.

"What the heck is that devil of a woman doing in there? O'Neill was right; she belongs under lock and chains." Everett was ranting.

"She's trying to save all our lives, you overgrown bully, yours, your men's, ours." Teyla quietly explained. "Samantha has this theory that under the right conditions the Stargate can be used to recharge a ZPM. That's what she's trying to do now. She's trying to create a connection not with one but with three other gates. They will feed our gate with energy which then will be absorbed by the ZPM."

"If this works, then why didn't you do it days ago?" Everett asked, impressed by this infuriatingly bright woman despite himself.

"It should be evident, Colonel. It's dangerous. She could be killed. That's why she sent everyone out and sealed the gate room." Janet answered with a toneless voice.

"The gate could explode." Elizabeth stated simply. "And if it works it will be drained of energy. We would not be able to dial out for quite some time."

Risking her own life for the sake of others was not something the woman O'Neill had described to him would do, ever. There had to be some flaw somewhere.

"So, if she fails we all will be blown up with her. Yeah, a great way to save us,"

"You don't get it, do you?" Teyla angrily retorted. "If the gate blows up, she will die and Earth will be safe from the Wraith. She would be the only one to die. We still have the puddle jumpers to reach the Alpha site. It would take a few days, but she already plotted a course there."

Samantha stretched her hand over one of the consoles; it lit up on its own, and the gate flared to life. She checked the readings and then placed the ZPM in the event horizon right in the middle. She quickly returned to the computer and her fingers flew over the strange symbols with amazing speed.

"She uses the technology of the Ancients? She knows their language? I was told that she didn't have the gene." Everett asked disbelievingly.

"It turned out that she didn't need it. The Tok'ra protein marker in her blood also did the trick. She didn't need the language to handle this technology better than anyone else but when we found the library it took her about four weeks to learn it from an Ancient-Asgard dictionary." John answered with a smug grin.

Everett stared at the screen and murmured. "O'Neill must have meant some other woman."

"Well, Colonel, perhaps you should have had a look at her file instead of listening to General O'Neill." Janet answered.

"You may have a point, Colonel Fraiser." He almost whispered.

~*~

Two days later, the recharged ZPM had effectively destroyed the Hive ships, and Samantha and Janet were alone, for the first time. Some of the personnel from the Alpha site were slowly coming back, but it was still mostly quiet.

The blonde was visibly nervous when Janet appeared in her doorway.

"Here, Sam, I want you to read this."

The taller woman scanned the letter with the Presidential seal. "I'm pardoned?"

"Yes, Sam, and if you want to, you can be reinstated in the Air Force with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. And I love you; I'm in love with you."

"You told me that you never could have those kind of feelings for another woman, Janet, what changed?"

"I had a lot of time to think, Sam, and I found that I always felt more for you than what one should feel for a friend, but I buried it deep in my soul. I'm sorry I hurt you. I can understand if you don't want to have anything to do with me..., or if you have found someone else..."

"I still love you, Jan. I always will, but please let's take this slowly, okay?"

"I thought you would put up more of a fight, Sam."

"Janet, I may have a blond moment every couple of years but anyone who gives up their whole life on the off-chance of getting back someone they love must be deadly serious. Damn, Janet, you walked right into a war zone. I could have slapped you when I recognised you in the gate room. I was so afraid for your life."

Despite her resolve to go slowly, Samantha pulled the smaller woman on her lap and kissed her soundly.

"So, there's really no one else. I'm glad."

"Why would you think there was?" The blonde asked.

"This Teyla is awfully protective of you. You should have heard how she cut Everett off when we were in the conference room staring at you doing your magic."

"Teyla is my friend, nothing more. Elizabeth would ban me to the outer edges of Atlantis if I would even think of touching her woman." Samantha answered with a smile. "So, how do we pull this don't-ask-don't-tell thing off?"

"We won't have to, Sammy. Look at the next page. General Hammond worked miracles. From now on gays and lesbians no longer will have to hide what they are and who they love. It was put in effect the day before we left Earth."

"Wow! What did Cassandra say about your move to the other side of the universe? Did you leave her with Daniel? Which college did she choose?"

"Slow down, Sam. Cassandra is fine. Yes, I left her with Daniel, in a way."

"In a way? What's that supposed to mean?"

"They're on board the Daedalus, Sam."

The only answer Samantha could think of was to give the doctor another passionate kiss. For the rest of the day they deliberately forgot to take it slowly.

THE END

I hope you enjoyed this product of a sleepless night. Feedback is always welcome, please contact romansilence@yahoo.de.

I might have a few more ideas concerning this blessedly Mackay-free (let him go and suck a lemon!) Alternative Universe where Daniel doesn't have to hook up with Vala (- though I do not know yet if I should have him pair up with John, Aidan, Carson, or one of the Athosians).

Let me know what you think.

[romansilence's Scrolls](#)
[Main Page](#)