

Threshold

by Pamela McCaughey (2006)

based on "UFO" (1969-70) created by Gerry & Sylvia Anderson & Reg Hill

and "Stargate" (1997-2007) Created by Brad Wright

Chapter One - May 2005

"Pretty nifty of the Asgard to give us a loaner for this science field trip," Jack O'Neill smiled, getting up from the pilot's chair to stretch.

Sam Carter was seated at her station, busily taking readings, monitoring the space anomaly which had developed halfway between the Earth and the moon only days ago. They all thanked their lucky stars the anomaly was not some sort of Gou'ld device. A quick call to their intergalactic allies, the Asgard, made it possible for them to get the usage of this small science vessel, with advanced equipment, so they could study the anomaly close up.

Teal'c's unsmiling face registered annoyance, "I do not see the need for me to make this voyage. I am not a scientist - I am a warrior."

"Just keepin' the team together, pal," O'Neill replied good naturedly, "Daniel doesn't mind taggin' along."

Dr. Jackson looked up from studying a page of Gou'ld hieroglyphics, "Yes, It's great to be able to plug into the Asgard computer data base."

The SG teams had discovered the Asgard could be depended on as great allies to the Earth. Not only were they sympathetic to the crusade against the Gou'ld, they actively encouraged the SG people and the Terran military to adopt new technology, often supplied by the Asgard themselves. This small loaner ship, *The Odin*, was Asgard state of the art in every way, from its powerful energy source for propulsion and weaponry, to its cloaking shield and scanning systems. Originally utilized by the Asgard for scientific exploration on the other side of the galaxy, they were willing to loan it to the SG-1 team as they trusted them to use the ship and its equipment wisely.

Only two days earlier, the anomaly had appeared, situated strategically between the Earth and the moon. Concerned at first lest the anomaly was some sort of Gou'ld device, the SG people put out an SOS to the Asgard, who responded immediately with technical expertise and the offer to loan them *The Odin*.

Jack O'Neill was particularly attached to the Asgard. Besides their big beautiful dark alien eyes, their delicate grey bodies and their immense wisdom, Jack felt the Asgard understood human concerns very well. And, they fully agreed on the necessity of neutralizing the Gou'ld by whatever means possible.

Just what was the anomaly? A black hole? Another type of stargate? So far it did not conform to any known type of space phenomena. The Asgard themselves were curious as well, but willing to permit the SG team to do the investigation.

"It seems to have a very light mass," Sam mused to herself, "But unlike a black hole, it doesn't absorb light at all."

"Well, that's good, isn't it?" O'Neill asked, "We don't want a black hole sitting right next to ol' Terra Firma."

"Quite true, but until we understand the real nature of this thing - an unknown is just as dangerous."

"Any radiation escaping from it?"

"Not registering anything unusual - just the normal amount of space radiation and whatever's coming from the sun. But, I am recording some major power fluxes within the anomaly itself..."

Dr. Jackson looked up from his work, "How can we be certain it's not some sort of Gou'ld construct?"

"That's why we're out here, Daniel, to determine what this really is." Sam made some more adjustments to her instruments, "Would you mind manoeuvring a little closer? There appears to be a light source registering deeper inside the anomaly..."

"Sure that's wise? What if that thing sucks us in?" O'Neill grinned and made a sucking gesture with his right hand.

Rolling her eyes, Sam replied, "There are no indications its a black hole - but I'd like to investigate the light source. Have you ever heard of a worm hole?"

"Theoretically, yes."

"Just because we haven't seen one before doesn't mean they don't exist. Can you imagine the excitement in the scientific community if we were to be presiding over the birth of a real worm hole?"

"But what does a worm hole do?"

"Theoretically speaking," Sam smiled back, "Worm holes could prove to be short cuts through vast distances of space. You enter it from one side, and come out the other end, hundreds of light years away."

Jack frowned, "That sounds kinda Gou'ld to me."

"Only if the Gou'ld have the expertise to create a worm hole. We've never heard they could do anything remotely like that."

"You'd think the Tokra would know if they could," Daniel added.

Teal'c nodded, "I was privy to many Gou'ld secrets, O'Neill. Building worm holes - I have never heard of such a thing."

"OK, but if you get some weird reading, we gotta get our butts outta here. The Asgard won't be too impressed with us if we get their ship wrecked," O'Neill warned. He manipulated *The Odin's* piloting controls to move the ship closer.

As *The Odin* crept up on the anomaly, a spiral of iridescent colours began to circle inside.

"That's pretty," Jack watched the viewscreen intently, "How's that registering on your equipment?"

"It's...not registering at all," Sam told him, "There's no radiation in those colours."

"Then, what's causing that effect?" Daniel had gotten up from his station to get a better look.

"I don't know...I've never seen a lack of reading like this before...", Sam kept recalibrating her equipment in case she'd missed something.

"I don't *liiiiiike* thissssss," Jack's voice rose nervously, stressing the last word.

"We should pull back," Teal'c advised.

"Ohhhhh, craaaaaaap...it's too late!" Jack worked his controls feverishly - but the problem was clear on the viewscreen. *The Odin* was starting to spiral uncontrollably into the anomaly...

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"Red Alert! Interceptors immediate launch! I repeat: immediate launch!" Moon Base

commander Colonel Roy barked into his comm system, "Co-ordinates being fed through right now!"

In the years since Moon Base's inception, their fleet of Interceptors had grown. They could now scramble as many as twenty high-powered, heavily-armoured craft, loaded with weaponry of three different types. Development of the Moon Base fleet had been paramount in the war against the marauding aliens. And the ring of SID satellites which circled Earth fed information constantly of scientific interest as well as incoming craft - friendly or not friendly!

"What the hell *is* that?" Interceptor pilot Josh Alexander exclaimed, "I've got a visual - but whatever this ship is - it's not the aliens' usual mode of transportation!"

"Roger that!" one of the other pilots agreed, "Not a standard alien craft!"

Colonel Roy switched on a group of frequencies, "Alien craft! Identify yourselves immediately or be attacked!" He repeated the orders several times while the seven interceptors streaked towards it, laser cannons at the ready...

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Jack O'Neill was holding *The Odin* steady, amidst a menacing flock of smaller ships, "Who are those guys? I've never seen fighters of that configuration before!"

"They're asking that we identify ourselves," Daniel interposed, "They sound human..."

"That could be a Gou'd trick," Teal'c cautioned, "We do not know as yet where the anomaly has taken us."

"Colonel O'Neill?" Sam asked anxiously, "They're threatening us with open fire if we don't ID ourselves - I think we should talk to them."

Jack shook his head, "We don't know who they are! I bet *The Odin* can stand up to whatever they wanna dish out! We can probably smoke these guys' asses!"

"If they think we're belligerent, they'll attack - in case you guys haven't noticed where we are - that's our moon out there - and just beyond it - Earth!"

"You leave us no choice...", Colonel Roy's voice intoned over the comm panel.

O'Neill punched up the appropriate frequency, "This is the Asgard ship *Odin* responding to your request for ID. Please stand down," He looked up at Sam and grinned, "Never thought I'd ever get to say this...", he turned back to the comm unit, "We come in peace!"

Colonel Roy's voice, devoid of humour, replied, "We are standing down to let you land on one of our pads, please follow the Interceptors down."

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With no other choice at hand, O'Neill banked *The Odin* and flew off, flanked by the cordon of fighter ships. He was further instructed to expect a boarding party once they were on the Moon's surface. They were a bit startled as the pad they landed on began to sink down inside a silo. A two piece hatch closed over them, blocking out the black space sky. They were now deep inside the Moon - in an installation of unknown origin. As they'd flown in, they'd seen a large sprawling complex of spheres, connected endlessly to other spheres and aboveground structures. Just what kind of installation was this? It looked permanent - like it had been there forever - but the SG team knew nothing about it. Why would such a major military site be unknown?

"What have we gotten into?" Daniel echoed aloud the thoughts of his fellow teammates.

"I guess we'll find out when the boarding party arrives...", Jack had been pacing the bridge, "I never heard of a Moon Base before. Why would SG be outta the loop on somethin' this big? Doesn't make sense! I mean, an installation like this would make a great jumping off point against the Gou'd. It's be like an early warning station - not to mention a port of call for

all the other friendly alien groups we've been involved with."

Sam had been listening quietly, "Uh...guys...I hate to bring this up, but we may not be where we're supposed to be..."

"Well, you're the one who said we were right between the moon and the Earth," Jack retorted.

"The operative question here is...*which moon and which Earth?*"

O'Neill rolled his eyes and shook his head, "Don't say it..."

"We may have come through some sort of...tear in the space-time continuum..." Sam finished.

"So we're not even in our own universe?" Jack demanded.

"We could be in another universe...or we could have been thrown forward or backwards in time...or..."

"What's the short answer?" O'Neill was exasperated.

Sam held up her hands helplessly, "I don't know..."

Before O'Neill could react, the comm panel came to life again, "This is Colonel Roy - please prepare to be boarded."

Sam leaned into the comm control, "Read you loud and clear, please prepare to be beamed aboard."

Jack grinned, "This oughta be *real* interesting!"

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The Moon Base boarding party included Colonel Roy, Josh Alexander, Ken MacKeigan and Bill Burroughs. When they appeared in the Asgard beaming chamber, the SG team were on hand to welcome them and gauge their response to the unusual technology.

Warily, the Moon Base team moved forward, weapons in hand, "What the hell was *that?*" Colonel Roy asked angrily.

"That, my friend, is how we get off and on *The Odin*," Jack responded, stepping forward to offer his hand, "You won't need your weapons - we're human - like you." It was clear O'Neill was enjoying the discomfiture of the Moon Base men.

Josh Alexander looked around and gestured with his hand, "I *know* we don't have anything in our fleet like this!"

"Funny, we were thinking the same thing about your Interceptors," Sam smiled.

"We are not belligerents," Teal'c spoke up, "Our presence here appears to be purely accidental."

Colonel Roy was the first to holster his weapon, "I suppose we should at least introduce ourselves before we jump to any conclusions," he shook hands with O'Neill, "I'm Colonel Roy, commander of Moon Base, and this is Josh Alexander, Ken MacKeigan and Bill Burroughs. Your arrival put us on Red Alert."

"I'm Jack O'Neill, this is Sam Carter, Dr. Daniel Jackson, and Teal'c. Sorry we stirred up so much shit."

"When you ID'd yourselves you said this was *'the Asgard ship Odin'*. I'm afraid I'm not familiar with the Asgard class designation. Is this some sort of prototype craft? It would have been nice if someone at HQ had given us a heads up on this. We thought you were aliens."

"Uh...what kind of aliens?" Jack asked uncertainly.

Colonel Roy laughed, "What kind of aliens? The goddamn greenies, of course!"

"The greenies?" Carter repeated.

"What do you guys call them?" Josh Alexander queried.

"It depends which aliens you're talking about," Daniel replied.

"Which aliens? There's only one kind of alien - and the best kind of alien is a dead alien!" Josh added.

"That...means by which you brought us aboard...how is that...possible? I mean, I think most of us figured beaming people around was just the stuff of science fiction," Roy said.

Carter spoke up again, "You're right about the *Odin* being a prototype - all kinds of new technology in this ship!"

"Yeah," Jack put in, "This baby is so new even we don't know everything about her!"

"We'd love to have a tour of her...maybe get some of our techs in here to look her over," Colonel Roy suggested, "But before we do all that, we need to get you over to MoonBase..."

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"Where are these visitors right now, Colonel Roy?" General Straker barked into his comm link to MoonBase.

"We took them over to the decontamination unit to be checked out."

"What you've described to me is not like any ship we have - not even a prototype - I'd know about it - hell - I'd have to authorize it myself - and *the Odin* is *not* one of ours!"

"I know the International Space Station is still being built, but is there any government on Earth which could have pulled ahead of us so thoroughly in space?"

"Not a chance. All our people have their sticky little fingers in the think tanks of dozens of countries - something this important wouldn't get past us - in fact we have the best technology available on the planet!"

"Well, sir, what would you like me to do?"

"Keep 'em on ice until I get there. I think I need to talk with these people."

Now all I have to do is stall them until General Straker gets here, Colonel Roy thought ruefully.

Chapter Two

"So far, they've treated us pretty well," Jack mused aloud, "I mean, I can understand the decontamination process. And, they've provided some food."

"Sir, it's obvious that this is a completely different reality than the one we know and live in," Carter said, "These people appear to know about only one alien species - greenies - and in our reality there are literally hundreds."

"This installation does not exist in our world, O'Neill," Teal'c commented, "They are at war, yes, but their enemy is not the Gou'ld. If it was, they would have recognized me as a Jaff'a."

Daniel was seated on a plastic couch, munching on an apple, "If this is in fact a completely different reality, or a different universe, how much damage are we doing just by being here, not to mention whatever we might say to these people, and what they've seen of our technology?"

"Yes, is there any chance our presence here will somehow impact our own reality negatively?" Teal'c asked.

They all looked at Carter, their resident scientist and deep thinker, "It's hard to determine what is and isn't. In both our realities, there is a war going on between us and some nasty aliens, obviously. We know from the boarding party's reactions that they do not have the kind of technology we have inherited from the Asgard and the Tokr'a. But whether we have travelled through time, into an alternate reality, or a whole other universe, I don't know. There are too many possibilities for me to pin down right now."

Jack got up and paced the room, "These people are locked in mortal combat with a race of aliens they call the greenies. They don't seem to know about the Gou'ld or any of the other aliens we work with. I think our best course of action is to try and find out as much about what's goin' on here, and who the greenies are."

"I also think we should refrain from telling them too much about our own reality-universe-whatever as possible. Until we know more about what has happened and where we really are - we could be potentially influencing our own reality as we know it," Daniel suggested.

"You know there's gonna be some interrogation goin' on here - even if it's conducted with fresh fruit, sandwiches and this...fake beer..." Jack held up a bottle of SHADO's finest non-alcoholic lager, "I wonder what this means on the label - *'not a drop is sold 'til it's 3 weeks old...'*"

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"This is quite the little spot you've got," Jack O'Neill smiled at Josh Alexander, who'd given the SG1 team an abbreviated Moon Base tour, "How long has your installation been operational?"

"1975, I believe - before my time. I understand MoonBase was a lot smaller in the beginning."

"Who's funding all this? The United States? The former Soviet Union?" Carter asked, looking around the astrodome where Omega science operatives did much of their long range scanning and space research.

"Really don't know, Ma'am. We're independent of politics," Josh had been briefed by Colonel Roy to avoid direct references to any genuine information. They still didn't know who these people were, so Josh confined the tour to non-classified areas.

"What is your fighting capacity here?" Teal'c wanted to know.

Cautiously, Josh replied, "We have full compliments of air and surface defensive and offensive machines. State of the art," he added, just in case the man with the odd tattoo on his forehead was gathering Intel.

"Well, so far, you haven't shown us any of the fun stuff," Jack noted, "You know, small arms, aircraft, yada yada yada."

Josh smiled, "You've already seen some Interceptors," making reference to the SG team's arrival, "We'd love to have a tour of *The Odin*. Did the Omega Corporation design it?" he figured he'd throw out a few innocuous questions just to see what the team members would say.

"Nooooooo," Jack pulled the word out, "*The Odin* is a...hush-hush thing, y'know," he winked conspiratorially at Josh, as if sharing a secret.

Josh's headset beeped and he held up a hand while he answered. Colonel Roy informed him that General Straker had made it to Moon Base and would be in the briefing room. "I'd like to direct you to the briefing room, sirs. We have more guests."

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General Straker, silver haired and steely-eyed, attired in a severe black Versace suit and a red power tie, stood up as Josh brought the SG team into the briefing room.

"Uh, oh. The brass," O'Neill said in a stage whisper. No civilian suit in the world could hide the fact Straker was still a military man to the core.

"General Ed Straker," he said, moving forward to shake hands with Jack, "You're Colonel O'Neill?"

O'Neill accepted Straker's hand and nodded to his team, "Captain Carter, Dr. Jackson and Teal'c."

Straker noted the man named Jackson was quite unlike the Dr. Jackson of his own acquaintance, and gestured for the team to be seated. The pneumatic doors closed and Josh Alexander took up a position in front of it, along with Ken MacKeigan, who entered before the doors closed.

"You gave my people quite a surprise," Straker smiled. It was a barely there, controlled smile that promised to disappear at the slightest sign of trouble, "The reports say you just popped out of nowhere. Care to explain that?"

"You wouldn't mind telling me what year this is?" Jack asked.

Straker rolled his blue eyes, "2005, of course."

"2005," Jack looked at his team, "That means we didn't time warp. This has to be an alternate universe, reality, whatever...thingmeeee."

"Time warp?" Straker questioned warily.

Carter took a deep breath, "General, the reason we seemed to pop out of nowhere is because we encountered some sort of odd space anomaly in our...universe, we'll say...and that anomaly sucked our ship into your universe."

"Are you...human?"

"As human as you are, sir," Jack interposed.

"And your ship...?"

"Well, that's gonna take some time to explain...," Jack chewed his lower lip.

"Colonel O'Neill," Teal'c began ominously.

Jack waved him down, "You see, *The Odin* is a loaner from some friends of ours...alien friends..."

"Aliens!" Straker stood up and motioned to Josh and Ken who brought up their personal weapons and trained them on O'Neill.

"OK, don't get your knickers in a knot," Jack replied, gesturing for Straker, Josh and Ken to be seated, "These aliens are friends of ours - they're not the bad guys - the Gou'ld are the bad dudes..."

Straker remained standing, as did Josh and Ken, "We've never known their name before..."

Dr. Jackson said, "They use the stargates to travel around space - ships are secondary to them - we've been at war with them since the first stargate was discovered."

"Stargate?"

Carter leaned forward in her seat, "Let me explain, General: Each stargate is like an interstellar telephone - you can dial up various planets and star systems - walk through it - and you're there. It's a very advanced piece of technology utilized by the Gou'ld as they pushed their way across our galaxy. The first Stargate was discovered on Earth about a decade ago in the deserts of Egypt."

"Egypt, you say...hmmmmm...that's very interesting, Captain," Straker leaned forward towards Sam, "None of what you're saying sounds anything remotely like the aliens we've been battling. For over 40 years, we've been working to halt their depredation of humans and the earth's natural resources. They're a dying race, feeding on us to survive. The only thing standing between them and our people are...us," Straker finished.

Teal'c spoke up again, "It is clear you have not encountered the Gou'ld, then. You speak of a dying race - the Gou'ld are not humanoid and they are not dying. They have no need of earthbound resources. Their sole purpose is conquest - for the sake of conquest itself," Teal'c looked Straker in the eyes, "Your enemies are different from ours. It is obvious there are vital differences in our technologies. You carry your battle on alone - in our universe, we have many allies for whom a Gou'ld defeat is paramount."

"Alien allies?"

Dr. Jackson said, "Allies who trade technology and Intel with us to secure a Gou'ld defeat."

"That's how we got access to *The Odin* - the Asgard loaned her to us. She's a research ship, but she'd fully loaded," Jack added, "Lots of firepower in that baby."

Straker was thoughtful for a moment, then he said, "In the spirit of goodwill, Josh here gave you a tour of our facility. It'd be a fair trade if we got to have a look at *The Odin*."

Teal'c opened his mouth to object, but Jack spoke first, "I think that can be arranged."

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"Do you think it wise to permit these people access to *The Odin*?" Teal'c was close to testy.

O'Neill replied, "Look, these people are in a war too. If somebody popped outta nowhere and offered us the upper hand technologically against the Gou'ld - I'd take it!"

"What if we're negatively impacting this reality?" Daniel asked.

"What if we're *supposed* to help them? What if this is some sort of cosmic karma thingmee at work and we have to fulfil it? Carter, you can explain this better than I can."

"I don't know much about cosmic karma, and I'm no expert on temporal mechanics, but I have read theories that posit the idea that some things do happen for a reason."

"Gou'ld interference has badly impacted those they've come into contact with," Daniel was getting defensive.

"Yeah - in our reality," Jack countered, "But, what if we could change all that and eradicate them completely? The technology *The Odin* carries could turn the tide for these people in their reality. I think the pros outweigh the cons. I know I'd want help if the tables were turned."

"Sir, *The Odin* is not our ship. The Asgard may not appreciate our sharing their technology with others unknown to them," Teal'c persisted.

"The Asgard aren't even gonna know - 'cause we're not gonna tell them - providing we're able to get back to our own reality. Did it ever occur to you people that we could be trapped here? There wasn't any space anomaly on this side when we came through at all. So we may have to live out the rest of our lives in this reality, unless Carter can think up a way to get us home again," Jack reminded them, "And if we have to stay here, I'd like to be part of the solution, not part of the problem."

They all digested Jack's last words before Carter said, "So what are you going to give them access to?"

"Anything they wanna see - weaponry, cloaking systems, long range scanners, shields, maybe even the beaming technology, although I'm not sure they can reproduce that at this point in time. These people are up against some baddies, that's for sure - and it's up to us to help them out."

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"To be perfectly frank, it sounds pretty fantastic, sir," Colonel Roy was seated with General Straker, reviewing the recording of Straker's meeting with the SG team.

"I'd have agreed with you, too, except for their references to the Gou'ld. The black man - Teal'c - says they're not humanoids and they don't want earth except as a notch on their intergalactic belt. That doesn't sound at all like our aliens."

"What about their assertions of alien allies? Who are the Asgard? Sounds like something drawn from Norse mythology."

"I hope I'll learn more about their allies during the tour of their ship."

"Sir, what if this is just an excuse to get you on board - kidnap you - or worse?"

"Assassination? I'm not worried about that. The aliens know even without me SHADO and Omega will battle on. Besides, I won't be alone. There'll be the technicians and security detail with me. If this ship can provide us with new tools to fight the aliens, the risk is well worth taking. I want to see this ship for myself."

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"I have to admit I'm amazed, Colonel O'Neill. This ship is light years beyond anything we currently have. We have a primitive cloaking technology, but not one like you have on *The Odin*. Our techs are salivating as we speak," General Straker told Jack after their tour of the Asgard science vessel.

"We'd like to give you as much heads up on this technology as possible," Jack said, "I'm having Sam print off some tech manuals in English from our computer system onboard - I think some of the technology is possible for your people to recreate - the rest - well - I've heard of reverse engineering."

"I don't think everyone on your team is as keen on helping as you are."

Jack sighed loudly, "My team has come to the stern realization that we may be trapped in your reality - we don't know if we can figure out a way to return. If we have to stay here with you - we want to help you get rid of the 'greenies' as you call them."

"Did you have time to read any of the materials we provided for you on our alien

enemies?"

"Yes, I did. If these aliens exist in our own universe, we haven't discovered them yet. The SG teams have covered a lot of space, General, but the Orion constellation is not an area we've contacted. We've been currently working on the Pegasus area of space actually, but Captain Carter could tell you more about that."

"You're fortunate in your own reality to have assistance from so many other benign alien species. You're not fighting your war alone."

"The Asgard are humanoid, but they look like the 'greys' that UFO abductees often mention. They're good friends with humans and they've given us much of their own technology and loaned us ships, like *The Odin*. The stargates have given us the chance to meet friendly aliens and cement political alliances with other cultures."

"There is more than one stargate?"

"Several, in fact. I don't know as much about Captain Carter and Dr. Jackson about these other gates, but besides the one found in Egypt, there was one found in Russia too."

Straker was thoughtful, "If you found the stargates in your own reality, I wonder if there are also stargates here, in our reality, and we just haven't found them yet?"

"Well, you're waaaay ahead of my thinking, sir, I didn't even consider that," Jack blinked.

"I think my people need a sit down with Carter and Jackson to consider this possibility."

* * *

"If there are potential stargates buried on your Earth, General," Sam said, "We can give you the locations for the ones found on our earth and you can explore the situation from there."

Dr. Jackson spoke up next, "They could theoretically be utilized the same way we used ours - for contact with other aliens - but that's a double edged sword as well - it was through the stargates that we discovered the Gou'ld and they had been looking for Earth-bound stargates for centuries before we unearthed and used ours."

"So, the risk of usage is also the risk of coming in contact with the Gou'ld - if they exist in our reality," Straker finished for Jackson.

"Yes, sir. we consider that a highly realistic risk. You're already at war with your own enemies. You do not want to end up with the Gou'ld as well - they are probably even more highly technologically advanced than your own aliens, and much more dangerous."

"You said one of the original stargates was found in Egypt...several years ago we discovered some sort of alien construct which had been housed in the Great Pyramid at Giza...we also managed to remove from the authorities a mummified alien who'd been buried by the ancient Egyptians - our people put the mummy's age at at least 3000 years - we know from captured intel that our enemy aliens have been coming to earth for centuries - and exploiting our ancestors for what they needed to keep themselves alive."

"This alien construct - what was it?" Sam queried.

Straker pulled up highly classified documents on the MoonBase briefing room's video panels, "We didn't necessarily call it a stargate at the time we discovered it, but it may well have been something akin to that. Two pieces of alien technology were necessary to be installed in the Great Pyramid's two vents - once they were installed - the machine appeared to be some sort of transportation device to the Orion constellation. As you can well imagine, we dismantled it asap, and have the two alien 'keys' held within very tight security. Our techs have been examining them for several years, but we have not been able to duplicate the technology ourselves."

Dr. Jackson inserted a DVD into the computer system, "This is what our stargates look like. As Sam mentioned at our first meeting, the hieroglyphs are like numbers on a telephone - they act as a code to dial up various star systems or planets - once the gate is activated, we can step through and be at that very location."

"You mean the gate acts as a worm hole?" Straker commented.

"I wouldn't exactly call it a worm hole, sir, but a technologically constructed teleportation device - we think created by the Gou'ld - or if they didn't create them - they certainly exploited them in their drive to control as much of the known galaxy as possible." Sam explained.

Straker reflected for a moment before speaking again, "I've never gotten the impression that our alien enemies were in any way interested in any sort of galactic power. Our own theorists have depicted them as a dying race - indeed their own actions have made that much clear to us - even if we are not certain where they come from and why they've chosen planet Earth to replenish themselves," he stood up, and paced the length of the room, "This much we do know about them - they are intent on using us to keep them alive in any way possible. They've encroached on our own space considerably - forcing us to build MoonBase here and we're in construction of a base on Mars. We don't have long range scanning equipment which would tell us if they are currently occupying any of the moons of Jupiter - but the theory is not impossible. If they are indeed from the constellation of Orion - trips home of that distance would be ridiculous if they could remain based in our system somehow. We think they are doing that. The scanning technology you've offered us from *The Odin* could be very useful in determining the truth of these theories and perhaps making it possible for us to send out long range defence ships to destroy any bases they might have within our own system."

O'Neill, who has remained silent during this discussion, stood up as well, "General Straker, I think you should definitely have your people sent out to the locations where our own stargates were discovered - see if they are there."

"And, Colonel O'Neill, if they are there, what then?" Straker asked him.

* * *

Chapter Three

"Sir, I don't want to get your hopes up, but I have re-examined all the data *The Odin's* on-board computer was collecting on the anomaly, and..."

"And, what, Carter?" Jack questioned her anxiously.

"The situation for us may not be as dismal as I originally thought," Sam riffled through a stack of printouts, "As far as I can make out, the anomaly is scheduled to re-appear on a regular basis. We saw it for the first time, but if it's anything like a worm hole, it will disappear and reappear on a time line."

"I thought you said it wasn't a worm hole."

"I don't know what it is, sir. I could be so wrong about any name I try to put on it - I'm only basing my comments on what I can quantify through science and experience."

"Sooooo, this means we might be able to get home after all?"

"Theoretically, worm holes move you from one location in space to another. Within one's own universe. This one moved us from our own universe to this one - we didn't time warp, we just moved into what could be considered a parallel universe."

"Whoa, Carter! Back up the temporal truck here!"

"If it's not a real worm hole, and its not a time warp, what the hell is it, anyway?"

"That's just it, sir, I feel its a mistake to try and name it - I'd prefer to call it a tear in the time-space continuum..."

"Yeahhhhh, I've heard this one before..."

"Listen to me, Colonel. Whatever this thing is, it has put us here - that much we know. And whatever happens in this parallel universe has no impact on our own and vice versa. This reality and our reality are co-existing in harmony. The only mode of transportation in or out is the...anomaly itself. We have to use the anomaly to get back."

"That makes sense, even to me, Carter, but the anomaly doesn't even exist in this reality - how the hell are we going to get back through it to our own universe?"

"Some of the data in the computer indicates major power fluxes in the anomaly - we uploaded all the data into *The Odin's* computer system before we went into space - information that was recorded when the anomaly first appeared in our own universe. Those power fluxes appeared to be on a regular time table - I can use *The Odin's* computer to calculate when the anomaly should re-appear in our own universe and if we can be at the proper co-ordinates, as registered by the computer when we were pulled inside it, we might be able to get through from this side and get home again."

"Even if we get home, what can we do about the anomaly itself? It's dangerous - what if the Gou'ld find out about it? They could use the anomaly to invade other universes - maybe even cross over into this one? We just can't let that happen!"

"As much as I would prefer to study the anomaly and find out what makes it tick, I think there's only one safe answer to keeping it out of Gou'ld hands, sir..." Carter replied.

"Destroy it," Jack nodded.

* * *

The SG1 team had another sit-down with General Straker and his staff, "We have no data ourselves which would help you determine the arrival of the anomaly, "Colonel Roy explained, "When *The Odin* appeared, it seemed to just 'pop' into being."

"All we need at this point is your protection and your permission to pursue this course of action. It may be our only chance to get ourselves back to our own universe," Sam told the

gathering.

"But, this anomaly," Josh Alexander temporized, "If it can be entered from your side, what happens if unfriendlies use it to come into our universe?"

"We've covered that," Jack added, "We plan to destroy the anomaly from our own side, so it can't be used - by anyone - friendly or unfriendly."

"And our side? How do we know for sure that the anomaly won't happen here, or open up as soon as you go through to the other side?"

"We don't know that. You're going to have to fire on the anomaly's supposed location as though it were really there, so as to seal up your own end," O'Neill explained, "But wait until we disappear before you fire."

"How soon do you think the anomaly will re-appear in your own universe?" Straker asked quietly.

Sam nodded to him, "By my calculations, we have another seven hours - I have the exact time figured - *The Odin* has to be in space and in the right location in order for this to work - we hope the anomaly will open up and suck us back through into our own universe."

"What actions do you suggest?" Colonel Roy was eager to get down to business.

"Let us launch at the right time to get us to the anomaly's co-ordinates, and as soon as we're out of sight, use the explosives on board the Interceptors to blast the anomaly's asshole out of existence," Jack finished.

* * *

The Odin soared gracefully out of the MoonBase launch hole, accompanied by three Interceptors, well loaded for their mission of destruction.

Tracking them from the Command Sphere, Colonel Roy and General Straker, were in constant contact, feeding them information and receiving information from *The Odin's* on-board system.

"T-minus two minutes to your original co-ordinates," Colonel Roy intoned into the comm link, "Our Interceptors standing by on your mark."

Jack O'Neill's voice came over the system, "On behalf of the SG1 crew, I'd like to thank you for your hospitality and your assistance. If this works according to Carter's calculations, this will be *The Odin's* final farewell."

Straker spoke up, "You're quite welcome, SG1. And, many thanks from us for all your technical assistance - I think those tech manuals will be a source of advancement for us. Godspeed!"

The staff in the Command Sphere could hear Sam Carter's voice counting down the seconds to the anomaly's opening on the other side, then they heard O'Neill's voice saying, "Full throttle into the co-ordinates!"

They watched their viewscreens intently as *The Odin* disappeared into nothingness, as though through a hole in space, and then Colonel Roy instructed the spaceborne Interceptors to fire repeated bomb loads into the exact co-ordinates the Asgard ship had vacated.

"Positive hits generated," Josh Alexander reported, "But, we don't have any kind of visual, sir."

Straker nodded at Roy, "Bring our boys home, there's nothing else they can do out there now."

* * *

General Hammond's voice blasted out the comm system on board *The Odin*, "Where the hell have you been, SG1? We've been frantic, trying to locate you for a week!"

Jack O'Neill and Sam Carter exchanged relieved glances, "Yeah, well, General, we kinda ended up on a little side trip..."

"We'll send you clearance to land *The Odin*, Colonel, the Asgard have been worried about you too!"

"We're comin' in, sir, just got one last job to take care of..." Jack nodded at Carter who calibrated The Odin's weaponry system to fire on the anomaly...

Epilogue

Straker had just lit himself a cigarillo when the comm link buzzed, "General, I have Ken MacKeigan on the line for you," Brenda McQuinn's voice informed him.

"Patch him through, Precious."

"General, I just wanted to bring you up to date on our stargate hunt. We've been to all the co-ordinates the SG1 team gave us, and so far, we have not recovered a single one. Looks like they just don't exist in our reality, sir."

"You know, I think I'm actually relieved to hear that, Lieutenant. If the stargates had existed, we might have felt compelled to set them up and use them. Might have decided the risk was worth taking. At least that's one decision I won't have to make."

"I'll forward a full report to you asap."

"That's fine, have a safe trip back to Moon Base."

The General sat back in his responsibility seat and blew a stream of smoke. The whole episode with the SG1 team had been a revelation, regardless of the fact there appeared to be no stargates within their own reality. It was probably for the best. *Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know*, Straker mused. And, the tech manuals and ideas they'd received from the SG1 team were going to even the score up between themselves and the aliens, at least for a time. They'd be able to equip their Mars ships and Interceptors with much more advanced cloaking shields, and although they couldn't begin to figure out the beaming technology right now, that didn't mean it might not be possible at some time in the future.

Straker glanced at his watch; time to pack it in and head home to his cats and his tea.

The End