

ADULT CONTENT WARNING!

This story is rated ADULT and contains material that is not suitable for younger readers. Reader discretion advised.

Dreamscape

Brennan rolled onto his side, kicking his legs at the sheet, which tangled around his feet and refused to let go. He raised himself onto an elbow and pounded the pillow with a fist. Glancing at the clock, he heaved a sigh. It read 3:26. In the damn morning! And he hadn't slept a wink.

He wished he could have gone with Shalimar and Jesse; they were on their way to meet a mutant who wanted to join the Underground. Cruising unnoticed through the nightly skies in the Double Helix appealed much more to him than the current tossing and turning in the confines of his bed. It would have given him something to do; something to keep his mind occupied and off of Lorna Templeton. But Adam had decreed he needed rest, to give his body a chance to fully recover from the venom Lorna injected him with. Thus, Brennan was stuck at the Sanctuary, with nothing but his memories to keep him company.

He took another deep breath and shifted again until he ended up on his back. For long minutes, he peered at the ceiling without really seeing it, before he closed his eyes in another attempt to find refuge in sleep.

They snapped open instantly and Brennan shot up from the bed. A groan rumbled deep in his throat while he ran his hands through his hair. Sleep eluded him. And no wonder; how could he find rest, if every time that he closed his eyes he saw Emma, slamming against the wall, propelled by one of his electric bolts?

Brennan thanked God, his lucky stars, and any other providence he could think of that Emma was all right. He could so easily have hurt more than her feelings.

A word from Lorna was all it would have taken.

It was hard to believe the woman managed to get such a hold over him. Sure, it made perfect sense, the way Adam explained everything to him. How the strand of scorpion DNA in Lorna's system made her capable of releasing pheromones that no man could resist. That it was mere body chemistry. Still, at the time it had seemed so true, so authentic.

Even in hindsight, what had happened between him and Lorna felt like the most natural

thing in the world.

Brennan swung his legs over the side of the bed. If he couldn't sleep, he might as well get up and do something useful. He decided to go and put in some training. A decent workout would hopefully tire him enough to help him sleep. All this thinking only served to make him feel more miserable and guilty.

Barefoot, he padded through the dark and quiet hallways of the Sanctuary. The air was chill on his bare skin, the night silent except for the low hum of machinery.

The soft clicking of keys made him freeze in his tracks. Someone was accessing the computer.

He listened for a second, ready to seize the current and defend himself, before he continued. In his mind, Brennan berated himself for being so jumpy. Nobody could enter the Sanctuary undetected. It was probably Adam; he often worked until deep in the night when he had an idea that couldn't wait until morning.

However, it wasn't Adam who sat at the screen, Brennan discovered as he turned the corner.

"Emma?"

She swung around, startled at the sound of his voice.

"Brennan!" She held her hand to her heart. "You shouldn't sneak up on people like that."

"Sorry." He offered her a sheepish grin. "Didn't mean to scare you. What are you doing up so late anyway? Or should I say 'early'?" He lifted an eyebrow and cast a meaningful glance at the clock.

Emma gave a chortle and a shrug. "Couldn't sleep," she said. "I thought I'd catch up decrypting some of the stuff we pilfered from the Genomex network. And what are you doing here? Adam said you need to rest."

Brennan smirked. "Couldn't sleep either." He wasn't about to explain to Emma why. It was awkward enough, being around her, remembering how easily he might have killed her.

"Want me to help?" she asked. "I can help you relax, give you a mental sleeping aid that'll surely send you into dreamland, if you like."

Brennan hesitated. Letting her help would put him even deeper into her debt than he already was.

She misread his reluctance to accept her offer. “It won’t hurt. I promise.”

“Well, okay then,” Brennan agreed. “If I don’t get some rest, Adam will never let me get out of here again.”

Emma laughed, a soft, tinkling sound. “Can’t have that, can we? Go back to your room and lie down, Brennan. I’ll shut off here and then give your mind a little nudge. I wouldn’t want you to fall asleep standing on your feet.”

“Right.” Brennan turned to leave but near the corner he stopped. He turned back. “Em?”

She looked up from the screen.

“I’m really sorry. About the other day, I mean.”

Emma smiled at him. “I told you, it’s all right. I’m fine. No harm done. Now, off to bed with you.”

Brennan returned to his room, shutting the door quietly behind him. He crawled back onto the bed and hugged the pillow, waiting for Emma. Again, he found himself studying the ceiling. It wasn’t long before he experienced a gentle tug in his head, light as a feather, and his eyes drifted close.

Brennan was asleep—

—and he looked up, the GS agent a limp puddle at his feet. Lorna was fighting a tug-of-war with Emma over the small suitcase that held the Anomite.

“Oh dammit, Em,” he muttered below his breath, “why did you have to get involved?”

“Brennan!”

The simple sound of his name in Lorna’s voice explained to him what to do. Without further hesitation, he released a stream of electricity that caught Emma in the chest. Her hand wrenched loose from the case. She sailed through the air and hit the wall with a sickening thud.

Brennan winced. He didn’t mean to hurt her—

—he struggled to open his eyes, to tear himself from the nightmare of reliving the betrayal of his friends. But his eyelids refused to obey his brain's orders. A soft moan escaped him. Brennan flung himself onto his stomach when—

—*“Hey there, big guy! Easy now.” Blue eyes looked up from beneath him, sparkling with humor.*

Brennan blinked and pushed himself up to lean on his elbows. “Emma?”

“Surprised?” She raised her head and her mouth found his lips. “You didn’t want that Lorna bitch to star in your dreams, did you?” Her breath was sweet and warm and Brennan found himself responding to her kiss.

He nibbled on her mouth and she eagerly parted her lips; their tongues twirled around each other until lack of air forced them apart.

“Emma...” Brennan struggled to get his breath back. “This isn’t—I mean, are you real—”

“Shh.” She put a finger across his lips. “It’s a dream, Brennan. Enjoy it while it lasts. Don’t feel guilty.”

Right. A dream. That had to be it. Emma would never be this forward. Besides, he always thought she had a thing for Jesse. And Shalimar was more Brennan’s type.

Then, why did he dream of Emma?

Before he could contemplate the mystery further, Dream-Emma laughed and shoved his upper body, flipping him onto his back. She straddled him, and for the first time Brennan realized they were both naked. Her breasts, small, round, firm, swayed to and fro enticingly in his vision.

“Go ahead,” Dream-Emma urged while leaning a little more forward. Her nipples grazed his cheek.

Brennan growled, no longer able to hold back. He sucked in a hard, pink nipple. Emma whimpered with pleasure. His right hand found her other breast, weighing it in his palm, fondling it with his fingers. She hissed while her hands marked a warm path across his chest and upper arms. His groin throbbed with painful need, and her weight on his thighs wasn’t helping.

He gasped around a mouthful of soft flesh. “Em... I need...”

“I know.” Her breathless voice held an urgency that sent a thrill through his body. She rose up a bit to arrange herself, then sunk down, taking him in to the hilt. It was too much and Brennan nearly lost it right then and there. She was wet and warm, her muscles quivering around him.

“Brennan... please...” She rocked back and forth, sitting up, throwing her head back so her hair brushed her shoulders.

Brennan reached for her, his hands finding her soft breasts, squeezing them, rolling the nipples between his thumb and forefinger until little moans burbled up from Emma’s throat.

“Oh... oh...” The noises of her passion drove him wild, and he let go of her breasts to grab her shoulders instead. Without breaking contact, he rolled them back into their original pose. Her eyes were glazed with lust. Brennan shifted between her legs in a more comfortable position. She raised her knees, crossing her ankles behind his back.

“You’re mine now,” she rasped, squeezing him tighter against her, deeper into her. “You’re not going to get away.”

“I’m not,” he agreed before leaning down to suck on the smooth, white skin of her throat. He could feel her vocal cords hum beneath his lips when another moan escaped her. Slowly, he began to move in and out of her, nearly deserting her warmth completely before plunging back in on the downstroke. The pace of his strokes increased as he found his rhythm. Emma rocked against him, her motions timed perfectly with his.

Her back arched up and her fingernails dug fiery trails into the skin on his back. The pain from the scratches mixed with the sensation of her vaginal muscles squeezing him repeatedly in quick succession, and Brennan plunged over the edge right along with her, their voices mingling in a single cry of release—

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Emma arched her back, bunching up the sheet in her fists. She cried out, once, then her body went limp. Her chest rose and fell with quick pants; a sheen of tiny droplets covered her brow. She opened her eyes, blinking at the bright light of morning, and let out a breath.

Her skin tingled all over. She was sore in the most pleasant of ways, and she could still feel the touch of Brennan’s hands and lips on every inch of her body. Her cheeks heated with the memories. That had to have been the most vivid dream she ever had. A little too vivid for comfort, to tell the truth, and Emma wondered what could have possessed her

subconscious to come up with such outrageous imagery.

The quick glimpse she'd caught of Brennan with Lorna Templeton.

It was the single explanation that made sense. It must have stuck in her mind, hiding, until her brain could process it through a dream.

She brushed a hand through her hair, surprised to find it damp with perspiration. She realized she was thirsty, and her stomach grumbled for food. With a little difficulty, Emma pushed herself up and lowered her legs over the side of the bed. They felt leaden, thigh muscles throbbing as if from exhaustion.

In front of the mirror, Emma stopped to stare at her own reflection. Feverish eyes looked back, dark with lingering lust. Her lips were red and swollen, as if they'd been kissed vigorously. Emma frowned and leaned closer to the shiny surface.

A livid bruise peeked over the edge of her nightshirt. Stunned, she tore at the shirt, pulling it over her head, cussing when the collar stuck behind her ear. A glance at the mirror elicited another gasp, when she noted the bruises on her chest and just above her collarbone.

"Oh God..." she mumbled, dismayed, when all of a sudden a disturbing thought struck. She'd used her telepathic ability to connect with Brennan and help him relax, before falling asleep herself. What if the connection had never been broken? What if her dream had been his also? At the suggestion, her cheeks did more than warm up—they grew a bright pink.

Emma dug a clean shirt from her closet and dragged it down over her head. She paused briefly to make sure that the shirt hid the telltale bruise on her throat before she raced out of the door.

Outside, she nearly collided with Brennan. Emma skidded to a halt and glanced at him. He was bare-chested, carrying a shirt tucked under his arm and wearing sweats. Must be on his way to the dojo, an analytical part of her mind suggested.

"Oh, sorry," he said, taking a step back to give her some space. "Good morning. And thank you."

It took Emma a couple of seconds to find her voice. "Uhm... yeah... For what?" She mentally crossed her fingers, hoping he didn't mean what she feared he was saying. She avoided looking at his chest. The memories of those firm muscles beneath her fingers were too fresh. Instead, she stared at the floor, afraid of what he might see in her eyes.

Please, please, please, let it have happened in her mind alone!

Brennan gazed down at her. “For what? For helping me get some sleep, of course! After your psychic sleeping pill, I slept like a baby. Had some pleasant dreams too, I think. Although I don’t really remember them. But I do feel good.” He stretched and yawned.

“Oh... right... of course... You’re welcome,” Emma stammered, breathing a little easier.

“You okay?” Brennan’s voice held a tinge of worry. “You’re not suffering any aftereffects from what I did to you, do you?”

She managed to suppress the nervous laugh that bubbled to the surface. If only he knew what was hidden beneath her shirt. “No... No, I’m fine. Just woke up.” She offered him a weak smile, hoping he’d buy it as an excuse for her confusion.

“All right, then. See you at breakfast.”

He turned and walked away.

Emma’s fist flew up to her mouth. Amid the newly healed scars on his back, which Lorna had given him, were several fresh, bright-red welts. She knew that if she laid her hand on his back, the welts would fit her fingers exactly.

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Down the hallway, Adam paused, watching in silence. His brow creased. His every instinct was on alert, shouting that something strange was happening. He took a step in Emma’s direction; she looked like she was about to faint.

Then his comring chimed. Jesse’s voice came through to tell him they had found the new mutant and were headed for the Sanctuary. Duty called. Adam made a mental note to talk to Emma later, though. But that was before he found out that Gabriel Ashlocke had been set free and urgent matters demanded the team’s attention.

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