

Saturday, June 2, 2068

When Lena woke up from her long sleep, she found that her clothes had been washed, dried and returned to her room. She dressed and found her way first to the lounge. Finding no one there, she headed downstairs to the dining room, then into the kitchen. She went in and saw a distressed Kyrano being comforted by Lisa.

"What has happened? What's wrong?"

"Some of the family are ill," Lisa replied. "We believe that it is due to the fish they ate for dinner. Durian had managed to get into the trash and eat a few of the heads. Shortly afterward, he started throwing up. He isn't well, poor thing. But this morning all three of the children woke up sick. The boys, especially, are really affected."

"Oh, poor babies. How can I help?"

"Lena, you are a guest here. Don't worry; we can handle things. Not everyone had the fish; Kyrano, Tin-Tin, Brains and myself ate other food. And it could be possible that not everyone in the family will be affected."

"No, I want to help. Anything I can do, just ask. I want to be useful." She turned to the Malaysian. "What's wrong, Kyrano? You don't tink you caused dis, do you?"

"How else could it have happened? Somehow I cooked it wrong."

"Not possible, Kyrano," Lisa replied. "What Durian ate was raw. Therefore, it couldn't have been your cooking."

"Dat's right. Dere must have been something in de fish when dey were caught. And notting you could have done would have eliminated it. I've seen you cook. You are very finicky about cleanliness and thorough heating of everyting you make. It has to have been some new bacteria or something, dat is resistant to de usual metods of cooking." She paused. "Who is Durian?"

In spite of himself, Kyrano was comforted, and chuckled at Lena's question. "Durian is the kitten who used to be known as Asterix. Christopher is no longer a member of International Rescue, and decided to leave the cat behind when he departed for home. But please, sit down and I will get you some breakfast right away. You must be starving."

Lena admitted it, and added, "But I still want to help, especially if more -- or most -- of de family is sick. Dere are several tings I can do."

Thus she found herself later, checking on various affected family members, changing and cleaning emesis bowls. She did her work so quietly that most were unaware of her presence. If one of them did wake up while she was there, she soothed them with a cool hand stroking a hot

forehead, or holding a head while the person tried to empty the contents of his or her stomach. She always made sure that each person was sleeping before she left the room.

Although she seemed tireless in her work, Brains, Kyrano and Lisa -- fully aware of her ordeal -- made sure she ate and rested. Nevertheless, as the day wore on, they were very grateful for her help.

From: Hobbeth Sent: 11/29/2005

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