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Subject: Re: New Beginnings

Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Mon, 30 Jul 2012 22:15:22 GMT

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Dominic flopped down on the sofa and threw back his head. Joshua had been riled up from his trip to the beach earlier in the day and it had taken him hours to calm down again. That kid is just full of beans. I don't have the energy to deal with it right now... He looked around the now-clean apartment and caught his reflection in the glass of the patio doors. Eww. I need a shave. And probably a shower. He sniffed one armpit delicately. Gross.

He stood up to make a beeline for the bathroom when the door chime sounded. He stilled. Should I answer? I could pretend I was in bed? Ugh! Deciding it was probably better not to hide from his friends, he walked to the door and opened it.

"Hey, Vince," he said. Memories of the rescue flooded back at the sight of the other man's face.

"Aloha, Dom," Vince took in the appearance of the other man, trying not to wrinkle his nose at the smell of body odor that he caught. The guy looks like hell, and smells like he's been out on a multi-day mission with the SEALs. I think stopping by and checking up on him was the right thing to do,. "Just wanted to stop by and see how you were doing. Haven't seen you around much but then I have been busy with things. Should I come back some other time?"

"Well, if you don't mind my appearance, I'm not doing anything. I just got Josh tucked into bed."

"After some of the places I've been, not much phases you," Vince commented as he stepped inside the apartment as Dom stepped to the side.

"Would you like a drink? I've got some soda or I can make you a cuppa. I was going to stick the kettle on anyway."

"A soda would be good, thanks."

Vince watched as Dominic moved around the apartment with slouched shoulders, sighing as he picked the kettle up to fill it at the sink. The man was clearly a big, big mess. I wonder how he's doing with Josh...

"Take a seat, Vince. I vacuumed the couches today," Dom said with a wink. The gesture lacked its usual sparkle. "Cassie took Joshua to the beach and I took the opportunity to clean. Things were a bit... stinky. Like me right now."

Vince sat down and crossed his arms across his chest. He hadn't been into Dominic's apartment very often. The colour choices on the walls, the upholstery, and even small details - down to the colour of the cups in the kitchen - all matched perfectly.

"You've done a nice job decorating in here," Vince said as Dominic placed a can of soda and a glass with ice down on the coffee table.

"I see you were doing some DIY yourself today. There's paint on your temple."

Vince chuckled and brought a hand up to touch the offending area.

"Yeah. There's always a bit left no matter how carefully you wash."

The kettle clicked and Dominic made his own drink -- from the smell it was coffee -- and the younger man crossed back over to the sofa and sat down.

"So, everything okay with you?" he asked.

Vince poured his soda into the glass and pinned Dominic with a look.

"I'm here to ask that question to you," he said. "How are you after the rescue? We haven't seen much of you."

Dominic was about to open his mouth but Vince stopped him.

"And don't say you're fine. I've seen enough denial in the services to last me a lifetime."

Dominic visibly deflated and his coffee cup nearly slipped out of his hands.

"I screwed up," he said quietly. "I should have thought. I should have used my God-given brains and realised all that space would trigger my xenophobia. And then that damned tarantula. I'm tellin' you, it's the same damn one every time. Ugh! I'm such weakling."

"Don't think you're weak just because you fear something. An admiral once told me that 'if a person claims they're not afraid of anything they're either just too weak to admit it or not capable at looking at things from all perspectives'."

"Good words," Dom commented, as he silently repeated the words to himself. "Mind if I ask what you were afraid of?"

"Monsters in the dark," the older man replied. He couldn't help but smile at the disbelieving look he got from the nurse. "I was six and had been picked up from my first sleep over early because I was afraid the monsters at my friend's house were going to come out when we went to sleep and get all of us. On the way home, I started worrying about what my friends were going to say at school. That was part of the speech my father gave me."

Vince picked up his glass and took a sip from it. As he placed it back on the coffee table, he continued talking. "You know the monsters in the dark seem silly now, but those words stuck and I've repeated them to myself plenty of times over the years. It's not always about conquering the things you're afraid of but taking what you learn about yourself from them. Perhaps deep sea diving wasn't the best situation for you to be in but you know your limit now and you did pull yourself together enough to finish the task at hand. Not much more yourself or anyone else could ask of you."

"Yeah, things worked out this time but what about next time?"

Vince shrugged his shoulders. "Sorry, but I can't help you answer that question. If it helps though, it's a question I ask myself from time to time; usually when I wake up at night from a dream of being buried alive. I've overcome a lot of fears in my life, but somehow that seems to be one that I just can't get past. It bothers me enough that when Lana and I took the kids on vacation in Shenandoah last year, my parents took the kids to see a couple of the caverns. Being underground like that didn't exactly appeal to me."

"But I bet it didn't stop you from making sure your kids had a good time, eh?"

"No, it didn't," Vince said with a mild smile. "We had a great vacation. Lana once said something to me that I find helpful to remember in times like this: 'what can't be cured must be endured.' You might not be able to get rid of your phobias; if not, you just have to endure them."

Dominic nodded, seeming to mull over the words, but was suddenly overcome with a yawn.

"Oh, man. Sorry. I guess I'm just exhausted."

Vince drained his soda and gave a satisfied sigh.

"Well, I'll get out of your hair," he said as he stood.

Dominic walked him to the door and gave him a grin.

"Thanks for stopping by, Vince. I feel a little better now. You've given me some food for thought."

"No problem, Dom, and if you ever want to talk or anything, you know where to find me. Get some rest. But can I give you some more 'food for thought?'"

"Sure."

"You stink. Have a shower first."

Dominic's face broke into a grin and he clapped Vince on his broad shoulder.

"Yes sir!" he said.

Vince gave him a mock salute as the door swished shut behind him, and Dominic folded his arms. What can't be cured must be endured. That's a good sentiment... and it gives me an idea. Dom nodded, and then headed off for a much-needed shower.

Collab between Robin and Rain