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Subject: Re: New Beginnings

Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Tue, 31 Jul 2012 03:00:17 GMT

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A gentle breeze was blowing in off the sea as Dominic and Luke took a stroll along the beach. Rommel was trotting along a few paces in front of them. Joshua had one hand securely placed on the soft fur of the dog's side. Rom set the pace for the little excursion, and Dom was glad. Luke didn't look too good.

"How're you feeling?" he asked.

Luke smiled wearily at Dom and shrugged.

"I'm bone weary," he answered. "Not that I really thought I would feel differently. You don't feel top-notch after being shot in the back, straight through the lung."

"I'll bet," Dom said in a voice that was strained with an attempt at normality.

The small group continued on a little further until Luke signalled that he needed to sit down. Immediately Rommel returned to his master's side, his tall ears folding downwards and his brow pulling back.

"I'm okay, boy," Luke said as he settled himself on a boulder.

The rock was warm from the midday sun, and Rommel sat down by Luke's legs, his long tongue hanging out of his mouth as he gently panted. Seeing this, Joshua decided to sit by the dog's side and stick his own pink tongue out. Luke chuckled and ruffled the little boy's blond hair, but as he did so Rommel looked up with his head cocked to one side.

"Here," Dominic said, and slowly reached out to pet the dog's head.

Luke chuckled again.

"I think that's the first time you've ever petted him," he said.

Dom's fingers relaxed as he rubbed them over Rommel's soft fur.

"Maybe dogs aren't so bad after all," he said. "Or maybe I'm just making an exception for this mutt."

Luke shifted a little and made room for Dom to sit down beside him. The rock was one of the larger boulders by the shore, brought down by volcanic activity many millennia before. Dominic sat and placed his ever-present bag in between them, pulling out some strong sunscreen. He brushed some errant sand from Joshua's pale arms and sprayed the liquid over them. Joshua frowned.

"I don't like it!" he complained.

"Well, you wouldn't like melanoma either, so sit still."

Joshua's little brow creased.

"What's melon-coma?"

The two men laughed, and Joshua couldn't help but join in after a moment's confusion.

"You're a pistol," Luke said to him.

"Bang, bang! Pistol!"

Joshua ran a little way out onto the beach, causing Dom to splutter with annoyance. As he saw the little boy make his hands into the shape of guns, he hung his head. Luke saw his hands tremble. He watched as the man's demeanour changed completely, the veiled normality sloughing away like melting snow. Luke felt a pang in his chest and shifted around carefully. What is this all about? he thought, but before he had the chance to ask, Dominic began to answer.

"You know," the dark haired man said, sniffing sharply and hiding his eyes underneath his hands, "I felt like throwing up when I found out you'd been shot," he said, letting the bottle fall out of his hands. "I couldn't believe it. When I heard where you'd been hit, it was even worse -- all I could think about was that your heart could be damaged, and that... "

His voice trailed off as Joshua ran back over and turned his attention to Rommel. Luke signalled to the dog that it was okay to relax, and Rom allowed himself to be petted and even rolled over to give Josh access to his belly.

"I could see myself, you know, as part of the LifeFlight crew that pulled you out. I could see myself as the nurse assisting in the operation to remove the bullet, because I've done both in my time. Then we had the back-to-back rescues in November. When I had to body-bag fatalities, all I could see was your face on their bodies, even though I knew that you were going to recover." Dom stood up abruptly and paced away from the rock and back again. "It's been like that ever since."

"I'm back now," Luke said, stumbling over the words. He wasn't entirely sure where this was all coming from and where it was going. What he did know, however, was that he was becoming more and more worried for his friend. "You've had a shock recently; you're still mending yourself. And think about it: it's been two months since my accident, and I'm here. I'm fine." His mind flashed back to the memories of Roger and those words Luke had never expected to hear: 'You died, Luke.' He suppressed a shudder. "I've been really worried about you," he continued. "From that phone call, and even just from the way you were yesterday when we met, something's really wrong. And I don't think it's just because of the rescue. Something else is up. I'd like you to tell me."

"Don't, Luke."

"Don't what, Dom?"

"Don't ask."

"So there is something more, then."

"Please, Luke --"

"Dom, you've become a great friend of mine here, and I want to help you. Just spit it out. I'm not going to drop it because it's obviously something that's really bothering you."

"I don't want to ruin that friendship!" Dom snapped, but immediately his face paled and he turned away.

Luke narrowed his eyes and raised an eyebrow.

"How could you ruin it?" he asked. "What, are you going to tell me you hate me or something?" he asked, trying to inject some mirth into the very heavy atmosphere.

"I could ruin it because I think -- dammit, I think I love you, Luke!"

"What?"

"There, I said it!" Dominic said, throwing his hands up into the air. Joshua looked up from where he had been digging a hole with Rom standing by, and Dom shook his head. "I've said it. God damn it, I haven't been able to get you out of my head for months! It's been killing me. I mean, maybe it's not love, but it's definitely more than just friendship. I don't know what it is!"

Luke gulped and stood up. Rommel trotted over to him. Joshua looked as if he was going to cry.

"Dom, I had no idea," he said.

"How could you?" Dom answered, visibly deflating. "You haven't been here. No one has any idea. I haven't said thing-one about it."

"I didn't even know you... swung my way."

Dominic reached out for his son and picked him up. Joshua buried his face in his father's neck.

"I don't think anyone does. I haven't talked about it to anyone. But yes, I'm bisexual. To be honest, I haven't really viewed myself as attracted to anyone since Josh's mother. She burned me so bad I vowed I'd never be with anyone ever again. I didn't even realise myself how I was starting to feel until what happened to you, and I realised I saw you as more than just... a friend."

There was a moment between them where the only sound was the wind and the waves, and Dominic turned away.

"I'm sorry."

"For what?"

"I guess I've just ruined our friendship," he said. "I can't say you'll want to be around me much. It'll be too awkward."

"Now hold up, Dominic," Luke said. "Look at me."

Reluctantly Dom turned back around, his eyes shining.

"Now, I'm not going to deny that this is all coming as a big shock," Luke said, spreading his hands in front of him. "But, and I want you to listen to me here and not disappear inside your own brain: it's not necessarily something that's a bad thing."

Dominic jiggled the little boy in his arms. His eyes widened in confusion.

"What?"

"Well, have you ever looked at yourself? You're a good looking guy. I've never thought about you in that way before because I never suspected that you walked on my side of the street, but... that doesn't mean I'm going to hate you because of how you feel. And it doesn't mean things need to be awkward. Maybe... maybe I'm happy about what you just said."

"Huh?"

"Maybe it's given me some food for thought. Some nice food."

"Gah?"

Luke couldn't help but chuckle at Dominic's slack jaw.

"I think I can see you brains dribbling out of your ears, guy," he said. "Come on, let's go and grab some lunch. We can talk more later."

"Mugh."

On that articulate note, the small party began to walk back up along the beach.