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Subject: Re: New Beginnings

Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Tue, 31 Jul 2012 03:36:36 GMT

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Luke led Rommel back to where he and the boys had stood. He moved to where the boys had separated, then knelt down and pointed to the tracks in the sand. "Rommel, find." The dog sniffed around a bit, then looked up and barked. "Find him, Rom," Luke said again. Rommel moved forward, nose to the ground. He followed the footprints to the edge of the jungle, then turned and barked again before plunging into the greenery.

Luke followed close behind, giving the dog space but keeping him about four feet in front of him. Rommel suddenly paused, and sniffed, appearing to lose the scent. He looked up at his master. "Find him, Rommel. Find him." The dog nosed around a bit more, then looked back and barked before moving forward. Less than ten minutes later, they paused at the foot of a tree. Rommel looked up and barked sharply, standing on his hind legs and resting his forepaws on the tree. Luke joined him and looked up. "Found ya, Tyler. Good job."

The boy waved then skirted down the tree. He stopped in front of Rommel and held out his hand. The dog sniffed him, circling all around his body, then woofed. Luke grinned. "Good boy, Rommel. Good boy." He pulled a treat out of his pocket and handed it to the dog.

"That was fun!" Tyler said. "Can I come with you to find Alex?"

"Sure." They made their way back to the beach. "I need to sit for a second though." Luke sat down on a boulder and pulled off his back pack. "Want a chocolate bar?" he asked Tyler.

"Yeah!!" Tyler parked himself next to Luke and took the offered bar. While eating, he peered down into Luke's open bag. "What kind of stuff do you have in there?"

"Well, snacks for all four of us, water too. Then a first aid kit, some ropes and calipers. Basic stuff."

"What do you need ropes for?"

Luke shrugged. "Nothing at the moment. But I'm working on building my strength back up and this is a good way to do it. I can't carry a full pack yet, so I just put a few things in, and add more each time."

Tyler nodded. "That's a pretty good idea."

Luke chuckled. "Thanks, I'm glad you think so." He zipped up the pack and turned to the boy. "Ready to go find your brother?"

Tyler jumped down off the rock. "Yep! Let's go!"

"Easy there, Tiger. Stay back here with me, quietly. Let Rommel do his stuff." The boy held back as Luke approached his dog. "Rom, find." He pointed to the ground. Rom sniffed and looked up at

Tyler, whining. "No, find him." He once again pointed to the sand. The dog bent down and nosed around. Then his head snapped up and he looked northwards. Giving a low bark, he trotted off, Luke and Tyler following close behind.

They walked for about quarter of a mile before the beach ended and Rommel moved into the jungle. He then paused and looked back. "What is it, boy?" Luke asked. The dog merely whined and pawed at the ground.

"What's wrong?" Tyler asked.

Luke frowned. "I'm not sure." He looked around. "I don't really see anything. Stay here." He moved forward, breaking out of the brush to scan the cliff. Rommel pushed past him, nose to the ground. Suddenly the dog sprinted forward. "Rommel! Get back here!" He cursed under his breath as he followed the dog. As he finally got out into the open, he scanned the cliff for Rom. "Rommel! Where...Oh, God, no!!"

Spying the discarded ball cap on the edge of the cliff, Luke raced forward. "Alex!! Alex, answer me!!" He came to a stop at the top of the cliff and looked down, heart pounding.

On a ledge about fifteen feet below, lay Alex. His left arm seemed to be twisted at unnatural angle, and he appeared to be unconscious. Dear God, please let him only be stunned, Luke prayed as he pulled off his backpack.

"Luke?" Tyler called out, breaking through the trees. "What's going on?"

"Stay back," he snapped as he quickly pulled out some rope. "Rommel, guard." He pointed over to the boy and the dog hurried over. He tied a length of rope around his waist and pressed the button on his wrist-com. "This is Luke, come in, Base."

"Hey, Luke, it's John. What's up?"

"John, I have a situation here. Tyler and Alex were helping me with Rommel and Alex is hurt."

"Hurt? Hurt how?"

Luke filled John in on what had happened. "We're on the northern face of the island. About a mile from the house."

"I can track you with the microchips. I'll let Scott and the others know and get rolling."

"Hold on a sec." Luke quickly anchored a belay line to the rock, and grunting, pulled it tight.

"What are you doing?" John asked, though he suspected he already knew.

"I'm going after him. He's down about fifteen feet, on a rock ledge."

"I don't think that's a good idea. Help is on the way. Wait until we get there."

"There's no time, John. What if he wakes up and panics, rolling off the edge? Or worse. What if he's too badly hurt to wake up?"

"Dammit, you're right. But be careful. We don't need to rescue two of you."

"FAB. Get here as soon as you can." Luke cut the connection and looked up at Tyler. "Your brothers are on their way. I need you to stay put until they get here."

The boy nodded. "Are you going down there?"

"Yes. Alex needs help. We can't wait for the others. Stay there," Luke said again. He turned towards the cliff edge, and taking a deep breath, started his descent.