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Subject: Re: New Beginnings

Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Tue, 31 Jul 2012 03:39:20 GMT

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Sweat ran down Luke's back as he slowly lowered himself down the cliff face. He paused a moment to glance down and assure himself that Alex hadn't moved. He wasn't sure if he was relieved or terrified to see the boy in the same position. Taking a deep breath, he started down again.

He had made it another couple feet when his wrist-com beeped. "Luke?" John asked.

He continued his decent, not able to find a decent hand-hold to pause.

"Luke? Is everything all right?"

"Hold on a sec," he muttered to himself, wincing as he reached a little too far.

"Luke! Answer me! What's going on?" John's voice was sharp with anxiety.

Finally he reached the ledge and pressed his com. "I'm down. Give me a minute," he grunted. He quickly fastened his rope to the cliff and knelt down to check Alex.

The boy was pale, his left arm bent wrong at the shoulder. Luke ran his hands lightly over Alex, relieved to find no obvious broken bones. He was loathe to move him however, until he awakened and Luke could assess him more thoroughly. "John? I've reached Alex. It doesn't look like anything's broken, but he's definitely got a dislocated shoulder."

"Is he still unconscious?"

"Yes. Breathing is even and... " He gently pried the boy's eyelids open. "Pupils are equal and reactive." He probed Alex's head, finding a small trace of blood behind his ear. "He has a small head contusion, but no immediate sign of major trauma."

"Thank God. Scott and, Elise are airborne in the heli-jet. They should be there shortly. Gordon and Virgil are en-route on the hover bikes."

"FAB."

There was a short pause before John spoke again. "How are you doing?"

"I'm fine," Luke said shortly. "Let's worry about Alex." As if on cue, the boy stirred, his eyelids fluttering. Luke placed his hands lightly on his chest. "Alex? Alex, can you hear me?"

Alex struggled to open his eyes. "My... hat... "

Luke smiled. "I've got it, kiddo. C'mon, open your eyes."

"Luke?" He finally focused and stared up at Luke. "Where am I? What happened?"

"Easy, Alex. Just lay still." Luke pressed his wrist-com again. "John, he's awake and talking."

They both heard John's sigh of relief. "Don't worry, Alex. Help is on the way."

"Help? Why do I..." His voice cut off in a scream of pain as he struggled to sit up.

Luke pressed him back down, kneeling on his left arm to prevent it from moving. "Alex! Don't move!"

"It... it hurts!" he sobbed.

"I know it does, pal." He carefully pulled off his belt. "Alex? I'm going to strap your arm down. It'll keep it from moving. I won't lie to you; it's going to hurt. I want you to close your eyes and count to one hundred. Out loud so I can hear you, OK?" The boy clenched his eyes closed and nodded. "Good. Go."

"One. Two. Three... "

Luke moved as quickly and gently as he could, steeling himself against Alex's whimpers of pain. "I'm almost done. I'm going to tie a rope around you so you can't roll off." After a few more moments, Luke had Alex's arm belted securely to his side then fastened another line to the cliff face. "There we go, done. Good man." He patted the boy's uninjured shoulder.

"I want my mom," Alex whimpered, tears running down his cheeks.

"I know you do." He heard the faint thump of rotor blades. "Hang in there; sounds like the cavalry is here."

"Luke? Scott says he's just about at your position. Can you see them yet?" John asked.

"Negative. But I can hear them." Suddenly a shadow washed over him. Looking up he saw the silver, black and gold heli-jet appear. He waved with his left arm as the craft circled around and came to a stationary position above them.

"Luke, we've got you." Scott's voice came across the wrist-com. "We're going to lower the platform and get Alex off first."

"FAB." Luke turned and smiled down at Alex. "Hear that? Your brother is here. Hang tight and we'll have you home in no time."

Alex tried to smile. "G-good."

They both looked up as the platform lowered towards them. As it got closer, Luke was stunned to see Dominic with Scott. "What are you doing here?" he demanded as the platform reached them.

"I could ask you the same question," Dom snapped back. He focused his attention on Alex and his tone softened. "Well, lad, you've gotten yourself in a mess. Let's get you home."

Scott held his younger brother's hand as Luke and Dominic carefully slid the back board under him. He then nudged Luke aside and lifted Alex onto the platform. "Hang in there, kiddo. Uncle Drew is waiting for you back at the house. We'll be there in no time."

"It hurts, Scott. It hurts." Alex's eyes filled with tears again.

"I know." He looked up at Dom. "Are we ready?" The nurse nodded. "Then let's go."

Dominic turned to Luke. "We'll be back for you."

"No, I'll be fine. Get the boy back to the house. I'll meet you there."

Dom shook his head. "No. We..."

"You're wasting time, Dom. Get him back." Luke looked up as he heard his name shouted. Gordon was peering down over the top. "I'll be fine. Go!"

Muttering under his breath, Dominic started the platform rising. Luke watched until it reached the heli-jet and sped off. He retied the rope around his waist and, taking a deep breath, started upwards. Halfway up, his arms started shaking and spots danced before his eyes. He stopped and clung to the cliff face, breathing heavily.

"Luke! Hold on, we'll hoist you up!" Gordon called out from above. Luke merely waved and a moment later, felt his line go taut. He walked slowly up the rock, letting them pull from above. When he reached the top, he was grabbed under the shoulders and hauled away from the edge.

Biting back a moan, Luke dropped to one knee, his left hand gripping his right shoulder tightly. He tried to breathe through clenched teeth. Someone pulled his chin up and placed a mask over his face. Breathing in the pure oxygen cleared his head a little and he looked up.

Virgil knelt in front of him, concern written all over his face. "Relax, Luke. Just breathe."

"Working... on it." He closed his eyes again, only to snap them open a moment later. "Tyler!"

Virgil pushed the mask back on. "He's right there with Gordon. We'll just wait a few minutes and see if you're up to riding back on the bikes or if we'll have Elise and Scott come out again."

Luke nodded and sat back on the rock, his head resting on his knees. A wet nose nudged under his hands and he smiled. "Hey, Rom. Good boy."

Gordon joined them. "Damn dog nearly took my hand off when I went for Tyler. But we're buddies now, aren't we, pooch?" He ruffled the dog's fur.

Luke smiled weakly. "Told him to guard... waiting for me... "

"That's what I figured. He calmed down when he saw you pop up from below."

"How are you doing?" Virgil asked.

Luke pulled the mask off. "I think I'm good. Could you give me a hand up?" He held his left arm out and Gordon carefully helped him to his feet. He took a cautious breath and nodded. "I'm ready to get out of here."

"Then let's go." Virgil led them over to the hover bikes.

Tyler rushed forward, wrapping his arms around Luke. "You're OK!"

Luke chuckled and ran his hand over the boy's head. "I sure am. And so is your brother." He smiled. "You did great, too, waiting with Rommel." Tyler blushed and shuffled his feet.

"C'mon, Ty. You're riding with me." Gordon swung the boy up onto the back of the bike and started it. "We'll see you back at the house!" he called out as he sped off.

Virgil rolled his eyes. "Always an adventure. OK, your turn. Drew wants to see you in the infirmary, too."

"I figured as much," Luke sighed. "Come on, boy. Up." The dog leapt up and lay down at Luke's command. Virgil fastened the straps, securing the dog to the pad on the back of the hoverbike, then indicated for Luke to climb on.

"Ready?" At Luke's nod, Virgil started the bike and followed Gordon back to the Villa.