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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:48:30 GMT

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Cassie took another bite of the veal on the plate in front of her. She was sure it tasted good, but in reality she wasn't really aware of the taste of any of the food in front of her because of her nerves. I just want this meal to be over with, she thought, trying to keep her eyes on the plate in front of her.

Beside her, Virgil looked over at their guest. I wonder what's up with her, he thought, as he had noticed a change in her. Before, she had been very open and friendly. Since the start of dinner he had noticed she had gotten very quiet and very interested in the plate in front of her. She answered the questions that were asked of her but hadn't volunteered very much. Virgil had seen his Mom and Dad exchange glances, and knew they had noticed it, too. She's been polite, just very quiet. Maybe it's just meeting so many new people, Virgil thought.

John had been asking her questions about her family. She had quietly answered his questions though hadn't seemed too enthusiastic. After a while, John had stopped unsure of how to continue the almost one-sided conversation.

Virgil decided to take a stab at getting her talking himself. Remembering the line of conversation his father had put an end to during the interview, "So, Cassie, you mentioned wearing a kimono once. Was it during a ceremony?"

Cassie nodded. "I spent two months there with my mother, though most of the first month was spent taking care of my grandmother who was ill. My grandmother was bound and determined to get well for Obon though. The Bon dance, part of the Obon festival is when I wore the kimono," she told him in a low voice. Across the table though, John had heard and was listening intently, as was Cherie who was sitting on the other side of Cassie.

"Obon, that's the festival celebrating the spirit's of one's ancestors, right?" John asked from across the table.

Cassie nodded.

"Sounds spooky," Cherie commented.

"It's not. It's quite beautiful actually and it's a special time for families to be together," Cassie told her, getting caught up in the memory of the one she had shared with her grandparents and other family members in Japan. "In some parts of Japan, it's held in July; where my family is from we celebrate it in August, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth to be exact. On the thirteenth, the home and our ancestor's graves are cleaned and offerings made. The mukaebi, or welcoming fire, is lit. The Bon dance takes during Obon, at night. Different regions have different traditional dances. It's celebrated as a reminder that one should feel toward our ancestors. On the last evening of Obon, small paper lanterns with lit candles are floated on a river to light the way for the spirits as they depart."

"I bet the lanterns looked pretty out on the river at night," Cherie commented, trying to picture the

sight.

"It's a very beautiful sight."

John said something in Japanese. Cassie looked at him slightly surprised and then responded in Japanese. The two exchanged a few more remarks in Japanese before Tyler spoke up from beside John.

"Hey, no fair! We don't know what you're saying," he complained, not liking being left out.

"Okay, no more, I promise," John said, looking at Tyler.

Cassie covered her mouth as she felt a yawn coming on. She had lost track of what time it would be in New York but she was sure it was late.

"I think the jet lag is starting to catch up with me," Cassie said, glancing down the table at Mr. and Mrs. Tracy. "I hope you don't mind if I retire early."

"Of course not," Dianne answered. "I forgot all about the time difference. You must be exhausted."

Cassie nodded. "Dinner was delicious," she told Kyrano as she stood up.

"Thank you, Ms. Kishi," Kyrano replied.

"I'm done. Let me walk you to your room," Virgil said standing up. He wanted to ask her a few more questions about her time in Japan on the way.

"Thank, you," she replied. Cassie and Virgil left the dining room.

"She seems nice enough, though a little on the quiet side," Dianne commented, when the two were out of sight.

"She was more at ease and talkative earlier," Jeff commented. "Perhaps she was just tired tonight."

"Or maybe it was just being with so many people she doesn't really know," John commented. "Are you going to tell her about IR, Dad?" he asked.

"Yes. Virgil and I were going to take her down to see Thunderbird 2 after dinner but I had forgotten about the time difference myself. We'll take her down after breakfast tomorrow."

Posted by starrynebula on August 17, 2007[/color

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