

---

Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:19:06 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Sunday, September 23, 2068, somewhere over the Pacific and past the IDL (Monday, September 24, 8:00 a.m. Tracy Island)

"Dad, I'm bored."

Jeff and Dianne glanced at each other, exchanging weary looks. "An hour into the flight and you're already bored?" Dianne said, shaking her head. "Tyler, read a book, watch a movie on your portable player, play with your computer game... hey, even take a nap! But find something to do!"

As Tyler grumpily went to look for a distraction, Emily glanced up and said, "Makes me glad we don't have to drive all the way to Kansas." She went back to her magazine. "I remember well all these boys saying, 'Are we there yet?'. Got to be quite a chorus of them after a while."

"Aww, we weren't that bad, were we, Grandma?" Gordon asked from where he was playing Battleship with Alex.

"You, young man, were the worst of them all!" Emily replied, tipping a wink toward Jeff. "You had this whine..."

"Are we theeeeerre yet?" Alan whined, his fake falsetto sounding like a little kid. The rest of the occupants of Tracy One's cabin laughed, and Scott's voice could be heard over the intercom.

"Hey, what's so funny back there?"

"Nothing, Scott," Jeff said. "Just your brothers dredging up some memories."

"Ah, okay."

"Let me know when you need someone else up there," Jeff added. "Your flight hours are pretty close to the edge."

"I will," Scott promised.

Jeff shook his head. "That boy won't relinquish the controls until we hit L.A."

"Of course not," John piped up. "Neither would you, if you were in the cockpit."

Will Abbott, riding back to the States with the family, felt a bit like an outsider among all this familial banter. Brains and Tin-Tin had remained behind to hold the fort with the new recruits as the Tracy family headed for Kansas to remember a sad and solemn time in the lives of Jeff and his sons. Emily had been part of that time, too, but Dianne and her children were along to support the others, and to learn more about the history of the Tracy family.

"Excuse me, love," Dianne said, rising from her seat. "This morning's coffee..." She favored Jeff

with a smile as she headed to the lavatory at the back of the plane.

Will took the opportunity to stand, and to address Jeff. "Mr. Tracy? Do you have a few minutes? I'd like to talk to you."

"Of course, Will. Sit down." Jeff motioned towards Dianne's empty seat. "My wife will be a few minutes checking her makeup."

"Thank you." Will complied. "I did a lot of thinkin' yesterday after you showed me the big picture about what my job would be. I'd like to accept."

"I'm glad to hear you say that. Welcome aboard. When can you return?"

"Well," Will rubbed the back of his neck, repeating the gesture he'd used during the interview. "I need to transition one of my employees into my job, do something about my apartment, and visit my family. I know you're shorthanded and all, but can you give me til October 5?"

"We've been handling things this long; I think we can give you that much time. But no more. You'll have a lot of training ahead of you, and the sooner you get on it, the better."

"I agree. I'd make my stay in Carefree shorter, but I think my mother would kill me if I tried."

Jeff grinned. "I know the feeling. Well, if you do find yourself able to get back here sooner, let us know."

"Will do."

"Hey, Will. Would you like something to drink?" Gordon was rummaging through the small refrigerator. "I'm taking orders, everyone."

"Better ask the pilots if they're thirsty, too," Emily said. "I'll have an apple juice."

Cherie, who had been sketching John while he was reading, got up to stretch. "I'll go ask, Grandma." She headed for the cockpit, knocked on the door, and was admitted.

"I'd like orange juice, if you have it," Will said.

"One orange juice and one apple juice, coming up." Gordon poured the bottles of juice into tumblers especially made for air travel, then brought them over. He handed one to Emily, and one to Will... who rose as he saw Dianne return from the lavatory.

"Just water for me, Gordon," she said as she passed. She smiled at Will as he vacated her seat with a flourish of his hands, then returned to his.

As Gordon served the rest of the family, Will peered at the title of the book John was reading. "A Morbid Taste for Bones," he read. When John looked up, he added, "Sounds creepy."

"It's not as creepy as you'd think," John explained. "It's a historical mystery story, set in England

during the period of civil war between King Stephen and Queen Maud... somewhere in the 1100s, I think. The detective is a Welsh Benedictine monk by the name of Cadfael." He hefted the book. "It's pretty good. A friend of mine got me interested."

"Hm. I like mysteries. I guess I'll have to look it up on the Web."

"I've got another by the same author, if you're interested." John opened the backpack by his side, and pulled out three books. "Take your pick."

Will selected one entitled The Rose Rent. "Thanks," he said, as he settled back to read.

Cherie came back from the cockpit and joined Gordon at the fridge. "Scott and Virgil both want coffee, if you're making it."

"Coffee sounds good to me," Alan said, looking up from his racing magazine.

"I'd like some coffee, too, Gordon," Jeff said. "But I can make it..."

"No sweat, Dad," Gordon said, waving a hand. "One pot of coffee, coming right up."

"And none of your motor oil, either, Gordon," Emily said sharply. "You know how to make a good pot of coffee..."

"Don't worry, Grandma," Gordon said. "I'll do it right; after all, I'll be drinking it."

Satisfied that her grandson would behave himself, Emily sat back with her juice and magazine. Alex and Tyler had linked their computer games together, and were playing as they drank chocolate milk. Cherie, cup of juice at her side, picked up her pad and pencils and went back to sketching. Dianne leaned her chair back, and rested her head on a travel pillow, turning so she was looking at her husband. Jeff looked a million miles away, one hand absently fingering his chin, gaze fixed on the blue sky through the window.

"A penny for them," she said softly.

Jeff turned to smile at her; a weary smile, she thought. "Just thinking how different this time will be without the house there. I don't know that I'm prepared for it. I just hope that the graveyard wasn't hit too hard by the tornadoes. I never did ask Marion."

"If it was, it'll do us good to clear it out and spruce it up," Emily said without looking up. "And we can make some plans for the house, too. Something to keep us from dwelling on our losses."

Jeff smiled, a sad one this time. "You're right, Ma, as always. And... I have something else in mind as well."

Both women gave him inquiring looks, but he turned his gaze back out the window and refused to say anything more.

Remembrance, part one (with Will Abbott dialog by Hobbeth)

---