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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:25:34 GMT

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Friday, September 28, 2068, 7 a.m., Tracy Island

Jeff let go a heavy, relieved sigh as the engines' whine ceased. He unbuckled himself from the pilot's seat. "Home at last."

John, who had flown shotgun on the last half of the journey from Kansas, removed his headphones, unbuckled his restraining straps and stretched. "That felt like it took an eternity."

"The ride home usually does," Jeff commented. He put the mileage and fuel data into the computer pad he held, marking off which of them had been piloting and co-piloting. "I'm glad Scott agreed to sit in back this time. His flight hours are pretty much full for this month."

"His official ones? Or his overall ones?"

"Overall. He's done a lot of flying, ferrying people around. Fortunately there's only a few more days to the month."

"Does this mean I can take One on the next rescue?" John's question was real and teasing at the same time.

"That depends." Jeff gave John a side wise glance.

"On what?"

"On who's flying Two, and if we have a rescue before Alan goes up. We do have Elise available, too."

John groaned. "Looks like I won't be going on any more rescues than I did before Callie came on board."

"I didn't say that..." Jeff's explanation was interrupted by the cockpit door opening, and Dianne sticking her head in.

"Are you two coming?" she asked. "We do need to unload the luggage, and do post-flight checks."

"I'm coming, Mom," John said, turning to the copilot's door. He opened it and eased himself to the hangar floor, stretching again. "I'll leave you lovebirds alone."

His last comment, made just before he closed the copilot's door, caused both parents to turn toward him, and shake their heads in near unison. Jeff returned to his report, but redirected his attention as Dianne draped a languid arm over his shoulders.

"So, how are you?" she asked, leaning close.

Jeff met her gaze, smiling. "I'm better. I feel like I've had closure on part of my life."

Dianne frowned a bit. "I don't understand."

He put down the pad and took her free hand in his. "For a long time, I shut my feelings and my memories of Lucille up in a little box and wouldn't touch it. I was... numb, I guess, when it came to her. Now I've opened that box, and I'm looking through those memories, and remembering those feelings, but there's a difference. They don't hurt, not like I thought they would. I can remember her without feeling the pain of grief." He kissed her palm. "I've finally allowed myself to let go. And that's due to you. Just as my being able to love you is due to her. She taught me how to open my heart to love."

"I think I understand now," Dianne said, her eyes moist. "Like Rick taught me how to fight for the one you love. There's a part of our relationship that was part of what we had, what we learned, with our first spouse."

"Yes." Jeff put his free hand on the side of Dianne's face and drew her near for a soft kiss. It was followed by a second, and a third, then she drew back.

"I think we'd better go, and pick this up later," she said, a touch of disappointment in her voice.

"I agree." He picked up the pad again, saved the information, and opened the pilot's door. He slipped out, and turned to help his wife, who had slid into his chair, down to the floor. Scott sauntered by, pushing an antigrav float, piled high with luggage.

"I'll take this upstairs and get it sorted out," he told his father. "The laundry room's going to be busy for the next day or two."

"I'm sure it will be," Jeff said. He kissed Dianne. "I'll be upstairs as soon as John and I complete the post-flight inspection."

"All right. I'll see you there."

Jeff turned and called for John, as Dianne fell into step with Scott. "I wish we could have gotten home sooner so that Cherie wouldn't have had to miss her art class," she said.

"It would have been nice," Scott admitted, "but the IDL is a bear when traveling to the States."

"And we did have a lot to do there on Wednesday; things we could have done on Monday if we hadn't had to clean up the graveyard," she commented. "It was nice to find a place that will cure all that oak for us."

"Yeah." Scott pushed the float into the elevator, and both he and Dianne squeezed in after it. "I wonder what Dad's planning to do with it in the new house?"

"I think he mentioned using some to carve the fireplace mantle. The rest of the wood? I'm not sure. Do you think there's enough to floor the living room? Or the porch?"

"I think flooring the porch with that would be a waste of good board." Scott thought for a moment. "But the front door... there's an idea."

"I thought he'd want something stronger than oak, for security's sake." The elevator stopped on the lower floor of the Villa, where Kyrano and Lisa waited for them. "Hi, Mom. Hello, Kyrano."

Mother and daughter embraced, and Kyrano spoke quietly with Scott, then took charge of the float.

"There's breakfast waiting for you in the dining room. You can tell us all about the trip then," Lisa said, putting one arm around Dianne's waist, and gathering her grandson in with the other.

"Sounds great, Grandma P.," Scott replied with a grin. "And, Mom? I think an oak veneer over a nice strong cahelium door would work, don't you?"

"You may have something there, Scott." Dianne nodded slowly. She straightened a bit. "I'm looking forward to what design Jim Kennedy proposes for the new house."

"Too bad Heather was out at the testing grounds. I would have liked to see her again." Scott's tone was slightly wistful.

"Well, first you eat," Lisa insisted as they entered the dining room, where most of the family -- including Brains and Tin-Tin - was already gathered. "Then we can talk."

Posted by Tikatu on September 26, 2007

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