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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:27:17 GMT

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"So what's next?" Luke asked.

"I guess finish unpacking and get the pictures I brought with me up on the walls."

"Do you plan on painting?" Luke asked, thinking the pictures should wait if that was the case.

Cassie paused briefly, considering it. "I'll probably paint the bedroom," she replied, "but I think I'll leave out here white. That way whatever I decided to do for curtains and rugs will be okay. Besides, I've gotten used to white walls as the superintendent of the apartment building I lived in refused to let anyone paint the walls. He felt that basic white was something no one could really have an issue with."

"Well, that explains while all the walls in your apartment were white," Luke commented. "Here I thought it was just a lack in taste," he quipped.

"Very funny," Cassie said, swatting him on the arm. "I think most of the pictures are in that box," she said, pointing to the smaller of the two boxes sitting in the middle of the floor.

As Luke retrieved the box and brought it back to the table to open it, Cassie unzipped a new grey duffle bag. She had bought it at the airport to pack the things her family had given her as going away presents. Reaching in, she took out a tissue paper-wrapped picture. Her mother had given it to her and it was a copy of the family portrait they had done four years ago at Christmas time. Having the portrait taken had been a Christmas present from her dad to her mom and it had always hung above the fireplace at her parents' place. She had been touched that her Mom had gotten one made up for her to take with her.

Picture in hand, she walked over to stand beside Luke, who had opened the box. "This is definitely not a picture," he commented, holding up the fire hat that had been given to her at the farewell party.

"No, but it fit in the box with them and I didn't want to risk it getting lost if I shipped it with the other things," Cassie told him, as Luke sat the helmet on the table.

He took a few pictures out, removing them from the tissue paper they had been wrapped in. Unwrapping one he paused looking at it for a few moments. Cassie looked to see which picture it was and realized it was the one taken out in California. "Seems like a long time ago, doesn't it?" she asked.

"It sure does. Looks like the glass got cracked on the trip here," Luke said placing the picture on the table as he continued to remove pictures.

"Actually it was broke before I left New York," Cassie told him, reaching into the box for the last picture. "It got left at the apartment when I first moved out and when Alex finally gave it to me, the glass was cracked. I figured he did it on purpose."

"Yeah, I got the feeling when I visited that he didn't particularly like me."

"More like he was jealous of you," Cassie said, reaching in the box to retrieve the packages of picture hangers with adhesive backs. "He didn't like that we were such good friends and I think he was always worried there was something more going on between us. I don't think he ever quite believed me when I told him you would find Mark more attractive than me."

Luke shook his head at the thought. "How do you plan on hanging these up?" Cassie held up the picture hangers. "Let me guess, your superintendent didn't like holes in the wall, either," he commented.

"Exactly," Cassie told him. "I think I'll hang the pictures on that wall," she said, nodding toward the outside wall of the one bedroom, across from the entrance to the apartment.

They started hanging up the various pictures, eight in all. "So, what's that brother of yours up to anyway?" Luke asked as they worked, having met Mark when visiting Cassie in New York.

"Why? Interested?" Cassie asked slyly.

Luke rolled his eyes. "You've been trying to set us up for the last couple of years."

Cassie shrugged her shoulders. "Can't blame a girl for wanting her brother to be with a good man now, can you?" she commented, glancing over at Luke in time to see a slight blush creep onto his cheeks. "Seriously though, he's doing good. Still with the force. He's been talking about taking the test to make sergeant. Possibly trying to become a detective in a few years. He's also started teaching karate to a group of eight-year-olds at the youth club. Loves doing it and Uncle Satoyuki, he's the uncle that started teaching both Mark and me karate, was ecstatic when he found out. I think he's just glad one of us took a serious interest in it."

"Sounds like he's keeping himself busy," Luke commented.

"Yeah, and secretly he's probably glad to have me out of his apartment so he can bring his dates home with him more often. He brought a few of them home to meet me when I first moved in but then he stopped. Claimed I asked too many questions. I was only trying to be a good big sister."

"The overprotective big sister, you mean," Luke commented, putting the last picture on the wall.

The two stepped back and looked at the wall. "Makes the place look more like home already," Cassie commented. She glanced toward the two bags and box left on the floor. Walking over to them, she picked up the other box and headed toward the kitchen with it. Luke followed her.

"I think you need more bubble wrap there," Luke said jokingly as he watched her unwrap one of the items from the box.

"I didn't want to risk them getting broken," she told him as she sat the tea caddy she had unwrapped on the counter. "These were all my grandmother's. This tea caddy," she said, nodding toward the item on the counter, "and the other equipment for the tea ceremony she got when she

turned eighteen. The tea cups for everyday use were made by her father as a gift for their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. My mom passed them on to me when I turned twenty-one."

"Guess I can understand the overkill on the bubble wrap then," Luke commented as he carefully took another item out of the box and started unwrapping it. "Planning on hosting a tea ceremony here?"

"I hadn't really thought about it," Cassie told him as they continued to unpack the box. "I guess maybe if there is interest I would do one," she said, thinking of the questions Virgil had already asked about her Japanese heritage. He might be interested in it. Some of the others may be too, she thought. "Plan on coming if I do?"

"Do I have to wear a kimono?"

Cassie laughed. "No, it's not required for guests unless it's a really formal ceremony."

"Then count me in. I just refuse to wear a dress."

"It's not a dress."

"Close enough for me," Luke told her. "Oh wow! That's beautiful. Is this one of the ones your great-grandfather made?" Luke asked as he held a handleless red tea cup in his hand. He turned it slowly and saw that there were four different Japanese characters written on it.

"Yes. The characters on it are: wa, kei, sei, and jaku - harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility."

"That's a nice sentiment," Luke commented, sitting the cup on the counter next to the other items from the box.

The conversation moved onto other things as they continued to work. Cassie put the things away in the cupboards while Luke gathered up the bubble wrap and tissue paper into the two cardboard boxes for disposal. The fire helmet still sat on the table.

Luke picked up the helmet and walked over to the electronics center, placing it up on top. "How does that look for now?" he asked, looking over his shoulder at Cassie who was standing near the table. "You could always move it when you get some shelves and things in here."

"Looks fine for now," Cassie said with a nod. "That reminds me though, I need to talk to Mr. Tracy about when someone can take me shopping so I can pick up some things. Other than the vanity I've had since I was sixteen, I let Alex keep all the furniture and electronics when I moved out. I wasn't sure how long I'd be with living with Mark and arguing over who got what would have just drawn out the process."

"Yeah, just mention it to him. I'm sure he can find a way to get you into Christchurch before too long," Luke told her. "Which reminds me, want to come see the things Nikki and Elise helped me pick out to decorate my apartment with? Unlike you, I couldn't stand the white walls!"

"Sure! Lead away," Cassie replied, interested to see what colors he had ended up with.

Posted by starrynebula on October 3, 2007

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