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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:32:20 GMT

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Nikki glanced up from her reading when the infirmary door slid aside. She smiled at Cassie, who stood there, looking a bit apprehensive. Virgil stood behind her, and he grinned as he saw Nikki rise to greet them.

"Nikki, this is Cassie Kishi." He gave Cassie a reassuring pat on the shoulder. "You're in good hands here. I'll talk to you later."

Cassie looked over her shoulder at Virgil. "Thanks for showing me the way."

"No problem," he told her as he headed down the hallway.

Cassie looked back at the young woman Virgil has addressed as Nikki. Part of her wished she was anywhere other than there. She hated seeing medical personnel for any reason. "Hi," she said. "I set up a physical with Dr. Tracy for today."

Nikki extended her hand. "Figures that Virgil wouldn't properly introduce us. I'm Nikki Jackson, one of Dr. Tracy's nurses." The two women shook hands. "Come along with me and I'll show you where you can undress, then let Dianne know you're here."

She led the way into the surgical scanner room, and brought Cassie over to the small dressing area. "Here are the gowns. Take off everything but your panties. I'll be back with Dianne in a few moments."

Cassie nodded as Nikki disappeared. She grabbed one of the gowns and stepped behind the privacy screen. Quickly she changed into one of the gowns. Another thing I hate about seeing a doctor, she thought to herself as she finished changing. Stepping out from behind the screen, she waited for Dianne to show up.

Dianne came into the room, a data pad in hand and Nikki at her heels. She looked up and smiled. "Hello there, Cassie. How's your day been?"

"Not too bad," Cassie replied. "Had some training with Gordon this morning both with firearms as well as getting my first experience of being in the ocean more than walking the shore line. I think I like the pool better. My first session with Virgil didn't go all that bad either."

"Good!" Dianne patted the scanner as Nikki moved a small step closer. "Come on up here, and let's take a look at you."

For the next half hour, Dianne poked, prodded, listened, peered, and instructed Cassie as she examined her. She had Cassie walk across the floor as she watched. She read the notes on her data pad, and referred to them when she noticed the scar on Cassie's shoulder.

"What's this from?" she asked, sliding a gentle finger over the scar.

"Gunshot wound," Cassie replied. "Price for not following procedure."

"Hm. I see." Scrolling down the information on the pad, Dianne nodded. "Here it is. Looks like it's well resolved."

As she worked, Dianne added to the doctor's notes, then finally put the pad down. "Okay, Cassie. Things look fine. But I do need a baseline scan. If you'd lie down on the scanner and stay as still as you can..."

Nikki helped Cassie lie back, and covered her with a sheet.

"Um, what exactly does this scanner do?" Cassie asked.

"You've never had a scan before?" Dianne asked. She made a little "hmm" sound, then continued. "It scans your insides for me, giving me a comprehensive picture of how your body works. If you're sick, or injured, I can compare a scan taken at that time to this one and see what's damaged or not working properly," She stopped, then added. "It doesn't hurt."

"What can I say; seeing doctors isn't exactly on the top of my things to do list," Cassie admitted sheepishly. "I only do so when absolutely necessary."

Nikki and Dianne glanced at each other and chuckled. "Well," said Nikki, "I'd say that's a pretty universal sentiment."

"Are you ready?" Dianne asked, moving toward the console in the corner.

Cassie took a deep breath and let it out slowly. "Ready as I'll ever be," she replied.

"Just lie still. It'll only take about 20 minutes."

Nikki dimmed the lights, and the scanner began to work.

The room was quiet except for the hum of the scanner and the occasional murmur from Dianne as she made notes on what she saw. Nikki left the room for a few moments, and came back with a covered tray, which she set on a stand by the console.

After the aforementioned 20 minutes was up, Dianne made a satisfied sound, and softly said, "I think that's enough." The humming stopped, and she came over to the side of the scanner to help Cassie sit up.

"Okay, Cassie. I've got a clear picture of how you're doing. You're looking fit; are there any chronic medical issues that I should know about?"

"Well, I do have migraines, but I know what triggers them: heavy perfume and cigarette smoke. One of the reasons I always looked for the bars that don't allow smoking in the New York," Cassie admitted. "Other than that nothing comes to mind."

"Well, it's a good thing that I managed to get Jeff and the boys to stop smoking!" Dianne said,

grinning. "I'll warn you though; our London agent, Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward, is a frequent visitor and she does like her perfumes. You may want to stay upwind of her when she comes calling."

She motioned to Nikki, who brought over the tray and uncovered it. "I do have your immunization records, and they're very complete. We, however, require an anti-malarial vaccine for our operatives, and we'll do that today. Then the locator chip." She picked up one of the hyposprays, looked at it carefully, and applied it to Cassie's neck. "You do get to say where we put the chip."

"Exactly how necessary is the chip?" Cassie asked, hesitantly. "The idea of a locator chip makes me feel like a pet that someone is afraid of losing."

Dianne sighed. "Well, we've had some instances where it would have been very handy. For instance, while flying home from a rescue, Scott was shot down over the Sahara by a bunch of weirdos called Zombites. It was only because some archaeologists were working in the area that he was found and rescued. Then we've had a couple of agents kidnapped, too. Lady Penelope, who I just mentioned, was kidnapped while undercover. It was a miracle that she was able to contact base and the boys were able to figure out where she was. More recently, one of our newer agents, Lena Matumbo, was abducted and taken to England. Again, it was only her quick thinking that let us know where she was."

Her voice got quieter. "On the recent mission where we rescued the King of Thailand, one of our operatives, Callie - I don't know whether you've met her or not; she's just come back from Thunderbird Five. Anyway, Callie was waylaid by a scumbag called the Hood. He's a sworn enemy of International Rescue. We managed to get her out of his clutches quickly, but if he'd managed to spirit her away, the chip she has would have helped us locate her." Dianne didn't mention the communications interference that they'd experienced on that rescue; she wanted to impress on Cassie the need for the chip.

Cassie listened closely to what Dianne was saying. Given those accounts, she could see the usefulness of a locator chip. I certainly don't want to fall into the "it won't happen to me" mentality that so many people seem to have, she thought, thinking of those whom tragedy had struck that her job had put her in contact with.

"Okay, go ahead," she said with a sigh, still not happy about it but willing to go along with it. "As for where, I'll let you make that decision."

"Hm." Dianne looked Cassie up and down. "I think maybe... just below the collarbone on the left - you're right handed?"

Cassie nodded in response to her question.

"Good. First the local anesthetic..." Dianne used a hypospray to numb the area, then picked up the needle. "If needles make you squeamish, better look away. We've had a couple of fainters with this..."

Cassie smiled slightly, thinking of some of her experiences with needles. She had been scared of them as a kid but she had gotten over that. "Training to be a paramedic got me over that fear,"

she commented.

With a deft hand, Dianne inserted the needle under the numbed skin. "Nikki? Do you have Alan on the line?"

"Yes. I've given him the chip number, and he says it's working fine."

"Good!" Dianne patted Cassie on the knee. "I think we're done here."

"I guess that wasn't too painful," Cassie said, relieved the ordeal was over.

"I do try to make my patients comfortable," Dianne quipped as she put the implements back on the tray and Nikki whisked them away. "Go ahead and get dressed. Just leave the gown in the dressing area, and you can go."

Cassie nodded again. "I did have something I wanted to talk to you about that isn't related to the physical," she commented. "After I get changed that is, if you have a few more minutes."

"Sure. Just come into my office."

"Okay," Cassie said standing up.

As Dianne left the room, Cassie went behind the privacy screen again to get out of the gown. Feeling much better back in her own clothes, Cassie left the room and headed for Dianne's office. Reaching it, she knocked.

"Come in, Cassie." The door slid aside to let Cassie in.

Cassie stepped into the office. Dianne indicated for her to have a seat in the chair in front of her desk. Cassie did so.

"What did you want to talk to me about?" Dianne asked.

"Well, I know the job position was for a firefighter, but paramedic skills were listed as a plus," Cassie began, asking something that had been on her mind but that she thought Dr. Tracy would be the more appropriate person to bring the subject up to than Mr. Tracy. "I was just wondering if my paramedic training was going to be utilized and how I'd fit into the group. I've met both Dom and Nikki now so I know you already have two capable assistants."

"Yes, and Luke is just a few hours away from finishing his paramedic training." Dianne looked thoughtful. "We can always use more help in the field, triaging and treating before a patient gets to... Thunderbird Seven." It was hard to say the name; she hadn't been down to see what had become of her vessel and, to her, it was stuck in that memory from her last visit. "When we were in the Ural Mountains, we had too many patients, and too few qualified medical professionals. It would have been helpful to have people out there who could stabilize a patient, who really knew what to do." She shook her head and sat up straighter. "Ask Dom about the amputee sometime. He could have used an extra pair of hands there." She cocked her head. "So, does that answer your question?"

"Yes," Cassie said, nodding. "I have to admit, I'm glad I'll still get a chance to put those skills to use. Originally, training as a paramedic was just a step on the way to getting to my dream of being a firefighter. It didn't take me long to enjoy the rewards of the job itself despite the dangers and heartaches that can come with it. I'm glad I don't have to give that up entirely."

"Oh, believe me, we'll use every skill you have, and teach you a few new ones as well," Dianne told her, giving her a wink. "Wait until you have to learn to rock climb, or caving. You'll wonder why... until we have to rescue someone in a mine, or some other inaccessible place."

"I love new challenges," Cassie said. "Even one's that scare me at first."

"That's the attitude to have."

"Well, I guess that's about it. I don't want to be taking up anymore of your time than necessary," Cassie said, pushing the chair back and getting to her feet.

"As long as your questions are answered," Dianne said. "And if you have any others, just ask. If I don't know it, I have an 'in' with the head honcho."

Cassie smiled. "I'll keep that in mind. Thanks for your time."

"You're welcome, Cassie. Have a good evening."

"You too, Dr. Tracy," Cassie replied, as she turned to leave the office. I wonder if Tin-Tin has replied to my email about a good time to get the uniform issues out of the way, Cassie thought as she left the infirmary and headed in the direction she hoped the monorail lift was in.

The Physical by tikatu and starrynebula on October 18, 2007

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