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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:36:19 GMT

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Wednesday, October 10, 2068, 11:00 a.m., Tracy Island

Dianne smoothed her hand over the clean side of the medical cabin. Parts of it were still unpainted, the cahelium bare and coppery. She turned to Brains, who was there to answer her questions. "Will you be repainting the whole thing?"

"Yes," he answered simply, nodding. Dianne nodded back, then came to the wide side doors. They stood open, and the ramp was down, inviting her to enter. She took a deep breath, and walked up the ramp.

She stood there for a moment, looking around, as Anna joined her. Jeff was outside, hovering, but Anna had felt too many people would make Dianne feel crowded. If she needed his support, he was there, otherwise, Dianne had Anna to watch her and gauge her responses.

"How do you feel looking at this?" Anna asked quietly.

Dianne stood still, looking around thoughtfully. The diagnostic beds were back in place, but covered in plastic, as was the monitoring station and the storage lockers. The antigravity stretchers weren't in place, but their hangers remained. "It's odd. It's familiar, yet it's like seeing it for the first time... again." She ran a hand over the dust covered plastic on one of the beds, and gave Brains, who had followed at a distance, a wry smile. "We'll have a fun time cleaning this up, won't we?"

She moved toward the back corner, which had been rebuilt. It was empty; the storage lockers there hadn't yet been replaced. She turned to the surgical bay, and glanced in. The parts of the bed were lying on the floor, ready to be reassembled. Some of the lockers were gone; they'd been warped beyond use by the collision, but the sink still stood. Its smooth polymer surface was cracked, though. Brains came up behind her. "That's coming out today. We'll be replacing everything in here before reassembling the bed. Hopefully, we'll have it done by the end of the day, or mid-day tomorrow." He smiled slightly. "Will's been a great help on this."

Dianne nodded, and said slowly, "I'm just thankful that no one was back here when we collided." She shook her head vigorously, her voice cracking. "There would have been definite fatalities then."

She breathed deeply, then turned away and went back into the main cabin. Spying the door on the other side, she walked toward it, slowly, and tapped the button to slide it open. It didn't budge.

"No power to it yet, I'm afraid," Brains said. "I'm still working on the new coupling devices."

Anna watched as Dianne merely nodded. "How will those devices work?" Anna asked.

"Well, there'll still be a magnetic coupler that will bring the two parts close together, but if there's a failure on the magnets, there will be a series of heavy duty studs fixed in the control cabin's rear

wall. They'll slot into holes on the medical cabin, and be clamped from within. A power failure will freeze the clamps in place so the two pieces are still physically connected." He paused. "I can show you in computer simulation if you like."

"Maybe later," Dianne murmured. She turned, smiled a little, and said, "Where's the control cabin?"

"Uh, outside." Brains shot a glance at Anna, who said nothing. "Are you sure you want to see it? We've been dismantling it..."

Dianne bit her lower lip, letting it slide between her teeth. "I'd like to try, anyway."

"Not alone," Anna said quickly.

"No, not alone," Dianne agreed.

They left the medical cabin, Dianne pausing a moment to run her hand along the door. "You know," she said conversationally, "I didn't even look at the skylights or the windows. Just the equipment. All I could think about was how fast could we get it restocked for the next rescue."

"I'll let you know when it's ready for that," Brains said as he followed her out.. He motioned to his right, to where the control cab would normally be. "This way."

Jeff met Dianne at the bottom of the ramp. "What's happening, love?" he asked as she held out her hand to him.

"I'm going to see the control cabin. Come with me, please?"

Jeff glanced at Anna, who nodded a little. "Sure, love. I'll come."

They followed Brains to the end of the medical cabin. The control cab looked much different than it had the last time Dianne and Jeff had seen it. Some of the outer skin had been removed, and much of the interior walls, so in spots, they could see right inside. The ceiling had been removed, as Dianne could see from where she stood outside.

"As you can see, we're taking it apart to see what we can salvage before we rebuild," Brains explained. He waved his hand toward a pile of things, most wrapped in plastic, set to one side. "Hopefully we can use these things again."

The lockers were there; only Jeff noticed the dent in Nikki's door. So was the emergency diagnostic bed, wrapped in plastic and laid on one side. But what made Dianne draw in a deep breath and tighten her grip on Jeff's hand was the chair -- the pilot's chair, her chair. It was still in the leaned back position, though it was no longer on its pedestal. The steering yoke was nowhere to be seen.

"I... I think I've seen enough for now," Dianne said abruptly. Anna, watching, noticed where Dianne's gaze went, and how Jeff turned to search her face as it went white. He lifted her hand to his lips, and she turned to him, then buried her face in his shoulder.

Anna moved in, and between her and Jeff, they drew Dianne away. "It's okay, Dianne. You don't have to do it all in one day. The medical cabin was enough."

As they headed out of the repair bay and back to the monorail, Anna asked, "How did you feel about this visit?"

Dianne breathed deeply a couple of times, before answering. Her voice trembled a little. "It was harder than I thought it would be. Not so much the medical cabin, though I had a quick vision what it might have been like if we'd encountered the tornado on the way in, instead of out." She sighed heavily. "I'm glad they're pulling it apart." Softly, she added, "The chair was the worst of it. I'm going to ask Brains to trash it entirely. Design a new chair."

"Good thought," Anna said, sitting next to her as Jeff sent the monorail car back to the elevators. "What else can you do?"

Dianne looked puzzled, and Anna continued. "You need to take control of your recovery, Dianne. What else can you do that would help you accomplish that?"

"Well, Brains has been consulting me on the design of the cockpit," Dianne said, her brow furrowing. "We've agreed that there won't be a steering column anymore, but will be all computer controlled. Sort of like a video game." She huffed a tiny laugh. "Tyler's promised that he'll teach me how to use a joystick."

"All of the ground based Thunderbirds and auxiliary equipment will be retrofitted with airbags, too," Jeff offered. "Drew bent my ear about that one."

"Be interesting to see how they design airbags for Thunderbird Four," Anna said. "This sounds like a start. What else can you do?"

"I'd get down there and work on the medical cabin, but Brains and Tin-Tin would tell me I'm in the way." Dianne looked down at her hands. "I've been making a list of what we'll need, and ordering the meds and other supplies. Some of them have arrived already."

"That sounds good, too."

The monorail came to a stop, and they stepped out into the rock-hewn vestibule. "I think you're ready to go back to the medical cabin, Dianne," Anna said. "You've had a rescue or two; you're taking charge again. We'll see about actually piloting Seven once things have been finalized on the new designs, and it's rebuilt."

Dianne smiled wanly, and shook her head. "Thank you, Anna. I know I couldn't have come this far without your help."

"We're not done yet, but you're getting there."

The elevator opened, and the trio stepped out. Jeff glanced at his watch. "Lunch will be served shortly. I'll get the kids, and have a word with their teachers before then."

"Then we'll meet you in the dining room," Dianne said, kissing him on the cheek. He turned and made the kiss a full one on the lips. She returned it, putting her arms around him. For a moment, they were oblivious to anyone but each other, so it was nearly a surprise when they heard Anna murmur softly.

"Teenagers."

Posted by Tikatu on November 6, 2007

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