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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:44:38 GMT

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Nikki stepped out of Thunderbird Seven's medical cabin, antigravity float at her side. She looked up, and stood stock still with surprise. The white Penelar tent was full of... bald people. One of them, a tall, middle-aged man saw her, and smiled, then bowed.

"Greetings, Aoethapot," he said in a deep voice. "It is an honor to meet you and see that you are well again. May I be of assistance?"

Nikki put up one finger. "Uh, wait just a moment, please." She left the stretcher hovering above the ramp, turned around, and hurried back to the surgical area, where Dianne was cleaning off the scanner bed.

"Doc," she said, her tones urgent. "There are... bald people outside. They're wearing these blue robes and sashes... one of them bowed to me and called me something I can't even pronounce! They look like those nutters who think we're from Jupiter!"

Dianne's eyes widened in disbelief. "No! You're kidding!" She left the surgical room for the little storage area, and peered out, trying hard not to be seen. Her eyes widened even more, and she began to laugh. "You're not kidding!"

"Shh! They'll hear you!" Nikki pushed Dianne back into the surgery and slid the door shut. "What do you think they're doing here?"

Dianne kept laughing, louder now, holding a hand over her abdomen. "Oh, God. That is so funny!" she said between gulping breaths.

Nikki shook her head. "I'm going to ask Maverick." Tapping her earphone, she said, "Mobile Control from Thunderbird Seven."

Scott answered promptly. "Mobile Control here. How can I help you, Angel?"

"Er, I'm not sure, Maverick." She glanced over at Dianne, who was trying to get herself under control. "There are a lot of unauthorized people in the med tent..." Her description set Dianne off again.

"Uh, yes, I know," Scott replied. "They're the people from Jupiter. They're here to offer their 'help and prayers'." He paused to listen. "What's that noise in the background?"

"Just Doc, laughing," Nikki responded. "So they're really those nutters who think we're from Jupiter?"

"Yes, Angel. Just... just let them help, but don't let them interfere." Scott paused, then added, "And tell Doc to go breathe in a paper bag or something. We don't need to antagonize or insult them."

Nikki blew out a breath. "F-A-B, Maverick. I'll tell her. Angel out."

There was a knock on the surgical suite's door. "Doc, Angel, are you all right in there?" Tin-Tin called. "Your next patient is waiting."

Dianne finally calmed, pulling off her visor and wiping her eyes. "Yeah, we're all right, Sweet. Be there in a tick." She glanced at Nikki. "Ah hope Ah can keep from laughing in their faces."

"I hope so, too!" Nikki replied. She opened the door to the surgery. "Let's go."

Dianne took a deep breath and let it out slowly. Her voice sounded steadier as she said, "Right. We've been too long in here as it is."

They left together. Nikki descended the ramp, making her way to where Tin-Tin waited with the stretcher she'd left. The middle-aged man was there, ready to help transfer the next patient to the float.

"Well met again, Aoethapot," he said with a smile and a bow. "I am honored to help you and Undlieek-asjaphe in your work."

"Er, thank you, sir," Nikki said, exchanging a bemused glance with Tin-Tin. Together, they helped the male patient onto the stretcher. "That word you called me..."

"Aoethapot?"

"Yes, that. What is it? What does it mean?"

The man smiled wider. "That is your name in the language of Tyrikalica, and it means 'she of the Golden Fist'."

Nikki winced. "Er, thank you for telling me. I'm not well versed in Tyrikalica." She moved to the head of the stretcher. "We'll take it from here."

"As you wish, Aoethapot." The man bowed again, then moved away to speak to another patient.

Tin-Tin pulled up beside Nikki. "And I thought 'daughter of the Golden Sun' was bad!" she murmured, grinning.

Nikki rolled her eyes, and gave Tin-Tin a hard nudge.

While Nikki brought in the next patient, Dianne busied herself by checking on the patients who were already settled in the biobeds, updating their doctor's charts, and making sure their vital signs were steady. As the stretcher bearing her next patient moved up the ramp, she moved to meet it in the doorway, and glanced out at those in the tent.

Suddenly, it seemed all faces were turned her way. A murmuring started amongst the robe-clad people, then they began to bow, murmuring, "Opalneio, Opalneio." A dark skinned woman raised her hands up and called out, "Praise Undlieek! Opalneio has returned to his service!"

The others took up the cry, while the construction workers watched with wide eyes and open mouths.

Dianne's jaw dropped for a moment, then she recovered her wits and held up her hands. "Please, please!" She wasn't getting the response she wanted, so she added, "Please, brothers! Sisters!"

The robed members of the crowd heard her and quieted, still looking her way. She took a deep breath and tried hard not to grin. "Thank you," she said, "Thank you for your help and your... prayers." The last word was hard to say, and sounded a bit strangled as she fought to keep from laughing again. "We appreciate them very much."

Motioning to the medical cabin behind her, she added, "I now must do my duty. Thank you again for your help."

With the last word, she turned and hurried to the surgery, where Tin-Tin and Nikki already had the patient on the scanner bed. She closed her eyes and shook her head, chuckling softly.

"Please! Don't start again!" Nikki cautioned her.

Dianne took a deep breath. "I'm okay. Really." She chuckled again, then took another deep breath. "Let me get to work here and I'll be fine. Really."

Nikki and Tin-Tin exchanged glances, and Tin-Tin shrugged. "You'd better go out and see what our Jupiterian friends are doing," Nikki said.

"Brothers and sisters, Angel," Tin-Tin corrected, with a sly glance in Dianne's direction. "Doc even said so." With that parting shot, she sidled out.

Dianne gave another strangled laugh, then took another deep breath. "I'll be fine. Really."

Post by Tikatu

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