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Subject: Re: Regaining Momentum

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:45:15 GMT

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Luke made his way towards the white tent housing Thunderbird Seven. Rommel stuck close to his leg, whimpering and whipping his head back and forth. Luke stepped inside the tent and froze.

It seemed to be full of bald people wearing bright blue robes. Some were assisting victims, others seemed to be standing in a circle, chanting something he couldn't understand. Pulling Rom closer he sought out a familiar face. He spied Dominic off to one side and hurried over to him. "Hey, have you seen Doc?"

Dom looked up, then started at seeing Rommel. "Aye, she's out back. Everythin' all right?"

"I'll let you know." Luke quickly pushed his way through the crowd, stepping through the curtain separating the area. "Doc? Are you in here?"

Nikki looked up from where she was settling a patient in one of the last biobeds. She frowned a bit at seeing Luke with Rommel so close at his side, but something told her that the dog's demeanor was off. "She's in the surgery, Alpine. Is something wrong?"

"It's the mutt. He's acting really funny. Cousteau said that we could put him on the scanner." Luke's tone was full of concern.

"I'll let Doc know." Nikki finished her task, shucked her gloves, and headed back to the surgery. Just as she got to the door, she found Dianne escorting Dom's wrist and shoulder patient out. "See that she has a comfortable place to sit," Dianne instructed. "Her rotator cuff is torn, but if she can keep the arm immobilized, it should minimize the damage."

"F-A-B, Doc." Nikki glanced over her shoulder at Luke. "Alpine here has brought in... the dog. He says there's something wrong."

Dianne looked over to where Luke stood, trying to comfort Rommel. "Okay. I'll bring him in."

Nikki nodded and escorted the patient back out into the tent, while Dianne approached Luke. "What seems to be the problem, Alpine?"

Luke knelt down and unclipped Rommel's vest. He ran his hands over the dog's torso. "I'm not sure. We found that last group of people and got them out. Suddenly he started acting like this. All jittery like. He doesn't seem hurt, and he hasn't been out of my sight, but something's got him spooked."

"Have you found anything toxic out there? Something he could have eaten, drank, or breathed in?" Dianne asked as she guided both dog and trainer back to the surgical area. She was aware of eyes following them; the still-conscious patients were interested - make that very interested - in the dog's presence.

"No, nothing. He just started acting like this." He looked up at her. "You don't think he's been

poisoned do you?" Luke swallowed thickly, his voice hoarse.

"Well, if he was, we'll find out," Dianne replied in a soothing voice. "Bring him in here, and lift him up onto the scanner bed."

Luke hoisted up the dog, and placed him on the bed. Rommel whimpered and Luke rubbed his head. "Easy, boy, easy." He took a step back, giving Dianne room to work.

She activated the scanner, and tapped her earpiece. "Doc to Indy. I'm going to need a long-distance vet consult. I think one of our agents is a vet. Can you get in contact with him or her and download these scans?"

Alan was surprised by the request. "F-A-B, Doc. I'll contact our vet right away."

"Thanks, Indy. Let me know when they're ready." She gave Luke a half-sympathetic, half-apologetic look. "I'm sorry, but I'm not a vet. Fortunately, one of our agents is and will be able to read these scans for me."

Luke had moved back to the dog's side. "Thanks, Doc." He lifted Rom's head, and peered into his eyes. "He's never been sick a day in his life." He bent down and pressed his forehead to the dog's. "You'll be OK, Rom. Doc here's going to take good care of you."

Dianne smiled at the sight of the pair, and stroked Rom's side gently. A sound in her earphone made her reach for her ear.

"Indy to Doc, I've got the vet online. You can upload the scans when you're ready."

"F-A-B." She watched as the scanner finished moving across the dog's body, then tapped a key. "Scans uploading now."

"Got 'em. I'm downloading them to the vet now."

"F-A-B." She turned to Luke. "The vet has the scans now. It shouldn't be too long before we get an answer."

"Thanks, Doc." He continued rubbing Rom's head. "By the way, what's with the pajama party outside? Thought I had crashed a costume party for a moment there." He frowned a moment. "Wait a second. Are those the kooks that were on TV a few months ago? The ones from Mars or something?"

Dianne chuckled. "Jupiter, actually. Yes, those are the same kooks." She raised an eyebrow. "Bet you get a Jupiterian name, too, now that they've seen you... you and Rom here."

"Terrific," he muttered. "See the trouble you get me into!" He ruffled the hair on Rom's head, causing the dog to lick his hand.

Dianne's earpiece sounded again. "Doc, patching the vet through."

A moment later a woman's voice came over the speaker. Dianne hit a button on the console so that Luke could hear too. "Doc, this is Agent 610. I've looked over the scans you sent me and can find nothing wrong." Luke groaned. The woman continued. "His heart rate is quite elevated however, indicating stress of some kind. I assume you have Diazepam on board?"

"Yes, we do." Dianne went to the meds cabinet. "What kind of dosage are we talking about? And it is better for him to have oral or injection?"

"Definitely an injection. How much does he weigh?"

Luke looked up. "About eighty pounds."

The vet rattled off a series of amounts and Dianne got the syringe ready. "Inject him in the scruff of the neck. He should calm down pretty quickly, but I warn you, he'll be groggy for the next couple of hours."

"Groggy I can handle, these nerves I can't. You have no idea what's going on?"

"I'd have to see him for a complete examination," she replied.

Luke looked down at his dog again. "I may take you up on that."

Scott cut in. "All operatives on alert! We have an aftershock warning!"

Before Dianne could inject Rom with the sedative, the aftershock rumbled and rocked the medical cabin.

Luke automatically threw himself over Rom, bracing himself against the table. The shaking lasted only a few seconds, but seemed like forever. When things had settled down, he glanced up at Dianne. "This is why I lived in the mountains. Are you OK?"

"Yeah. I'm okay." She picked the filled syringe from the floor where it had fallen. "I'd better get another, then go out and see how everyone else is doing."

Luke watched as she refilled the needle and injected Rommel. Within moments, the dog stopped shaking and seemed to doze off. Luke let out a sigh of relief. "Scared me, mutt," he said softly. He looked up at Dianne. "Think he'll be all right here? I should get back out there too."

Dianne winced. "I have to move him, I'm afraid. Need the scanner for other patients." She shook her head. "Just watch this get out into the media. I can see the headlines now." She pulled a blanket from a cabinet. "Move him out by the back door. I doubt we'll be needing it."

"How is the patient?" The vet's voice sounded.

"I gave him an injection and he's asleep," Dianne responded.

"Good." She paused a moment. "If it won't be too much of a security breach, can you confirm that you are in an earthquake area?"

Dianne looked puzzled. "Yes, as a matter of fact we are. Just went through an aftershock. Why?"

"Tell me, how was the patient acting when you first arrived?"

Luke thought a moment. "Fine, nothing out of the ordinary. We found victims, both alive and dead, but that's never bothered him before. It's only been the last forty-five minutes or so that he's been off."

"Hmmm, I wonder...Animals sense things, far better than we humans do. Could it be he sensed the quake coming?"

Luke paused. "I suppose it's possible." He looked down at the sleeping dog. "Big goof. Is that what you were trying to tell me?" He shook his head and hoisted Rommel into his arms. "Thanks, Doctor. I'm sure you'll be hearing from me again soon."

"I hope so. Keep me posted."

"Thanks, Doctor. I appreciate the help," Dianne said as Luke eased himself and his burden out of the surgery. She pulled out some antiseptic and began to wipe down the scanner bed.

"You're very welcome. Glad to be of assistance. And it's nice to know that you've got a four-legged addition to the team."

"He's been a big help today, but I can see we're going to have some challenges with him, too."

The vet chuckled. "You'll be fine. I'd better let you get back to your specialty."

"F-A-B. Thunderbird Seven out."

The bed now clean, Dianne put away the medicines. As she did, Nikki appeared in the door.

"Alpine's gone out to help with the remaining yellow tags," she said as she helped another patient in. "That aftershock gave us a few more injuries."

"We'll deal with them, Angel. We'll deal with them."

Post by Tikatu and Lillehafrue

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