



The Lost Chapter

Troy Freeman and the 'lion's den'

After the Rover family had left the ward and entered the lift, things returned to normal on the floor. The frantic busyness of this floor settled into the familiar rhythm. Sylvia Bloodworth returned to the room where Cyrus had been staying the past few days.

She passed by a cleaning cart, which was a regular sight after a patient had been discharged. An orderly was stripping the bed, and the cleaning products were on the table in the corner.

Sylvia greeted the young man, "Hey Troy, how ya doin'? Cleaning up after our friend, Cyrus?"

"Yeah, I'm gonna miss that guy. He knew his movies and even let me hang out after my shift one night to watch a classic with him. We had a great chat. Whatever happened to him while he was under really changed his life. You know I love movies, and he made me enjoy them even more. It was like he had a personal connection with film that went beyond casual. You know what I mean?" He paused and continued, "Anyway, I hope I get to see him again," he said while cleaning the room. "How are you, Doctor Sylvia?"

"I've told you, Troy, you can call me Sylvia." She smiled as they seemed to be going over a conversation they had so many times before. "Yeah, I'm going to miss him and his family. They were pretty amazing, and that kid's stay with us impacted me." Her voice stammered briefly as the young doctor tried to keep from crying.

Troy stopped making the bed for a second to check on her, "You okay, Doc?" He smiled to see how she responded to him.

Sylvia smiled and wiped away a tear, "You are cheeky, Troy. Yeah, I'm fine. I better get back to my other patients." Then she noticed it, sitting in the chair in the corner.

A Detroit Lions baseball cap.

"Hmm, I didn't notice Cyrus having that before. Even though he loved that bag of his." She went over and picked up the hat, "Troy, funny thing. The bag didn't come in with him on the day of the accident, but suddenly appeared after he woke from his coma. He had a different backpack on during the accident. It wasn't worth keeping. But, that nice, well-worn leather bag just shows up later. Maybe his grandparents brought it in or his Dad, I'm not sure. I didn't think much of it at the time. Still, it was odd how it became pretty important to Cyrus," she pondered the whole situation as she looked down at the baseball cap with a lion emblazoned on the front.

Troy laughed, "You ain't kiddin'," he was spraying the tables with disinfectant next to the bed. "Whenever I came in the room, that bag was on the bed with him and wouldn't let anyone take it from him."

He paused for a minute, "Even the night we watched the movie, he kept that thing on the bed. It was like it was his security blanket or something."

Suddenly, Sylvia snapped out of her stupor, "Troy, Troy! The Rovers are probably in the lobby saying goodbye to some of the staff. Could you get the hat down to Cyrus before he leaves?"

"I'm on it," he said as he reached for his phone and dialed his supervisor, "Hey Genevieve, I've got to run a lost item to a patient; I'm leaving my cart for a few minutes, be right back." He nodded as if he was getting permission from his mother to leave school early.

He politely took the hat from Sylvia, "Genny said it was fine, but I had to get right back to work. I'll take the service elevator, that'll get me there faster."

"Thanks Troy, I'm sure Cyrus will appreciate it," Sylvia said as she followed him out of the room.

Troy knew not to run, but he moved quickly to the elevator at the end of the hallway. After he hit the down button, the orderly took a moment to check out the hat. It was a nice fitted cap, but it

looked like it was made for the wearer. Inside the lining at the back was an embroidered set of words and numbers. Rev 5:5.

He thought to himself, “Hmm, what is that stitched into the lining of the cap? What does that mean?”

That was when the elevator door opened, and as Troy got in, he didn’t even think about it but instinctively put the hat on his head. He pushed the L button for the lobby, and the doors closed. At that moment the lights flickered and there seemed to be a bolt of lightning crack across the ceiling. After the lights went crazy, the elevator started moving faster than usual, things shook, and he lost his balance momentarily and leaned against the door.

Just as he put his hand on the door, it opened, and he fell out of the elevator. He didn’t have time to think about the terror he felt riding in the elevator, because he wasn’t in the hospital lobby.

That is when Troy heard the crowd roar and found himself standing on the sideline of a football game. Everything was moving fast around him; people were yelling, and the stadium lights blinded him. The whole thing felt like a movie set of some of his favorite sports films. Then he felt a hand on his shoulder that was heavily padded.

“Hey, Troy! Can you hear me? Troy!” Someone was yelling in his ear.

Bewildered, the young man turned to the voice. He could see a man who looked like all of those coaches in those football movies through the faceguard on his helmet. “What was going on?” Was all he could think. He must have looked like he had suffered a concussion or something.

He felt the man pound on his shoulder again, “Troy, Troy! Snap out of it. You got hit pretty hard. It’s me, Coach Elijah. Focus. Can you hear me?”

Troy shook his head, “Yeah, I can hear you, but I don’t know what’s going on or who you are.”

Coach Elijah smiled, winked, and said, “Good, as you shake it off and come to your senses, you’ve got a decision to make.”

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