



# **BREAKING POINT**

**By Dana Ellington Myles**

## Chapter One

Dr. Richard Moreland  
Patient: Caitlyn M. Birch  
Evaluation, December 8, 2012

*Patient suffered a breakdown of sorts two days ago. After medical examination, patient transferred to The Estate for further evaluation and treatment. Interview with patient's parents and close (?) friend, reveal three traumatic events in the past eight years. Initial diagnosis, fugue state brought about by extremely delayed post-traumatic stress. Physical symptoms - uncontrollable shaking of the hands, bouts of rapid breathing, increased heart rate, particularly at night. Additional symptoms - night terrors. Prescribed nightly sedative to aid in sleeping, lesser dose during hours of wakefulness to help with tremors. Patient unresponsive for the most part during the day.*

#

*Session: 3  
Date: December 12, 2012  
Note: Nurse Gavin informed me of patient's waking; stopped in first thing.*

Good morning Caitlyn.

Good. Morning.

*Note: Subject's speech still slurred. Decrease sedatives immediately.*

Do you feel up to talking today?

What day is it? Where am I?

You're at The Estate Caitlyn. It's Friday. December twelfth.

Oh. Am I sick?

No, you're not sick.

You're my doctor. Dr. Moreland.

That's right.

Who has Tila and Hun?

I'm not sure who they are?

Where's my mom?

She'll be by this afternoon. She usually comes around two.

Good, she'll know then. May I have some tea?

Sure, I'll have the nurse bring you some. Do you feel like talking today?

Maybe after my tea.

Okay, I'll tell you what, I'll come back this afternoon when your mom's here.

Thank you.

#

Session: 6

Date: December 17, 2012

*Note: Patient looks much better, definitely more alert.*

Good morning Dr. Moreland.

Good morning. I'm happy to see you up and awake.

Yes, well, I feel a bit more, peppy. I guess.

Have you had any more nightmares?

No, I've managed to sleep through the night for the past three nights.

Without the sleeping pills?

Yep, without the pills.

That's great.

Well, letting my folks bring my dog helped.

I noticed you seemed a bit more relaxed.

Don't suppose I could have my cat too, eh?

Maybe, but it would have to be in a carrier.

Great. I'll let mom know.

#

Session: 12

Date: December 27, 2012

*Note: Patient definitely stronger. Going to begin recovery therapy after the first of the year; have agreed to allow animals to be present for some sessions as they seem to have a calming effect.*

#

Session: 1 – Recovery

Date: January 7, 2013

Alright Caitlyn, it's time we got down to business. I want to have you out of here and functioning on your own by spring.

Geez Doc, that sounds a bit soon don't'cha think?

Not in this case. You're amazingly resilient and I believe we can get you back up to one hundred percent fairly quickly.

So what you're saying is the past eight years of my life didn't have any lasting effect.

Oh no, there is definitely some damage, but I believe we can work through it and get you past whatever it is; to where you can live on your own again without the need for all the heavy artillery. We're going to restore your sense of security.

I hope so.

So now, let's get started. I want you to go back to this time last year, 2012. What are your clearest memories?

Do you mind if I hold Hun while we talk? She gets so mad when I keep her in the carrier too long.

#

(January 2, 2012)

"What? Oh, okay, okay. It's morning, I get it."

The insectile blaring of her alarm reminded Caitlyn of the time her dad knocked the hornets' nest from the front porch of the beach house. All one billion of those hornets buzzed at the same time creating one of the angriest noises Caitlyn had ever heard. Until she'd heard the alarm clock at the local home goods store, that is.

The sales clerk was showing it to a family who was obviously there stocking up in preparation to send their progeny off to college. The clerk's strongest selling point? The sound would be the perfect jolt to get that freshman out of bed for any class that started before eleven in the morning.

Caitlyn bought it. Not because she had trouble getting going in the mornings, quite the opposite. Caitlyn prided herself on her ability to rise and shine. Instead, she'd fallen for the unique way the time was projected from the clock so it appeared on the ceiling. The alarm just proved to be a bit of a bonus. When it went off, she was most definitely awake. The blast was so jarring that falling back to sleep was not an option.

"Ugh. Alright you lazy bums, let's get rolling."

Caitlyn slid out of bed and shuffled into the bathroom. The animals, with which she shared the house, never seemed to be affected by the alarm. They wouldn't move until she came back, fresh from a steamy shower, wrapped in a fluffy towel.

Only then would Attila, a larger than life Rottweiler and Hun, an equally larger than life Maine Coon cat, rise from their respective places on the king sized bed. There'd be lots of yawning and stretching as Caitlyn tossed the towel into the hamper and then put on her robe.

Soon after, all three of them would head for the kitchen. That particular January day, it was sunny but chilly. Despite living far enough below the Mason Dixon line to be considered "in the South", mornings that late in January were brisk. Frost would cover most of the windows until well into the afternoon.

Caitlyn didn't dally as she unlocked and opened the patio door, letting Attila outside into the big back yard. Tila didn't do much dallying either, finishing her business in record time so as not to be out in the cold longer than she had to be. The big dog came back to the patio door, giving the glass her signature head butt to indicate her readiness to come back inside. Caitlyn had barely had time to walk away from the door before she heard the soft thumping.

"One day, I swear you're going to just pop your head right through that glass." She'd never understood how such a big dog learned to be so delicate. Another burst of cool air swirled in as Caitlyn opened the door. Tila brushed Caitlyn's legs as she came in, leaving some of the cold from her fur to seep through the shag of Caitlyn's robe.

"Brrrrr, Tila. Geez. No need to share. I know its cold out."

Hun avoided going anywhere near the cold air blowing through the open door, opting instead to go straight to her food dish situated next to the refrigerator. She reveled in the warm air blowing from underneath the refrigerator. She settled into its flow, nosily crunching away at the last of her kibble. Soon after, loud snorting added to the noise in the kitchen as Tila scarfed down her own kibble, announcing that the morning routine was well on its way toward completion.

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