

Read a Romance!

Lean on me

This time, it was the firefighter who needed help-and Kendyl was more than happy to come to his rescue . . .

hanks for volunteering today. You'll be a walker." The woman behind the table handed Kendyl a nametag. "Escort our donors to the snack table when they're finishedyou can touch their elbow lightly as you walk with them to make sure they're steady.'

"Got it." Kendyl had donated before, but this was her first time volunteering at the blood drive. She surveyed the room. One of the nurses beckoned her to a cot where a young woman was just sitting up. As she stood, Kendyl took her elbow.

"Feeling okay?" Kendyl asked, as they walked.

The woman nodded. "This is the third time I've donated," she said. "I come for the donuts." She gave Kendyl a smile and selected a glazed one.

"Hi." Kendyl returned his smile. "You're feeling okay?"

Sam was on his feet now, and she had his elbow. "I'm feeling fine," he said. "I try to do this twice a year if I can, and-"

Suddenly, the color drained from his face and Kendyl felt him sag against her. Fortunately, they'd taken only a step, so Kendyl supported him as he collapsed onto the cot. The nurse rushed to their side and maneuvered Sam's legs back onto the cot and propped pillows under his feet.

"Did he just-did he faint?" Kendyl said.

The nurse glanced at Kendyl with a hint of a smile, and nodded. "Yes, our fireman fainted on us. But don't worry—he'll

be fine. This isn't an unusual reaction."

Just then Sam's eyes blinked open. "Wait-what am I doing back on the cot?"

"Sam, you passed out briefly, so I'd like you to lie down here for a few minutes," the nurse said. She turned to Kendyl, "Can you stay with him?"

"Sure," Kendyl replied. She sat on the stool beside Sam. "Have you ever fainted before?"

"Never. Have you ever had

anyone faint on you before?" "Never," Kendyl smiled.

"Well, thanks for helping me," Sam said. Kendyl met his hazel eyes, then noticed the color had come back into his face. A moment passed, then, "I've got to

get back to the station," he said, moving to sit up.

Kendyl frowned. "I'd give it a few more minutes."

Sam sighed, but followed her

suggestion. For the next few minutes, the

two chatted and laughed, then Sam said, "Okay, let's do it." He swung his feet to the floor, took a deep breath, then stood.

Kendyl took his elbow. "Can you make it?"

"Only if I have my walker to help me." Sam smiled at Kendyl. "Will you join me for a donut?" he asked when they reached the snack table.

"I'm on duty, remember?"

"Oh, right," he said. "Well, in

that case, Kendyl, are you free to have dinner with me on Saturday?"

"That would be nice." "Can I pick you up?"

Kendyl took a napkin from the refreshment table, jotted her number, and handed it to him. "Sure-that is, unless I have to pick you up . . . again."

"Very funny," Sam said, taking the napkin, grabbing a donut, and heading toward the door. When he turned to give her a wave and that warm smile, Kendyl couldn't help feeling a little faint herself.

—Krista Weidner

He was a firefighter—that explained the muscles

Kendyl laughed. "Okay, then. On to the next patient." She spotted a cute guy on a cot, chatting with a nurse. Blue jeans, T-shirt, dark blonde hair and-Kendyl noticed-a great build. Those arms, she thought.

"It can be a tough job," she heard him say, "but I spend a lot of time waiting around the firehouse, cleaning the equipment."

A firefighter. That explained the muscles. Kendyl walked toward the check-in area.

"It was nice to meet Sam," Kendyl heard the nurse say. "Now, let's get a walker to take you over to the snack table."

She caught Kendyl's eve and waved her over.

"I don't need a walker," the firefighter said. "My grandmother uses one of those."

The nurse smiled up at Kendyl.

"Oh, you mean that kind of walker. Hello . . . Kendyl," he said, looking from her nametag to her eyes as he sat up and swung his legs over the edge of the cot.

Crossword puzzle solution

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