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Subject: Re: Winds of Change  
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Thu, 26 Jul 2012 00:41:42 GMT  
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From: Tikatue Sent: 3/16/2007 2:46 PM

Friday, August 17th, 9:30 a.m., Tracy Island

"Recently, International Rescue was made aware of a situation involving Dr....' What is the man's name?" Jeff hunted over his desk, looking for the article he'd clipped and the notes Drew had given him on the situation. He found the article, then looked back at his work and shook his head. "That won't do. I have to be more general."

He scanned the notes and the article again, tapping his stylus on his chin as he did so. Then he erased what he'd started, and began to write again. "'International Rescue wishes to offer its support...' No, that won't do either." He took a deep breath, sitting back to stare at the screen, taking off his reading glasses as he did. Shaking his head, he murmured, "Maybe I'd better give this to Tin-Tin. She's taken so much of my dictation she could probably write this and make it sound more like me than I can!"

A small window popped up in the corner of his computer screen, and a light chime sounded. He put his glasses back on and straightened up. "Contact the Killdeers with ETA." He sighed heavily, tossed his glasses on the desktop, and slumped back, rubbing his temples. As if on cue, Kyrano appeared at the door from the study, a tray holding a coffee carafe, cups, and condiments on it in his hands. "Your timing is perfect, Kyrano."

"It is a gift," Kyrano gently quipped as he set the tray on a nearby table and poured a cup of coffee for Jeff. As he passed it over, he observed, "You are troubled, Mr. Tracy."

Jeff nodded, a rueful expression on his face. "You have that right. I'm having trouble composing a letter to show our support of Mercy General, despite Dr. Willis's actions." He paused to take a sip from the cup, then went on. "I've also been reminded of the vacation Dianne and I promised the younger kids." He shook his head. "There's no way we can do it; Dianne simply isn't up to it yet. I guess I have to discuss it with her, then break the news to the children... and Dianne's relatives. Jared will be fairly easy, but Douglas?" Jeff shook his head again.

"You may find it easier to deal with him than with the children," Kyrano said with a warning tone. "Perhaps Lisa and Dr. Carmichael could be of some assistance."

"I hope so. I know the children will be disappointed; they were looking forward to this. So was I, to tell the truth. But that damned crash..." He took a sip of coffee to keep from sighing. "It changed everything."

"Indeed it did, as all such things do," Kyrano said, catching Jeff's eye with his own sympathetic gaze. "But you... but we must go on. Learn from it, and use what we learn in our lives for the future."

Jeff stared at Kyrano for a long moment, then smiled slightly. "You're right, as usual, Kyrano." He

glanced down at the screen. "I think I'll take a break and go discuss the vacation with my wife, then come back to this later." He took another sip, placed his coffee cup in the saucer, and rose. "Thanks for the coffee, and the advice, Kyrano."

"You are most welcome, Mr. Tracy," Kyrano said. "Good luck in your discussion."

"Thanks," Jeff said again. He stopped at the partition between lounge and study, turning and pointing. "You can leave the carafe there. I shouldn't be too long."

"Very good, Mr. Tracy."

As Jeff left, Kyrano picked up the soiled cup, and put it on his now empty tray. "I will return with a fresh carafe in twenty minutes," he murmured. "I fear it will take longer for the discussion than Mr. Tracy believes."

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Jeff entered the sick room all in a rush, only to stop short at the sight of Maggie straightening up one of the empty beds -- the one Dianne usually slept in.

"Oh hello, Jeff," Maggie said, glancing up from her work. "She's on the patio outside the dining room. She needed the change of scenery and I needed some quiet to work in."

"Ah, okay," Jeff replied, blinking. "Where's Andy?"

"In the surgery, getting ready for the follow up appointment for the nurses. He's looking over the files they brought back with them from the hospital." At Jeff's sudden frown, Maggie added, "He's one of the doctors on record as treating them; they might as well be in his own files back home."

"Ah, I see. I need to talk with him for a minute."

"Sure. Drew?" Maggie called. "Jeff's here. Needs to talk to you."

"Coming!"

It took a moment for Drew to appear. He was wearing a button down shirt and slacks, and had a data pad in his hand. "If you're wondering where Di is..."

"Maggie already told me," Jeff replied. He glanced from Drew to Maggie and back to Drew again. "I need your professional opinion."

Drew put the pad down on the bedside table, while Maggie went back to straightening up the bed clothes. "Go ahead."

"Before all this happened, Dianne and I had planned a vacation in the States with the younger kids. We were going to take Stephanie with us to the ranch in Wyoming, then the twins to our place in New Hampshire." Jeff slid his hands in his pockets. "I've gotten to the point where I have to confirm our arrangements or cancel them." He moistened his lips with his tongue. "I need to

know: is Dianne fit enough to go?"

"When did you plan this for?" Drew asked, reaching out a hand to smooth it idly over the folded down sheet.

"We planned to leave Sunday, arrive in the States on Saturday...."

Drew shook his head. "No. She's not ready. I haven't even released her from the sick room yet."

Jeff paused, nodding. "How about next Sunday?"

Drew frowned. "Why do you ask that? You know it's still too soon."

"I know, Drew, but I need to hear it from you. The kids... they'll want to salvage some of the vacation if they can...."

"Ah, I see," Drew said, nodding sagely. "I get to be the bad guy here."

Jeff gave his friend a rueful look. "Uh, well... maybe... a little. The decision will still be mine and Dianne's to make, but I'd like the backup of medical authority." He rubbed the back of his neck. "Not only for the kids, but for Jared and Douglas, too."

Drew snorted. "If you have any trouble with Dougie, you send him my way. Or Lisa's. We'll straighten him out."

"I hope I won't have to, but I'll remember your offer."

Maggie shook her head. "You know Doug," she said, her tone one of slight disgust. "He'll be on the horn to you and to Lisa, trying either to get you to make Jeff change his mind, or to gripe about it."

"Just as long as it's me and not Dianne," Drew said stoutly. He glanced up at Jeff. "Do you need anything else?"

"Let me know when the nurses can go back to duty. But don't rush them. I'd like them to be healed fully before they go back on active status."

"I'll let you know. And depending on how things look tomorrow morning, I'll likely be releasing Dianne from the sick room."

Jeff grinned. "That's good news!"

"I thought you might say that," Drew said dryly. He picked up the data pad. "Now, I'd better get back to work."

"And I'd better find my wife so we can discuss the change in plans."

"Then I'll see you at lunch." Drew waved a hand and headed back into the surgical area.

Jeff turned to leave as well. "The patio outside the dining room?" he asked.

"Yes," Maggie replied. She paused, and just before the door closed behind Jeff, she called to him. "Jeff?" He stopped and turned back to her, a questioning look on his face. "She's feeling kind of low today," Maggie explained, her voice dropping in volume. "Today... it would have been her wedding anniversary with Rick. She's got their wedding album out and is looking over the pictures..."

Jeff's face took on a look that Maggie couldn't quite place. It was concern mixed with sadness and perhaps a bit of stubbornness. He realized she was watching him, and gave her a smile, one that didn't reach his eyes.

"Thanks for the heads up, Maggie. I appreciate it." He turned to step outside again.

"Jeff?"

Something in Maggie's voice made him glance back again. "Yes?"

Maggie gave him a troubled look. "Don't be upset with her."

Jeff smiled again, and shook his head. "I won't be. Not now... not about this." He raised a hand. "See you later."

The door finally closed behind him, and Maggie sighed.

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