
Subject: Re: Winds of Change
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Thu, 26 Jul 2012 00:53:36 GMT
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From: ArtisticRainey Sent: 3/18/2007 2:53 PM

Friday August 17, 10.30am, Tracy Island.

The mail plane had come and gone without anything of interest for Dominic. He hurried down the outer steps with Joshua in his arms. The young boy was clamouring to be let down, but there were too many steps, and they were already late. Joshua's disgruntled murmuring vibrated with each descending step, and Dominic suddenly realised that the lift would have been quicker -- and less hassle -- than his current choice. The mixture of beach toys and water bottles clunked in his backpack, and Josh's diaper bag was swinging at his side. Horsey, in Joshua's grasp, was brushing against his forearm. He reached the ground floor and entered into the common area to find Nikki half-heartedly viewing some of the art on the walls.

"Sorry, sorry, sorry pet," he said, and finally let Joshua down.

The small boy immediately ran over to Nikki and attached himself to her leg.

"Ik-ik-ik-ik!" He shouted with a wide grin.

"It's okay," Nikki said, and ruffled Joshua's fluffy white-blond hair. "I didn't think I'd been stood up," she added with a grin.

Dominic smiled and clapped his hands.

"Well, shall we get going?"

He gestured for Nikki to go ahead of him, and she managed to extricate her leg from Joshua's grasp and offer him her hand instead. The merry party made their way to the monorail, beginning their journey to the beach.

The scent of sun block was heavy, and Dominic glanced down at his bare, glistening arms. He had always been pale and skinny, and while the extra gym training was beginning to make him visible to the naked eye, even the tropical sun didn't seem able to tan him. Joshua was even more heavily covered than himself, though the boy had inherited his mother's more tanned complexion. The boy was chatting to Nikki, barely able to see her over the brim of his peaked cap. Horsey was being carried along by the left hind leg. His glass eyes glinted in the morning sunshine, and he almost looked sad.

There was a light smell of chlorine and tropical plants in the air as they reached the poolside, and Horsey was suddenly swung around wildly as Joshua waved in greeting to Virgil, who was sitting in the shade with a glass of water. It looked like it was sweating.

"Hi, Virgil," Nikki called, and waved along with Joshua.

Dominic gave a salute to the other man.

"Off on an adventure!" he said.

"Before you get going, come over here," Virgil said, and sat up. "There's something here you might find interesting to say the least."

Nikki looked over her shoulder to Dom, who shrugged, and they made their way over to the other man. Virgil held up an open copy of Newsweek. Nikki shook her head with pursed lips, and Dominic rolled his eyes.

"That's just marvellous," he said.

Emblazoned across two pages in bold, red writing, were the words: INTERNATIONAL RESCUE: NO MORE LIES, SAVE MORE LIVES!

"There's a whole section about us in here," Virgil said. He flicked through a few more pages. "There's stuff for us, against us. Heck, there's even an article on those crazy people who think we're aliens and their theories about us."

"Ugh. People can be so dumb," Nikki said. "I mean, why would anyone take notice of that kind of nonsense?"

"Makes for an entertaining story," Virgil quipped, "even if it is complete sh -- garbage," he said, eyeing Joshua.

"May I?" Dominic said, and reached out for the magazine.

Virgil acquiesced, and Dominic shook his head as he flicked through the pages. He came to the first article Virgil had shown them, trying to stop a sneer of contempt reaching his face. Didn't they save more lives than anyone thought possible in such situations? He huffed out a breath, and read some of the lines.

"...International Rescue, a humanitarian, philanthropic organization, has repeatedly ignored calls for them to release details about their technology. Their equipment does a fantastic job, so why not share? If each country could equip its own emergency services with this incredible machinery and technology, it is doubtless that more lives would be saved than International Rescue could ever manage. Even they themselves have increased their numbers in the past year at least; surely this is a sign that the state of the world is too much for even this extraordinary team to cope with..."

"Who wrote this rubbish?" Dominic said, and cast his eye upon the by-line and reporter's photograph.

His hands tensed up so much that the magazine crumpled at the edges, and if it were possible, he went even whiter. He felt a vaguely ill feeling creep into his stomach, and read the name again.

"Are you alright?" Virgil asked, and stood up.

"Yes," Dominic said. "I'm fine." He handed the magazine back to Virgil. "If you don't mind, I'd like to have a better look at that when you're done with it."

"Sure," Virgil said, frowning slightly and glancing over Dom's shoulder at Nikki, who looked equally as confused.

"Thanks." Dom turned to Nikki and his son, who had grown restless. His expression brightened, but looked strained. "Shall we head on?"

Nikki nodded, and the party waved their goodbyes, and walked on down to the beach. Joshua continued to babble half-coherently and soon found a spot on the beach that he declared was his 'favourite'. Dominic firstly pulled a bucket and spade from his backpack, which set Joshua and Horsey digging, and then he and Nikki set up camp on a large, soft beach blanket. Nikki didn't waste any time.

"What's wrong, Dom?" She asked, pinning the man with an "I'm-not-taking-any-nonsense-from-you" look as soon as he glanced up.

"That article, the one about sharing the tech? It was written by a Thomas E. Hawkins. And that was definitely his photograph."

"Your brother?" Nikki asked incredulously.

"Yeah. Tom. Man..."

"That's...that's...just...oh my..."

"I know." Dominic watched as Joshua flung sand across the beach, covering himself in the process. "Careful son!" He shook his head, and focused on Nikki again. "How am I supposed t' even talk to him again? He doesn't know who I work for -- he can't -- but now... I guess I just don't know how to deal with this. Tom's my best friend, y'know?"

"I understand," Nikki said. "Look, maybe it was just a one-time thing. Maybe he doesn't even believe it but took the job anyway."

"That's possible... I mean, Newsweek is a big breakthrough for him. He might just have thought it was a more attention-grabbing story."

"That could be the case. I guess you're not going to find out for sure unless you ask him."

"I guess I'll have to," Dom said.

He tried to shake the frown from his face and the feeling from his stomach, and suddenly dashed across the beach to snatch his son and twirl him high in the air. No sense in running this day for Joshua, he thought, as the tiny blond boy squealed with delight.
