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Subject: Re: Winds of Change  
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sat, 28 Jul 2012 02:16:56 GMT  
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From: susanmartha Sent: 6/13/2007 10:29 PM

Tuesday, September 4, 2068, 3:30 p.m., Tracy Island

"It's not fair," Cherie grumbled as she walked down the stairs, toward the pool.

Anna had been sitting in a lounge, reading, but now she looked up from her book. "What's not fair? Life in general or something specific?"

Cherie slumped down on the nearest lounge. "My friends started school this week. The cutest guy in the school asked Ellen to go steady with him. They all went to the mall last weekend and I'm stuck on this island. I won't see anyone until next summer." She glared at Anna.

Anna raised her eyebrows and put the book down. "You know, life's..."

Cherie cut her off. "I know life's not fair. And I have a lot to be thankful for. And I'm being childish. But I wish I could have spent this year at school with my friends."

"You've lived on the island for how long now? Two years? And you're still in touch with friends from Carolina?"

"Sure. I've known most of them all my life. We went to kindergarten and grade school together. Alex is still in touch with his friends, too."

"You're lucky. I went to 5 different grade schools in 3 different states. I haven't kept in touch with anyone from college even."

Cherie looked almost shocked at this. "How can you stand that? Grandma Lisa still has friends she's known since grade school. So does Grandma Tracy. For that matter, so do Dad and the older boys."

"I grew up with the idea that you went where the jobs were. My Dad got transferred a lot for a while. I suppose that's why moving to New Zealand with my husband didn't seem like such a big deal to me. I'm used to the idea of making new friends wherever I go." Anna looked at Cherie thoughtfully.

"You know, I wasn't going to say 'life's not fair' or any of those things. I was going to say that life is a series of trade offs. You live with you family on a tropical island. When your mom came here she decided it was worth leaving her home town to come here. What did she give up and what did she gain?"

Cherie looked thoughtful. "She got away from painful memories and people who where harassing her. She got us kids away from the harassment, too."

"Were any of your friends harassing you? What about your brothers' friends?"

"Jenny's mother died in the bombing. She screamed at me every time she saw me. Linda's mom and dad wouldn't let her go near me. It was pretty hard, since they were both in my class. The teacher thought about transferring me out of her class because of that. But the other teacher for my grade blamed Dad, too. So I just had to put up with it." Cherie looked down at her hands. "There were some problems at church, too. Mom stopped going for a while."

"So your Mom though the chance to get away from that was worth leaving her old friends. Do you?"

"We didn't leave until 2 years after the bombing. It was getting better."

"For you or for your mom?"

"It was still hard for me, sometimes. I don't know how the boys were doing. Mom seemed to be getting better but," Cherie hesitated, "I know she didn't see most of her friends anymore. And we didn't have a lot of money."

"So your mom moved here and you're stuck on a tropical island with 7 brothers and no one your age."

"Yeah. It's not that I don't like it but..." Cherie's voice trailed off as she tried to find the right words.

"You miss the social life of school, and friends."

Cherie nodded. "That's it. I was supposed to spend this school year with Grandma Lisa in Greenville. I was going to see if my cousin Stephanie could stay, too. But then Grandpa came around and Grandma left Greenville. Now she's engaged to Kyrano and will be living here. Steph and I just spent a week in California with Uncle Drew, but I don't know when I'll see her again either."

"What happened with your grandpa? Do you like him?"

"I don't know him. I'd never met him before. Grandma Lisa kicked him out when Mom was little." Cherie hesitated, not sure if she wanted to tell this to Anna. "He beat Mom really bad. Mom wound up in the hospital and Grandma divorced him. Until this summer I didn't even know he was alive."

"And he came back now? After, what, 40 years? What does your grandma think of him?"

"Grandma doesn't trust him. And then Uncle Douglas got transferred, so she didn't want to stay in Greenville any longer."

"So she made the choice to leave rather than staying and having to deal with him. And that spoiled your plans."

Cherie looked out at the ocean and was quiet for a while. When she looked back at Anna, she looked troubled. "He said he was trying to make amends, and he wanted to get to know his

grandchildren. Do you think that might be true?"

"I don't know. What was your impression of him?"

"I just saw him for five minutes in the grocery store. Grandma freaked and wouldn't let us go anywhere alone after that."

"You met him in a grocery store? Does he live near your grandma's old home?"

"No, he lives in a different city. He said he'd been following her, wanting to get a chance to talk to her."

"He's faking it," Anna said confidently. "If he really wanted to make amends, he would have contacted her and set up a meeting. And it would have been with just her, not with her grandkids around. If he's been following her, that's stalking. Did he try again?"

"No. We came home the next day. Until we left, Grandma wouldn't let any of us go anywhere without her. She didn't even leave me with the kids when we went to meet Mom and John at the airport."

"And then she moved here."

Cherie nodded. "Now we have no reason to visit Greenville. I won't see them at all!"

"You won't be able to go to Greenville alone, that's for sure." Anna hesitated. "Have your friends ever come here?"

"Not to the island, no. They've been to the ranch in Wyoming. I had them up for my birthday last summer."

"So you have two problems. One, you want to see your friends in Greenville more often, and two, you want girlfriends your own age. So what other options do you have?"

Cherie looked surprised. "What do you mean?"

"You've been looking at one solution to your problem. It isn't going to happen because of something you can't control. That's not fair, but instead of worrying about that maybe you can look at other solutions."

"Like what?"

"I don't know; let's brainstorm. Could you live with your cousin?"

Cherie shook her head, "Mom and Uncle Doug don't always get along. Anyway they don't live in Greenville, so I still wouldn't see my friends."

"And there's no way for you to make new ones here." Anna thought for a minute. "Have you thought about other ways to meet people your own age?"

"Like what?"

"A club or group in Christchurch? Girl Scouts? Maybe a boarding school? I don't know; maybe you can think of some other things."

Cherie frowned. "A club would mean someone would have to fly me over. And a boarding school would mean I wouldn't see my family except on holidays."

"Unless the boarding school was in Christchurch or somewhere else nearby. Then you could come home on weekends. Thousands of children do go to boarding schools. Thousands of others live in isolated places and never see other children. You have to decide what is best for you." Anna grinned. "Want some homework?"

Cherie grinned back. "Depends on the homework."

"I want you to write down all of the alternatives you can think of. Write down whatever comes to mind, no matter how ridiculous it sounds. Spend a day doing just that. Sleep on the ideas you've come up with. The next day write each idea down on a separate sheet of paper. On each sheet make two columns -- 'Pro' and 'Con'. Then write down everything you can think of, again no matter how silly, under each heading. Then summarize what you have on the back of each sheet. I'll go over them with you when I come back next week." Anna looked thoughtful for a minute. "You might ask someone to help."

Cherie was doubtful. "One of my brothers?"

"Possibly. Or Tin-Tin, or one of the recruits. Whoever you feel comfortable talking about this with. Maybe have a couple people over for a girls' night and brainstorm. And I bet Grandma Tracy would have some ideas. She must have been lonely sometimes with all these men around."

Cherie frowned. "She goes back to Kansas a couple times each year. I never thought about her being lonely."

"Keep in mind that some day you will go off to college. Learning how to make new friends now will make finding friends in college that much easier." Anna looked at her watch. "I have an appointment in ten minutes. Should I plan on talking to you next Tuesday afternoon when school lets out?"

Cherie nodded, then grinned. "If I do a good job with my homework, do I get a good grade?"

Anna chuckled and stood up. "This is strictly a pass/fail course, my dear. And you're the one who decides if you passed or failed."[/color]

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