
Subject: Re: Winds of Change

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sat, 28 Jul 2012 02:28:15 GMT

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A few minutes later, the three of them appeared at the table. The sweat pants were rolled up at the waist several times, but were still way too long. Even with the cuffs rolled up, she kept tripping on them.

The t-shirt was also too large. It fell down below her knees, or it would have if she hadn't tied it in front. It still came down past her waist. Between the t-shirt and the sweat pants she looked like a 4 year old playing dress up in her mom's clothes. That is, if a 4 year old could look pregnant.

Jeff Tracy looked up from his paper. "Hello. You must be Jackie." He smiled briefly and went back to his paper.

"It's Jasmine." Dom pulled out a chair for her, next to an elderly lady, and she slid into it giving him a smile.

"Whatever. Is there anyone you need to call, Jazzy?" Jeff never looked up from his paper.

Jasmine opened her mouth to say something then thought the better of it. Instead she said a simple, "No."

Dominic held out the chair on the other side of Jasmine for Lisa. Alex and Tyler were already seated just past her and beyond them was a young, oriental-looking woman. Dom sat down directly across from Jasmine. There was a 2 or 3 year old next to him. A girl with 2 pigtails, one on each side, and freckles was sitting on the other side of the child and helping him eat. Brains sat on the other side of Dom and another young man, a real hunk, sat next to him. Jeff was at the head of the table still hidden behind his newspaper. Anna sat at the other end managing to look like she disapproved of everything. For some reason she reminded Jasmine of a snapping turtle.

Tyler handed a salad bowl to Lisa. She picked up some tongs and put some lobster salad on her plate. But Jasmine didn't have a plate in front of her. Just then Kyrano walked over and put a plate in front of her along with a bowl. "Mr. Brains said you were not to have any rich or heavy foods. So I made a plate for you." He nodded at her and turned away. She looked down at the plate. It contained a tuna fish sandwich and a banana. The bowl contained chicken noodle soup.

She started to eat the sandwich but couldn't seem to get comfortable. No matter how she sat, she itched. She squirmed in her chair but nothing seemed to help.

"You don't look comfortable, my dear. Is anything wrong?" The older lady next to Jasmine smiled and added, "I'm Emily Tracy, Jefferson's mother. Can I help?"

"I think I might be allergic to your laundry soap or something. My, um, seat itches."

Across from her Dom was helping the toddler eat. Brains and the other young man were smiling at each other and talking.

Jasmine caught Dominic's eye and smiled. "Oh, what an adorable child. Is he yours?"

Dominic grinned broadly. "Yes. This is Joshua. Say 'hi' to the pretty lady, Josh." Joshua smiled at the nice lady. He was having one of his favorite meals, a peanut butter sandwich.

"Is his mother around?"

Dominic froze for a second. "No. She and I were divorced soon after Joshua was born. She didn't want custody then." His lips tightened for a second, then he smiled down at Joshua, "But we do ok without a mom. Although sometimes I do think I should start looking for a new mom for him."

In the meantime, Joshua had finished his lunch and climbed down from his chair. He ran around the table to see this new person for himself. He smiled up at her and when she smiled back at him, he reached up toward her and grabbed her hair with his peanut butter smeared hands. Since he wanted to be picked up, he started climbing onto her lap, using her hair for support. Jasmine shrieked in pain.

"Joshua Aaron Kelly! You let go right now!" Dom started to stand up but Grandma Tracy had already grabbed Joshua. It took several tries before he finally released Jasmine's hair and settled on Grandma's lap.

"I'm sorry. Here, let me help you wipe that out of your hair." Dominic came over with a napkin and used it to get some of the peanut butter out of her hair.

"You better find a woman to help raise that young hellion soon." Jeff Tracy had never looked out from behind his paper.

Jasmine waved Dominic away. "That's fine. I'll get the rest out when I shower." She gulped down some iced tea, looking as if she wished it was something stronger. Her voice was considerably less friendly when she added, "You called him Joshua Aaron Kelly. I thought your last name was Tracy?"

Dominic took Joshua away from Grandma Tracy and sat back down at his place. "No, I'm not a family member. I'm a private nurse they hired when Mr. Tracy had his accident last winter. I stayed on to help with the kids."

Jeff snorted and put down his paper. "Those brats of mine from my first wife couldn't be bothered to stay when I needed help. They don't come here much since I remarried. See if they get anything in my will."

Jasmine looked around desperately. "And who is your friend, Brains?"

Brains beamed back at her. "This is my friend, Luke. Luke, meet Jacquelyn."

"It's Jasmine," she smiled. He looked good wearing an unbuttoned short sleeved shirt, but there was more fabric starting at the middle of his chest. "I'm pleased to meet you. Do you live here too?"

"I came over here to help decorate the house. But Brains and I became such good friends I just sort of stayed." He looked adoringly at Brains, who had a "cat that ate the canary" look on his face. "He has such a brilliant mind. And such a nice body. And, of course, he doesn't need his glasses at night. We've had such a wonderful relationship these past two years...." Luke leaned against Brains and snuggled up. Brains looked even smugger, if that was possible. Jasmine suddenly realized Luke was wearing a sarong and it didn't quite fit all the way around. The pink flowers on it matched Brains' scrubs.

Kyrano brought out dessert. Plates of chocolate cake with a scoop of vanilla ice cream covered with chocolate shavings and topped with a strawberry were set in front of people. It looked simply divine. But when Kyrano reached Jasmine, he put down a small bowl of plain vanilla ice cream. He smiled at her. "No heavy foods." She returned a wan smile and started eating.

Anna looked at the clock and cleared her throat. "It's almost time to start today's Bible lesson. Then I really need to get home. I'm giving a lesson to the fallen women staying at the Salvation Army shelter tonight."

Tyler piped up, "What are we learning today?"

"We'll be continuing with the different levels of Hell. We're on the sixth level, which contains liars, cheaters and those who bear false witness. We may also talk about the seventh level, which is for loose women and people caught in adultery."

"Cool," said Tyler. "Are you going to join us, Miss Joan?"

Next to Tyler, Alex leaned forward in his seat. "Afterward, I can show you my bug collection. I've got some really neat tarantulas I caught right here on the island." His face shone with excitement.

"Can I feed the mice to Mr. Hiss this time?" Cherie asked.

"Hey. You got to do that last time. It's my turn now." Tyler looked ready to fight for his snake feeding rights.

"Don't forget to feed the alligator. We don't want Little Snapper climbing out of his pond again. It upsets the kittens," Jeff said distractedly. "Damn. The Royals lost again. They won't be in the Series this year."

Dominic wiped off Joshua's hands. "I'll just give Joshua a bath and settle him down for a nap." He looked at Jasmine. "If you want, you can come help."

"Ah, no," Jasmine replied. "I don't think I'd better go with you. I really need to go downstairs and wash my hair again. To get the peanut butter out."

"Let me get you some different shampoo. You can use some of mine." Cherie smiled at her from across the table.

"Was there a problem with the shampoo?" Anna looked at Jasmine as if it was her fault the shampoo had caused problems.

"She accidentally got some of John's. Look at her hair," Dominic called from the door.

"I thought we got rid of all of that evil stuff," Anna sniffed. "That young man will come to a bad end."

"Well, he won't come to it here. I've forbidden him to come to the island while his hair is that color." Jeff stood up, folded his paper and walked toward his study. "Nice to have met you, Jake."

"Jasmine."

"Kyrano," Anna snapped. "When will you be ready to fly me home?"

"As soon as the dishes are done, Mistress Anna. That should be in about an hour."

"I'll be down at the plane waiting. I certainly don't want to have to stay here until the supply plane next week."

In a small voice, Jasmine asked, "Can I come with you? I really need to be on my way."

Anna glanced at her. "If you're ready when we leave. Tin-Tin, don't we have anything that will make her look less like a harlot?"

"I'll see if I can find one of my muumuu that will fit." Tin-Tin smiled at Jasmine. "I'll bring it by the guest bedroom while you're taking a shower."

"Thank you." Jasmine quickly got up from the table and headed for the door. She could still hear Anna talking.

"Youth today. They have no manners."

Forty-five minutes later Dominic drove the golf cart up to Tracy One and dropped Jasmine off. She was wearing a muddy brown, shapeless dress that came down to her feet. She climbed up the stairs into the plane like she was scared it might take off without her.

Ten minutes later, Kyrano was just finishing the pre-flight checks. Anna walked up with a small overnight bag. "Our passenger on board?"

Kyrano grinned. "I do not think the combined engines of Thunderbirds 1, 2 and 3 could get her out. Do you wish to copilot?"

"This time I think I will. If for no other reason than to be sure I don't start laughing so hard I rattle the plane apart." She suppressed her own grin and went up the steps into the plane. Kyrano followed and closed up the plane behind him.

Thirty minutes later they landed at Christchurch's main airport. Kyrano opened the door and lowered the steps. Jasmine was down them like a shot. As she walked as fast as possible toward the terminal, Kyrano called after her, "I hope you enjoyed your stay on Tracy Island, Miss

Josephine." She started running.

Kyrano climbed back into the cockpit. Anna grinned at him from the copilot's seat. "Is she gone?"

Kyrano replied, "I believe the correct phrase is 'she took off like greased lighting'. I shall enjoy watching the boys when we tell them about this."

"Too late. A message just came over the radio. The boys landed 10 minutes after we left. I expect Alex and Tyler are already filling them in. I reminded Jeff that I promised Gordon immunity for telling me where the itching powder and shampoo were hidden."

She changed the subject. "You don't have to fly me to the Lake Colendge airport, you know. I can call my husband and have him pick me up here."

"I do not wish to run the risk of Miss Jasmine seeing you in the airport. Also, your car is there. And, truthfully, I wish ask you some questions. How did you know she was a fake?" Kyrano taxied the plane into the line waiting to take off. Anna waited until they were in the air to reply.

"I knew she was a fake as soon as I looked at her hair." Kyrano looked at her, inquiringly. Anna went on. "It was dry. With every hair in place. Well, actually in 'artful disarray'. If she'd been in the water, it would have dried in clumps."

"This is why you started your plan before we had checked her fingerprints."

"Yes. I told Tyler to give the cup to Tin-Tin as soon as we got back to the house. She was able to lift the prints and check the New Zealand fingerprint database before Brains was through with the medical check. If I'd had to contact someone in the Police department, I would have taken a lot longer. Considering what her record was like, I'm happy we checked."

"Most of the crimes on her record were minor things." Kyrano frowned.

"Most of her convictions were minor. The attempted extortion was never proven and charges were dropped. When I saw that, I made sure she was never left alone with any of the men. Tin-Tin, Lisa, Cherie and Emily helped me there. I wanted to be sure she had no basis for any charge she might try to bring. The Tracys don't need that type of publicity."

"Now I have a question for you. I can understand Tin-Tin having the sarong. But where did she get that burqua?"

"Two years ago, she went on an around the world trip with Alan and Lady Penelope. As a joke, Alan purchased for her a dress of the type women wear in Muslim countries. She was cleaning out her closet last week and put it in the pile of things to go to charity."

Kyrano called the tower and started to land. Anna kept her eyes on the instrument panel until they were safely on the ground. When he taxied off the runway, Anna continued, "Do you really need to do some shopping? I'd be glad to drive you around."

"No. The supply plane comes tomorrow. I need to get back to Tracy Island to be sure there is

enough food for all the hungry young men and women there." They both moved to the back compartment and Kyrano lowered the steps. "But I will look forward to seeing you next week."

Anna grinned, waved and headed for the parking lot and home.
