
Subject: Re: Winds of Change
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sat, 28 Jul 2012 02:44:59 GMT
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From: Tikatu Sent: 6/17/2007 5:52 PM

Thursday, September 6, 2068. 11 am. Tracy Island. (August 5, 11pm England, local time)

The house was quiet once again, and Kat had gotten back from an evening on the town. She'd needed it after the grueling day with the solicitors as they went over with her again and again what happened with Ernie. She'd been close to tears then; she was close to tears again as she considered what she knew she must do.

"I'll just ring him up and ask his advice," she murmured to herself as she pulled out her satellite phone. "But this will be so hard!"

She looked at the phone, gathering up her courage, then took a deep breath and speed-dialed his number. The connection took a few moments longer to make, then she heard the distinctive clamor of the ringing phone.

John was lounging on the sofa in his suite, reading and enjoying the morning sunshine streaming through the windows, when his satellite phone started ringing. He set his book down on the seat beside him, and picked up the handset. The caller ID told him it was Kat, and he quickly figured out the time difference. It's late there, he thought. I wonder what's up...

"Hey, Kat. How's it going?"

"Oh, hullo, John. It's good to see you!" Kat smiled, a tad nervous. "Things are going well here, though I've had a beastly day at the solicitor's office. It seems that the case is going to trial, and I am required to be a witness."

She paused, and decided she should ask how people were on the island. "How are you? How is the family? Are things going well there?"

"I'm fine," John said. "Nothing out of the ordinary to report. Our newest recruit Luke is settling in well. The kids are all back at school. Mom, Nikki, and Dom are all recuperating nicely." He shifted forward in the seat a little. "I'm sorry to hear you're going to have to be a witness at the trial, but at least that guy'll get what's coming to him. So, what can I do you for?"

"Well," Kat said, then paused slightly to get her words just so. "I was out with my friend, Thomas, and a few friends of his twin, Teresa, this evening." She smiled, and waved a hand. "After such a beastly day as I had, I needed a bit of fun to make things better." She paused for a breath, then resumed, "Anyway, one of Teresa's friends owns a taxi company. It's an all-female concern. All the drivers are female, as are the supervisors." She bit her lower lip slightly. "As we were talking, this friend discovered I was a mechanic by trade, and was very excited. The upshot of it is that she is interested in hiring me."

Kat looked away briefly, and when she brought her gaze back to the phone, her eyes were moist. "I... I don't know what to do. The offer is very generous; not as generous as working for your

father, of course, but still, a good wage. And I would be close to home, able to keep an eye on my mother. But..." here her voice dropped to a softer, more sultry tone, "I should miss the island, and my friends there, and particularly... you."

She straightened up a little, then smiled sadly. "So, could you give me advice as to which way I should go?"

John blinked in surprise. He hadn't been expecting what he had heard. He set one hand on one of his knees as something clicked inside of him, and he paused briefly before answering as he processed it. I really wouldn't be that upset if she left. I mean, I'd miss her, but definitely only as a friend and colleague. I guess this is the confirmation.

"Well Kat," he said, straightening up. "When it comes down to it, only your opinion matters on this. Of course we need you here and we'd miss you, but, it's your life. You've listed a lot of positives there: a good wage, close to home and your mother, and you seem to be having a good time despite all that's going on." He took a deeper breath. "Joining our 'family business' isn't necessarily a lifelong commitment, and you know it. If you feel like you'd be happier living back at home, with your friends and family, then no one is going to scorn you for making the decision to leave. It's up to you."

Kat sat back, a hurt look on her face. I would have supposed he'd be at least the tiniest bit jealous! But no, he'd be happy to see me leave! Perhaps I was right about him and Callie after all.

What she said was, "I see. So you think I should take the job? Leave your family in the lurch, to put it bluntly?" She couldn't help the hurt, slightly sarcastic tone of her voice.

John's eyes widened a little, and he cocked his head slightly to one side. Uh oh. I think she wanted me to say something else. But...I'm telling her the truth.

"Kat, no one's going to be glad to see you go. You've got experience and knowledge of the equipment, and being on rescues. You're an important member of the team." He stood up, and began walking around the room as he spoke. "Your leaving certainly would leave us 'in the lurch', as you say. But you need to think about yourself. You only get one life. And if International Rescue isn't for you, then you need to let my father know."

He stopped in the middle of the room, and pinned Kat with a firm look.

"It'll take time to get someone else who's suitable to fill your shoes, but your first concern should be for your own well-being. No one is going to scorn you for doing that, because no one should expect you to do otherwise. As far as whether I think you should take the job, I've already given you all the advice I can: do what's best for you." He frowned a little. "Do you understand what I'm getting at here?"

Kat nodded slowly. Not a word about him missing me at all. "Yes, I do. You've told me all I needed to know." She took in a deep breath and let it out slowly, then went on, sounding much more formal. "I still have not made my final decision; however, when I do, I shall be certain to inform your father. Thank you very much for your advice, and your time." She glanced pointedly at her watch. "I fear the hour is getting late here, and I must retire. Good day, John."

"Goodnight, Kat. I hope you sleep well. And good luck making your decision."

The connection cut from her end, and John set his phone back on the table. That really wasn't what she wanted to hear from me. But...what was I supposed to do, lie? Tell her I'd dearly miss her and our...'special' friendship? I will miss her; there's no doubt about that. I'll miss teaching her about astronomy and languages and seeing her improve. And I was honest; I would prefer her to make a decision based on her own wants and needs, not just because she thinks she has a shot with me, especially when I know nothing will come of it. Maybe I'm being self-centered here, but I can't help feeling that was partially what all of that was about... He rubbed his hand over one side of his face, and propped his chin up on his palm. Damn...

Kat gazed a long time at the screen on the phone, then carefully folded it up and placed it on her dresser. She didn't trust herself not to fling it across the room and break the thing, and seeing as it was not her property... And never was mine. None of it. Not the job, not the apartment, not... him. Well, I think my mind is made up. I shall begin the process of disentangling myself from the Tracy family and International Rescue in the morning.

But despite her reasoned internal arguments, a terrible sadness and anger overtook her, and she flung herself down on her bed to weep bitter tears into her pillow.

Decision, by Tikatu and ArtisticRainey
