
Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 23:16:31 GMT
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From: AmandaTracyandFred Sent: 9/30/2006 7:28 PM

Saturday August 4, 4:10 p.m. Eldorado, KS/ Sunday August 5, 9:15 a.m. Tracy Island

Four hours later, Heather came back down again with eyes dark from lack of rest. "Didn't you get any rest at all?" Jenny asked as she checked the pie she made that she had sitting on the side to cool.

"I got a little," Heather answered, pushing her hair back.

"Now, what happened to you on your way home?" Jenny asked.

"Well, I'd just finished my last reports on the plane I was testing when the sirens started blaring. I sent the reports off through the company email system; the planes were on their way to being stowed for weather, and I decided to head for home. In a nutshell, I spotted a tornado right near Towanda, reported it, and by that time there were several drivers making for the ditches. I dove for the ditches, too, and had started for home when you called," Heather answered wearily.

"Well, I promised your father that you'd talk to him, so get calling while I get dinner set on the table."

Sitting down on Jenny's worn, cloth-covered couch, Heather tapped out the number she knew by heart, and a few minutes later, her mother and father sat in their black leather divan to face the camera.

"Are you all right, Heather?" Jim asked as he got up. "Honey, we've been worried sick."

"I'm just fine. It was a bit close for everyone's sake. It's been pretty bad all day," Heather admitted to him.

"Jenny said a tornado caused your house to collapse," said Martha who was fidgeting in her seat.

"Oh, it didn't just collapse, the thing just pulled it off the foundation and left just splinters. All that's left is the foundation," Heather said, wincing. "I feel like I've been turned into a tumbleweed!"

Martha felt slightly jealous of the connection between Jim and Heather. My stars, she's a disaster! If Jenny's so high and mighty, why doesn't she have some decent clothes for Heather to wear?! Oh, it's time to get her home. She might be too old to have children, but if married to someone prominent like the Alstair or the Franklins, that would put us up with the top families. Oh we'd be invited to the Washington Balls. Jim could pick up on some huge commissions, she thought to herself. "Heather, maybe this would be a good time for you to come home now."

Oh no, Jim thought to himself.

Heather's mouth fell open and she could see her Father's reaction. "Honey, we haven't seen you face to face in years!" Martha said. "Donny hasn't seen you in such a long time."

Now that's hittin' below the belt, Martha! thought Jenny as she put a bowl of cooked carrots down on the table along with Southern Fried Chicken and mashed potatoes. Don't you give in, Heather! Not unless that's what you really want.

"Don't worry about the house, pumpkin. I know that was heavily insured. We can rebuild it again for you," Jim reassured his daughter.

"Thank you, Dad. For right now, I think just getting the claim going would be the best thing."

"Will do. I'm just glad you're all right. You look as if you fought a tornado singlehandedly. You did, didn't you? You were right in the middle of one!" Jim said, frowning worriedly.

"No, not right in the middle of one, but about as close as you can get without being tossed."

Martha interrupted. "If you'd stayed, this wouldn't have happened!"

"Martha, can't you see she's tired?" Jim complained to Martha.

"Stop!" Heather shouted, startling Martha, Jim, and Jenny, who nearly dropped the butter dish she was bringing to the table.

Jenny knew how a simple conversation could turn into a shouting match, and she foresaw how one right then would not help Heather's situation. Wiping her hands on her apron, she prepared to march out and defend her niece.

"I know exactly where this is going, and it's going to stop right here," Heather spoke sharply. "I've had enough! I'll call you back a little later." With that, she broke the connection.

"Mother just makes me want to scream sometimes!" sighed Heather, burying her face in her hands.

Walking to the couch and sitting down, Jenny wrapped her arms around the younger woman. "I want you to know that your mother does love you, honey. I admit, she has a strange way of showing it."

"Aunt Jenny, I don't understand her at all. It's like we've been at odds since I was born! Was she always like this?"

"No, she wasn't always like this," Jenny answered wistfully, patting her on the back. "She laughed at me when I came out here so many years ago, and then she blamed me when you decided to make your home right across from me. Your father appreciated it, though. Why don't we go have dinner?"

As soon as the connection was cut on the vidphone, Jim and Martha glared at each other. "And you wonder why she left in the first place!" roared Jim with his hands clutching the back of the divan.

"Don't you blame this on me! You're the one who helped design and build that home! Now it's totally destroyed!"

"What about Heather?! She was in the middle of a twister!"

"You're exaggerating!"

"Honey, do you even care? Not only did she barely survive out there, but her home was destroyed. She loved that place."

"Yes, I know and look where she is now!" Martha said weakly. The argument she'd been using for so long was wearing thin on everyone.

"You two have been total strangers for--I don't know how long!"

At this, Martha turned around her diamond earrings twinkling as she moved. Speaking evenly and firmly, she walked until she was staring at him. "Ever since you became famous!"

Jim's mouth fell open. "What?"

"Yes," Martha said petulantly. "Ever since you became famous. Being rich was one thing, but you becoming famous just made my life--miserable! When we'd just gotten married, we didn't have to try and live like everyone else! When you 'hit the big time', suddenly I was thrown into a culture I knew nothing about!"

"Your father was wealthy! It couldn't have been that different!"

Martha ignored his words with a wave of her well-manicured hand. "In order for you to get those commissions, I got you into the finest parties and get-togethers!"

"You're saying that it wasn't my work that made me so well known, but it was simply you getting me to the right people. Is that it?"

Jim stared at his wife who looked up at him with a smile. "If we want to keep going, we need to become connected with a solidly prominent family--like the Adamses, for example. My family ties aren't strong enough. That's why I keep hoping to convince--"

"What's happened to you?" he asked as if seeing his wife for the first time.

Martha patted the leather divan, trying to think. Finally, she said honestly, "I don't know, Jim. I don't know, but it angers me to think that Heather is wasting her life! She's practically too old to have children!"

"Honey! That is her choice! If she wants to live as a single for the rest of her life, that's her prerogative! We have no right to tell her what to do, and making it as one of the rare few women Blue Angel pilots is a great achievement among many! You act as if she has insulted you by not marrying the man of your choice!"

Throwing up her hands, Martha proclaimed, "What good is that when you're old and your family is gone? What will she have then? Who will take care of her then? It certainly won't be you!"

As Martha moved off to the kitchen to talk to their cook, Simon, Donny came shuffling out of his room after hearing his mother and father arguing. Worried that he had something to do cause it, he came out to find Jim standing in the living room with his face drained white and his hands in fists.

"Daddy, did I do something wrong again?"

Jim ran his fingers through his hair in frustration when Donny asked his tearful question. That bothered him, too. Donny couldn't help the things he did, and Jim knew he treated Donald with the most loving care he could give whenever it was possible. Shaking his head, Jim accepted his mentally disabled son in his stronger arms. "Now, listen to me. You haven't done anything wrong, Donny. I'm very glad you came to see me."

Donny smiled happily, enjoying the opportunity to be in his father's arms which felt safe.

What is going on here when I'm gone? he thought worriedly. I wonder if Jeff might have time to talk with me if I call? I could sure use another wise head.