

Tuesday, January 8, 2069, after dinner, Tracy Island

After cleaning up from dinner, the Crenshaws decided to enjoy a quiet evening together. They were nowhere close to being settled in, but Vince and Lana didn't see the need to rush it. What with getting ready to move and the move itself, all of them had been busy the last few weeks. Vince figured they all deserved an evening to relax.

Vince was playing a game of war with his two kids. Though Lana had chosen not to join in on the card game, she had settled herself at the table with them. She was working on cross stitching a flowered pattern onto the quilt she had bought. She wasn't sure what she was going to do with it when she was finished but figured something would come up.

"So how did your day go?" Lana asked.

"Kind of slow," Vince asked as he flipped a two of spades over. The card was easily beat by both Aaron's four of clubs and Lea's eight of spades. "Mostly trying to get administrative things out of the way."

"Did you find time to schedule an appointment to see Dianne?"

"Not yet. Did Dr. Tracy say something to you?"

Lana and the kids went to the Villa that morning to have their physicals and make sure that all of their medical records were up-to-date.

"She just mentioned that you hadn't talked to her about setting up a time. Wanted me to remind you."

"I'll get in touch with her tomorrow morning," Vince said, as he gathered the three cards lying on the table and added them to his win pile. He glanced over at his wife to see her looking at him skeptically. "What? I will. Might as well get the unpleasant task over with."

"It's just a routine check-up. Of course the last time you actually went to one of those was when you were in the service," Lana commented, thinking of all the crazy excuses her husband had come up with every time she tried to schedule a check-up for him.

"Anyway, the physical is one of the last things, besides the training, that I need to take care of." Vince flipped another card over, losing the battle once again. "Now if I can come up with a code name . . ."

"How about Aquaman?" Aaron suggested with a grin as he gathered the three cards on the table.

"I don't think so."

"Daddy, what's a codename?"

"Well, it's sort of like a nickname. Like I always call you Poppet instead of Lea. When I'm out doing my new job, my co-workers and I are going to be using nickname for each other instead our real names."

"Can I pick your nickname, Daddy?" Lea asked, looking up at her father expectantly. She flipped a card over to go with the two that Aaron and Vince had already placed on the table. Having turned over a queen, she gathered the nine and eight that were with it. "Please. You gave me a nickname."

"Okay, Poppet. What should my codename be?" Vince asked his daughter. I just hope I don't live to regret this, he thought, not at all sure what his five-year-old was going to come up with.

Lea flipped another card over. The ace of hearts came up. As Vince and Aaron flipped over their cards, Lea put her hand on her chin, looking thoughtful. Beside her, Lana smiled at the serious look on her daughter's face.

Lea gathered the three cards, her eyes falling on the ace which was on top.

"I know!" she exclaimed. "Your name can be Ace!"

Beside his sister, Aaron laughed. "Well, at least she didn't suggest Queen," he quipped.

"Or Joker," Lana added, smiling herself.

Aaron laughed again at his mother's suggestion.

"What's so funny?" Lea asked, looking confused and a little hurt. "Don't you like it?" she asked, looking up at her father.

"I think Ace is a great codename, Poppet," he said.

"Are you going to use it?" Lea asked, a smile coming to her face again.

"Yes, I will," Vince assured her. "How about we finish this game?"