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Subject: Re: New Beginnings

Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Mon, 30 Jul 2012 02:39:14 GMT

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Wednesday, January 9, 2069, 11:30 a.m., the Serengeti, Tanzania. (8:30 p.m., same day, Tracy Island)

Kyrano squatted by the end of the infinity edge pool, where his bride, Lisa, leaned on her forearms, gazing out at the dry landscape beyond.

"A last swim, my dear?" he asked, smiling softly.

She sighed, a deep and satisfied sound. "Yes," she replied, not looking up at him. "This has been wonderful."

He lowered himself to the edge, dangling his bare feet in the quiet waters. "It has been a memorable time, dear one. I am very glad I have been able to share it with you."

She looked up at him then, smiling, and reached a hand toward him. "When do we leave?"

"Soon, dear one. We should ready ourselves for the trip to Paris."

She sighed again, and turned around, swimming with a slow stroke back to the stairs at the opposite end of the pool. Kyrano levered himself to his feet, and paced her back, picking up a thick white towel on the way and handing it to her as she rose, dripping. He took another and dried his legs.

Lisa wrapped her towel around her waist. "I will miss this place."

"Perhaps we shall visit again," Kyrano said, trying to lift her spirits.

"Perhaps."

They made their way back to their private cottage. The Singita Sasakwa Lodge was a small place, but very elegant. It was near the Grumeti River in Tanzania, in the Serengeti National Park. They had spent five days there, enjoying the solitude and viewing the myriad of wildlife that lived in the vicinity. They'd been pampered by all the staff, who found their newlywed status a matter of gentle amusement. Kyrano grumbled a bit about the food, but admitted that the cuisine was, on the whole, up to his exacting standards.

"Jeff wouldn't send us somewhere where it wasn't," Lisa had told him.

They had spent time horseback riding or bouncing around in an old-fashioned safari truck. (Better for viewing the animals than the hovercraft used elsewhere, they'd been told. The trucks didn't throw up as much sand and dust.) They visited the spa, and relaxed in the one bedroom cottage which held all the amenities they could have wished for.

Before Tanzania, they had visited the American Southwest, exploring such sites as the Grand

Canyon, and doing a few things they both never thought they would ever do in their lifetimes. Lisa quipped that they were still in places where the weather was generally hot; the only difference was that now it was, for the most part, dry. Kyrano responded by saying it was good for old bones like theirs.

"Do you think Dianne and Jeff will like this carving?" Lisa asked a few moments later. She had changed her clothes and wrung out her bathing suit as best she could. In the heat of their veranda, it would dry enough to be packed with their other clothes. She held a carving of a wildebeest, made of Queen's ebony, its dark brown wood with the black striations gleaming dully in the light.

"Yes, I believe they shall." Kyrano rose from the comfortable chair where he sat and took it from her hand. "It will go well with the Dianne's elephants."

"I wish I could think of something more... personal to give them as souvenirs." Lisa retrieved the statue, and wrapped it up, cushioning it from damage.

Kyrano nodded sagely. "It is difficult to know what to get the man...and woman...who have everything."

There was a knock at their door. Lisa opened it to let in the two staff members, who smiled widely at the newlyweds.

"We bring you lunch," said one, his bright teeth gleaming against his dark skin. "A last meal before you leave us, yes?"

"Yes, thank you." Kyrano had unobtrusively slipped something into his ear. It was a translation device, one that he was beta testing for Brains. It keyed into Thunderbird Five's language database, and was not only translating from the Swahili that most Tanzanians spoke, it was also recording the local dialects to enhance the accuracy of the filters. So, though he and Lisa couldn't actually speak to their hosts, they could listen and understand. It had already helped them in bargaining for some of their souvenirs.

Their meal spread out on the veranda tables, Kyrano and Lisa sat down to enjoy it. The staff members withdrew, and it was quiet once again. Only the sounds of the African birds broke the quiet.

"I wish we could stay longer in Paris," Lisa said wistfully.

"We will return there, you and I," Kyrano replied firmly. "However, I did want to introduce you to my first wife's family. My... Elias Manabo is failing. His daughter, Tamea, wrote to tell me so. I had promised to introduce you." He stopped, and when he continued, his voice was lower. "They have not been a large part of my life, but they are family still."

Lisa reached out a hand to touch his. "I understand, Tuan. I really do."

Kyrano covered her hand with his free one. "I know, dear heart. I know."

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