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Subject: Re: Another Really Rather Marvellous Chapter...

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Thu, 16 Apr 2015 22:54:02 GMT

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Dianne brought her cup of coffee into the lounge. Pausing at the door from the study, she gave her husband a visual once-over before descending the steps and crossing to his desk. His hair stuck out in odd little spots and though his eyes were focused on a tablet he held, she could tell he wasn't really seeing it.

"Good morning, love," she said, coming around to his chair to give him a peck on the cheek.

"Mornin'," he mumbled, placing the tablet on his desk. He punctuated the greeting with a huge yawn before returning his attention to the screen.

"I take it the camp out didn't go so well."

Jeff blinked bleary eyes and glanced up at her. He shook his head. "No, it was fine. Great even--that is, until Gordon pulled a prank on Dom as we were bedding down for the night. Scared the man so much he ran off into the jungle and we spent God knows how long searching for him."

"Would this prank have anything to do with spiders?" When he frowned at her, a question in his eyes, she shrugged. "I know he's afraid of them. Makes the most sense to me."

He grunted slightly. "Well, you're right. Fake spider in the sleeping bag. Never heard someone scream that loud!"

"I'll bet!" Dianne settled her derriere on the edge of the desk. "Where'd Gordon get the spider? Don't tell me he has a collection of them!"

"Actually, he does, and I probably should do something about that. But this time, he got one from Alex."

"Alex?" Dianne frowned. She put down her cup and straightened. "I'll have a little talk with him ..."

Before she could take a step, Jeff grabbed her wrist. He shook his head, giving her a weary smile. "No need, love. Alex had no idea what Gordon was going to do with it. In fact, his response to the prank was, and I quote, 'Not cool'. Besides, I had a little chat with him and he promised me he wouldn't help Gordon out like that again." He placed a lingering kiss on the back of her hand. "In any case, I told Alex and Tyler they needed to get some more sleep--in their beds, this time. Waking them this early will mean grumpy sons later on."

"All right. I'll just let him know you told me--once he's up." She picked up her coffee and drained the cup. "I take it someone found Dom?"

"Yes. John did. Helped him out of a tree." Jeff rolled his shoulders with a slight groan. Dianne laid her cup on the desk and moved behind him to massage the affected area. "Then Gordon found them and they went after Gordon ..."

"Which explains the split lip and scraped knees Gordon came in with this morning."

"Very likely." Jeff grunted as his wife hit a particularly tense spot. "Though I didn't see anything ..."

Dianne huffed a laugh as he continued. "Obviously, none of us got a lot of sleep before the sun came up."

"Obviously." She leaned over, getting her mouth down near his ear. "You'd better get some yourself, love. After all, we have guests tomorrow."

Jeff's eyes grew wide and he froze. His head whipped around to meet her gaze. "Damn! You're right! Stephanie and the twins are due here tomorrow! I totally forgot!" He paused, taking her hand from a shoulder. "There's no way! We still have so much clean up to do! The runway isn't fit! I haven't even discussed Operation Cover-Up with everyone." A frown furrowed his brow and his eyes pleaded with her. "Can we just postpone it? It's not like we don't have a valid reason!"

Dianne sighed and resumed her prior position, leaning up against the desk. She folded her arms. "Jeff, we planned this months ago. It's true we're not one hundred percent back to normal after the cyclone but this is their spring vacation. It's already Friday over there and they're either at Drew's or on their way to Drew's." She shook her head. "I'd suggest sending the 'Birds to Mateo, but we'd have to send the support crew as the boys would be expected to be here when the kids arrive--and none of them are up to par on Four."

"I know, I know." Jeff ran a hand through his hair. "We haven't even fixed the trail from the runway to the house. Though maybe ..." He picked up his phone. "I'm going to call Drew and see if there's a way to stall them a bit. Maybe Disney or Sea World. I'll pay for it. It'd give us some time to confer here and make some concrete plans."

"Okay, love. He might have a few ideas of his own." She picked up her cup. "Want some coffee? I'm getting a refill."

Jeff nodded. "Sounds good. I want you in on this brainstorming session. Besides, who else is going to convince Maggie to put up with the twins for a couple of extra days?"

Dianne, already on her way out of the room, turned and shot him a wicked grin. "My mother, that's who!"

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