
Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 20:54:39 GMT

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Saturday, November 3rd, Mid-morning...

Jeff bent over his desk, doing his least favorite job, paperwork. But there were times it couldn't be avoided. And this was one of them. He finished typing up his notes on the last interviewee, and sent it on to his human resources department. He had just started in on the latest expense report when he heard someone clearing their throat. Looking up, he spied Luke standing in the doorway.

"Mr. Tracy? Could I talk to you for a few minutes?"

Jeff smiled. "Sure, Luke, come in." He waited until the young man had sat down in front of him. "What can I do for you?"

Luke handed him a file and a disc. "My report on the New England plant, sir. I don't think Burlington, Vermont is the way to go. The spotted owl is finally making a viable comeback up there, and the environmentalists tend to go overboard at any new industry trying to move into the area."

"You wouldn't happen to agree with said environmentalists, now would you?"

Luke chuckled. "There are environmentalists and there are enviro-terrorists. But don't get me started on that. I did a little research and I think Toronto is the best bet for what you're looking to do. There's an abandoned manufacturing plant right on Lake Ontario that could easily be converted. Plus, it's an already established structure so you won't have to jump through as many hoops to get the building permits. It's zoned manufacturing and right on the lake, so shipping won't be a problem either. And by using this factory, you don't have to build another, thereby lessening the environmental impact."

Jeff nodded thoughtfully, his eyes skimming the report. "Hmmm....you've done your homework here. Nice job."

"Thank-you, sir."

"In fact," Jeff closed the folder. "I'd like you to go to the Los Angeles office and give this to the Board in person."

Luke paled. "You...what?"

"Remember, the main reason Tracy Industries hired you is for just this. You'll just have to present this report, answer a few questions from the Board, things like that. Since you seem to have gathered detailed information about the property in question, I don't see the need to send you to Toronto for further study."

Luke nodded. "All right, Mr. Tracy. But I have to tell you, I hate public speaking."

Jeff laughed. "Don't we all. Now was there anything else?"

"Well, actually, yes." Luke sighed. "We're big outdoorsmen in my family, and it's currently hunting season back home in Montana. My niece is finally old enough for hunting camp and my brother emailed me last night, asking if I could get some time off so we could all go together. It's sort of a family tradition. I told him I'd have to check with you first."

Jeff frowned thoughtfully. "I don't see a problem. When were you planning on going?"

"Around the ninth of this month, sir."

His employer pulled a calendar up on the screen. "I think that would work fine. You could spend time with your family, then report to the LA office later in the week, around the fifteenth. Will that give you enough time?"

"Yes, it should. Thank-you, sir."

"You're welcome, Luke."

"Mr. Tracy, there is one other thing." Luke took a deep breath. "I'm used to attending church services pretty regularly. I haven't been since I got here and...well, I'm missing it. I made a few inquiries and there's a Catholic church in Christchurch that holds Mass every Sunday at ten. Scott said I was progressing well in the simulator and that it would be a good idea for me to get some actual flight time in. I thought maybe I could kill two birds with one stone and fly with someone to the mainland every couple of Sundays."

"That would be fine. I'm sure any of the boys would be glad to take you." He looked thoughtfully at Luke. "You're not a prisoner here, Luke. You're free to ask for whatever it is you need. It's your home, after all. Granted, I may not be able to give in to every request, but I'll try my best."

Luke smiled in relief. "Yes, sir."

"And stop with all the 'sir-ring'. I've been out of the military for quite some time now."

"Yes, si-- Mr. Tracy." Luke grinned. "I guess I'd better go get in touch with my family. Let them know I'm coming home." He started towards the door, then paused. "Where will I be staying in LA? A hotel?"

Jeff shook his head. "No. We have a house that we use for occasions like this. There are enough furnishings in it to look completely lived in. You're not the first agent to use it. Will you be taking Rommel with you?"

Luke nodded. "My mother would kill me if I left him behind. And I've found out that he can fly commercially if he's working." He blushed slightly. "I just need to make him wear his vest and say we're on our way somewhere. I hate to do it but it really cuts down the red tape."

"Right. We'll work out the logistics of getting you to the States later on. Enjoy the rest of your day, Luke."

"I will. You too." With a wave, Luke left.

Jeff sighed and turned back to his paperwork. "If only I could..."
