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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 20:56:16 GMT

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She wasn't much to look at, rather mousy, and most of her features could be considered "average". Only her eyes, with their keen gaze, could be considered more than ordinary. She took in everything, filing it away. Yes, she was here for the interview with Tracy, but it was part of a larger scheme for her true employers.

Everyone she came in contact with treated her graciously, and when she was introduced to both Kyrano and Mrs. Tracy, she filed their faces and names away for later retrieval. She answered their questions, trying not to seem too eager, trying not to seem too formal, trying not to seem uninterested. The balance was hard to maintain, and she noticed that Mrs. Tracy, in particular, was frowning slightly and often.

Finally, they escorted her downstairs to see the facilities. She passed through the study, making a quick note of its location and furnishings. Going downstairs, she noticed the lift that they passed, and heard a snippet of a Spanish lesson being held in a room opposite the study. Classroom, she thought.

Passing through the dining room, she noticed the style of furnishings and the set up of the room. All of it tucked away in her head, just as if she were taking photographs. She'd been asked to bring a hidden camera, but she declined. If she was caught with it, her chances of getting the job -- and a long term position from which to watch the Tracys and report on them -- would be totally blown. No, her real employers would have to make do with her eidetic memory, and her communiqués.

The kitchen offered more fodder for her thoughts. No one was there when she entered, tagging along at Kyrano's heels, but one of the sons came in. Gordon, was what the old lady called him. He asked what was for dinner, and she'd replied they were having steamed mahi-mahi and rice pilaf. He'd asked, jokingly, if it were fresh-caught. She'd replied, no, it was frozen. He replied that everyone would eat it then, knowing he hadn't caught it. It seemed to be some sort of inside joke.

Then Kyrano put her to the test: prepare an omelet. There were several different ingredients available, but she decided to go the minimalist route. Eggs, a bit of milk, a touch of salt and pepper. Keep watching it so it doesn't burn. The pans were nice; they made flipping it easy. Top of the line cookware. Would be a pleasure doing this job if she got it. And getting paid twice would be a bonus.

They tasted it, and nodded. Both approved of her choices and liked her technique.

"Now," the old lady said, smiling. "For another test."

She pulled out a tray covered with a cloth, and uncovered it. On it was flour, shortening, seasonings, and in a big bowl, some fresh apples. "Please, make an apple pie."

"Apple pie."

Damn. Why a bloody apple pie? Why not something less... American? But these people are Yanks, aren't they? She stifled a sigh, and began.

Whoever said things were easy as pie had obviously never made one. Rolling out the crust had to be the hardest part of the whole thing. And both of them were there, watching, evaluating her. Finally, the bloody thing was in the oven, and she could go sit in the dining room as it baked. They'd made her a cuppa -- good tea, too, the best kind. She almost wanted the job now that she thought she'd made a bloody mess of the whole thing.

An older woman, plump, silver-haired, came through the dining room. She smiled, asked if things were all right, then headed for the kitchen. The timer went off, and she got up, taking her cuppa with her as she pulled the pie from the oven.

"It will take time to cool," Kyrano told her. "Why don't you wait on the patio and enjoy the sun as it does?"

Another cuppa fixed, and she was led to the patio, where she could watch people swimming in the pool. She took out a small cigar and had a smoke; she'd been able to douse the craving before, but here, outside... wouldn't hurt, would it?

As she lit up, a dark-haired boy came by, dressed for the pool. He stopped to look at her, and frowned, but didn't say anything before running off. She groaned internally. Trust a sprog to be a nosey parker. Her smoking would be common knowledge before long. And, it seemed, no one here indulged.

Eventually, Kyrano came out and told her that the pie was cool enough to eat. By the time she arrived back in the kitchen, three pieces were gone, and had been consumed by Kyrano, the old lady, and the plump lady, who was introduced to her as Lisa. She tried a piece herself; it wasn't bad, but her pastry left much to be desired, and she knew it.

It seemed that they'd discussed her good points and bad points before bringing her back inside, and when she was guided back upstairs to see Mr. Tracy, he smiled and told her she was heading back to Christchurch. The son she'd seen in the kitchen, Gordon, had been deputized to fly her there, with someone named Alan as his co-pilot. They were eager to go, so she shook hands with Mr. Tracy and the others, murmured something inane and harmless, and got in the cart to head back down to the air strip. She sat in the passenger cabin for the half hour trip, and took a cab to the hotel she'd been told was expecting her.

Once ensconced in her room, she pulled her hair from its confines and brushed it out well. Then she put on some make-up, and made a call on her satellite phone. The call took a few moments to place; the other party was on the other side of the world, after all.

He picked up and she smiled at him. "Hello, Giles?"

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