

---

Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:19:45 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Tuesday, November 13, 4 p.m., Tracy Island.

Cherie scowled, muttering a quiet, "Damn." She scribbled over the pad she had in her hand, and threw the pencil down, breaking it in half.

"Language, young lady."

The teenager started, and glanced up to find her mother behind her. Dianne had come up quietly, intending on a swim and had been heading for the lounge next to her daughter when Cherie had her little fit.

"Sorry, Mom."

Cherie's tone told Dianne that the girl wasn't terribly sorry. She held out her hand for the pad, and with a heavy sigh, her daughter offered it.

"Hm." Dianne looked from the pad to the high board, which was what the girl had been trying to sketch. "Looks okay to me. What do you think is wrong with it?"

Putting her hand out, Cherie wordlessly asked for the pad back. Dianne gave it to her, and the girl looked at the ruined picture. "I dunno. I thought my shading was off..."

"I don't see it, but I'm no artist." Dianne dropped her towel onto the lounge.

Cherie shrugged. "I've ruined it anyway." She sighed. "Now I have to come up with something else for art class."

The older woman thought about this for a moment, then reached out a hand. "C'mon. Time for a mother-daughter conference."

Cherie looked at the outstretched hand, then at her mother's face. "Where are we going?"

"To the beach. For a little talk -- away from bothersome brothers."

The girl shrugged again, and took her mother's hand. Dianne helped her lever herself out of the lounge, and the two of them walked off toward the trail leading down to the beach.

They walked in silence for a while, the only sounds the scuffing of their feet and the gulls wheeling overhead. When they got down to a point where they were level with the Cliff House, a shout and a wave turned their attention to the patio. Dom was there, Joshua sitting high on his shoulders. He was encouraging his son to call and wave, and the boy did, shouting, "Serry! Serry!"

"Hi, Josh! Hi, Dom!" Cherie shouted back, a smile coming to her face. The two continued to wave at each other until the women got to a point below the Cliff House where they couldn't see the

patio anymore.

At last, they reached the bottom, and turned to the right, away from the airstrip. The sand was soft and white and still moist from days of rain. Cherie tucked her hands into the pockets of her jean shorts as they walked.

"Now, tell me," Dianne began, "what's going on with art class?"

Cherie shrugged. "Not much. It's been made perfectly clear to me that I'm no longer welcome."

"In the class itself?" Dianne probed. "Or with the little group of kids who you thought you were becoming friends with?"

The girl sighed. "With the group. I... I don't know if I want to go back, Mom. I mean, I don't think there's anything Mr. Jernigan can teach me that Virgil doesn't know..."

"I'm sure there are things that the teacher can show you that Virgil hasn't. But the purpose of you going to this class was to make friends," Dianne reminded her. "There are other kids in the class, aren't there?"

"Yeah." Cherie sighed again. "But... I don't feel like starting over. Plus they've all heard Jen making fun of me."

Dianne put an arm around her daughter's shoulders. "You have to remember that you're the outsider there, as far as not being native to the town or even the country. That will make it harder to connect with these kids."

The girl sniffled. "I thought I had connected with them. Then they found out that I was a Tracy... and it all went down the tubes from there." She glanced up at her mother, her eyes moist. "Is that what it's going to be like for the rest of my life?"

Blowing out a breath, Dianne shook her head slightly. "No, it isn't. You'll likely find that lots of people want to be your friend -- because you're a Tracy, and rich, and have a powerful father. It's not going to be easy to separate out those who want to be friends because of who you are from those who are friendly because of who your family is." She paused, then asked, "Do you think these kids are like that?"

Cherie shook her head. "I don't think so. It's more like they're jealous of me -- well, at least Jen is. Probably Aroha, too. I'm not so sure about Anneliese or Manjari... and I can't figure out Tim at all." She gave her mother a small wry smile. "Here I have seven brothers, and I can't figure out one teenaged guy."

Dianne chuckled. "Well, the fact that none of your brothers are teenagers might account for it."

They both laughed a little, then Dianne continued. "I think, love, that you have to focus on the ones that still seem friendly. Ignore the girls who are being snarky and reach out to the ones who aren't. And while you're at it, see who else in the class might be good to know. This is already a tight-knit little group; there are likely others outside of it who could use a friend."

The girl's shoulders drooped, and she sighed again. "It's so hard!"

"Making and keeping friends is always hard, Cherie, at any age. This whole situation is reminding me that I have a few people to nudge and say hello to, too." Dianne smiled. "And as Tracys, we never..."

"Never give up." Cherie finished her mother's sentence. "I already got that lecture from Scott."

"Then put it into practice. And try to enjoy the class for the class's sake, too. I'm sure there are things you'll learn that Virgil hasn't had time to teach you."

Cherie nodded. "Okay. I'll keep going."

There was a pause, and Dianne looked up at the sky. "We should head back. I would like to get in a bit of a swim before dinner."

The girl agreed, and they turned to retrace their steps. "So," Dianne ventured. "How is that mural project going?"

Cherie brightened. "I think it's going well. I need to talk to Ms. Cassie about it soon, though, and show her what I have."

"So, tell me about it," Dianne suggested as they walked back, her arm around Cherie's shoulder, drawing her close.

---