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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:20:55 GMT

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Tuesday, November 13, after dinner

She had gone back to the kitchen ostensibly to get herself a cup of tea, but she wanted to have a good look around without Mrs Tracy somewhere nearby. She inspected all the cupboards, noting the contents for future reference. Really, the kitchen was in excellent condition, and she hadn't seen such a well organized area since her first waitress job.

Suddenly she was aware that she wasn't alone, and she spun around. Alex and Tyler were standing in the doorway watching her eagerly.

"Hello," Jenny greeted them.

"Hello. We wanted to know whether we could see the python," Alex answered.

She glanced around the kitchen. "Well, it looks as though I've nothing to do right now, so I might as well show you. Come and meet Hiss, then."

She led the way to her apartment, listening in amusement as the boys started arguing about snakes. She was quite surprised at the range of Alex's knowledge. Obviously there was little he didn't know about animals. He would probably become a fine wildlife carer when he grew older.

"Here we are," she announced finally, opening her door.

Hiss's new enclosure had been set up in a corner of the room. He was curled up on the floor of it, sleeping. The boys walked closer to have a good look.

"He's beautiful!" Alex whispered, eyeing the snake rapturously. "This colouring is quite rare, you know. It's olive green, isn't it?"

"Yes," Jenny answered, leaning against the dresser to watch.

Tyler looked up eagerly. "Could we hold him?"

"Not today, because he's tired out, and not without your mother's permission. She might not like it."

"Ok," Tyler answered.

"What does he eat?" Alex asked.

"Mice and rats, mostly. I only have to feed him once a fortnight. I keep them frozen and thaw them when needed."

"When was he last fed?"

"Two days ago."

"Could I help you feed him some time?"

"I don't see why not, if your parents don't mind."

"How old is he?"

Jenny leaned her head against the wall and thought. "About two years, I think. I've had him for nearly that long."

Tyler asked, "How did you get him?"

"I bought him from a pet shop."

"Are there many snakes around where you used to live?"

"Plenty! The most poisonous is the tiger snake, though. There's even a rare black snake that only lives in the area. It's endangered."

"Wow! Have you ever seen one?"

"No. There's a story in my area, though, about a farmer who jumped over a fence one day into a paddock full of high, thick grass. A great big tiger snake reared up and looked him in the eye, in the eye, mind you. He was a big guy, about six foot tall, and this dirty great big tiger was as tall as him!"

"Whoa!"

"Not to mention that the snake must have been about three times as long as that to be able to rear so high. Anyway, his son came up behind the snake and knocked it down."

"Did you ever see the snake?"

"No. It was told to me by a friend who'd heard it from her cousin. So I don't know whether it's true or not. But there are plenty of rumours of really big snakes around the area."

"Have you ever seen a crocodile?"

Jenny shivered involuntarily. "Yes, at a zoo, and I wouldn't like to meet one in the bush!"

"Neither would I," Tyler agreed.

Just then there was a knock on the door.

"Come in," Jenny called.

A girl of about fourteen entered. "Hi, you must be Jenny. I'm Cherie Tracy. Are Alex and Tyler here? Mom says they should be getting ready for bed."

There were simultaneous groans from the direction of Hiss's enclosure and Jenny repressed a grin.

"Hi, Cherie; nice to meet you. Well, boys, you'll have to come back tomorrow, won't you?"

"Will we get to hold Hiss then?"

"Ask your mother," Jenny replied, ushering the Tracy children out with a smile.

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