

---

Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:39:36 GMT

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

---

Saturday, November 17, 2068, 5 p.m., Tracy Island

Cherie was busy at her computer when her satellite phone rang. She was building a collage from the images Cassie had chosen; she would later split the collage up into pieces the separate canvases that would make up the mural, and work from that.

She reached into the outer pocket of her art bag for the phone. The ringtone was unfamiliar, one of the default tones that she hadn't taken the time to change. She glanced at the screen which said, "Wilton, A".

"Anneliese!" she cried, grinning. She saved her work, put her wireless earphone in, and answered the call, allowing for the video feed. "Hey! Anneliese!"

Anneliese looked a bit startled, then smiled. "Hullo, Cherie!"

"I'm so glad you called!" Cherie said, eager. "I need a break from this project I'm working on."

"Is it something for school?" Anneliese asked.

"Nah. Just something one of our... uh..." Cherie thought hard about how to describe Cassie and her position. "Neighbors. Yeah, something one of our neighbors asked me to do."

"Neighbors?" Anneliese frowned a little. "I thought you lived on a private island..."

Cherie winced. "Well, yeah, we do. But there are some people who work for my dad's company that also live here." She shrugged. "I mean, they're not like servants or anything, working for the family, and they live on another part of the island. So they're neighbors... sort of."

"Do you have servants?" Anneliese's eyes were wide.

Cherie squirmed a bit. "Well, I suppose they're technically servants. But they're more like part of the family. Though we just got someone new to help in the kitchen." She paused. "In fact, one of them is going to be family because he's marrying my Nana."

"Your nan lives there, too? But not your grandpa?" Anneliese looked a bit confused.

"It's kinda hard to explain," Cherie began. "My mom's mom is divorced; my dad's mom is a widow, and both of them live here. My mom's mom is the one getting married. My mom's dad... well, he sorta dropped out of the family until recently. My biological dad's parents live in Florida. I send them cards and letters and visit them for a couple of weeks every year."

"Ah, now I see." Anneliese's face had cleared and she nodded. "My mum's divorced, too, and that means I don't see much of my nana and nandy on my da's side. He's remarried, and though I suppose that makes my stepmum's folks my grans, too, I've never met them." She paused, then

asked, "What do you mean about your 'biological' da? How'd he let you get adopted by your new da?"

Looking down, Cherie composed herself. "My biological dad is dead."

Anneliese looked aghast. "I... I'm sorry, Cherie! I didn't know..."

"Hey, hey, it's okay. I didn't expect you to know." Cherie sighed heavily. "I miss him, sometimes, and it still hurts when I think about him. But if he hadn't died, we probably wouldn't have even come here, and my mom definitely wouldn't have married my new dad." She gave her friend a small smile. "Then you and I would never have met."

"You ain't wrong," Anneliese said with a nod. "Sometimes I think what it might be like if my mum had carked it in that chlorine spill and I didn't." She shuddered. "I'd have to go live with my da and his wife... and all their little brats."

"Sounds awful!" Cherie commiserated. "I mean, my little brothers can be brats sometimes, but at least they're my real brothers, not step-brothers or something." She thought a moment. "I suppose that my older brothers would have been step-brothers if Dad hadn't adopted me." Shaking her head, she asked, "Do you have any brothers or sisters? Living with you?"

"I have an older brother, but he's a scarfie." At Cherie's blank look, Anneliese elaborated. "He's at uni, down in Dunedin. University of Otago. Mum wanted him to go to the Christchurch branch, but he didn't want to live at home. He comes home weekends, anyway. Brings his dirty trousers and jerseys for her to wash, then pisses around with his mates. He's always strapped for cash." She shrugged. "During the week, it's just Mum and me." Smiling, she added, "Sometimes we get brassed off at each other, but I like having her to myself."

"That must be cool, really," Cherie said, smiling back. "It's not easy being part of a big family, but I am the only girl..."

The two girls laughed, and their conversation moved on to other matters. Before they knew it, an hour had passed.

"Oh, here comes my mum." Anneliese glanced over her shoulder. "She's brought home take-aways for tea. I'd better go. It was nice talking with you, Cherie."

"Good to talk to you, too, Anneliese. I'll see you on Thursday if I don't talk to you before then."

"Right. Well, cheers!"

"Take care! Goodbye!"

The call ended, and Cherie sighed with contentment. Putting her phone down, she rose and stretched, then headed out toward the dining room. "Time to see what we're having for 'tea'."