



Plain Text - Day 1
Wiley Davis

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Categorie(s):
Tag(s): 500 words

New section

CHAPTER 1 - A DEATH AT MADCAP STATION

5:30 a.m. In my notebook, scribble scribble: Look up Greek word for middle[perfect for needs, if not found, make one up.]

In the dark, put on socks, already wearing long underwear. Can smell the coffee, small pang of... [what?]. . . that Orlando beat me awake, again. [Most likely joy masquerading as regret.]

Lights on, out the door. In the hallway follow the clank of dishes, like high-pitched bells with occasional thuds and the soft shuffle of unshod feet on a wooden floor. I know where these sounds originate but am led by them nonetheless. Into a mystery. I stand in the doorway and watch him scramble the eggs with a fork [he refuses to use the whisk and will never get the chance to tell me why.]

"Good morning Wilma," he says when he sees me in the doorway.

Don't get the wrong idea. My name is Sandler and his is Orlando, but in the morning we've always called each other by women's names. "Good morning curls," I say. "What's for breakfast?"

"Forked eggs," he says. [Orlando can be quite nerdy.]

I pour out orange juice for the both of us and a cup of coffee for myself.

"What happened to your leg?"

He looks down at his calf, plastered with bandage. "Cut myself on a door hinge. Caught it just enough to make this little gash." He reaches down and peels open the bandage to show me a small red wound. "How many eggs you want?"

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Breakfast is nice, but my favorite part of the morning is warming up the cat. We call it Chester [nerdier than forked eggs to be sure.] Chester's a she and she runs on combustible fuel so she's something of a throw-back, but a necessary one because winter around these parts can get cold enough to freeze your eyeballs shut and the electric drives don't provide the confidence one needs to have in a cat. [As far as I know, no one even makes an electric cat.] So ours runs on diesel fuel we make ourselves and when we want to use it we have to warm it up. This involves a large kerosene heater that looks vaguely weapon-like in its tubularity. One end emits a blast of hot air and once it's stoked you open up Chester's engine compartment (which is inside the cab, by the way) and position the

heater to blast the cold engine block with heat.

The kerosene heater needs about half an hour to do its work during which time we double check our gear, inspect the tracks and the fluids of the cat, drink cups of coffee, and stand around quietly anticipating the trip ahead.

This is my first jaunt of the Winter, arrived from the city last night, and I'm looking forward to spending a few days at the Bunsen Station with Orlando and the scientists. He'd been on a tour while I'd spent both Spring and Summer in the Devs, and I look forward to talking about something other than gogs and poxie. [Perhaps explain this for future [i.e. future future] readers.]

From the same author on Feedbacks

Segue (2008)

A segue. A short story about a transitional moment.

Ned the Automator (2008)

In a world where relationships have been automated, only Ned Barton has the nerve to set fire to the nerve center -- and the heart to write a letter to his grandma.

A Fabrication: and other stories (2008)

7 short stories.

Plain Text - Day 12 (2009)

In a world of free food and networked living, something interesting is happening down in Baja. A fifteen year old girl named Zoe, her biologist father, and a coastline of drugged-out fishermen help us reconcile the conflict between physical reality and virtual freedom.

Plain Text - Day 2 (2009)

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Plain Text - Day 3 (2009)

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