

Conflict and Drama



On the first morning with all of them on-site, Boss got up to a stand-off between Dan and Jed. Everybody was up, listening. The wizard hovered at the far end of the upstairs walkway.

“Morning all,” Boss said. “Is there a problem?”

“I didn’t sleep not a wink,” Dan said. “This fella was up all night, sorting through gear, dragging things here and there. I go out to see what’s what, and he tells me he’s starting on the garage-build!”

Jed jumped in. “I’m not comfortable with my equipment out in the weather for the long term. With all of us working together, it won’t take long to shift the two end cabins,” he nodded toward Wendy’s and Dan’s cabins. “Exchange places with my cabin. Build the garage next door and I am happy.”

“See why I’m spitting chips?” Dan said.

Boss nodded generally. “Here’s what I thought we’d do today,” he said. “I’m seeing way too much blue. We’ll collect up all the tiles we have. Lay them along the walkways. Then ...Then we tidy the site. Look at all this mess. And then ... we construct our kitchen, cook a meal, and eat it.” He waited. Nobody moved. He raised his eyebrows. *More to come?*

“That’s just busy work,” Wendy said.

Everybody looked at Dan.

“Boss!” Dan said. “You gonna let this uppity call the tune? He ran right over our wizard, look at the poor nin in fear of his life!”

Bosley checked where the wizard teetered on the edge of the gangway with Tim comforting him. Jackie up there too, silent and not siding with her partner. *Don't go there, Boss.* The wizard's shed lay a-kimber with Ruff guarding the wreck.

“*And* he moved my truck!” Dan spluttered. “Nobody drives my truck without me inviting them!”



Boss got his act together. “Jed, park your rig round the back or beside your cabin. Dan, move *your* truck to the outside of the machinery pad. Then help Drew bring over the rest of our machinery, and park it in the outer bay. Tim, you and Trish fix Nin a place in the inner bay. The rest of us will put the kitchen together.”



Nin Wizard inspected his new and improved quarters. Not a lot like a mere shed now and good as the tea house where he once lived, he told Tim with croaky sounds and gestures.

Trish saw gestures that she was starting to understand. Ruff licked her hand and she patted him. "Still my friend, hey?"

"You gave him quite a bit more space than the rest of us have," Dan grouched when he inspected the hut. "We could've used half that bay for our machinery."

"He has a name and it is Nin," Tim said. "He was and will always be my mentor. He's old and crippled, but not stupid."

"Fine. Fine. I apologize. Pleased to meet you, Nin."

"If you're wondering how you'll fit your truck in," Drew said. "Park it across the end of the space of a night."



They tucked in eating, their first meal mostly together. Nobody was interested where Jed might've gone. They just enjoyed the peace. An eight-sided table gave them plenty of space. Drew and Jackie did the honors at the grill.

"Lucky we still had the barbecue set," Drew said. "I'm hungry enough for one of everything."

"What's next, Boss?" Wendy said. "The tiles?"

"We might have to leave them for a rainy day," Boss said. "Some of us will lay out the foundations for the store. Drew and I will walk to where he's parked his campervan. He'll take me to my second job."



“Second job as what?” Trish said. “Thought building was your be all?”

Bosley continued as if not interrupted. “The slabs that came with the build are thin and floaty. I decided that we need to get the hardware store up out of the mud same as we got ourselves up.”

“I’m not arguing,” Wendy said. “If I go over there for a cup of coffee, I don’t want to sit ankle-deep in mud. Will it affect the rest of the build, knowing as I do we’ve been scratching for materials?”

“That’s the job. Me scratching for materials at the Hardware Store’s central management.”

The rest laughed. “Good luck with that.”

Dan revved up his truck. “Wake up somebody! We need to get going!”

“Hey,” Tim called. “Sun is not even up yet.”

“Drew called,” Dan shouted. “Hop in. He found us a kitchen.”

“Kitchen?” Wendy grumbled. “We have a perfectly good kitchen, I thought.”

“I can see how where we sit and where we cook, in the middle of the site, would get in the way of any seriously building we’ll be doing, but apart from that ...?” Trish said.

“Not you too,” Wendy said. “Never happy!”

Trish ploughed on. “I think let’s set up an al fresco kitchen-dining on the work-yard slab. That way we can leave it in situ until we’ve done everything else.”

Jed strolled from around the corner. “I like it,” he said.

“Thought you’d left,” Trish said.

“Why would he?” Wendy said. “All the comforts of his life are here.”

“She’s not wrong,” Jed said. “I parked round the back in case you’re wondering.”



Dan almost walked the truck along the muddy wheel grooves. He had to be extra gentle as Tim balanced on the cab's roof to prevent the stove-unit from sliding forward.

They drove into the yard where, surprise-surprise, Jed waited to show them where to drop it off. Dan looked toward Trish and Wendy for confirmation.

Trish came forward. "I was thinking we set up on the work-yard slab?"

"Do we need to talk that through?" Dan said with an eye on Wendy's thunderous expression.

"Only if you want to rebuild the kitchen every time we need space in the middle of a build? Let's set it up semi-permanent?" Trish said.

What Trish suggested didn't happen, it was like Jed had them mesmerized.

Dan dumped the kitchen where they'd cooked yesterday and Jed happily revved up the run-about.

"We should fetch Drew and the sink bench first," Tim said. "Piece of extreme luck that he saw that newly dumped kitchen after dropping off Boss."

"I agree," Wendy said. "You two go fetch Drew and the sink bench. And Trish is right, Jed. The rest of us will get the rollers out and shift the stove to the work-yard slab!"

