

The New House

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The New House

by [Jespah](#)

Summary

When Malcolm and Lili marry, there's a little matter of her moving into his house.

Second marriage. Second house. Second life. Lili O'Day Beckett Reed sighed for a moment. "No one ever tells you how weird it is when you remarry."

"You say something, dearest?" asked Malcolm. He walked into the old bedroom Lili had shared with her first husband, Doug. Malcolm picked up a box marked *winter clothes*. "Do you even need these, Lili-Flower? It never gets cold on Lafa II."

"I am well aware of that. Those clothes are for visiting Marie Patrice on Andoria or if we go to Earth. Jonathan said he wanted us to come over once we're settled." *If I can ever get settled, that is.*

"Oh, yes, of course. Just trying to allow for space considerations. Perhaps we can build a shed for storage or some such."

Don't take my things away from me. Please. "I don't know. Maybe later. Let's just get everything to the Reed House and deal with the specifics later. Declan said he was going to help us but then he and Joss disappeared into Fep City."

He put the box down and put his arms around her. "So, it's just you and me, then?"

"And a ton of boxes. Do you even notice that I'm, ahem, a mature bride?"

"I do and I don't, to be perfectly frank with you. I recognize you as being you, naturally. But I also see you as something else. Something ethereal, as it were."

"Good lord, Malcolm, I put my pants on one leg at a time just like everybody else."

"And you take them off the same way, too." He nuzzled her neck.

Not now. Later. But not now. "C'mon, what'll happen if the boys come back and find us, shall we say, shirking our responsibilities?"

"You are my favorite person to shirk them with."

Lili managed a game smile. "I just, Malcolm, I'm being hit by more emotion than I know what to do with right now."

"Oh?"

"C'mon, you know Doug and Kevin are buried in the back yard. I spent a good chunk of my life here. It'll feel strange for this house to become Joss and Jia's and not mine anymore."

He stepped back a little, hands still on her waist. "I hadn't taken that into account. Here I am, being flippant about things, and it's bothering you. I apologize."

"It's, it's okay. It's just that today is kinda fraught."

"Understood." He removed his hands from her waist and picked up the box again. "Once this is all done, perhaps I should carry you over the threshold or some such."

"And throw out your back? You do realize that neither of us are spring chickens any more and I've put on a few kilos."

"Those kilos are in all the right places, so kindly do not fret about that. And I shall endeavor to respect your feelings. See, for me, this is nothing but pure excitement. Us, living together in harmony as man and wife? I've been waiting for this for years."

"I know. And I don't want to bring you down." She looked down, spotting a stray sock. "Huh, this one tried to escape one of the boxes."

"By the looks of it, it wasn't too successful, eh? But you won't bring me down, I swear. Lili, this is for better and it's also for worse. We've known one another for decades. Confide in me as a friend if not as your husband."

"Except the feelings are different for you. We're not just pals."

"I get it. I do. I vow to you that I do." He looked at her gamely. "It's just up the rise anyway. You can come back any time you wish, to, to visit the graves if you like or for any other purpose. Melissa comes to Kevin's grave, and you've always welcomed her to do so. I have no doubt that Jia and Joss will have no issues with you doing the same to commune with Douglas."

"Of course, you're right. Just, just give me a moment, all right? I think I want to commune now."

"Absolutely. And I shall just take this to our home and leave you so you can have your privacy. Let me know when you're ready for me to return. All right? We can finish this up later if necessary." He kissed her cheek and departed, box in hand with the stray sock casually draped on top of it.

All right. Here goes nothing.

Lili made her way to the back, where she had gone thousands if not millions of times. To watch the children as they played, or the local fauna, fanged hares called linfep, frolic in the weeds. To tend to the garden. To attend Kevin Beckett's funeral, the third infant son of Melissa and Doug. To attend Doug's funeral. And to marry Malcolm.

"It's all too much," she whispered to the wind.

And the wind answered, in her head.

I get it. I really do.

"Doug?"

No. Not Doug. But close.

"Jay Hayes?"

Yep.

"How can I hear you?"

Psionic abilities.

"I see. Are you where Doug is?"

Kinda, but only in the sense that we're both in the afterworld. But he can't come to the phone, as it were. So, you're stuck with me.

"I don't feel like I'm stuck, sheesh, Jay."

Well, thanks. I should have asked you out while I still had the chance. But then again, we wouldn't be having this conversation, now, would we?

Lili smiled to herself. "I suppose not. Is there something you wish to tell me?"

Apart from that? Yeah. It's to tell you to embrace your new life and new home and new husband and everything that it all entails.

"I don't know. It feels..."

Disrespectful?

"At times, yes."

It's not. Trust me, it's not. You have a lot of time to be on the other side of the ground. You're entitled to be happy. You're entitled to let it go for a while.

"To forget?"

Never to forget. But to not let it run your life? Yeah, that. Go on, and know that it's okay. You've got Doug's blessing and if it's worth anything, you've got mine as well.

"It's worth something. Definitely worth something."

I appreciate that. And know that we're never far away.

"Doug and, and you?"

And Malcolm's mirror counterpart, Ian. And even the man you married when the Enterprise got thrown back the second time.

"Second?"

Eh, it's a long story. But José Torres's counterpart is here as well.

"José? He's so, so tall."

There was laughter on the wind. Just go. You'll get an explanation eventually. But right now you need to spend your time on your side of the ground. Oh, and Lili?

"Hmm?"

The other sock is under the flowerpot in the foyer.

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