

James

A Novel by MikeC
Chapters 36-46

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Part VII. Wandering Afield.

Chapter 36

Saturday looked to be a scorcher as I picked Mr and Mrs Cipola up in the morning. Amanda's heat was at eleven - which was good because it would not be too hot. The final heat was scheduled for two, which meant they would likely be sweltering in their suits.

On the way I told them about Amanda's friend who owned a marina and had been giving her lessons in the Junior-class runabout. I assured them it was very safe as the speeds were strictly controlled and full safety gear was mandatory.

Amanda ran up to us from where she and Sara were working on Neta. "Mom, Dad!" She gave each of them a hug and a kiss.

She took my arm and, after kissing me softly, turned back to her parents, "I'm not going to let James steal my thunder this time. So... Mom, Dad, I love James and he loves me. He's great and really cares for me. And he makes me very, very happy."

Mrs Cipola smiled at me and even Mr Cipola nodded. He shook my hand, "James, I think you're a fine young man, but if..."

"If he ever breaks my heart, I will personally break every bone in his worthless body. So you needn't worry Dad!"

"I was going to say if he needs some pointers in handling you, I'll be glad to help!" He smiled.

"Mom...! Are you going to let them make fun of me?"

"Oh my Amanda, you've grown up so!" Mrs Cipola said with tears in her eyes, "And you've grown so too!" She was admiring Amanda's lush new body, just as every guy within ten feet was.

Amanda pointed towards the boat, "Sara's 'family' owns Max's Marina at the lake and she's been helping me and getting me ready for this! Anyways, I gotta go - wish me luck!" Amanda took my hand and led me away.

The pit area took up the entire perimeter of the river and ours was towards the end. 'Jewel' was docked about thirty feet away and the girls gave us the thumbs up from the cabin.

Sara pointed to a boat, beautifully prepared in black and chrome trim, still being polished and buffed by its crew. "That's 'Black' Angus Needham. He's won every race for the last three years. Everyone is waiting for him to move up in class next year but for now, he's the one to beat."

Each heat was three laps around the course and Amanda's was the second of four. She would have to come in third or better for a berth in the finals. Each race began with a flying start, and the drivers had to time themselves to be close to the start line when the flag was dropped.

The five minute siren went and Sara fired up the engine, smiling and giving it an affectionate pat. I wished Amanda luck.

"Where's my kiss?" She grabbed me and gave me one. A REAL kiss. Lips, tongue, spit, erection - the works. Everyone watched us and I could feel her parents' cold stares stabbing me in the back.

As the boats jockeyed for starting position, I could see the skill with which Amanda handled her craft. It was also obvious why the 'Black' boat was tops. It was driven coolly and competently. Instead of cutting sharply around the buoys, it almost coasted around.

Sara was intrigued, "Why would he do that? All it does is slow down his exit - his start speed will suffer!"

The start flag dropped and Amanda was first through, followed by the number 14 boat. 'Black' was third, hampered by the wide turn that Sara had questioned. But almost immediately,

the quality of the boat was apparent. It cornered better and it planed quicker than anyone else. It had overtaken #14 by the second turn and was hot behind Amanda.

Amanda had the inside track on turn four when 'Black' nudged 'Neta' in the side, enough to throw her entry wide and allowed 'Black' to cut in on the inside. After that, he pulled away, beating Amanda by ten feet, although she still made the finals by placing second.

The damage to the rear quarter was not serious and would not affect the performance of the boat, but Amanda was dejected, "I can't hold him off and once he's past me, he out-turns and out-accelerates me!"

Sara came back from applying duct tape to the damaged section and said, "He's got three things going for him - One, he's good; Two, he's got a fantastic boat and Three, he cheats." She looked at us, "Check out the chrome trim around his boat. Look closely, you'll see that they stick down almost three inches. When he leans into his turns, the rails act like strakes and stop the boat from slipping out. I saw the gouge it made on 'Neta', it looks like they're made of heavy gage stainless steel."

"So what can we do about it..."

"Wait, there's more. Did you notice how much polishing they were doing to their boat? And why he wouldn't take the turns in warm-up?" She held out her finger, a pale white toothpaste substance was on it. "They weren't polishing it, they were applying a surfactant - good old soap! When it dissolves in water, it reduces the surface tension, making the boat less sticky, and therefore quicker to plane! And he had to take the warm-up turns easy because he didn't want to wash it off too early!"

"...Or to leave soap bubbles - but can we do something about that?"

"Not too much - officially, we should lodge a complaint, but it's hard to prove anything after the race. We can try the soap trick too, but it will be iffy since we've never tested it on 'Neta'..." Sara stopped and smiled, "But we do have a secret weapon!"

The boat had hooks on each side to allow it to be tied down during transportation. Sara had removed ours because they were not required. Now she was going to put them back.

"Sorry baby, this is for a good cause." She said to 'Neta', then to us, "This time I'll just put one at the center of gravity and low on the hull..."

"They'll drag in the water when I lean!"

"Exactly, so at least we level the playing field some!"

"Good, without the soap, I can take the turns harder and beat him at the start again!"

"But make sure you test out the new addition first!" Sara warned.

Amanda went to 'Jewel' to cool off and talk to the girls about our plans, returning with refreshments to watch the remaining heats.

Many of the competitors were poorly prepared and two even got themselves tangled in the marker buoys. I timed the other competitors and nobody came within 4 seconds of Amanda. She would only have the 'Black' to contend with.

We were having sandwiches which Brenda had brought over when a competitor from the last race, still in his Nomex suit and helmet, came over with his technician.

The crew member introduced himself, "Hi, I'm Patrick and this is Jesse... my brother." We shook hands and exchanged names.

"Isn't it hot in the suit?" Amanda asked. She had hers halfway open and her boobs halfway out. Patrick blushed and tore his gaze off them.

Jesse shook his head and muttered something. "Jessie, it's all right! We know you're a girl!" Sara whispered.

"How could you tell?!" Patrick blurted and got kicked in his shin.

"My name's Jessica, but call me Jessie."

"Come over on the 'Jewel', the aircon is running. You can let your hair down and cool off." Amanda invited, "Girls ONLY. James, you can entertain Patrick and watch the boat."

I cracked us beers and found out from Patrick that Jessie shared Amanda's infatuation with fast things and had talked him into helping her with the sport. He was taking Mechanical Engineering at the U and they would race in the Summer.

"It's very difficult for girls to break into the racing scene. You are either a bimbo, or must be a lesbian." He sneered. "Black Angus is bragging to everybody how he's gonna whip your asses. He's positive Amanda was just lucky, simply because he's sure no team involving females can be any good. Make sure Amanda watches out for him!"

"We've seen some of his dirty tricks. We were talking about lodging a complaint after the race."

"Not too much good there! His Dad is Hal Needham, the F1 Racer, he owns a couple of circuits up north and nobody is going to cross him because of a lowly J-Classer!" He shook his head, "That's why I'm glad we're out. Jessie is sixteen already and she's promised this will be her last year."

He shook my hand and wished us luck as the girls came back out. Jessie was back in her helmet and zipped up suit. She dragged Patrick away, saying, "Wow, you'd kill to see the babes on the boat!"

Amanda took my arm and went up to her parents, "How'd you like it so far?"

"It's good dear, just be very careful!" Mrs Cipola was looking a bit faint from the heat and no doubt from the smell of the 2-stroke engines.

"Do you want me to take you back? I can come back for Amanda later!"

"No, I want to stay for the finals. I'm very proud of you Amanda, I'm just not used to the noise and the heat!"

We went back as the horn sounded. Sara had touched up the torn section in the back and had painted the strapping hooks as well.

"That's Jessie's boat," Sara pointed, "She actually won her heat so she's quite good."

As they took their warm-up turns, Amanda and Jessie stayed together, just trailing 'Black'. As the 3 minute clock wound down, Amanda sped up and, still with Jessie alongside, beat 'Black' across the start flag by two boat lengths.

"Watch this," Sara murmured.

The two leaders imperceptively slowed and sprayed the 'Black' coming up behind them. At the first turn, they were ahead by 15 feet. Amanda took the inside track as Jessie took a less torturous turn on the outside.

Once past the turn, 'Black' was almost alongside Jessie when Amanda cut across their bow and her rooster tail dumped on 'Black', allowing Jessie to pull away. As the soap washed off, 'Black' was not able to make up any grounds on Amanda, while she would cut off any of his attempts to overtake Jessie.

The two girls were neck to neck on the final stretch until Amanda throttled back to let Jessie cross before her. 'Black' was a distant third.

Jessica and Amanda took their victory laps to riotous cheers as each unfurled a streamer saying 'Power Tuned by Max's High Performance'.

It was a fine sight when they mounted the podium and removed their helmets, revealing that two girls had taken first and second places. Angus Needham did not show to accept his third place finish. Although he still remained the points leader, his invincibility had been cracked, by girls, no less.

I found him bitching loudly by his pit to a crowd of hangers-on. I took his hand and put my arm around his shoulder and turned him about.

"How are you, Ang!" I cried, masking his "Oof!" as I squeezed his hand hard. I did not let up until I felt his bones rub against each other.

"Walk with me and NOT A SOUND!" I hissed, steering him away from the crowd.

I waited until we were a good distance off, "I don't like anyone mouthing off my girlfriend, understand?" He nodded as sweat ran down his face. "And if I even THINK you're

dissing her, I break your knees as well. Nod if you understand." He did. I increased the pressure until he started whining.

"Now, do you want to keep this hand?" He nodded eagerly, "Go up to the girls and congratulate them nicely, loud enough so I can hear you, then go. I don't want to see your face around here anymore."

He did as he was told, shaking their hands gingerly and grudging out his congratulations. He disappeared inside his trailer which soon drove away.

I helped Sara tie 'Neta' up and said goodbye to the girls - they would be going back to their own home too after dropping the boats off. Then I rejoined Amanda's parents as they waited for her to get changed, inviting them to Frank's for a late lunch.

"Amanda seems to be very good. Did she let the other girl win?"

"Oh, Amanda is VERY good, she has an innate understanding of machinery and their dynamics. And, yes, it's Jessica's last year of racing and honestly, it would surprise me a lot if Amanda didn't let her take first place." I looked at them, "Amanda is a winner in every way."

Amanda came back out, hair tied in a loose bun, wearing a white blouse and tight jeans, soft and all girl and all curves. We stared.

"Whaddaya think, guys?" She rested a fist on her hip and struck a pose. My heart leapt in my throat.

"Oh, Amanda, you look like an angel!" Her mother blubbered on her as she smiled and took my hand.

"Wow, you HAVE grown up!" Mr Cipola shook his head. "Wow!" He repeated.

We drove over to the restaurant and met Frank inside. He shook my hand and bowed over Amanda's, impressing the hell out of her parents. After she introduced them they too received the effuse welcome.

"Dad, can we get champagne - for the occasion?"

He nodded, "Just this once, I suppose! But you're too young to start drinking, young lady!"

"You know I won't, Dad." She smiled at me, "I'm giddy enough as it is..."

"Tell us about this job you have!" Mrs Cipola asked, "You were awfully cryptic on the phone!"

Amanda fished out the contracts and told us about her modeling career and the job as engineering consultant. "It will be all week up at the Marina but I'd rather be working on the boats than taking pictures in them. The technical part is what gives me a kick."

"Is that a career choice Amanda?" Mr Cipola was an Engineer and he was obviously pleased with the direction Amanda was taking.

"I'm going to try and finish High School this year, then I'll try for Electrical or Mechanical." She said, outlining Nicole's plan to graduate in the least possible time.

"Mom, Dad, I know it's a big decision and there's a lot of hard work ahead. But I WANT to get my degree and do something with it. Give me this summer, then we'll look at the results. If this works out, I'll get my education and you don't have to spend all your money putting me through private school." She took her parents' hands, "Then you can do something for yourselves for a change."

"That's a lovely idea, Amanda, obviously you've thought this through. And we have the entire summer to see how things work out... And James? You have similar plans?"

"I've got a job in town but I'm also aiming to get my High School diploma this summer and start Journalism." I paused, "And I would like to spend as much time as I can with Amanda."

"It's good you care so much for each other, but you're both very young. Don't be in such a rush to grow up!"

"I'm sure you're right, Mrs Cipola... I'm very happy with what I already share with Amanda - I won't need anything more." Amanda rolled her eyes but her parents visibly relaxed.

The meal was extremely enjoyable and Amanda made everyone comfortable. She proudly insisted on treating us with her second place winnings.

"Frank, thank you." Amanda said as she pressed the \$40 she got back as change into his hands. "Please thank your staff for a lovely meal."

"You are most kind, Miss Amanda. Give us some notice next time and I'll prepare a special meal for you." He bowed deeply.

The trip back was filled with Amanda's animated, but heavily censored, recounting of the shoot and the week.

"Mom, we have to get me some new clothes - nothing fits anymore!" She paused, "If you're busy, then I'm sure I can convince Dad to help me pick out stuff... bras, panties, that sort of thing... Or maybe James..." She ruffled my hair from the rear.

Mrs Cipola laughed, "Let's not embarrass the guys, we can go this afternoon. Dad's going golfing anyways..."

"OK, James, come pick me up tomorrow afternoon. I'll have my new duds and you're taking me on a date."

"Yes ma'am." I answered as her parents laughed.

I drove up to their house and, in front of her parents, Amanda leaned in and gave me a soft warm kiss.

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The bustle of the city and the shopping malls was startling after the calm of the lake and I hurried as soon as I could out to Nicole's. She was not in and the big house stood empty and cold.

She had collected a freezer full of meat and I had to do another major excavation of rancid produce. I prepared the vegetables I picked up and started a big pot along with cubed sirloin steaks for soup.

I moved some text books into the car and spent an hour on the exercise machines. Then I settled in the kitchen with a laptop to figure out the US Patent System. After I learned to ignore the confusing and confused rhetoric, I wrote up my application for 'A means to determine gas-liquid convergence zones in a moving body using aural interpretive methods', which itself was more grandiose and longer than the methodology itself, but no doubt the technical writers could stretch it to 10 pages or more.

I heard her car pull up and greeted her at the garage entrance.

She smiled and I was rooted in her beauty, and the aching need I had for her. We stared at each other, our breaths catching.

I took her hand as I knelt and kissed it, "My princess..." I struggled with my voice, "I am here to pay court..."

She clasped me to her and stroked my hair. "Welcome home," she whispered, "My knight, my love." She pulled me up and we held each other, shivering in our emotions.

Our lips met and, smoothly, silently, our clothing drifted to the ground. My hand touched her breast and she gasped in my mouth, darting her tongue in to caress me. I touched her nipple and it warmed and grew hard in my palm.

Her hands slid down my torso and held my hardening penis. With practiced ease, I leaned forward and she wrapped her legs around my waist as she directed me into her soft core, sighing at the rightness of our joining.

She leaned her head in my neck and hummed happily as she slipped her softness on my cock. In minutes we were moaning and I staggered against the wall as waves of sweetness drew sperm from deep within me. Nicole shuddered and hung on as she too, shook and grunted out her pleasure.

"Mmm, I liked that!" She murmured in my ear as she worked her soft cunt on me, milking me. We held her on me until I was small, then she kissed my ear, whispering, "Can I go wash up?"

"Hmmm, don't be long..." I kissed her nose, "I made dinner..."

She smiled tenderly and went upstairs.

I threw my pants on and busied myself in the kitchen. I had just ladled out the soup when Nicole reappeared in her shimmering white gown. She softly kissed me and allowed me to seat her, oohing her delight at the vase with the single white rose I had placed on the table. I poured us wine, a light white Zinfandel, then I lit the candles and turned the lights down.

"To us..." We toasted and smiled.

I served her the borscht with sour cream and followed it with veal medallions which I had browned, then baked with chopped coriander on a bed of fragrant rice, surrounded by cubed vegetables covered in a light buttery sauce.

Nicole leaned to kiss me softly and held her wine up, "Thank you, my darling knight... You spoil me."

"No more than you deserve." We drank, "But I'll admit - I'm more than a bit impressed with myself: it turned out better than I dared hope."

Her eyes glinted, "And if I have any say in the matter, the rest of the evening will unquestionably turn out quite nicely for you as well!"

As we ate she told me about her trip to visit the construction companies, culminating in a visit to an IPO company we had been investing in. SurgInt specialized in minimally-invasive surgical robots. Their revolutionary extensor system consisted of an articulated arm that could be controlled remotely by a surgeon wearing a stereoscopic viewer. Sensors allowed the robot arm to emulate the surgeon's arm movements and the device itself could be interchangeably equipped with grippers, retractors, laser-cutters, cauterizers and suture-staplers.

Its major advantage over laparoscopic technology was the robot's ability to operate UNDER other body organs. The heart and the liver being the primary candidates - neither of which could be accessed using existing low-intrusion methods.

The major hurdles so far had been its 2-million dollar price-tag and the lengthy wait for the FDA to approve its use outside of teaching hospitals.

Nicole wanted to install a unit in the Valley Clinic, with plans to expand it for recuperative care in the future.

"We'll have the first unit in the State. It's an ambitious plan but we anticipate a 12-15 month payback once the FDA gives us the go-ahead, which may not happen for 6-8 months, but we'll make use of the time to get the staff trained. The funny thing is that even without FDA approval, we can still operate - as long as they're referrals or non-US citizens. And the list of overseas patients waiting for our kind of minimal-intrusion, low-risk operations for coronary bypass and mitral replacement run in the tens of thousands!"

"Ah - that's why you want to add the rehab wing. If they're from abroad, they'll probably be fairly well-off, and they'd need to recuperate before they can travel," I paused, "We'll need to set up the support staff to arrange Visas, transportation... Hmm, what about lodgings for their relatives?"

"One step at a time, hon!" Nicole laughed, "But you're getting an idea of the magnitude of the venture!"

After we finished dinner with extra helpings of fresh fruit, we took the wine to the garden and sat on the steps of the pool. Nicole leaned on me and gently stirred the water with her foot.

She held my hand, "Sometimes I get scared with the visions we come up with. Then I realize that that's what makes us unique. Individually, we're competent and confident - but together, we are an unstoppable force; not afraid to try things, to help each other reach the next plateau. It's magic, what I've discovered with you," she turned to kiss me softly, "And it's made even more meaningful by the incredible amount of love and closeness we share..."

She held my hand around her shoulder, looking up at the fading twilight and whispered, "Love for the dusk... Love for the glistening after; Quiet the trees to their last tops... Serene..."

We gripped our hands, hearts pounding but barely breathing, lest it disturb the delicate glow that seemed to suddenly enfold us.

Chapter 37

"What do you think?" Nicole looked out from the mirror, eyes aglow. She was a vision in a white wraparound dress and golden hair flowing. My heart pounded in my throat.

I kissed the back of her neck and she reached back to caress me as I slipped my arms around her waist.

"Hmmm, we should've asked for more material here..." She looked at our image and ran a finger lightly up the distended front of my pants, one of the many she had made for me that had been collecting dust in the closet.

"If you don't stop teasing me, we'll miss your flight..." I slid my hands up her ribs and over her breasts.

"If YOU don't stop teasing me, I won't care if we miss my flight..." She leaned back and murmured.

I turned her around and kissed her. "It would be a crime to deprive the world the chance to get a look at you, my Princess..." She took my hand and smiled.

She only had a small carry on suitcase, "What's the point in traveling with my wardrobe? If I need more, I'll buy it there!" It made sense, sort of.

In the BMW she took my hand and, after a bit, she leaned her head on me.

"I used to feel terrified of going on trips like this, and did it only as an obligation to Gaston." She looked at me, "Now, it's just the opposite, I WANT to go and show them how good we are... I can't wait for the world to see what they're up against." She paused and grinned, "It's either that or the frontier life you've forced me into has turned me into a wild woman!"

"I can just see it now - barefoot and pregnant, with a couple of kids already at your teats." I laughed, "But still impeccably coifed and in a white Gucci outfit!"

She shared my laughter, "I prefer Chanel, myself." She looked up, "And all the li'l ones will look like you..." She dropped her hand on me, "Won't they?"

"Is that a threat?"

She moved her hand on my bulge, softly, "Hmmm, make it a promise, OK?"

"I promise, hon. One of these days..."

She squeezed me and smiled, gloriously. "But maybe not this week..." She let it hang as she fished me out from my pants, "Oooh, you naughty boy! Thinking lewd thoughts about Mama!"

I sighed as she moved her hand on me, gasping and squirming as she slowly increased the pressure and the pace.

"Tell me when you're ready to come." She said against me, running her thumb around the dripping crown.

"Ahhh, soon... Very soon... Ah, ah... A-about n-now!" She slipped her mouth on me and applied soft suction that made my come pour out. I groaned as she nursed on me gently. I moaned my grateful delight and sprayed into her.

After a lick and a kiss she tucked me in and straightened up from my lap. She followed my gaze and gulped at the sight of an equally surprised motorist who was pacing us on our right and snarling at me. I had let the car slow to 50 in the fast lane.

Slowly she smiled and, turning to face the man, licked a stray spot of come into her mouth, just as I accelerated and pulled away.

"Damn," Nicole complained, "I wanted to keep your stuff in my mouth and he made me swallow it!"

"Wow, was that what you mean by 'Wild Woman'?" I gasped.

She giggled, "Oh my god! Was that me?" She collapsed on my shoulder, laughing uncontrollably.

"I was wild, wasn't I?" She said after a while, then looked up at me, "You know, there was a time, not long ago, that sunbathing in the nude was the most depraved thing I could think of?" She pinched me, "That's what happens when you let me hang around Celeste! What a class-A bimbo!" She hummed on me and smacked her lips a bit. "Hmmm, I like that! Nikki, the Bimbo!"

We had just turned into the underground parking when she smiled - a Nikki-the-Bimbo smile, "We've got ten minutes, don't we?"

Moments later, we staggered out on the concourse. Nicole was humming happily as she leaned on me and stuck a hand inside my back pocket.

She took my arm to the VIP lounge. "Oh shit, you can't sneak in anymore..." They had added a detector and X-Ray machine at the entrance and nobody except passengers were allowed to pass. She sighed, "Oh well, Nikki the Bimbo has had her fun."

Nicole pulled me aside, all business again, "Don't forget to drop off the patent application to the Lawyers." She brushed my hair out of my eyes, "Take care of the girls, and... I'll miss you..." She kissed me softly and vanished inside.

The grey day brightened immensely when Nicole called me from the waiting room. "Hello, my knight. Just trying out the new phone." I had picked one up for her the day before. "I love you lots!" I could hear the warm smile in her voice.

I drove home and had lunch. Erin was leaving for camp and she asked me to take her, piling a suitcase, a duffel bag, sleeping bag and bedding in the car before jumping in.

"Why do you have so much junk? Are you eloping?"

Erin laughed, "It's a gym camp, so I have to bring all my leotards and grips as well as regular camp gear. It's 2 weeks long - so I can get ready for National Elite next year!"

"Hey! That means you have to train in Colorado?"

"No, not until I make it to Junior level, and only if I want to go there. But I'll probably be training 35 hours a week." She sighed, "But I still need another release on Bars though - I'm hoping I can get the Jaeger..."

"As in Chuck Yeager?"

"Who? The Jaeger was named after a German Gymnast who did it on Men's High Bar. It's like a side straddle from a kick release. I may go for the full twisting one after - but what I REALLY want is the Hindorf - it's a Jaeger from kip. It's also a Men's move, but my coach says I'm long and strong enough for it. If I get it, it'll be the first in America - at the Novice level, I mean."

"Good for you!" I said sagely, "I hope you have a terrific time at camp!"

"Thanks, I'll try."

I helped her carry her gear into the bus - it was amazing, each girl had easily five times their weight in luggage. Then Erin paraded me in front of her friends and finally introduced me to her coach.

"Angela? This is my brother James."

I shook her hand - she was obviously a gymnast herself. Barely 5' 3" and not an ounce of fat on her. Cutoffs showed impressive upper body development - I'd think twice before arm wrestling with her. Nice pecs too.

"Angela was in the Pan-Am Games before NCAA." Erin confirmed.

She looked at me, "James, do you work out?"

"Yes," Erin grinned, "He's a wrestler... The GOOD kind."

"Hmmm," She appraised me, "If you're free next Sunday, come up for Visitors' Day - we could use you for our Nutritions Talk."

"What, to show us what happens if we don't watch our diet?"

"No - that you can be healthy regardless of size. Sometimes there is too much emphasis on weight, and not enough on nutrition."

Angela gave me directions to the camp, "We're on an island and it's mostly back roads getting there, about four hours." She smiled, "If you can, come, if not..." she shrugged. I blinked at her excellent, bouncy pecs.

Erin hugged me, dragging me away, "Stop drooling! She's too old!"

"And your friends are too young!"

"They don't think so - and they'll have to come to me to get close to you!" She smiled as she patted my cheek and joined the throng boarding the bus.

I watched the bus drive off and waited until the waving hands and happy screeches faded in the distance.

"Amanda's gone out," Mrs Cipola said when I called. She then gave me JulieAnn's telephone number, "They're doing something for work, so she went over." She explained apologetically. "She said they'll be going up to the marina tonight."

"Thanks, Mrs Cipola, I'll call - maybe I can see her before she leaves."

I drove over and let myself in the door, following music coming from the basement. They were all there and were sitting quietly listening to Sherri playing the piano. Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata", if I remembered my classics.

Brenda saw me and smiled, pulling me down and kissing me softly. "Isn't she amazing?" Sara was hugging and leaning on Jules and they waved.

Amanda slipped into my lap. "Aren't you going to thank me for getting her here?"

I kissed her, "I will," Another kiss, "Later." Another one, "In private." We grinned at each other.

She hugged me and twinkled, "But probably not tonight, right?"

Brenda hit her, "Lemme listen!"

We settled back and basked in Sherri's artistry. Celeste, who was sitting next to her to turn pages, was teary eyed, swaying, intoxicated.

Sighs greeted her as the final soft notes of the first movement faded away. Celeste leaned her head on Sherri's shoulder and hugged her, "I'd love you to finish the piece, but I think there's someone here who'd like to say hi."

Sherri turned and I took both her hands, "That was lovely..." I kissed them, "Magic hands..."

She looked at me and sighed, stroking my cheek and slowly melting into my embrace, whispering in my ear, "Master, my dear master..." her voice faded as we kissed softly and gazed into each other. She was beautiful, glowing with joy, and her eyes radiated love and desire.

Celeste turned her about, taking her hands and kissing the palms, pressing them to her own cheeks. "That was absolutely unbelievable... I'm sorry we don't have a real piano for you to play on." She turned to us, "This is only an electric piano, a good one, but..."

Sherri smiled and said, "Oh, it's VERY good, I play a Clavinova, which is the larger, non-portable version of this." She paused, "The sound's the same, but, in a way you're right, the keys have no 'touch'." She continued, "The Clavinova have actual hammers activating the electronics so it feels and sounds just like a grand piano. The P-series only have dampened action so it's not quite 100%. Still..." She looked at Celeste, "I'd be honored to play the rest for you..."

"You do, and I'll have your child." Celeste took Sherri and kissed her. For a long time.

"Why don't we take the Yamaha up with us, then?" Jules asked, when they finally broke, "You're taking your violin anyways and there'll be nobody here to play it!"

Quickly we took it down and stuffed it into the Solara and loaded the music into my car. Then they strapped themselves in, "See you at the House!" as they waved goodbye to Sherri and me.

I held her soft body and stared in the deep pools of her beautiful eyes, "How've you been, my lovely fairy?"

"Very well," she leaned into my chest, "Knowing I'd be seeing you..." She looked up, "And taking you to bed..."

"Can it wait until we're at the Lake?" I grinned.

Her eyes darkened as she smiled, "It can wait as long as you want - provided you know how I feel about it!" She glinted, slipping her hand inside my shirt and sighed.

We drove off as she held my hand, "Where did you learn to play like that?"

"Lessons... Been playing since I was five. I've had the same teacher and she kept me going these eight years." She leaned on me, "It takes a long time before you could start playing an instrument, in a musical manner. And most of it is boring, repetitive work." She looked outside for a while, "Too bad there's no other way of learning it - although the Suzuki method has had some success. They teach music as a language - through listening and immersion. It does work, you learn to speak it, but, regardless of how competently you can reproduce it, musicology, like languages, requires the written component. Just because you can converse in a language does not mean you can write it, let alone create in it. So the extra work still has to go in."

She looked at me and I squeezed her hand, "Go on..."

"Suzuki tries to divide the spoken music from the written. Kids listen to the pieces until they know the syntax - meaning they could hum it accurately. Then they reproduce it on the instrument - it decreases the curve and allows them to learn the physical aspects quicker. Perhaps of greater value is that it permits starting the child at an earlier age, before they can read.

"Hopefully, the quick results give more of them the incentive to continue, but, even if they don't, they may have enough to continue to ENJOY their music." She paused, "That's the crossover point, conservatory music teaches all aspects of music simultaneously, so it takes twice as long to get to this point, but, unlike Suzuki, once you reach the sight-reading stage, you're able to do quite a bit with the instrument. Many jazz and professional pianists take off from here.

"Suzuki method teaches the hand-ear relationship but they still need to follow regular methods for the hand-eye-ear training. Of course that's for the piano - for strings, there's more - the pressure and the angle of the bow, for instance; the DISTANCE you play from the bridge makes a big difference; how hard you press the strings with the fingers matters as well. The list is endless - Celeste will know more about that." She took a breath, "And that's just getting to know the instrument! For each piece, you go through another, similar cycle - learn, practice, absorb, interpret, express.

"Then there's the physical aspects, no matter how gifted you may be there's no way your fingers can play two-hundred notes a minute without the training. On the piano, trills can run at over 500 notes a minute! And you have to practice with virtually any pair of fingers!" She paused, "You know, Mozart's daddy was for a long time more famous than his gifted son? Unfortunately, Leopold was famous because he was the author of the Finger Exercises that every pianist had to endure. And you cannot play the same thing 2 hours a day without getting kinda sick of its author. Plus it's dry and totally unmusical." She wiggled her fingers, "But at least I can say now that I enjoy my music..."

I slowed, "These ARE magical hands," I sighed as I kissed the finger tips.

She smiled sweetly and then looked around, "Is this the dam?"

"Yeah," I showed her the lock and the fish hatchery, "The river takes us the 45 miles to the ocean and," I pointed to the lake, "The house is that direction, hidden behind the cliffs, a half hour by boat - or ten minutes if Amanda drives." I amended.

"Is she..."

"Good, yes. It's because she understands mechanical things so well, almost as if it's inborn, that she can push the envelope with little risk. Sara is like that too but she approaches it scientifically, she has to study and understand it first, then she OWNS it."

"And you...?"

"I'm not nearly as good. Most of the time I say screw it and let them figure it out."

"And then you screw them... Right?" She laughed, the lovely trill of a silver bell.

I laughed with her, "Do they make me out to be as bad as that?"

"Who says it's bad? Between themselves they think you are the god's gift." She glowed, "And I tend to believe them."

"I can see I've got an impossible image to live up to!" I said as I parked and took her hand.

"The Marina will be crazy next week. We're adding another 2000 square feet down by the water and construction will begin tomorrow. That's why I'm leaving the car back here..." I looked around, "Funny, I don't see Celeste's car!"

Max was down in the shop and I introduced Sherri, "Another one?" He grinned and shook her hand gingerly, as if afraid of bruising her.

"Why are you working here on the weekend?"

"We got 3 overhauls and a refitting to do - they saw the advertising at the race. And Amanda's gone over to Harry's to help out." He grinned at me, "It's good to see the place hopping again!"

"Tell Amanda to call us when she needs a ride!" I said as we took our leave.

We loaded Dweebus with the stuff in the car, taking 10 minutes to get all the stuff and text books in.

We drove out slowly and watched the houses and cottages drift by, getting a few waves from people. I did the 15 minute drill on boating and afterwards Sherri steered with my arms around her. I asked her about her vacation.

"OK, I guess, but it was weird at first. My folks took me to the places that they knew I was looking forward to, but everything seemed bland and," she shrugged, "Even childish..."

Sherri continued, "I realized I was in a different mind set when the rides and attractions no longer interested me. It didn't feel like you." She leaned back on me, "So we spent the rest of the time in the exhibits, and then I could imagine you with me, telling me about the dinosaurs and distant galaxies." She sighed, "And we would visit exotic lands and meet the people and experience their culture." She kissed my cheek, "Or just cuddle like this..." I smiled and held her to me as she confidently steered us past the towering cliffs.

"James..." Sherri sighed in my ear, "Seeing as I'm the new kid on the block and everything, I have a question about protocol..."

"Hmm?"

"If someone's erection is poking me in my bum, is that someone expecting me to touch it?"

"Hmmm, depends if you have the patience to wait for it to go away on its own. If you're in a hurry, then you'd best be prepared to take matters in your own hand..."

She squirmed around inside my clothing a bit, "Like this?"

"Ahhh, seems you have a good grip on things..." I sighed, and moaned as she licked my ear and started moving her hand.

"James, I have another question..." She waited for me to wheeze a response, "Hypothetically, if a young lady is in your arms, and she has a need to be touched. What would be the proper way for her to approach it?"

"Ahhh..." She slowed enough for me to speak, "Usually the young lady can ask politely, but, considering the fact that the hired help is not overly bright, she may have to show him what to do..." I gulped as she pondered the answer - by pumping her hand on me.

"But supposing the hypothetical young lady is steering with one hand and is busy with her other hand, do you think the hired help can locate the areas that need touching, unassisted?"

"I... Mmmph!" She resumed working me over as I slipped my hand under her T and up to her breasts.

"Ahhh," she breathed in my ear, "The hired help appears trainable... Mmmm. I like that - I like your big hands on me." Her hand was still moving on me but without the precision she was showing before.

"Uhhh, Sher..." I grunted, "T-turn in here..." Her hand stopped, seconds from splashdown.

She let me take the wheel and rubbed her butt on me. "Uhhh, d-don't move! I'm close!" Gingerly I nudged the boat against the dock, afraid to set off any hard jolts. "Ahhhh, we're there!"

She turned, "Don't YOU move, James..." and slowly slipped down, working my pants off. My cock was swimming in secretion as her tongue slipped out and tasted me. With a soft smile she started licking.

"Uhhhh, uhhh..." I gasped sincerely, gripping the wheel tight to stop my hands from ramming her face down on me.

"Ohhhh!" I moaned as her mouth settled and she added her hands. My head fell back as my hips started bucking into her tender heat. With a shudder I came, I shot and shot again, deliciously, as she gently milked my lust with her softness.

"Sherri! Don't swallow - you have to share!"

Sara, Brenda and Celeste were on the docks watching us, smiling, holding Dweebus against the gentle current.

I handed a smiling Sherri off the boat. Sara caressed her face, then joined their lips together. Then Brenda got her minute and finally Celeste clung to her and they shared a tender kiss.

"Welcome to The Eyrie."

Chapter 38

I had finished tying the boat down when Celeste finally untangled herself from Sherri. She propelled Sherri my way, "Now you do James - he hates the taste." She smirked, "But then... who doesn't?" They all laughed.

Sherri took my hands and looked deep in my eyes, "My master..." and shared her soft, sweet touch with me.

"What?" Celeste cried, "He's got you calling him 'Master' already?"

"Of course!" I said, "Ten minutes with a hairbrush convinced her! Ow!" Sherri bit me, hard.

"Sorry... master!" She ran giggling behind Brenda.

"See what you've done?" I advanced on Celeste. "Now it's your turn!"

She cringed from me, "No, no, don't hurt me! Please don't hit me anymore..." She hugged her tummy, "Not when I'm carrying your children!"

"Children?" Sherri looked impressed.

"Yeth!" Celeste stuck her tongue out, "About a million of them!" And dissolved in a choking giggling fit on Sara.

"Talking of children," I looked around, "Where's Jules?"

"She took Amanda..." Sara began and bit her lip.

"...to Harry's in Celeste's car." I finished for her, "Right?"

Sara blinked and said brightly, "Are you going to take a hairbrush to me too?"

"Oh, I'm guilty!" Celeste clutched Sara protectively, "I said they could! Torture me if you must! But spare the poor child..." and started kissing her. "She's but a pawn in our sordid plans. She's quite innocent!" Which was highly suspect judging from the way she thrust in her tongue and ground herself against Celeste.

Celeste pulled back and looked at Sara, their eyes sparkling, "What did the brute do to you my love?" She checked Sara at length for injuries, "Did he scare you? Ohhh, poor darling, your heart is beating so fast!" Celeste stroked Sara softly and kissed her.

"Oooh, ohhh, don't leave me, he's coming to get me!" Sara giggled into Celeste's neck as they grappled each other.

Sherri was sighing and leaning into Brenda as she watched the two fondle and kiss each other shamelessly. Brenda supported her, busy with some fondling and kissing of her own.

Clearly dismissed, I turned and had moved everything out of USS Dweebus and was setting up the extra bookshelves for our new textbooks when the girls came into the house.

Sherri faced me and said softly, "Sorry James, I was unavoidably detained." Her eyes were glowing and her hair in disarray, still leaning on Brenda and holding her hand.

"Didn't Sara warn you about falling into bad company?" I regarded Brenda, "And this one is the worst!"

Brenda grinned and hugged Sherri to her, "He's just jealous I prefer you to him."

"In fact," Celeste leaned on Sherri and licked her neck, "We all prefer you to him..."

"Cept me!" Sara hugged me, "I love him to bits!"

Celeste groaned, "Spoilsport! And after I stood up for you too!" She sighed, "Oh well, no rest for the wicked - back to my lonely study..." she stopped and eyed Sherri, "But first, you owe me a song."

Sherri smiled, then turned to me, "May I?" she paused, "Unless you need me for something else..." Her eyes glinted.

I touched her face, "Which also includes soothing the savage breast, musically." We shared a smile and a quick kiss.

Sherri seated herself at the Yamaha which had been set up beside the stairs, saying, "The Moonlight Sonata was not Beethoven's name for it - he intended it as a love song; of unrequited

love - so listen to it not as a song of peace and calm, but one of emptiness and yearning. And ultimate loss."

We made ourselves comfortable on the couch while Celeste again acted as page turner. Quietly, Sherri started and we were drawn into the perfection of the music. Her hands flowed over the keys, enchanting us with Beethoven's masterpiece of bittersweet romance - the longing, the waiting; the eager anticipation and fleeting joy; then the frustration and pain of denial and finally the despair upon losing the chance at happiness. The word "Why?" seem to reverberate in the air long after Sherri finished and we sat in silence.

"Whew," I finally breathed, "That was SOMETHING!"

"You like?" Sherri grinned when we all nodded vigorously. A very teary Celeste kissed her on the cheek.

Sherri played a chord. "Here's another Moonlight Serenade, by Romberg, but he had to change it to just 'Serenade' because of the outcry." She made some adjustments to the Yamaha.

Suddenly the music she played was from an organ, augmented by a harp. The piece was blatantly sweet where the Beethoven was refined and introspective. Still it gave us goose bumps and kept us riveted.

Amanda and Jules tiptoed in and joined us on the couch. At my look, Jules mouthed, "Max." She took my hand and relaxed to the music and Sherri's skills.

"That's beautiful! You're amazing." Celeste breathed when it was finished, "You know, that reminds me of Thais' Meditation, by Massenet." She saw Jules and suddenly started laughing.

"When she was small," Celeste explained, "She thought it was called Thais' Medication and asked what he was sick with!" She wheezed.

"Hey, that's not nice, do you want me to tell my violin jokes?" Jules retorted.

"OK, OK - let's not get into THAT." Celeste placated.

"Please - just one, OK?" Jules was already giggling. "What's the difference between a violin and a coffin?" She waited, "A coffin has the dead person on the inside!" She leaned on Amanda and cackled wildly.

Celeste rolled her eyes, "Ha ha, very funny. Happy now?"

"No, not yet - I got a better one!" Jules snorted, "Why do bank tellers look worried when they see a violin case?" Without waiting for an answer she said, "There may be a violin inside!" She rolled on me and chortled, wiping her face on my shirt. We looked at Celeste in sympathy.

"Wait, wait," Jules gasped, "Why is a violin better than a harmonica?" She waved her arms around as she wheezed and tears flowed from her eyes, "B-because you can burn the violin to stay warm!" She dissolved in a fit of breathless gurgling on the floor.

Celeste groaned in defeat and retreated inside. Unable to contain our laughter any longer, we joined Jules and howled.

"You are all so mean to Celeste!" Sherri said after, as she wiped tears from her face.

"I had no choice!" JulieAnn explained breathily, "She was forcing me to practice my piano to accompany her! I had to keep telling those jokes until she let me stop!"

"I think we should all go in and apologize!"

"Really? I have to too?"

"Yes!" Sherri said and ushered us into the office.

She took Celeste's hands, "Celeste, we're very sorry we made fun of your violin." Sherri looked at us, "Right?" We nodded as Sherri continued, "And Celeste, I would love to play with you."

Celeste beamed, "That would be awesome!" She rummaged around and handed her a stack of music, "See what you like in here... But definitely the Thais - the harp part is in there, but you'll have to transcribe the orchestra..." She suddenly stopped, "Or did you have another kind of playing in mind...?"

"Well..." Sherri smiled brightly and gave Celeste a soft peck, "Tonight HE's making a woman of me..." She took our hands, "Perhaps afterwards we can start working on my downfall?"

"Hmmm, that'll work. We'll give you tonight to get over him, then..." Celeste leaned in conspiratorially, "I know ALL his tricks, and I've got a few he doesn't even know!" She smirked.

"Let's not forget your promise to have my child..." Sherri reminded her.

"Oh don't listen to her, she's promised to have a child with all of us!" Amanda complained.

"She wanted TWO of mine!" Brenda sighed.

Celeste glowed, "See, I'm such a LOVING person, they all want to get it on with me!" She leaned her head on Sherri, "But, right now I have to get back to work." She batted her lashes at me, "My master would be most vexed if he caught me slacking..." She sighed softly and kissed Sherri, stroking her face, "Weep not my dear - but rejoice the day I am free of my shackles..." We trooped out to the mournful strains of "Dixie".

Sherri leaned on me and said, "She's strange - but I LIKE her!"

Sara grinned, "You'll find soon enough that we're all strange!" Then she took our hands, "C'mon, we better get started on dinner now!" and set us to washing and chopping.

"How was Harry's?" I asked Amanda.

"Everything that could..." she sighed, "First a gust flopped the 'chute on the PPC-trainer around!" she shook her head, "Almost knocked the cart over and Harry spent an hour untangling the lines. Then I had to field strip a 503 which seized up during warm-up." She turned to Sara, "The main bearing popped - and it had less than fifteen hours on it!" Then at me, "Those little engines have to be overhauled every 100 hours, can you believe it? It's a good thing we ordered a 4-stroke, they're much more dependable.

"It was a zoo, but Jules was amazing - she got the schedule straightened out and ended up conducting the ground instructions class for Harry!" Amanda's eyes glowed, "Four guys showed up for their first lesson, took a look at Jules and next thing, a dozen of their friends were there, wanting lessons." She grinned, "Harry's really excited we can bring in so much more business, so he's gonna make sure we get our instructor licenses..."

Sara interrupted, "Mandie, did the 503 have the A-series gearbox?" Amanda nodded, "I think the factory mounting's too high on it. The newer engines with CDI have higher torque and peak rpm so that will put stress on the bearings and warp the race."

"That's a good point, although they'll still need the clearance for the longer dual-blades... So the best thing is to go with the more rugged "B" or switch to the "C" box and the triple-blade." Amanda tapped her lip, "That would lower the noise and the vibrations too, then."

"Yeah, or even the "E" - that's got the high ratio as well." Sara turned to me, "Have you seen the warranty on the engine? There are 2 pages outlining what ISN'T covered!" She laughed, "And it's only a 120-day warranty at that!"

Sara looked over the two chickens and steaks she had laid out. "Mandie honey, can you see if you can catch us a few more fish? We may be short on food. Four, five fish would be good, in say, an hour?" Sara looked at Sherri, "He's useless unless he's well fed... In fact, you could say he eats well only after he's eaten well!" They started giggling.

Amanda tugged Sherri's hand. "C'mon Sherri, let's practice on something squirmy and slimy!" She looked meaningfully at me and added, "Then I'll show you where a sharp knife does the most good."

I helped Sara lug a big pot of rice under the tap, "This is something different, I'm making steamed rice with a mix of glutinous and fragrant rice. Then we place a bunch of those sausages over top to cook them."

"Mmmm, mini-pepperoni sausages... Good snackin'!"

"That they're definitely not - can't eat them raw. Mom gets them from the Chinese grocer - they're really good." She grinned, "She went shopping and I took all of it with us!"

"How come you don't need to measure the water?"

"That's how the Chinese make rice, and they should know - wash the rice first, then pour in water to cover the top, add another half a finger joint." She showed me, then waited until I carried it back over the flame, "Boil on high, uncovered, until the bubbling stops and the water's absorbed, then low simmer with the lid on. We drop the sausages in then - twenty minutes, and perfect rice every time!" She grinned, "I hope! I've never made it this way before!" She turned and busied herself with the chicken.

I brought a drink and a hug to Celeste. She pointed to her drawing of the wheel building, which looked like a carousel at the fairgrounds. "I had wondered why Mueller's design for the support braces have the V-notch in them, now I know - not only does it give it added strength, but allows easy access for pipes and wiring." She hugged my waist, "Hmmm, I'd like to have HIS child, too!" She grinned and looked at her drawing, "In a way, I am..." she sighed softly.

Amanda gestured to me from the patio and I followed her down to the docks. "We caught this huge mother and I'm not sure what to do with it!"

Sherri proudly showed me a large black fish that was swimming placidly at the end of her line. "It's the biggest fish I've ever SEEN!" She glowed enthusiastically.

"Almost appears he likes it there!" I laughed, "It's a catfish - not too much meat on it, maybe we should let it go..." I reached down with a pair of pliers and pulled the hook off. It swam lazily off, "They're bottom feeders that hunt by smell - through their whiskers. Unfortunately they're mostly stomach and the flesh is pulpy. People filet them for fish fries, although they make good soup too."

I switched Sherri to a lure and after a few minutes, amid more excited laughter, she added a 2-pound striped bass to go with the 3 Amanda had caught. We quickly cleaned them and Amanda took them up to Sara.

I sat next to Sherri, "Are you having fun?"

"Yes! The girls are so cool! I wished I could have spent all last week here!" She looked at me, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Shoot."

"About tonight. Where do I..." She blushed, "I mean where do we..."

I smiled, "Don't worry about it. It'll be fine, OK?"

She leaned and pecked my cheek, "OK."

"Would you like to fish some more?"

"Yeah, if I could..."

"You can do anything you want. Just enjoy."

Amanda came back down, "Dinner in an hour." and sat next to Sherri with another rod.

I stood, "Let's try and catch a big one again." I rushed off and returned with leftover corn.

"The catfish reminded me of another kind of fish we could catch here." I strung a row of kernels on a small hook, until it was fully covered.

"Some believe the carp is the strongest fresh water fish, and there's no doubt they are the trickiest. And really tasty." I tied a bobber with about 8 feet of line from the hook. "Carps are omnivores that grind up their food at the back of their mouths but they use their really sensitive lips to pick up food and taste it first." I cast into the cove and let the current take the bait into the channel.

I continued, "That's why they will always avoid a lure or metal hooks - they taste wrong right away. But, unlike other fish, carps have a real weakness for sweet stuff." The bobber slowed as it reached the center of the channel, "So by covering the hook with corn, we might fool it..." I paused as the bobber bounced once, "I think it's tasting it now..." I whispered as it bobbed again.

Suddenly the bobber darted to the open lake as I continued to let line out, "Sometimes it will take its meal some ways before eating it..." I waited another few seconds, "I hope it's swallowed enough!" As I locked the reel and pulled back on the rod.

"Fish ON!" I cried as the pole was almost ripped from my hand, the drag barely holding. I groaned with the effort of keeping the fish from taking off.

"Lemme try!" I gave Amanda the rod and it almost launched her into the water, "Oof! He's strong!"

"Work the retrieve, we can't let him run too far, he'll rip the line on the rocks."

Amanda grunted as she fought it. Although fighting fiercely, once it swallowed the hook, there was little chance the carp could get free unless it broke the line.

"Sherri, do you want to try?" Amanda panted after she had brought the fish back into the cove.

I got the gaff from Jewel as Sherri, gasping with effort, worked the fish towards us.

"OK, slowly now, he may try one last flight..." I warned as Sherri wheezed with effort with the struggles of her catch.

Finally I was able to gaff and land it on the dock as Amanda screamed her excitement. It was indeed a beautiful specimen, 15lbs of steely turquoise scales and the characteristic whiskers under its mouth, unlike the catfish, which had the whiskers on its upper lip.

"Clean it and we'll have it tomorrow - dinner's cooking already." Sara told us after she ooh'd and ah'd at it.

"C'mon, let's catch another one!" Amanda urged as I heaved the fish to the cleaning hutch.

"Remember, they may learn to avoid the channel if you keep catching them - best to give them a day or so to get over it." I told her, "They are quite intelligent and actually form groups to patrol and guard their young."

"Smart fish!" Sherri came and watched me, "So we're culling the dumber ones to improve the breed, right?"

"Or the hungrier ones!" I grinned and got to work, as Amanda gave Sherri a colorful commentary on piscine biology.

"Wait, let's try this!" Amanda grabbed a piece of fish gut and used it as bait, saying to Sherri, "We were in Jewel in the middle of the ocean and I caught this big grouper with the leftovers of another fish." Her eyes sparkled, "It was so fun! The salt water fish fight much harder than lake fish. In fact..." She umphed as she hooked a bass and started to dance it towards shore. "Sara caught a Mahi-mahi which was like the same size as the catfish and it took her an hour to land it." Amanda unhooked the bass and threw it back, "Thank you Mr Fish, you can keep the food as payment."

They used up the offal as bait, throwing their catch back, while I cut nine large pieces of steak from the carp, leaving 14" of tail for broiling and the head for bait. I carried it up to the fridge and returned to the docks, stripping as I went.

Sherri looked at me, "What's he doing?"

"He's hoping to impress us enough to get some action," Amanda sneered, "But I'm not interested, are you?"

Sherri blushed, "Er, I guess not..." but kept staring.

"I have fish gunk on me and there's not a whole lot of water in the house for showers later." I explained.

I dove in, avoiding their lines, and started my work out. I was on my 4th lap when they greeted me in the water and we finished my laps with them swimming along.

I started washing myself and Sherri was intrigued by the soap. "We have to use Ivory because it's scent free, so it doesn't attract bugs. Also it won't sink if you drop it."

Amanda nodded, "Remember, no perfume or fruits, especially bananas. You really attract them then." She leaned on my shoulder, "Do I smell clean?"

I held her and inspected her and stuck my face in all her nooks and crannies, licking it if I wasn't 100% sure. For a little girl she had an amazing array of soft nooks and crannies one could sink one's mouth and tongue into. And she had a different squeal to each one too. Finally I declared her spotless and she staggered with a towel around herself up to the house to wash her hair.

Sherri was watching wide eyed, apparently still recovering from our swim as she was breathing hard and her face glowed.

"Would you like me to help you with the soap?" I asked, leaning back on the steps. She smiled shyly and allowed me to ease her over on my lap.

She moaned softly when I started applying soap to her, caressing the suds into her smooth skin. I soaped around her shoulders and she reached for my hands, leaning back to redeposit them on her breasts, nipples hard and crinkly with the cold and need.

She sighed contentedly as I ran my hand over their softness. Slowly she squirmed until she was nestled tightly against my erection.

"Mmmm, other areas need the hired help's attention..." She leaned her head back, "...or is it the hired hand? Uhmhhh!" she smiled as I trailed down her soft body and thin brown patch.

"Uhhnn, ahhhhh," she breathed, as I made languid strokes on her tender flesh and between the soft folds of her little pussy, "Oh, oh, ohh!". She held my hand to her sex as she whimpered and shook on me.

She relaxed on me as I rinsed her off, then helped me get cleaned.

"Dinner in ten!" Sara called from the patio.

I got our clothes back on and took Sherri up the steps. At the top she leaned on me and whispered, "Did you know how close you came to not having a virgin tonight?"

"Huh?" I blinked.

"You know, back when you were soaping me? I could feel you - you were SO hard! And all I had to do was lift myself up and slide back a bit and you'd be in me... Ooooh!" She sighed, "Pop! No more virgin!"

"And I'm still hard..." I offered.

She looked at it, "Hmmm, are you suggesting I should do something about it?" Sherri's smile faltered as she realized everyone was seated and watching us. She blushed, "I, er, we were talking about..."

"...you giving him a blowjob." Amanda sighed. "We know."

"I guess we could wait for you. This being your first time..." Brenda said, adding, "I'm sure he won't complain."

"Really? You mean I can choose whatever I want - because I'm a virgin?"

"Pretty much," JulieAnn grinned, "You probably won't be in any shape to do anything tomorrow!"

"Wait," Sherri's eyes lit up, "You're saying that as long as I stay a virgin, you guys have to let me do what I want?" She smiled widely, "Like you'll have to listen to me?"

"Hey, wait...!"

"No, that's not it..."

"James," Sherri leaned on me, "Can we wait a bit before we, er, do it?" She grinned impishly, "I think I could get to like this arrangement." She kissed me, "A month should be enough..."

"What! A month?!"

Sherri was laughing and squirming against me, "Sorry, just kidding guys, I couldn't resist!" she looked back at me, "And James I'd really like to lend a hand with your... your difficulty, but I want to have dinner." She looked coyly at me, "Besides, compared to present company, I don't think I'm very good at... the other thing." She fidgeted as the girls broke out in laughter.

"Hah, you're the only one who has made him come twice in a row!" Amanda stated.

"The rest of us are dying to learn your secrets!" Celeste added as I seated Sherri with a kiss.

"Really?" Sherri twinkled, "So I'm good?"

"You're fantastic! Just don't ask him to define 'good', though!"

"Yeah, you'll be on your knees for hours and he'll STILL not be satisfied."

"Oh he'll be SATISFIED all right, just not happy!"

"But he'll be grinning from ear to ear!"

"And drooling..."

Suddenly they stopped and, giggling madly, each of them pulled an imbecilic face with their tongues hanging out. After a second or two, even Sherri joined in. I sighed and began eating while they wailed out their laughter.

I must have been hungrier that I thought because I had finished a steak and a pan-fried fish before they could start. The rice was superb, the flavor of the sausages blended into the fragrant rice, which was fluffy and light. The little sausages which Sara had diced up were tasty and had a distinctive smoked ham texture.

I was just started on a hunk of the chicken when Sherri slipped on my lap. "James, I'm sorry we made fun of you... We didn't mean to." She bit her lip, "I love you." and kissed me. "And we're all going to apologize, OK?" she looked at the girls.

"Aw c'mon Sherri! You're spoiling him!"

Then one by one they came and kissed me before they continued with their dinner.

After the meal, Celeste stood, "Nicole isn't here so it's my very happy privilege to welcome Sherri to the family." We all toasted her, "I'm sure you'll find it just as rewarding as the rest of us..." she sighed, "Considering the fact you're already calling him Master - you're obviously well on the way." She went and gave Sherri a warm kiss.

Then Sara led Sherri to the board hanging outside the kitchen. In a fine cursive hand, she added Sherri's name below ours. "Now this makes it official - you are on the Job Board!" She consulted it, "Hmmm, Amanda and Jules have cleanup, Brenda, you're with me on dishes and Celeste has the floors to do. James can help Sherri with the laundry."

I explained about our water tank which was filled from the lake, then filtered and softened so we could wash with it. "It's terribly limited - we only have 40 gallons per hour and only about 15 gallons of hot water. So we really have to conserve - we put in this high efficiency front loading washer to save on water and detergent. The waste water is recycled for watering and flushing." I added. "And we only use cold washes - hot water is reserved for showers and dishes."

She followed me and we helped sort out the garbage, "We have to watch everything we throw away - metals, plastics and even paper are big no-no's. They don't decompose easily and animals will choke if they accidentally swallow it. So we bag it for disposal at the dump.

"Vegetables and non-meat foodstuff we compost outside, and this..." I showed her the oversized garburator by the sink, "This is a mascerator - which grinds the meat and bones to a fine grit-like consistency, which we can flush out into the lake, along with our treated waste water. Remember your catfish this afternoon? He's probably gorging on it to get this fat. In fact all the fish benefit from it, as long as we don't pump chemicals down with it."

"That's a lot of work to stay here!" Sherri observed.

"Yes - if we want modern conveniences, we have a responsibility to make them safe for the environment."

We joined the others and worked on our text books until the laundry was done.

"Tired?", I ask as she tried to hide a yawn.

Sherri nodded and smiled "Kinda..." she blushed.

A grinning Brenda led us up the stairs where Jules was waiting.

"Bren and Jules have been preparing this for us." I looked at them, "Thank you very much..."

"Enjoy..." they kissed us and let us out the side door.

"Oh, James, this is heavenly!" Sherri gushed as we went up to the clearing. The moon glowed through the clouds with a torpid fullness and frosted the land with gentle light. We looked out on the lake, hazy and shimmering with mystery and wildness and anticipation.

She took my arm, "The sea, the sky, and thee..." She sighed, "What a wonderful dream, a dream that lives forever." She breathed, "I could not ask for any more..."

The breeze stirred her hair against my brow and I gazed at her refreshing beauty. She saw my look and smiled, "Am I not handsome enough for you, my love, my dearest master?"

"You are that, and more, my glorious fairy..." I murmured, turning and leading her to the trailer that was the original Eyrie.

She gasped as we entered. The inside was dark but for a small flickering lamp and the bed in the corner was cocooned in satin and silk. The sleeping bag laid on top, decorated in hearts.

Sherri blew the lamp out and, lit by moonlight through the window, slowly removed her clothes. She laid, gleaming with need, and opened her arms, "Now, my master, make me yours."

Chapter 39

"James," she whispered in the early dawn light, "Take me to see the sunrise, OK?"

"How can I say no?"

Sherri smiled rapturously and stretched, lithe and supple like a mountain cat. And just as dangerous, her actions last night proving it. She had cried and bit and scratched as we made love the first time, and again when she woke me in the small hours.

I held her face. "How are you my sweet?"

She blinked, "A little sore, but more than OK." She bit me again and whispered, "I love you... Mmmm. I. Love. You." She sighed, "I could never have thought those words could mean so much."

Gingerly I wrapped her up in the sleeping bag and she curled herself in my arms, saying, "Last night was amazing! I never dreamt I could be so CLOSE with anyone!"

"And don't forget this morning as well!" I reminded.

"Oh! It feels so good! Just thinking about it gets me all weak and warm..." She smiled and pulled me down for a long soft kiss as we settled with our backs against the hub.

She looked into my eyes and whispered, "My fair master. I am all yours now," she kissed me, "My heart too."

She curled up against me inside the sleeping bag as the sun began lighting up the horizon. Sherri leaned her head on me and said, "This is just how I feel, a new day, a new life."

She hugged me tightly and whispered,

I see the new horizon,
My life has only begun,
Beyond the blue horizon
Lies a rising sun.

"Good morning!" Amanda called as she came up with hot chocolate, already dressed in jeans and a T. She kissed us, "You feel OK, Sher? Did you bleed?"

"Mmm, a tiny bit, a little sore, but crazy happy." She pulled Amanda down and hugged her, "Thank you my sweet Amanda. It was better than anything I could have imagined." They leaned on each other, then Amanda said, "Sara wants to know if you're ready for breakfast."

"Why are all of you up so early?"

"Celeste's been up since the crack of dawn and nobody could sleep with her pacing and growling."

We followed Amanda back inside. Down the stairs we could see Celeste stomping back and forth, muttering darkly at the air. Brenda and Jules ran and greeted us with kisses. Then they jumped back in bed and cuddled together with their heads under the pillows.

We washed up quickly and I placed a kiss and a bit of vaseline on Sherri. She was squirming and giggling, more ticklish than painful. We helped each other dress and headed down the stairs.

Sara was busily setting up breakfast, sparing a big grin and kiss for us.

While we ate, Celeste stared out the windows, glancing at the phone when she wasn't, murmuring about missed deadlines and procrastinators. It was still before eight.

A few bites later she took her coffee out to the patio. I rose but Sherri waved me down, going to stand with her arm around Celeste.

When they returned, Celeste sat and ate. Finally she looked up and smiled, "Rushing it doesn't help and we all have to work with the tools given us..." she looked at Sherri, "Thank you, love."

Then she smacked her own head, "And am I the evil step sister or what? Your first night and I did not even congratulate you!" she went and hugged her. "You look so happy I'll assume he did not abuse you too much." Sherri grinned and kissed her back.

"Of course he's sweet - the first time..." Celeste sighed, "But then the evil surfaces and, oh, the horrors!" she shivered, "I suppose you'll find out soon enough!" There were solemn nods around.

Sherri grinned, "Don't forget I've had the hairbrush already! So it probably won't get MUCH worse!"

Celeste held her, "Still, I must insist that you take advantage of my comfort..." She tugged Sherri to the sofa and over her lap. "Which you obviously have need of right now!" They hugged warmly.

The phone rang and we froze, waiting for Celeste.

"Well, someone answer it! If it's for me, take a message, I'm busy!"

Amanda picked it up and after a minute she hung up, grinning, "That was Max - there are FOUR trailers there!" She looked at Sara, "And one of them's got a boat on it!"

Celeste groaned and reluctantly stood, "Oh well, duty calls." She kissed Sherri's brow, "Mark my spot honey."

"Why don't you all go? I'll clean up here." I said, "Sherri, keep an eye on Celeste OK?" She grinned and hugged Celeste possessively.

I looked at Jules and Brenda, "But maybe you two should put on something more than just panties and T's..."

"We'll stay." Jules said, as she grinned at the others, "We need to ask James a favor..."

After we cleared breakfast and washed the dishes I went in the trailer to clean it. They tagged behind.

Brenda slipped her arms around my waist, "James..."

"OK." I said.

"What's it mean, OK?" Jules bristled.

"OK," I repeated, "Whatever it is, I agree."

"You haven't even heard what we wanted!" Brenda yelled.

"But isn't one of your arguments that you've thought it out very carefully and it's the best thing for us?" They nodded.

"And you've carefully considered all the reasons I might disagree?" More nods.

"And you're STILL confident it's the best thing?"

"Yes... well, WE think so..." Jules bit her lip.

"So - OK, you can do it!" I shrugged, "Just so you feel better, you can tell me what I just agreed to."

"Well," Brenda bit her lip, "We sorta had planned for you to be in a horizontal position by this time..."

Jules tugged me down on the bed, "I was going to distract you..." She shrugged out of her top and ran her hands over her breasts, moaning softly as she wet her fingers and drew her nipple to hard nubbins. She smiled softly at my look and slipped a hand inside her panties. I could see her fingers moving slowly as her eyes closed.

"And I start working to lower your resistance." Brenda said from my lap. Not only had she stripped me, she was quite naked herself. With an lusty glint she rubbed my cock on her lips and kissed it.

"While I make sure your hands are immobilized." As Jules pulled them to her breasts and slid a hard nipple in my mouth, "And your mouth occupied. Oooh!" I bit her in acknowledgement.

"I will then implore you to carefully consider our proposal." Brenda breathed and took my quivering cock into her mouth, working me in her churning heat.

"Mmmm, as I remind you how effective the advertising was at the race, how we must be more aggressive than our competition..." Jules pinned my shoulders with her knees and covered my mouth with her warm cunt. "Ahhh! Not just word-of-mouth, ahhh, we need to p-promote ourselves vigorously. L-like that, yesss! And w-what better to do that than a-a... ahhh!" Suddenly Jules lost her voice.

For a while the silence was punctuated only by our sighs and grunts and slurping sounds. I was getting ready to scream rather loudly when Brenda pulled off my bucking groin, "But I would have to be careful not to let you come." She leaned and tasted me a bit, "At least until you agreed with us." She tipped her head and listened, "Hmmm, no, I don't think that was a 'Yes'. What do you think, Jules, was that a Yes?" She stroked me lazily.

"Mmmm, mmmm, oh god. Mmmmm, I-I ahhh, oh, ohhh," JulieAnn squirmed on me and distributed more fluids on my face, nails digging in my chest. She took a shuddering breath, "Ah, no, never heard him..." She shivered, lifting herself off me and took a few deep breaths, "So James, what we need is an airplane..." and sank back down.

"Ahh, we already have the PPC, you might argue." Brenda stopped to lick the liquid running down my cock and gave the tip a little suck. "But James, we need something that could spread our message fast!" her hand worked energetically on me, but again my scream was cut off when she stopped and said, "The PPC is SO slow!" as she matched her motions to a crawl, barely worth moaning about.

"So, to spread our good word to all parts of the state!" She cupped her other hand under my balls, "And so that we could reach the masses wherever they may be," she illustrated with a multifaceted tour of my groin, "We obviously need superior speed and handling. Don't you agree?" She return to her task as I nodded vigorously, to Jules' very vocal delight.

"Was that a yes," Brenda asked sweetly, "Or were you just sneezing?"

"Oh, oh.. Ahh!" Jules breathed, "Oh god! Oh god! I-it's a Yes! Oh god, oh god S-stop! C-can't come any more! Ahhh!" She rolled off me and laid panting and quivering on me.

Brenda smiled and tenderly slipped me back in her mouth.

She had me in an agonizingly delicious state of suspended ecstasy when Jules leaned over and added her caresses and kisses. The scream that was so long in the coming finally erupted from me and they shared my pulsing stream.

"Oh wait!" Jules said, as she applied a finishing lick on me, "Has anybody ever christened this trailer yet?"

I shook my head and everything started spinning again.

They helped me to the floor and we had to do two sets of hearts because they had shared. I didn't mind - I was seeing double already.

"Oh shoot!" Jules cried, "There was another reason we need the plane." She looked at me, "We can't use the PPC on the water - once the chute gets wet, it won't lift and so..." She blinked, "Damn! That was so dumb!" She paused and sighed, "I think we have to do it over again."

"Eh?"

"The whole thing." she licked her lips, "From the beginning."

Brenda grinned and took my shoulders, "Yesss, ve haf' to do vonce more!"

My back hit the wall, "Please! No more...!"

=====

I was sleeping in Brenda's arms when Jules announced that we had arrived. The nap seemed to have restored me somewhat but I had no recollection of them getting me dressed or into the boat.

The marina was in a state of mayhem. Sara and Amanda were at the dynamometer doing their power measurements on the new boat, they smiled and waved, unable to make themselves heard in the din of their engine.

Outside Celeste was staring at the foreman, impatience clearly written on her face. Max was standing guard as the other construction workers crowded around, puffing up and trying to get Sherri to notice them.

Sherri walked over when she saw us, "Greg, that's the foreman, is saying they can't start work until next week and Celeste, well..." She drew a finger across her throat.

I nodded and stepped up to them, "Ms Celeste, I'm sorry I'm late. We can handle it now." She swiveled her 'look' at me and I could feel myself breaking out in a cold sweat. She thawed and gave me a small smile as she walked off with Sherri.

"Ah, Greg, what seems to be the trouble?"

"Your... your boss," he glared at Celeste's back, "She won't listen to reason! I'm only supposed to drop the lumber off and set up the scaffolding. There's nothing in here that says my boys gotta do nothin' til' next week!" He waved his order book at me.

"Ah I see the problem, er, Greg. The office obviously gave you the wrong set of instructions." I turned, "Ms JulieAnn is from the legal department and she will be happy to advise you that we have a duly executed contract stating the building is to be FINISHED by this Sunday." She showed a stack of documents to Greg.

"Ain't nobody told me that!"

"Furthermore," Jules amended, "The contract stipulates that for every hour you delay completion, there is a 3% cost penalty. That's every hour after midnight beginning Sunday." She added icily.

"Full open-ended indemnity at oh-nine-twenty hours, Tuesday." Brenda added helpfully.

"Thank you..." I turned to Greg, "Ms Brenda from the accounting section has just reminded us that if you aren't finished by 9:20 am on Tuesday, not only do we not have to pay you, your company starts paying us for losses." I waited for that to sink in, "So I really think it best if we get started; after all, if you wish to avoid overtime, there's only..." I paused and Brenda supplied, "Thirty three hours and forty five minutes..." I nodded, "To complete the building before the deadline."

Greg looked at me and at the contract. "Shit - looks like you got the right of the matter here." and started yelling for the crew to get moving, "Oh, and can you tell your boss to move her car?" Celeste had parked behind the trucks so they could not be moved. He rushed off to start the unloading, with a very energetic Max supervising.

Jules took us to the Solara, "James..? Harry's kinda expecting us and uh, I have the car keys..."

"He knows." Brenda said, "Celeste got the hairbrush yesterday."

"What happened?"

"I'm not sure - but Sherri calls him master after she was hairbrushed and then Celeste started calling him master as well..." They looked at me.

I shrugged, "Jules, why don't you take the BMW," I said as I handed Jules the keys, "Then Celeste can still get around."

They stared, "Are you SURE?"

"Are you good enough to drive it?" Jules nodded. "So move this car and get going then, and don't forget to make a list of the groceries you'll need to pick up for the week too." We spoke a bit about what they were doing and they went off happily.

I gave an update to a much happier Celeste and went to check on the new boat. The girls hugged me as we watched it being lowered into the water, "Well, what do you think?"

"Nice!" It was too. 22' Cuddy Cabin, done up in a dark burl-oak finish. With a sink and fridge on the deck. An Entertainment Center, I corrected myself.

"Did you see the engine?" Sara prompted and eagerly showed me the huge 320hp 7-Liter engine, which filled the rear compartment.

"Look at this too, a DX lower unit - dual concentric, counter-rotating propellers!" They nestled inside each other and would cancel out the torque-drift in single-screw setups. "And we got one for Jewel too!"

We went out and the boat handled really nicely. The acceleration was amazing with the powerhouse installed - it was a thirsty beast too, at full throttle we could actually see the gas gage needle drop.

"There's their problem. The top speed is only 4 mph faster than the much smaller 5.7 liter!" Sara yelled over the wind and the howl of the engine. I motioned for her to kill the engine.

"The revs look good?"

Sara nodded, "Yeah. I thought of putting a higher ratio in, but it's 100rpm per inch-pitch so that's not the answer. There's something else..."

"That's why they sent it to us. They're hoping we can fix the problem and give them a 70mph cuddy." Amanda said. "Oh, and we've decided to rotate ownership of the Gyros. This is 'Gyro 2' and it's Sara's..."

"Is there a difference who..."

"Is there a difference?" Amanda jumped up, incensed, "Are you THAT retarded?" She grabbed Sara and stuck a finger in her mouth, whispering, "Ohh honey, mmmmm, sweet thing, suck it babe... You're the best... Mmmm, oooh, oooh, oooh, I can't believe I'm fucking your mouth..." Sara was blushing and squirming, but she did nothing to stop Amanda; in fact, I could see her tongue greeting Amanda's hand.

"Now, do you understand?" Amanda turned on me as Sara leaned, flushed and gasping weakly on her, "The owner does the christening! Duh!" She rolled her eyes. I could only nod breathlessly, the blood having traveled to another part of my body.

"Mandie," Sara whispered, her hands running lovingly over Amanda's breasts, "That was sick and disgusting..."

"So...? What's your point?"

"I just love you so..."

"All you virgins say that the first time..." Amanda kissed her, "It'll pass..."

"Are you going to use me and discard me?" Sara was fascinated by Amanda's nipples, rolling and squeezing them through the thin cotton.

"Ahhh, a-absolutely..." She moaned as Sara bent and carefully nibbled the fabric. "C-can we go below, please, Sare?"

Happy screeches from the cabin soon made it obvious they were not coming up any time soon. I tossed the anchor overboard, stripped and went for a swim.

The girls were still belowdecks after I dried myself so I followed the soft murmuring down the cabin.

The V-berth was deserted, but behind me, the designers had cleverly managed to tuck a shoulder high cabin directly under the outside helm seats. It had the niftiest little bed inside. With two nifty, naked bodies on it.

Sara and Amanda were giggling and squirming like lovestruck weevils as they tried to hide under each other's body. My blood went south again.

"Are you two ready to get to work?"

"Is that what you call it now?" Amanda said.

"Call what?"

"A blow job shouldn't be work," she said matter-of-factly, "It should be given freely as a gesture of love." She stared at me.

"Sure, next time Peter asks why you haven't delivered your report, I'll tell him that."

"Oh...! I-I thought," Amanda blushed bright red, "Well I thought y-you said... I heard you..." She pulled Sara up, "Well YOU heard him didn't you?"

"Heard him what?"

"Heard him say... say... we have to give him a blow job..." she fidgeted, "Because that's our job... or something." She buried her face in Sara's neck, giggling, "It's not FAIR! He walks in with his... his THING pointing at me and tells me to get to work... So I thought... thought... he... he..." she faded.

"So you thought," Sara said tenderly, "He might like to hold you and kiss you...?" she stroked Amanda's hair, "And share sweet love with you?"

Amanda looked up, dreamy with emotion, "Yes..." they hugged, "Sara," she whispered, "I just love you so..."

=====

As we drove a newly christened Gyro 2 back to the marina, we could see tremendous progress with the Wheel. The central support post had been secured against a corner of the existing building and they had moved a small crane onto the roof of the marina.

All the lateral support pieces were bolted from predrilled 2 x 6 stock. Each roof joist was matched with a floor beam, connected with pre-measured lengths of cabling at the ends and lifted it into place. 5/8" bolts secured the assembly to Mueller's V-plates at the top and the bottom of the support. An extra length of steel wire from the ends was then tightened to a mushroom-shaped extension on the top of the center post to form the cantilever. They already had 8 of the 10 beams required in the plans and the ninth was moved in as we tied up.

Greg was breathless with excitement. "I ain't seen nothing come together so quickly!" He shook his head, "That boss of yours. Man! She's one smart lady!"

Sherri came towards us, waving to the workers as they whistled good-naturedly at her. "Greg, Ms Celeste would like you to start the roofing from the North side as soon as the last beam is in place, OK?"

He snapped her a mock salute, "Yessir, Miss." before turning back to the last beam being lowered in place.

She smiled at us, "Come, you've got to see this!" and led us to the restaurant. There were close to a hundred people milling about the site but they made a path for us when they saw Sherri.

The restaurant was humming with activity, packed with people who wanted to watch the construction. Celeste had commandeered all the tables along the windows facing the marina and was holding court with Marjorie and Max flanking her, calmly handling questions from reporters for the local newspaper and TV station.

There was a minor riot when the photographers asked the girls to line up for a photo and everyone rushed in for a better look. I got a leisurely 40 minutes by myself and finished my order as well as all their food.

I waved a glowing Sherri over, "Tell my boss I want her and all of you outside by the Wheel in fifteen, OK?" She smiled and gave my hand a squeeze.

I had just arranged for us to be in a line facing the wheel when, on schedule, Jules and Harry soared overhead in the PPC, taking a couple of turns as Jules filmed the construction. They zoomed overhead and turned to film us as they flew away. We waved and a hundred voices shouted out their blessing on Bertram Mueller's dream.

Chapter 40

Marjorie took my hand and watched the PPC fly away, "Thank you James, this is so wonderful!"

"Don't thank me! Thank Celeste - it's all her work!"

"Oh, Celeste knows how I feel, but I'm not so senile I can't tell what you are to her!" she smiled and looked around, "I thank you all, for making an old woman's dream come true!"

After hugs Celeste and Sherri returned to their temporary office, getting more handshakes and smiles from the well wishers.

We went back to the new Gyro and I hoisted it up. "I took a look at the hull in the water this morning and, besides having no disrupters, a couple of other things seemed out of place. First these chines go all the way back and, with the heavier motor, it's constantly dragging in the water."

Amanda pointed, "That's probably why the lower unit has to be canted back to offset the lift. That will affect the ride and the power."

"Hmmm, that may account for 2 or 3 mph. The power curve indicates something around 12 mph over the 5.7." Sara reached for the design manual. "Wait, perhaps the increased drag of the larger lower unit... No, that's not it." She scratched her head.

"OK, let's file that one away. The other thing I noticed was the size of the cooling intake scoops. And when I opened her up on the way in, the water pressure gage's pegged at the redline."

"Yeah, we saw that too. There's a note here..." Sara flicked pages, "Right. The engine was overheating around 36. That's why they increased the size, even though it's too large for the boat."

"Hmmm, bad news - that's water skiing speed." Amanda said, finger on the lip, "So they're just not getting pressure at 36 but too much everywhere else! That's weird!"

"Damn! There goes my brilliant idea to get 10mph by putting in smaller scoops!" I said.

The girls laughed, Amanda adding, "We can't have you come up with ALL the brilliant ideas! People might start thinking you actually have a brain!"

We took the boat out to measure the plane points and I showed them the equipment I had prepared. They were 18" long dowels with inexpensive stethoscopes attached to one end. This allowed us to listen for aeration without having to double over, even so, the job was made more difficult by the low cabin design and we had to take twice as many readings to record the false signals that Brenda had commented on before.

We also verified the factory results of only getting about 10psi of intake pressure between 32 and 37mph, while it was 30 or more at other speeds.

With results in hand, we returned the boat onto braces and worked at removing the chine sections that were dragging in the water.

It was over an hour later before we finished sanding the areas down and smoothed epoxy over it. It would take another 10 hours for the repairs to cure properly.

The Bimmer came back just as the workers left for the day, allowing calm to settle over the Marina. Jules was bright-eyed with glee - the girls had finished their practice hours and would be able to fly solo on the PPC.

Brenda was wind and sun burned and her freckles stood out brightly on her face, almost the color of her curls. She too was glowing with excitement - she had taken a turn at giving the ground instructions - to a packed house which had primarily come to stare.

Jules went to get Sherri and Celeste and they came back loaded down with food which the restaurant had supplied in return for the extra business we brought.

As Jewel sailed slowly out the bay we joined Celeste at the stern. The Wheel already had a roof and sub-floors, along with the roughed-in ramps and stairways.

"It's still like a dream to me!" Celeste whispered, arm around Sherri, "Somebody pinch me!" So we did.

"Ow! You didn't have to do it so hard!" She glared at us, "And Sara pinched my boobs!" Sara and Amanda were leaning and cackling on each other.

Celeste sniffed, "I'd make you kiss them better, except you guys have paint and grease all over you!" She turned to Sherri, "Aren't they disgusting? Even the construction workers were cleaner!"

"Mmm-hmmm!" Sherri heartily agreed, "I'd much rather have THEM kiss my boobs than..." She started squealing and laughing as Sara grabbed her and Amanda lifted her shirt and began licking and mauling her breasts. Grinning, Brenda started working on her from the other direction.

"Aren't you gonna do something?" Celeste leaned on me, "How can you let them carry on like this?" Somehow the buttons on her blouse had become undone and, after careful scrutiny, I decided her boobs did look a little red. I did the only thing possible - I began trying to make the rest of her body just as flushed.

By the time the boat stopped, we were all quite filthy, not to mention depraved and disgusting.

I had taken them further up the lake to show Sherri a bit of the sights and sailed back to drop anchor at Lover's Rock.

Sara cheerfully demonstrated the Lovers' pose by winding a leg on mine and sliding her body against me. Then they practiced their lewdness by trying to improve on it. Then Brenda insisted on a reenactment of our last encounter there which had left her unconscious, which subsequently was also lewdly improved on.

Finally, after a reviving and refreshing swim, we started dinner - the restaurant had supplied caesar, macaroni and potato salads along with chili and marinated steaks which I grilled on the ship-board BBQ.

We crowded around the little LCD screen to watch Jules' footage of the construction, using the camcorder I had picked up on the weekend.

"This is really good!" Celeste enthused, "I could have used this BEFORE we started building too! It would be great for establishing lines of sight and angular disportments!"

"Oh excellent!" Jules was thrilled, "More write-offs!" Then she said, "You know, because the FAA designates ultralights as non-commercial vehicles, and because their record is so clean, the insurance on them is cheaper than cars!"

"If they're so good and cheap, how come everybody's not flying one?"

"Probably because you need room to land and takeoff; and also they're too noisy for most neighborhoods. Don't forget the fear of heights. There's also this fact that most people can barely manage driving, which is two-dimensional on very clearly marked areas, whereas flying is three in virtually unpoliced skies.

"Oh and on the subject of flying..." Jules smiled and showed us some brochures of small airplanes. "Because of a simple banner at Amanda's race last week, Max now has weeks of work lined up. And we've decided to put our sign on the parachute of the PPC - but that restricts us to this immediate area. So Bren and I, we started thinking about something with more speed and coverage..." Jules looked softly at me, "That was what we 'discussed' with James this morning. He, er, 'agreed', that we should get a plane, but one we can use on the lake too."

"Yes!" Amanda grinned and pumped a fist in the air.

"We're sticking with ultralights because these are the only ones we can legally fly until we are 17."

Jules held up a pamphlet, "This first plane is light and strong because the motor, wing and tail all mount on a straight metal boom with the cabin slung underneath, a very practical design. This second one has the engine behind the cabin, in a pusher configuration. It needs more supports but saves weight with a smaller elevator and rudder because the stream from the propeller blows directly across them. Also the weight distribution is more optimal and it's safer for people on the ground because the propeller's out of the way. Both these types are simply land

planes with pontoons replacing the wheels. So you'd have to switch to go from one to the other." JulieAnn allowed us time to look at the brochures, then Brenda held up another picture, grinning at our exclamations.

"Yep, that's what it did to us too!" It was sleek and sexy and looked like what a high-performing seaplane ought to look; a pusher engine tucked in behind a streamlined pod with a V-hull, complete with outriggers at the tip of the wings.

"That's clever," Amanda pointed, "These steps into the cockpit are also strakes!"

"It's got wheels too!" Sherri noted.

"Yep," Brenda continued, "Semi-retractable landing gears, two 8" in front and a 6" steerable in the tail. This plane has been designed as a full amphibian, meaning you can land and take off from either water or land, at will. Its Canadian manufacturer calls it the Sea Sprite."

"What makes this different from regular seaplanes?" Celeste asked.

"Although ultralights have strict restrictions, there is a grey area for seaplanes and amphibians. I looked it up when we were researching the PPC." Jules answered, "The FAR103 regulations permit an unspecified weight allowance for flotation and other necessary, quote-unquote, attachments for seaplanes. In addition, they've relaxed pretty much everything as long as it is necessary for the safe operation of the plane! This allows us to have a fully enclosed fiberglass cockpit and full aircraft instrumentation."

Brenda picked up, "So, to answer your question, there are NO differences between the Sea Sprite and a regular small 2-seater seaplane, even comes with dual controls. In Canada this is already certified as both an ultralight and a sport-amphibian so we can bring it in no problem. We can even order it with a backup wing tank to double the range to 500 miles. But we have to watch the weight - it only has a 550lb useable load limit..."

"So James can't fly in it!" Amanda snickered. I grabbed her and sat on her.

"It IS a consideration - with 2 on board, it'll leave about 300lb; a full load of fuel will be another 160lbs so that leaves like a hundred forty pounds for everything else... Still, it's not bad for a little 30 foot plane with a 100hp motor!" Brenda concluded.

"And, look at this, this little opening in the wing contains a BRS - Ballistic Recovery System. Which basically is a huge mother of a parachute," Jules' eyes glowed, "Yep, a parachute for the whole freaking plane and everything in it! Safe or what, huh?"

"So, are we all agreed on the Sea Sprite?" We nodded.

"Now the caveats. For us to operate this, the pilot must hold the BFI, or Basic Flight Instructors license; the take off and landing distances for these planes are longer - about 500 feet, but we have 10 miles of lake we can use here." Jules paused, "And, finally, because of its features, the SeaSprite costs more than the others. I had planned on spending the price of a new car for the plane but now it'll be one-and-a-half new cars." She sighed, "I'll kick in my car, I guess."

"You can take half of mine." Brenda offered.

"Since when were you getting a car?" I ask.

"Since I was promoted to assistant manager." Brenda sniffed, adding, "YOU got one!"

"I only got a USED car!"

"Well, OK, I'll contribute my used car! Happy?" Brenda sneered, "See if _I_ let you in my plane, hah!"

"James," Amanda said from under my thigh, "Can Sara and I buy one too? We'll throw in our cars."

"Sorry, I used yours for the PPC! Ouch!" as she impressed my ass with her teeth.

"You can have my car." Sherri offered, "If I get one, that is..."

"Of course you get one!" Amanda squirmed out from under me and hugged Sherri, "Then we can fly when they drive!" She looked at me, "Don't you find it extremely weird that I can race boats, fly planes and STILL can't drive?"

"That's because nobody expected you to WANT to! Most kids your age are interested only in TV and Barbie dolls!"

"Yeah," She nodded slowly, "But then most kids my age would have enough sense not to let known sex perverts in their houses..." she turned to Sherri, "Did I tell you how I was attacked and cruelly used by the heartless brute here?"

"Quite a few times," Sherri smiled, "If we're talking about the person you are heads-over-heels in love with!"

"You!" Amanda yelled, "Whose side are you on? Wait till he beats you black and blue and you come running to me!"

"He does already," she sighed, "With a hairbrush..." her hand crept into mine.

"James," Brenda said, "If I was a bad girl, would you beat me with a hairbrush?"

"Depends," I said, "When you're good, you're good. But sometimes, when you're bad, you're VERY good!"

"Really?" She grinned, then seriously, "Oh, I mean, if, if I kinda drove your car without asking you, would I be hairbrushed?" She looked anxiously at me.

"No," I sighed, "Because if I did, I'd have to whup Jules too. Right?" They nodded, looking somewhat disappointed.

"See?" Brenda said to Jules, "I told you you can't get hairbrushed for the same thing twice! It's called Double Jeopardy!" She finished smugly.

"But keep working at it," I suggested, "I'm sure one of these days I'll have to use the hairbrush on both of you." They nodded solemnly and their eyes glowed.

"James, Master..." Celeste whispered in my ear, "Can we go back now?" she licked it, "Sherri and I have business to attend to..." Sherri's hand left mine and crept into Celeste's.

I sighed as I weighed anchor and took us back to the Eyrie. They disappeared upstairs, leaving Jules to help me clean up.

"How is the money holding out?" I asked, "We are spending an awful lot it seems."

"We're doing fine," Jules smiled, "We still have the core JamPC Funds invested and the bulk of Gaston's shares from years ago is still in place. Nicole's wangled and leveraged much of the capital for the new companies we're buying. There's this one company, their shares have split four times in the last twenty years and it hasn't slowed! Gaston must've known something about them, he bought big at the initial offering - at bargain basement prices too!" she laughed, "That's how I noticed it, their dividend cheque is now bigger than what Gaston spent on the shares!"

"Computers?"

"Strangely, no!" Jules laughed again, "Commercial Electrics is into manufacturing. Industrial Power Units is how they describe it. That's why Nicole is checking them out. We'll know more when she gets back this Friday.

"And James, don't worry about Amanda's plane; if she needs one, get one. Peter was very pleased with her work, apparently we've saved them millions already, so we've made some adjustments to the contract." She grinned, "About 3 planes' worth so far!"

"Oh good! They sent us another!" I described briefly their latest problem boat. "We ought to be able to find a good answer to their grief. We've got a way to determine a boat's performance much quicker and more accurately than them."

"The blowjob detector?"

"Yeah!" We laughed, "Their own results from the first boat were actually 2 inches off and it wasn't balanced well. So it's safe to say they know they need us!"

She started piling cartons of groceries on me - bread, jam, spread, TV Dinners and about a ton of pasta. "How are you gonna finish so much pasta?" I groaned under the load.

"They're SO cute! Did you know they have wheels, shells, bow ties, sheets, tubes and, like twelve different kinds of straight noodles? And in different colors too! So we got three packs of each." She saw my look, "Oh, don't worry, Sara's gonna cook us a batch tomorrow and we'll

just return what she doesn't use up! The rest of the time, we'll probably eat at the restaurant. They're just thrilled we are bringing in so much business."

They were all seated at the dinner table, Sara and Amanda and the manuals were at one end and Celeste and Sherri with THEIR notes occupied the other. Brenda was between them with the laptop and was having an animated discussion with Celeste about the building.

Amanda looked up and grinned at us, "We figured out the scoop problem! Actually Brenda did, so we'll let her explain it." When Brenda did not break off her conversation with Celeste, Amanda grabbed her face and aimed it at me. "Tell James about the scoop!" She demanded.

"Huh?" Brenda blinked, "Oh, er..." Her voice became a squeak when Celeste leaned over and stuck a tongue inside her ear.

"Honey, we were talking about the office space, now..." she was cut off as Brenda squeaked again, this time from Amanda's tongue in the other ear.

Celeste humphed and decided to balance out the tongue-in-ear equation. For added emphasis, her hand slipped under Brenda's top and over a breast.

Brenda squirmed and squeaked and moaned weakly. Sara leaned over and started kissing her. Then her hands disappeared inside Brenda's top as well.

Jules was watching, eyes gleaming. She smiled at me, "'Scuse please." and slipped under the table. Brenda's eye opened wide and she started wheezing and thrashing, held firmly in place by at least three pairs of hands.

I kissed a raptly attentive Sherri, "How's it going?"

She pushed my face away so she could watch Brenda's torment. "Wow!" She said shakily, "Look at that! Er, it looks kinda fun..."

"Are you saying you'd like to participate?"

"Mmmm, no... I kinda mean I want YOU to do those things to me..." She smiled shyly at me, stood and kissed me.

She took my hand and led me out to the patio. I put my arm around her shoulders and she sighed against me. "Look at that view..."

"There is nothing like the sunsets here."

"The sunrises are pretty amazing too!" She smiled and pulled me down to the pad. She laid on top of me and wrapped her legs around mine.

"It's just starting to sink in," She said as she licked and kissed my face, "What you mean by 'do anything with each other'," punctuated with more tender kisses. She squirmed softly on me. "Mmmm, hold me, James..." and sighed as my hands stroked her back.

"I think that's why girls want teddy bears - so they can do this..." She bit my nose and lips, "Mmmm, ohhh - but teddy bears definitely don't do THAT!" she moaned softly, "I think though that first you should take my jeans off..."

We rolled around and finally got our clothes off. I hugged her soft warm body close and kissed her. Her eyes were closed and she was moaning softly when I started moving down her body.

I licked down her neck and kissed along her tan lines. Her breasts quivered as I lapped around them and up their sides, the nipples bunching as I nursed on them. I bit one and she moaned, her legs flexing, and she reached down for my cock, turning my body around with a desperate grip. She moved us until she could reach my erection with a kiss.

I gave her little pussy a soft lick and she froze, "Oh, ah, ah James... Ahh, ahhh!" Thus encouraged, I gave her a more thorough going over as she breathed and moaned around my hardness. "Ohhh, James, I can't do you if you keep that up!"

"It's OK." I murmured into her moist hole, as she allowed me to part her legs and tease open her soft petals. She was hot and wet and very tight, but my tongue slid in smoothly as she grunted approvingly into my groin. Her hand could only make shaky strokes on me as I paid

loving tribute to her womanhood. Her legs wrapped themselves about my head and she shook and moaned.

"James..." She groaned urgently, "S-stop! I need to bite something!" I managed to twist out of the way as she sank her teeth into my thigh. We slumped back panting and grunting into each other.

"Oh, poor baby!" Cried Sherri after she opened her eyes and saw the circle her teeth had left on my quads. She started kissing me and her hand went back to my cock.

"You don't have to..." I said halfheartedly as her mouth traveled up the shaft.

"No, James, I HAVE to!" She smiled and enfolded me in her mouth. I sighed and humped and grunted until I could provide Sherri with my offering.

She took my hand and skipped into the house. The girls were again working at the table, with somewhat fewer pieces of clothing on. Sherri planted her little ass on Amanda's lap, facing her. Then, leaning forward, she took Amanda's face and tongue kissed her.

She pulled back and slid over to the empty space a grinning Sara had prepared and they shared. Sherri made the full tour, ending with her face locked on JulieAnn's.

She smiled tenderly at me as I hastily slid into the next seat.

Jules smiled at us, keeping Sherri on her, "James, excuse us but I haven't introduced myself properly to Sherri..." they kissed softly.

"Hello Sherri, my new sister, welcome to the family..."

Chapter 41

"See?" Brenda said as she showed us the underside of Gyro 2, "They knew the approximate plane points for 65mph so they knew to place the scoops behind them, but because of the size of the motor, and the placement of the second cabin, they could only put them here." She pointed out the 5" wide stainless steel cowls.

"And yesterday, when we started looking at the test results, I began plotting them on this chart." She held it up, "Now look at where the SECONDARY points are at 35...?" She nodded and smiled, "Right over the scoops! My theory is that the secondary plane points are caused by a sort of leakage of the primary aeration and it pools where the standing wave of the hull's motion compresses it. So that means the scoops are sucking mostly air at this speed!"

"Now, let's take a look inside," she said as she lowered the boat into the water and we climbed in. She opened the motor cover and looked inside with a flashlight. She aimed it at two hoses running up the sides of the compartment. "These are the take ups." She followed them with the light, "And it joins in the middle here..."

"That's the coolant interchange assembly and the intercooler." Sara explained.

"Right," Brenda looked up at us, "Now for these calculations, I've had to program in adjustments to the plane points because of the V-geometry and attitude of the boat at speed. The kicker is that yesterday you measured both primary and secondary plane points at 35, right?" She waited until we confirmed it, "And you did all your measuring INSIDE the cabin, right?"

Suddenly Amanda said, "Right, and the scoops are behind the cabin, under the engine!" She stopped, "Which means...?"

"Which means," Brenda explained, "Wave actions occur at the keel ahead of the sides. Just geometry." She smiled, "On this boat it's about 19 inches. So anything that happens on the sides is happening at the keel 19 inches ahead!"

"Right! So putting the intake on the keel puts it a safe 19" BEHIND the secondary aeration!" They all grinned.

"And all we'll need is a single scoop!" Sara paused, "A much smaller one, too!"

Brenda nodded, "According to my figures, we'll only need a single 3" to get 25psi pressure."

"And 15 is all we need..." Sara mulled, "Hmmm, that means... lessee... 20-22% decrease in drag, the square root... times..." She looked up, "Eighteen mph! Wait, factor in Bernoulli's equation... still, fifteen should be a safe bet!"

Amanda's eyes glowed, "A 77 mph cuddy cabin? Shit! Peter's gonna cream his pants!"

"Hmmm, we'll need progressive tabs for that kind of speed. And dampened hydraulics and a longer jack-plate for more steering control."

"There's one more consideration," I added, "If Brenda's theory is right, there will be a fair amount of induced pressure from the standing wave, so we may not even need such a big intake!" I paused, "Or eliminate it entirely!"

Amanda grinned, "Right, we put in a 3" opening at an angle. Sorta like an induction channel... We may even crack 80 then." She shrugged, "We'll start with that, and put the scoop in if it's not enough!"

"OK, let's give Peter our shopping list so we can start putting it in!" Sara took off with Brenda.

Amanda turned to me, "James, can we leave the boat until the supplies get in? I want some time at the Flight Park."

"OK, it can wait until we get back from the shoot." I looked at Jules, "You can start giving Amanda driving lessons as well, but make sure you work things out with Celeste - she has to know where you are at all times, OK?" Grinning, we kissed goodbye as they took off for Harry's.

The noise outside was worse than the hammering in the marina. I walked towards the restaurant but it was already wall to wall people; in addition, there was a TV crew there filming the construction of the Wheel. Marjorie, Celeste and Max and another man were talking with reporters.

"That's hizzoner the Mayor!" Sherri said as she waded through the crowd to join me, "Most of the town council is here too. This is the biggest thing that's happened since they shot the movie here three years ago!" She laughed.

"Looks like a good time for us to head out, are you doing anything for Celeste now?"

"No - she says we should go and she sends her love. Marjorie's gonna run interference for her. And Max is just wonderful too." She took my arm and we waved goodbye from a distance. We collected Sara and Brenda and boarded Jewel.

We sailed out slowly, watching the installation of the vertical supports for the Lexan 'glass' for the Wheel. Once the full-height pieces were in place the building would be shielded from the elements. It was already an imposing and inspiring sight.

After the ride down the lock by the dam, we stopped at the fish hatchery. They were out of chum but the rangers invited us in for coffee and served us home made crab cakes. The crabs infiltrated the incubating pools and they had to be trapped before they ate up the small fish.

The Ranger boys were full of questions about the marina and the Wheel, although none of them were addressed to me. The girls laughed at all their jokes and enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

We said our goodbyes, promising a return visit, and set off down the river, munching on a supply of the delicious crab cakes they forced on us. The girls were happily giving Sherri a guided tour on the bow when suddenly they screamed and pointed at two Paragliders that were sailing down the river towards us.

As they drew closer we could see Jules in one and Harry and Amanda in the other, 50' back and above. Amanda had the camcorder and was filming us as we cavorted and made complete asses of ourselves. With our asses.

Amanda's PPC was our new one with "MAX Performance - Land, Sea & Air" printed in bold black letters on the day-glo orange canopy. They followed us down river for a bit before waving goodbye and turning back.

The girls were still waving and giggling on each other as I called Brenda over. "Does your face hurt?"

"No, why?"

"It will, you're getting too much sun - even your freckles have freckles!"

Sherri looked at her, "Yeah, you're gonna start burning real soon!"

Sara hustled her down the cabin, "We've got to slop some moisturizer and sunblock on you now!"

Sherri turned to me and kissed my cheek, "This is great! I feel like we're international jet-setters or something..." Squeals from below made her look into the cabin, "Oh my god!" She whispered, "They... they..." her voice faded as she gripped my leg.

"They...?"

"They, uh, uh, they, ah, look like they COULD be having fun." She closed her eyes and shivered against my chest. She hugged me and hummed a bit, then she leaned down for another look. She sighed again.

Sara called out, "Oh Sher-reeeee, we're waiting for you-uuuuu!"

She looked at me, then checked the action down below, "Hmmm, it looks scary down there..." she took a deep breath, turned and pecked me, "But, I'll never know unless I give it a try, right?" Her lovely butt disappeared even before I could wish her good luck.

The river opened up with the multimillion dollar homes. I waved and their owners waved back, no doubt feeling extremely fortunate to have the three lovely ladies moan and sigh in such appreciation of their estates as we sailed by.

After refueling I took the boat out of the harbor. This was the first time I had a chance to try out the new dual propellers and it was a noticeable improvement over the older unit. The acceleration was more authoritative and the top end was almost 50.

We had gone out about 5 miles when Brenda came up in a skimpy bikini, glistening with lotion. She kissed me and slid on my lap, arms around my neck, "I don't know what it is about Sara, she gets on this boat and she goes crazy horny. She's worn me out and now she's working on Sherri!" She giggled, "Last week, when we stayed over, she was up all night propositioning everybody!"

"Maybe she simply finds all of you irresistible!"

"Oh, you don't have to defend her," Brenda laughed, "We all know how you feel!" She licked my ear, whispering, "Do you find me irresistible?" She rubbed herself on my groin and said, "Hmmm, is THAT your answer?"

We were well clear of the harbor and I set the autopilot, then took Brenda to the lounge seat and started untying her straps.

We had finished verbalizing our mutual satisfaction and delight and were draped drowsily on each other when we heard loud screaming from the cabin. A very naked Sherri ran up and piled on us, with an equally naked Sara stalking her.

"Help!" Sherri clutched my waist, "The strange lady is chasing me!" She panted in panic, "She wants to give me a piece of candy so she can touch my privates!"

"And of course you told her no?"

"Of course!" She sniffed indignantly, "I told her I always get TWO from you!" They collapsed on us, cackling and wheezing. After a bit, Sherri said, "Now I know why everybody warned me about sex!" She looked up, tears running down her face, "It's so much FUN!" and laughed some more.

Sara murmured, "You have the most incredible body - and it gets turned on by EVERYTHING!" She stroked Sherri's face, "And such a quick learner too!"

Sherri giggled, "The strange lady is really strange beyond description!" She kissed Sara, and whispered, "That last bit in there? It would be disgusting if it didn't feel so good!" They leaned on each other and sighed some more.

We got dressed as the boat chimed and slowed. We were about 30 miles from the shore, the land a haze on the horizon with only the tallest buildings visible. I took them on the fore deck. "Look at the water. This is the edge of the Continental Shelf. It's about a hundred feet deep here, then a mile further out, it drops to over 800 feet. That's why it's sort of emerald blue here and becomes a deep, dark blue there."

"We're in the REAL ocean now, aren't we?" Sherri said, awe in her voice. We could feel the raw power of the water as it bobbed our 3 ton boat like a cork.

"Yes, and the weather here is really changeable so, as standard procedure, we set the UHF to the Emergency weather channel, AND, we'll have the radio on AM."

"Why AM?" Brenda asked.

"FM will not travel this far from shore and AM may give us faster reporting of sudden storms. The US Weather Bureau works with satellite pictures but the AM people will often report sightings from other boats."

I turned and looked at Sara, "Remember how Amanda caught the grouper last time?"

She nodded, "We looked for an underwater ridge..." she grinned suddenly, "And we're sitting dead smack on top of the mother of all ridges here! Right?"

"Right!" I led them back to the back and flipped the cover of the live bait well.

"Oooh, they're beautiful!" They were about 10" long and shone with an iridescent blue over a brown body and they trailed long golden gossamer cloaks behind them.

"Some fisherman had netted a load of flying fish and he was going to sell them as pet food in town, so I bought us some. They make a really good bait fish because they are so attractive to other fish. Except their flesh is very soft so they have to be handled very gently."

I climb over the rear transom and continued, "This is where the kicker motor comes in handy." as I dropped it in place.

"Oh, that's why you had Max put it in yesterday with the DX!" Sara said, "How fast can a 10hp motor go?"

"It'll do about 12mph on this boat."

"Hmmm, that's a good trolling speed."

"But for this - we have to keep it under 5. The fish are REALLY fragile!"

We prepared our 3 rods, carefully placing the hooks through the bony part of their mouths and dropped them gingerly into the water. Their wings opened in our slow movement and they glittered and gleamed in the sunlight. We let out fifty feet of line and left the rods in the holders.

We waited with drinks as we steered towards the deeper part of the shelf.

"Guys, is it my imagination," Brenda said, "Or are we going backwards?"

"Yeah, it looks spooky!" Sherri breathed. We could see the water passing under the boat but the shoreline seemed to be moving in the opposite direction.

Sara looked at us, "Er, I think we're in the Bermuda Triangle! Right?"

I nodded, "We ARE on the outer fringes, and this phenomenon has contributed its share to the tales, but it's not CAUSED by the Triangle. Any ideas?" I waited a bit, "OK, try Gulf Stream."

"Oh... But we're not in the Gulf!"

"It's CALLED that because that's where sailors first noticed it." I pulled out the map, "The Gulf Stream goes up one side of the ocean and circles back down the other side, along Europe." I pointed, "Here, it comes up close to land and is quite fast, about 10mph." I looked around, "Our kicker motor is going at 5 in the other direction, so..."

"So our net velocity is 5 mph the wrong way." Brenda sighed, "But it still gives me the creeps. Are you SURE we're not being sucked into some black hole like all those other boats?"

"Not likely," I laughed, and paused, "Wait, something's happening - look at that line" The starboard line was weaving back and forth, "Get ready - that's a sign the fish is trying to escape something..." and as the line snapped tight, "Fish on!"

Brenda pulled the rod out and started working the fish in, "Stay over the side - don't let it cut across the other lines."

"Fish ON!" Sara cried as the port line got a heavy hit as well and started singing out immediately. Sherri helped her get the rod out and held it as Sara worked the reel.

Suddenly, Brenda's line started whining out too as she grunted and tried to keep the rod from tipping out of her hands. I helped get it back under her arm as she fought the suddenly viciously struggling fish. It must have been swimming with the boat and had just realized that it was hooked.

"Shit!" Came from the other side as Sara's line broke and threw both of them on their butts. They started giggling as they crawled around checking each other for bruises.

I reeled the broken line back in as they helped Brenda bring her catch in - a 15 pound grouper. Brenda and Sara started wrestling it down so they could kill it.

"Eeew! He slimed me!" Brenda cried and dove overboard, rubbing her hands over her body.

"Sherri," I urged, "Climb up to the cabin roof and look around for anything moving in the water. Scream if you see something - and keep your eyes moving around!" I nodded as she followed my directions and I went and reversed the little motor.

"Bren!" I waved to her, "Swim back here without making any splashes. NOW!"

She had drifted about fifteen feet back of the boat and now hurried back in a strong breast stroke.

"All clear!" sang out Sherri. I reached down and hauled Brenda out and sprayed her down with fresh water.

"What was that all about?" Brenda asked.

I waved for Sherri to join us. "The fishing line didn't break, something CHEWED through it!" I showed them the frayed end, "This was 50 pound steel wire. How do you think a bite from teeth that did that would feel like?"

Brenda shook as she looked back over the side, saying quietly, "That wasn't very smart, was it?"

I hugged her, "You didn't know. But it's a big ocean, with big and hungry animals in it!" She nodded and shivered in my arms. I turned her face up and kissed her, "And I'm the only animal that's allowed to bite your beautiful body, OK?"

"Yes," She smiled through her tears and held me tightly, "My master."

They weren't in the mood for fishing so we started the main engine and made lunch. We cleaned the grouper and ate that with crab cakes and leftovers.

I held Brenda in my arms and rocked her as she took little tastes of the food. "Remember we were talking about the Bermuda Triangle?" I said, "Well it started back around the Second World War, an out of work journalist saw a newspaper article about a formation of US Fighters which had disappeared on a short training flight, then a rescue plane sent to look for them also vanished. He got the idea to write a book about, as he called it, the Bermuda Triangle. He did his research, but selected only ones which fit in his theories."

"So some things DID happen here?" Sherri asked.

"Of course, for the last thousand years ships have been sailing to the New World, and attracting wars and pirates. Don't forget that until a hundred years ago they were simply not aware of the Gulf Stream, so when they were swept off course, they blamed weird happenings with the compass, the wind or the gods. Anyways, the author attributed it to some extra-dimensional alien thing and it started a modern day legend."

"And the planes...?" Sara asked.

"As it turned out, it was a group of raw pilots flying in bad weather and their leader's plane had a malfunctioning compass. They drifted South and may very well have run out of fuel and crashed in the Gulf - their last message was tracked in that direction."

"And the rescue plane?"

"It took off in bad weather as well and it was searching in the wrong area. It was a wooden seaplane notorious for fires and it was believed that that was what happened."

"But it COULD be something we can't explain?" Brenda asked.

"Not based on the research that's been done. Statistically, the Triangle has no more accidents than any other well traveled parts of the world and some of the cases cited in the book didn't even happen in the right places.

"Just so you know where this guy is coming from, he also wrote another best-seller." I smiled, "On the so-called Y2K disaster. Of course we know now it was all hokey-pokey fear mongering, but the press has an almost ludicrous appetite for sensationalistic half-truths. Still, once a myth is started it's not easy to change people's minds.

"In fact, something happened just a few years ago which, at the beginning, seemed to support the weird science theory. Apparently a British warship 2 days out of Bermuda found a small sailboat. It was adrift, in perfect condition, but, as befitting our tale, had nobody on board. So they sent a handful of their sailors over and restarted the engines so they could sail it to port. But on the second night, the engines quit and wouldn't start again. Finally, days overdue, they limped in on sails. So of course everybody went, 'See, I told you so!'"

Brenda turned around and kissed me, "See? I TOLD you so!"

"So what really happened?" Sara asked.

"The truth came out when they found the owners. They had sailed from Europe two weeks before and the boat had developed an electrical problem which kept draining the batteries. So they pulled into the Virgin Islands for repairs, and while in port the boat was stolen. Obviously the thieves discovered the power problems too and abandoned ship."

"So I shouldn't believe everything I hear before I check it out." Brenda mused.

"Or," I continued, "Let your mind dwell on an unpleasant incident until it starts to grow..."

Brenda curled up on me and sighed, "OK, so tell me who you think Mr Teeth was."

"Well, he might be a shark..." I started and Brenda shuddered, "But based on the fight he put up, a smaller one, maybe four feet long."

"That's big enough!" Brenda whispered.

"But sharks are opportunistic feeders, they prefer dead meat to chasing live bait. So chances are we're talking about a barracuda here."

"Would they attack humans?"

"As a general rule, fish will only attack things under half their size, but if you show signs of distress..."

"So that's why you wanted me to swim quietly."

"Yes, I was afraid the sounds of the fighting grouper and then your dive may have attracted it." I rocked her a bit, "Feel better?"

"Hmmm, yes," She hugged me back, "Lots, thanks."

"I'm glad it's just a scare, Bren." Sara kissed her, softly, but with more tongue than was absolutely necessary.

Sherri hugged us and leaned on Brenda. "Mmmm, it must've been a real bad one!" Sherri breathed, "Your nipples are hard and your heart's beating so fast! Oooh, just feel it, Sare!"

Brenda sighed as she allowed them to pull her into the cabin.

"Sare," Sherri's laughing voice said from inside, "If you were a barracuda, which part would you want to bite...?"

Chapter 42

I set the autopilot and had just cracked a beer and settled back for a snooze when Sherri and Sara came back out. "Brenda's got salt all over her! Yuck!" Sherri made a face, then pouted, "And Sara won't play with me anymore!"

Sara laughed, "Hard to believe but your girlfriend is even hornier than me!" she hugged her, "But we must wait a bit - you're still healing." Sara sat Sherri on her lap and leaned on me, "This is going to be such a GREAT trip!"

Brenda came out of the shower, naked and dripping and shaking her hair. "Watch the water, we're halfway down!" The boat held 8 gallons, or about 40 minutes of fresh water on board for everything - drinking, washing and cooking. "Another good reason not to go in the ocean - the salt is itchy!" she added.

"Did you see? She's washed all her sunblock off!" Sherri grinned at Sara, "THIS time I get to put it on her while you hold her down!"

"See what I mean?" Sara laughed as they hustled Brenda down, "But take us where we can do more fishing!" she added.

Ten minutes later, a thoroughly oiled Brenda led the grinning pair back on deck. They had put on T-shirts but the shadows and dark hints of their breasts underneath made looking away difficult.

After I gave them the ogling they were due, I spread the hydrographic map, "This marks a wreck, in eighty feet of water. Wrecks and coral make great fish habitats and we're going to try there. And I'm going to test out the diving disk as well." The 2" round metal planers attached to the line and pulled the lure deeper by diving under motion.

I set up the little motor to cut across the current. Sherri watched me, and then asked, "Why are you going half the speed as before?"

"Because before, with the current against us, we had to go 10mph just to stay in the same spot. But now I'll cut across the current at about 7 mph to avoid damaging the flying fish and still drift past the wreck slowly."

She thought about it, "Makes sense - but then you're too slow now." I looked at her and she continued, "You were going 4000rpm before to get 12 mph. Now you're only going 1800, which is only 5-1/2 mph." We stared at her.

"It's very simple," Sherri smiled, "I have what's known as monotonic pitch recognition. I can tell what pitch is based on middle-A, which is 440Hz, so by doubling and approximating, I can judge almost any frequency. I can tell, for instance, that the motor's running at around 2 octaves above "A", so that makes it 1800rpm, or thereabouts."

With her help we adjusted the little motor, catching a 4-pound snapper almost immediately with the deeper lure, then we turned and angled back over the wreck.

The next 2 hours produced 13 fish, eight being ten pounds or more, giving all of us more than enough excitement and exercise. We kept the 2 largest, a 17lb Mahi-mahi and a 22lb Kingfish which almost wrenched Sara's shoulder out with its furious darting fight. We stopped when Brenda's steel leader was snapped again, but by then, we were down to our last baitfish, which we released. Despite their soft flesh, which disintegrated too easily, the deadly attraction of the flying fish for game was well proven today.

We cleaned up, using water sparingly, as I steered for shore. We were all a little tired and nobody relished the idea of another meal on the pitching deck, so we happily accepted Brenda's suggestion of dinner ashore.

I had intended for us to stay over at a large city but we started smelling a foul odor which became worse the nearer we got. Soon we could see why. The current had trapped miles of seaweed and garbage and, despite the unrelenting efforts of tugboats and dredgers, was choking the harbor with a rotting smegma. I turned about and steered for cleaner air.

It took us almost half an hour before we were rid of the cloying smell but by then we were looking ahead at a beautiful sandy island with a row of low white buildings gleaming in the sun. The map named it Brookhaven.

It was a large island connected to the mainland by a causeway at one end, with sandy beaches and meandering waterways in beds of reed. The opposite side was a scraggly cliff protected by a concrete lattice in the surf to fend off the unrelenting waves. On the very top perched a resort and convention center.

I steered up a deep, narrow channel and docked at the marina built beside the causeway. I nodded at the attendant as I coasted up. He looked up and his mouth dropped as the girls leaned over the side.

"Geez, I'm so sticky and yucky!" Brenda whined, fanning her shirt, and we stared at the billowing hints of her nakedness, "Isn't there some place a girl can get cleaned up around here?" She arched her brows at the man.

"Er, there's a resort and..." he looked at me, then back at Brenda, "They'll have showers..." He stared at me as I tied us down and we stood to regain our land legs.

"Is your fly undone James?" Sherri whispered in my ear, "He's awfully interested at you!" then to the man, "Can you show us where?" The man started pointing up the hill and his eyes popped as Sherri took a deep breath and leaned over him.

"But he's not gay." Sherri informed me.

The man flustered over Sherri then he turned back at me. "Er, excuse me..." he dashed inside the office and returned with a boating catalogue. He flipped through it and opened it, "Is that you?"

"God, look at the mug!" Sara laughed, "I can't see why they'd want that picture of you in there!" She looked closer, "Of course they must've wanted Celeste and forgot to crop you out!"

The man looked at me carefully, then the picture, then Jewel. "Oh, you're from the factory!" he suddenly grinned and shook my hand, "Let me call my boss!"

They were busy explaining to Sherri why Amanda was looking somewhat cross-eyed in one picture when a swarthy man came up in an electric cart and started shaking my hand, "Al Jeffray, here! Welcome to Brookhaven! I own the marina and I'm also the mayor of this here sand dune." He shook my hand again, "Ah, it's good of you guys to drop in on a little outfit like ours!"

He started looking over Jewel, "Is this the new 26?"

"Yes, we're still trying a few mods on her..." I started.

"Show me, show me," he was quite beside himself.

"We'd be happy to talk more about the boats." I paused, "But right now we'd like a chance to freshen up first."

"Of course, of course! Let's get the word out and maybe we can pick your brains over dinner?"

"Thank you for your invitation Al - I accept. And I've got something here I'd like to contribute to the meal." I transferred the two fish we had caught.

Cars were not allowed on the island; wheeled transportation was either by bus, bicycles or golf carts. We were issued an electric six-seater and Al took us to the resort.

"We're a little busy this week so we only have this cottage tonight. It's got two bedrooms and a pullout in the living room." He paused, "Will you be needing the cottage for longer?" At my smile he amended, "Please don't misunderstand! You are our guests - but the cottage is booked for later this week and I'll have to make other arrangements if you need a place for more than tonight!"

"Al, you've already been most kind. We will be leaving tomorrow morning."

"Right then, make yourself comfortable, dinner in say, an hour and a half?" Al gave us directions and took off.

The cabin was large and airy and the bedrooms shared a walk out to a patio with a panoramic view of the ocean. Once or twice we caught glimpses of dolphins and other, less identifiable creatures far out in the sparkling water.

We cleaned up and took a drive around the island, using a map provided in the cottage. We drove along narrow roads past low rolling greens, exchanging greetings with the islanders in their low summery houses. A number of depots dotted the island where we could obtain fully charged batteries for the cart in exchange for drained ones.

The restaurant was quite full already with the resort guests seated for the early dinner sitting. Al had reserved a table at a corner for us, explaining, "I figure we'll let you enjoy a quiet dinner and we can meet everyone in the meeting room next door after."

The kitchen served the mahi-mahi on a large 4 foot long platter. It had been baked whole in banana leaves that removed the skin when they were peeled off. We were served generous portions then the dish was set up in the center of the room so everyone could have a taste.

Al gave us a brief run down of his town. The island was 12 miles long by 9 wide, almost perfectly oval, of which about a third was beaches and marshlands. Although fewer than 2000 people live there year round, it could have up to 5000 visitors staying over at any time, drawn there by the beaches, the nature areas and of course the golf courses.

Once the private estate of a wealthy industrialist, Brookhaven was bequeathed, upon his death, to 120 long-time employees of his factories. Some 30 families descended from those still lived on island.

"We've been lucky to have been spared much of the nastier storms in recent years and so we are doing a booming tourist trade. In early Summer, like now, we also attract bird watchers and we've been working with Wildlife America to protect the endangered sea turtle." He pointed to a young brunette in the dining hall, "Janet there organizes the beach Turtle Watches so they and their eggs are protected. We attract a lot of turtle watchers during these two months.

"Quite a few residents rent their houses out in the summer to tourists and then THEY go off on their own vacations! Many of them sail to the islands or Central America so boats are very important to us. Then there are those of us who also take a boat to work!"

Al gave a sigh of relief when I finished my second Chocolate Mousse, after helping the girls clean up their plates, and stood. He led us to a large room where about 40 people were milling about.

Applause greeted us as I introduced ourselves, "First off we're technical and know nothing about sales," I smiled and waited for more applause to fade, "And we have to limit this talk to the 26' open cabin cruiser, the 20' runabout and the 22' cuddy cabin."

I described the improvements we had made on the Jewel, then Sara gave a run down of the innovations we had developed for the original Gyro, then she began talking about the 22' Cuddy Cabin.

"Is that the Monster Cuddy?" Asked a voice from the audience.

Sara smiled, "If you mean the Magnum 455 with the DX I/O, then yes."

"How close are you to production? I hear you're having serious problems with the power?"

I stepped in, "We're in research so we can't speak for production or marketing, but we are seeing very strong indications on our test unit that speeds in the low to mid-70's are realistic." I had to wait for silence again, "We are having the test model prepped for testing as we speak, so we will know in a matter of weeks."

Cuddy cabins were the SUV's of boating and typically suffered from poor acceleration and performance. Gyro 2 was a venture in a 'fat' cuddy - by designing in a higher cabin, not only was there room for a unique mid-cabin for two, there was also the clearance for the more powerful Magnum engine as well. It would be an industry first if we could realize the speed promised.

Brenda and Sara began talking about plane points and optimizing performance and I went back to sit with Sherri. She was talking with a young girl whom Al introduced as his daughter.

"Lucy is very keen on boats - she's been sailing since she was born."

"And Lucy's been telling us about her turtle!" Sherri smiled.

"Well," Lucy hesitated, "It's not really MY turtle, but it was named after my mother, and her name is also Lucy."

"And what kind of a turtle is it?" Sherri prompted.

"Lucy is a Loggerhead sea-turtle and, about ten years ago, she started coming here to lay eggs. You can tell it's her because she has a bump on her big head, like she's wearing a little cap!" Lucy smiled.

Al continued, "My wife's family was one of the original Brookhaven residents and we had just married and bought our own place here when Lucy first appeared. The turtle has a barnacle attached to her head, so she's very easy to recognize. Sea turtles always return to the beach they were born to lay their eggs, so we were quite worried when she did not appear for a couple of years. Then last year she reappeared with a badly cut up carapace from a ship's propeller, it must've been a close call because it took her two years to heal."

"And she came up to beach two nights ago," Lucy said, "But something spooked her and she turned back without laying any eggs, so we've been watching for her every night!" She took Sherri's hand, "Do you want to come with us?"

"Of course!" Sherri smiled.

The question period was winding down and Al became busy with people interested in placing orders. I collected the girls from their fans and we followed Lucy to join the Wildlife Guide who was giving her talk just outside.

"The Loggerhead and the Kemp Ridley are the only sub-tropical sea-turtles left. In fact, the Kemp is virtually extinct, the only colony lives off Mexico, with fewer than 300 adults. Here, we've been seeing fewer and fewer loggerheads each year. Twelve years ago, we had fifteen to twenty females beaching here, last year was six, we're hoping for eight or nine this year - that would show that our conservation is working.

"The problem is that sea turtles take thirty years to reach maturity - so what we're seeing are the results of over-harvesting thirty years ago. As it is, with just the weather and their natural predators, less than 1 in 1000 hatchlings survive their first year. Given that each adult lays only 300 eggs per year, it follows that it is no easy task to replenish their numbers.

"A few years ago, there was a plan to raise turtles in captivity for a year before releasing them into the wild, so that they have a better chance of survival. But it was a plan that had some major flaws in it. One was that the birth imprint was not as strong, so some released turtles actually forgot where they were supposed to go lay their eggs. Then a potentially disastrous oversight surfaced when they discovered that because they were released in a different environment there is a chance they will never find a mate of their own species." Janet sighed, "So even our best laid plans fail miserably at times!"

After a pause she continued, "As if they don't have enough problems, sea turtles are still hunted by many cultures for food and souvenirs. But their greatest danger is from the fishing boats, some 50 thousand sea turtles drown each year when they get trapped in fishnets.

"Four years ago, a West-coast leatherback female was tagged with a satellite transponder on her shell and was tracked at a steady 300 miles a week as she swam towards Asia. Then just outside Tokyo, Japan, the signal faded and stopped. She had been caught in a shrimp net and had died when she could not reach the surface to breath.

"We believe that that poor, brave lady had been swimming the 9000 miles there and back each year for 40 or more years..." Her voice dropped to a husky whisper, "Isn't that something?" After a deep breath she continued, "So it's very important we give them every chance to lay their eggs. Lucy the turtle," She smiled at OUR Lucy, "Came out 2 nights ago but was startled by someone trying to take a flash photograph of her, so we're hoping she will try again tonight. So

please, leave your cameras and flashlights behind, unless you have the red-shielded ones. Stay behind me at all times and DO NOT try to touch or go near a turtle. They have a hard beak for a mouth that can snap fingers off!"

In single file we followed down the dunes to a platform built on the sand. Groups of children with adult volunteers were scattered around to keep intruders out and to watch for turtles.

Janet pointed into the dark, "This is where Lucy came out last time and we'll be VERY close to the site she started digging last time. Remember, they panic very easily so no sudden noises or movements!"

The night was warm with just the sound of the surf as we waited breathlessly for our visitor. The beach lamps had been turned off but there was enough light from the moon to see by.

"Most turtles will come out as soon it gets to high tide - so they have time to make it back to the ocean before the sun comes out." Janet continued in a low voice, "She will dig a deep hole, as deep as her flippers will reach, then she'll lay around 120 eggs, each smaller than a golf ball. They will do this perhaps one more time this season before swimming away to their feeding grounds for a year." She paused and pointed, whispering, "There's something swimming in..."

We could just make out a bobbing object 50 feet out. Then it vanished in the waves and the froth.

"Quiet now!" Janet hissed as we breathed our amazement as the lumbering female pulled herself up the beach. "It's Lucy!" she could not hide her own excitement.

It was huge - fully four feet across and heavy. Out of her element she pulled herself awkwardly through the sticky sand, leaving a herringbone shaped furrow behind her.

A movement in the low shrubs caused her to stop and watch cautiously. Turtle eggs are a delicacy few animals could resist and there were obviously some already anxiously waiting for the feasting.

"Come-on, come-on!" Someone behind us started chanting. With an angry growl Janet whirled around and shone her torch in his face as he squeaked to silence.

We all breathed a sigh as Lucy resumed her trek towards a spot about 30 feet from us, her need to spawn perhaps overriding her usual wariness.

She stopped 10 feet from the edge of the vegetation and started burrowing, with flailing motions of her head at first, until she could fit her back flippers in, throwing dirt wildly to the sides. So intent was she in her task that she no longer looked about her. We could now see a large gouge in her shell, opened by a large round blade. It yawned open and we could see a lattice of tissue that had grown over the wound. An inch or two deeper and she probably would not have recovered.

In 20 minutes, grunting and gasping with effort, Lucy decided the hole was deep enough and dipped her hind into the hole. More movements along the shrubbery showed where drooling appetites were waiting.

Finally, with a hiss and a shake of her ponderous head, Lucy began sweeping sand over her brood until the hole was covered. Without a backward glance, she heaved her exhausted body back towards the water, where she would feed and rest until she could beach for a second batch of eggs.

Two raccoons were already scouting in the spot before Lucy was fully in the waves. Her quick backward glance was full of a mother's anguish, but Lucy continued until she disappeared into the foam.

The animals were gibbering with greed as they neared the cache when two uniformed rangers approached and shoo'd them away. Janet led us to them after carefully checking for other females who might be waiting to spawn.

The men had donned gloves and were transferring the clutch of eggs into a wooden crate, cushioning each layer with sand from the hole. "Turtle eggs appear to be sensitized to the sand they are laid in," Janet explained, "And so this improves their chances of hatching."

We watched until the men drove off with their precious cargo.

"There's another sad tale there too; for a period of time, about 80% of the hatchlings from our incubators turned out to be male. It was found out later that we needed to fluctuate the temperature naturally to even out the ratio. Now we aim for a 65% female population because they are frequently caught and killed while beaching.

"The eggs will be incubated for 60 days and half will be re-deposited back here but the rest will go to another beach, hopefully away from too many seagulls and other waiting predators."

Since there were no signs of more beaching, we bid Al and his daughter goodnight and drove back in the golf cart. We leaned on the rail of the patio and looked seaward.

"Good luck, Lucy. Good luck, sea turtles."

Chapter 43

Brenda and Sherri had stayed up late, hoping to catch a glimpse of the turtles, so we let them sleep. Sara and I went for breakfast.

Al welcomed us, and showed us a huge plastic wrapped package. "This is a small token of my appreciation!" Al enthused, "We took the King Mackerel you caught and smoked it in palmetto and oak. It should keep for a week or two so you won't starve on board!"

"That's so very thoughtful of you, Al!" Sara laughed, "How did you know that James has to eat all the time?"

Al confided that he had made 3 sales the previous night with twice that in potentials, "What you are doing is just the thing - there's been concern that the engineering has fallen behind, but your little talk has sure lit a fire under us!" He paused, "Is there any chance of seeing you back - or the cuddy in action?"

"We'll be busy for the next ten days of so, but we're planning an open house a week from Saturday, you should come up and stay the weekend!"

We exchanged cards and he shook hands with both of us, "Come back any time - you're now honorary Haveners!"

After breakfast, we collected the girls and boarded the freshly provisioned Jewel. Along with the fish, Al had supplied more breakfast and drinks.

We pulled out and had to hug the shore closely as the current further out was still a stiff 8 knots going the wrong direction

Sherri and Brenda disappeared down the cabin after just a few bites and Sara and I sat nestled together with our coffees, watching the scenery slip by.

The shore was dotted with houses and, wherever there was sand, beaches, motels and cottages. Here and there were huge tracts of tidal-flood plains converted to salt farms. Lush bird life accompanied us the entire time.

Gradually the bottom shallowed from silt buildup and we were forced to double back out to sea. Then with the hydrographic maps and an eye on the depth sounder we navigated into a wide and congested river. It would take us to the inland lake where the shoot was scheduled.

Bren and Sherri emerged, rested, radiant and hungry. We were still quite early so decided to look for a place for lunch in the harbor.

"Look!" I pointed at a boat painted in naval camouflage colors with "PT-69" on its side. Wicked looking torpedo tubes and huge Anti-Aircraft cannons and machine guns bristled along it.

"It's a PT-boat from the Second World War! I didn't know there were any left!" A sign on its control bridge pointed to the "Home of the Original Patrol-Torpedo Boat" up a side channel.

"Sorry girls, I've got to see this!"

"There he goes with his phallic symbols..." Brenda grumbled.

"Actually the PT boats had the first planing deep-V hulls." I explained, "They're 75' long and had redundant power sources with three engines driving twin screws, requiring only one of each to power it 10 knots or better. With all 3 engines running, they produced over 3500hp, with a top speed over 55 mph, and could handle 15-foot waves."

"Wow, how'd you know so much about these things?"

"While you were drooling over the phallic symbols back there, I just read it." I smiled, the shipyard had a billboard pointing out the basic facts of the boat.

Sherri leaned up and said, "James, what's a phallic symbol?" She dropped a hand on my lap and licked my ear.

"God, Sherri, are all you private school girls so perverted? I thought Amanda was an exception, but you're even worse!" Brenda marveled.

Sherri grinned, "We have been instilled with a need to learn, to pursue knowledge. Of any kind." She batted her lovely lashes and squeezed me.

"That's a beautiful sentiment," Sara said, "I for one could not fault that - so I will volunteer my impeccable expertise. Starting now." As she pulled Sherri down into the cabin.

"Whatever it is - Sara's got a bad dose as well..." Brenda shook her head as she planted herself on my lap.

We tied up at the far end of the dock in the shade. Hopefully the two in the cabin would not attract too much of an audience.

The company had returned to manufacturing pleasure yachts since the war and now specialized in mid-size, 45' to 70' deep hulled boats with traditional pilot-house layouts - where the living quarters and the bridge were enclosed in the same area. This allowed large, open interior spaces suitable for longer journeys over open seas.

We were introduced to a tall, handsome woman when we mentioned we represented a Marina.

"Hi, I'm Rhianna Degan." She smiled as we exchanged business cards.

She looked at mine, "Hmmm, I'm not familiar with your organization..." I explained our expansion plans and interest in handling larger motor yachts such as hers.

"In fact, we are going to Regan Boats now to see if we can work something out..."

"Oh, in that case, I'm sure none of our boats would be of interest to you."

Brenda and I looked at each other as she brusquely shook our hands and returned to her office.

"Wow! Talk about snobby - or is it neurotic?"

"And they don't even make the same kind of boats!" I said.

"I think they just feel anyone interested in Regan boats is not classy enough for them!" I had to agree with that - every boat they built was sumptuously appointed and luxuriously finished in deep burnished wood and gleaming brass - no plastics for these guys! Designed for cruising, they emphasized traveling comfort rather than speed. We followed a wall full of autographed picture of boats they had built for famous personalities.

We found a restaurant not far away and joined the summer crowd for lunch. Brenda was happy and sparkled, drawing more than her share of attention and admiring looks. Arm in arm we walked the curio shops and touristy places for another 20 minutes and returned with burgers and drinks for the girls.

The remainder of the trip was through a series of canals linking small lakes and waterways, alternating between small towns and hamlets and open marshlands. Several times we saw people fishing with pelicans and kingfishers. The birds were kept on long leashes and then sent to dive for fish - which they had to surrender to their handlers because they could not swallow them past a strap around their throats. It did not appear fun nor comfortable for the birds.

The girls went below and Brenda and Sara coached Sherri in 'The Look' and practiced applying makeup on each other, only coming on deck after I announced our arrival.

We were on a large hourglass-shaped lake owned by the Regan Boat people and they had everything out on the water, from 17 footers to ocean-going yachts 50 feet long.

Todd and Kelly came up as we tied up.

"I knew that was your boat pulling in!" Kelly enthused, taking my hand but looking at Brenda and Sara, "Dammit, you girls get prettier each time - you two are just gorgeous!" She shook her head, and looked at me, "What a lucky bastard!"

Sara took a step towards us and Kelly quickly dropped my hand, "Er, Sara, it's ok - I've already been warned by Amanda. I promise to respect your property!" She twinkled at me at the last.

"Does that mean you'll wear a bra now?" I asked innocently. Brenda eased up and slipped her hand down my shorts, nails first.

"Not on your life! I have an image to maintain too!" Kelly laughed, as she fluffed her open blouse. She looked back at Todd, "What a find, these people!" And froze.

Todd was staring as well. Sherri had just stepped out of the cabin, wearing a shirt tied loosely over a white one-piece swimsuit. She was a breeze on a tropical night, jasmine-sweet, warm and sultry and blood-boiling. For a moment she looked lost under the close scrutiny, then she turned to me and I smiled and winked at her. She smiled back and I heard Todd gasp.

"Y-you're Sherri?" She nodded, still smiling. She turned slightly and rested her hand on her hip. Todd started shaking with excitement. "C-can you turn around?" he managed.

He was wringing his hands by the time Sherri finished her pirouette, "Who do I have to deal with?" He panted.

"Me." I sighed and invited Todd on board.

"James, can I take the girls over to the pavilion?" Kelly asked. Many of the models used in the shoot were employees and their families and a big welcoming cook-out dinner was getting under way.

Todd wanted Sherri to work with him as a fashion model, where the real chances for fame and fortune were. "She's got it all... Looks, youth, poise, body and that... er, sauciness." He gushed. A nice way to say sluttiness, I suppose.

I did not have the girls' abilities to wow their way through negotiations, so I smiled enigmatically whenever I envisioned Jules to be batting her lashes and tapped my nails on the table when Celeste would be touching her tongue to her lip.

Finally, I said, "Todd, I like you and I know Sherri will do great things with you, but you know," I smiled and added an enigmatic sigh, "I have to report back to Jules... And Sherri is Amanda's good friend..."

Todd wilted and said, "Yes, I understand..."

So Sherri signed on, subject to her parents' approval, at a starting rate of \$250 per hour, net, with a guarantee of 3 full layouts the first year.

We went to the food pavilion and a large crowd, mostly male, had collected around the girls. Brenda saw me and made her way over, followed by Kelly, Sherri and Sara. Some of the men started following but were stopped with a haughty 'Look' from Brenda.

They handed me a drink and a burger and waited as Sherri leaned in and gave me a kiss, soft and intoxicating.

"We had to tell them you're Sherri's boyfriend to stop them attacking her." Sara explained.

"And you two?"

"Our boyfriends are back home, but they're AWFULLY big and AWFULLY jealous!"

"So I shouldn't get fresh then?"

"We let on that you're in the same fraternity with them and we're, well, sorta loose with the brothers. Y'know, the booze and drugs and all..." Sara glinted as Kelly and Todd looked on in great amusement.

Sherri sighed and blinked at me, "And James, I had to promise the strange lady certain... ah, liberties... For the privilege of being your girlfriend." She held me and leaned on me, "I hope you don't mind too much and, well... I hope you appreciate my sacrifice!" She licked me.

Sara laughed, "Sacrifice my ass! You're as wild as Amanda in bed! Do you want me to show James the hickey?" They both blushed. Kelly snickered.

"Tell you what," Brenda said, "Next time, I'll be the girlfriend and you two can be lezzie lovers..."

"Then we can't let him touch us?" Sherri murmured against me.

"Well he could be trying to convert you..."

"Hmmm, that may work..." Sara leaned on Brenda, "Can we be lezzie lovers this time?"

"Well, it's real lonesome away from our jocks. And... y'know, with the booze and drugs and all..."

By this time, Kelly was draped over Todd as they gasped out their laughter. We waited for them to get back under control while I outlined his offer to Sherri.

"No need to decide now - you'll have to get some studio shots and then talk it over with your parents. But I believe Todd, you could make it big!"

"Yes," Todd managed, "In fact I want all of you, but then I'll have to re-negotiate with JulieAnn," He grimaced. "Sherri, your face is classic, lovely eyes. Plus all of you have that, ah, the, ah..."

"Sluttiness." I filled in.

"Well, yes, that's one way of putting it... but there's a purity, an innocence as well." Todd amended.

"So," Sherri wrapped her arms around my neck, "I'm your Slutty Virgin?" She slipped her hand in my hair and wrapped a long leg around mine, "Or do you want a Virginal Slut?" As she licked my lips.

I stroked her hair, "Neither," I whispered, "I want my Fairy..."

Her eyes suddenly swam with emotion and she hugged me tight. Then she took my face, "My dear master, I am all yours, my heart too..." I sank in the warm pools of her eyes.

"Alright you two, spare us the schmaltz - the whole world now knows you're her boyfriend."

"You know," Kelly said soberly, "Next time I see JulieAnn, I'm gonna beg her on bended knees to be let in on your little group - I'll even promise not to come on to cutie pie here. You guys are having way too much fun."

She looked about, "Oh, duty calls. I'll see you later and we can swap dirty stories!" Grinning, she went over to the podium to go over details of the next day's shoot and to coach them on posing for the camera.

"We've got an hour or two of sun yet, why don't we take some shore shots?" Todd led us out. He had to get his own equipment as the photographers would not be arriving until the morning.

Many of the smaller runabouts and cruisers were moored along a strip of land to be used as backdrops. Todd did some with me and the girls, which was great fun as we got to be mushy and lovey-dovey; we swam and did picnics and cuddling shots and a number of head shots. The most memorable was when Sherri licked my ear and squeezed my cock just as Todd clicked the shutter.

After he exhausted my photogenic abilities Todd concentrated on the girls, handing me a digital and telling me to start shooting as well.

I caught Brenda walking down the sandy strand, her hair fired up by the setting sun.

"Smile for your lover!" I cried.

"Which one, my sweet thing or my lezzie lover?" She grinned as I snapped the shot.

Todd was planning on having Sherri attend a fashion shoot in the Islands in a month's time and was busy with head-and-shoulder shots of Sherri for her portfolio. I collected the lezzie lovers to look at the boats.

Sara was intrigued and waded up to a 17' runabout. "These are the most worked-up hulls I've ever seen!" Even the portion above the waterline looked complicated. There were long thin ridges and fins and grooves half way down the boat. There the design stopped abruptly, as if the boat had been chopped and grafted to the back end of a smaller boat.

"Stepped hull." Sara explained, "The idea is to use the front half, with its deep displacement and aggressive design for stability and turning. On plane, it would sit on the trailing edge of the fore-piece and the smoother, smaller aft-piece, with an artificial air gap to cut down water resistance."

She leaned under, "And look!" She pointed to large grooves running vertically, ending in swirled cavities below the water line. "They want to introduce air at these points, but were not sure of the exact locations." Her eyes glinted, "Because they could not locate the exact aeration points either!" She shook her head. "Still, it must've been hell to work up this mold. I would love to see their assembly!"

Kelly came to join us, "Well that's it, let's hope they remember a tenth of what I told them! And let's also hope they show up on time..." She looked slyly at me, "It's a 9am shoot, do you want me to wake you up?"

"Er, no thank you..." I hastened as sets of nails arrived simultaneously at a very sensitive part of my body.

"Didn't think so!" Kelly laughed, shaking her head, "You guys are too fucking much!"

I drifted back to the food pavilion after the girls went off with Kelly to do shots with different outfits. I grabbed sandwiches and drinks for them and started making myself a couple of steaks on the grill. I was joined by another model, a tall distinguished man, older and with a silver white head of hair. He was the epitome of healthy outdoor living, tanned and sinewy muscular. I introduced myself and he just said, "Call me Chuck."

He accepted my offer of a steak, rare, and got us beers.

"Busy day tomorrow!" I said, between bites.

"Yep..."

"From around here?"

"Yep... You came in with the girls?" Geez, he was old enough to be their grandfather!

"Yeah, we work with Todd as well..."

"That your boat?"

"Yeah." I was determined to show him I could grunt with the best.

"26-footer, Magnum III engine?" Maybe he was not quite the lecher I had thought.

"Yeah, nice handling, good in seas."

"What, 40 tops?"

"In the books, yeah, we've clocked 49 on a dirty hull... Lake, repeatable." The speed would be an appreciable percentage lower in salt water, but I emphasized the fact it was not current or wind assisted.

"Really? Changes?"

"Nothing fancy. Lateral disruptors, progressive tabs - with the DX lower-unit and a longer pitch."

"Hmmm, interesting..."

"Care for a ride?"

"Ah, no, not tonight. Tomorrow, after the shoot, perhaps?"

"Sure, but we're leaving right after." He finished his food and stood, nodded to me and walked off.

I grabbed drinks and sandwiches and the bowl of fresh fruit salad before the cleaners could dump them and took them back to Jewel.

I was dozing off comfortably on the deck, digesting the third meal I had, when I was pleasantly awakened by a pair of lips on mine. The perfume was distinctly identifiable.

"Mmmm, Kelly, do the girls know you're here?" I mumbled without opening my eyes. Giggling in the background informed me they did.

"Damn, you ruined the surprise. The girls were telling me what a great kisser - among other things - you are. So I begged them for a chance to try."

"Just a kiss, James." Brenda cautioned.

"Yeah, but..." Sherri breathed. "When he kissed me? Ten seconds and I was ready to give up my virginity."

"No chance of THAT happening here!" Kelly laughed, "OK where do you want to do it?"

"This seems as good a place..." I stretched and scratched my tummy as Kelly knelt down by my side.

"James, our reputation's riding on this you know?" Sara looked worried.

"You didn't seem to mind it the last time..."

"No, but..." she blushed, "I'm easily impressed."

"Hmmm, too true," Brenda agreed, "The girl's got it bad for our stud here... However, I'm not so easily impressed and he does OK by me."

"You ready Kell?"

Without a word she pressed her face against mine and her tongue snaked into my mouth.

I pulled her back. "Wait, Kell, who's kissing who here?" I stroked her hair. "Just relax, and let me lead... OK?" She looked at me, nodded and closed her eyes.

I held her face and stroked her softly. I kissed her eyes and nose. I ran my thumb across her lips and she whimpered.

"Shit," Brenda whispered, "She's gone now!" Kelly sighed.

I let my lips flutter across hers with light licks. She gripped my shoulder as I danced my touch around her lips and her face. Her breath was strained and she was grunting softly as I increased my pressure. I slipped one hand behind her head and cupped the other against a cheek.

I turned her face to give better contact and nipped her lips. Her mouth opened in surprise and I slipped my tongue in, just touching her teeth and lips, teasing hers.

She grunted and climbed over me, wrapping her legs around mine. We mashed our mouths together, tongues dueling for control, our breathing labored and urgent. She gripped my hand and forced it on her ass as she squirmed her groin on me. She moaned, her tongue stabbing in my mouth, grunting to her gyrations against my thigh.

Finally, her gasps slowed and she nestled her head on my chest, her hand still holding mine over her back.

I looked up. Sherri was hanging over the bench, flushed and excited. I stroked her face as she leaned down for a soft kiss. She pulled back, smiling, then she moved so Brenda could share a kiss as well.

I took Sara's hand as she knelt down where Kelly was before and she caressed my face. "My wonderful lover." She whispered, leaning down to kiss my cheek. "I love you so..."

"So, Kell, convinced?"

"Mmmm, let me lie here a bit..." She said on my chest, "James, put your arms around me...?"

I hugged her and she squirmed on me until she found a good spot. "Oh, it's so good you holding me! I can do this all day!"

"Which is pretty much what you've been doing! OK Kell, time's up!" Brenda pulled Kelly up.

She slowly sat up between my legs and looked at Sara, "I wish you hadn't talked me into trying it. Now I'm gonna go round wondering what else I'm missing!"

Sara laughed, "You literally forced me to let you try! But I'm afraid that's all the sampling he's allowed!"

Kelly looked at me, "Can we do it again? I think I can do better than that..."

I sighed, "Kelly, you have to remember that each of these ladies kisses at least as well as me." I smiled at them, "And then there's Amanda..."

"Ohhh god, that girl..." Sherri said dreamily, "Kelly, one touch and I was spreading my legs and begging her..." She shivered.

"Ah well," Kelly sighed, "I guess I'll be going back to my trailer and seeing if Mr Eveready is up to the task..."

"Kelly," Brenda said, "Do you trust me?"

"Trust? Shit yes, Bren..." Kelly hissed, "I just humped my orgasm on your boyfriend and I was ready to let you watch him fuck me!" She looked sadly at us, "Pathetic isn't it?"

"Kell, this is something James taught me..." Brenda smiled wistfully, "Back when I thought fucking and sucking were the only things in a relationship."

I moved back and Brenda sat facing Kelly. She placed her hands on Kelly's face, "OK, you do the same to me... Right, now do to me what I'm doing to you... Or what you want me to do to you, OK...? Now, close your eyes."

Their hands made lazy movements and for minutes nothing seemed to happen, Kelly opened her eyes, then quickly closed them at Brenda's gentle smile. Gradually, their breathing sped up and I could see sweat breaking out on their skin. Soon Kelly was shaking and moaning her need.

"Wait for it, love," Brenda murmured, "It gets better..." and went back to her slow and sensual caresses.

Now both of them were squirming on their seats, Kelly looked with yearning at Brenda, passion in her eyes, squeezing her legs together and trying to rub her crotch on the seat. Brenda too was soaked through with sweat and they were both whining out their passion when Kelly turned bright red and went "Ughhh!"

She released Brenda and started touching herself, leaning on Brenda, and shook and moaned. "Oh, oh, god, oh, fuck, good! Oh god! Yesss!" She jerked in her delirium.

Brenda was shivering and panting as we watched Kelly spasm in her seat, hand blurring at her crotch.

Finally Kelly took a shaking breath and looked at us, "I've just been totally ravished..." She sighed and shook her head, "I don't know if I should slap you or kiss you... Brenda... My lovely Brenda..." She looked shyly at her and blushed.

"We call it the Touch. All it is is trust - of allowing someone to get close to you, both physically and mentally; and sharing - you want me to feel good because it makes you feel good, and so on." Brenda leaned back on me, "He showed me... And I cannot thank him enough." She stroked my face and sighed.

"I'm a mental wreck. You guys are entirely too much to take in one sitting - maybe never." Kelly picked herself gingerly off the seat.

"And guess what?" Brenda grinned, "Next time you're in the mood for Mr Eveready, do this," She held her hands to her face, "You'll save a bundle in batteries!"

"I'll probably be dreaming of just that all night!" Kelly laughed, weakly.

"Did we also mention that Brenda does the same thing with us?" Sherri said softly, "But over our naked bodies? With our tongues?"

"Arghhh! Don't say another word! I'm joining a convent!" Kelly covered her ears and ran off.

"Do you think she'll ever be happy with Mr Eveready?" Sara said.

"Do you think she'll ever be happy with another man?" Brenda chuckled.

"Or another woman?" Sherri giggled, and tipped her head at Brenda, "You look a little uncomfortable still... Brenda... My lovely Brenda..." she breathed, mimicking Kelly.

"OK Missy, you asked for it." Brenda dragged Sherri in the cabin, "Tonight, we do the tongue thing until you can make me come first!"

"Yes, my lovely Brenda..." grinned Sherri.

Chapter 44

I woke on shoot day to Sara's soft eyes. She caressed my face and softly kissed me.

We had spent the night on the front deck of the boat - Brenda and Sherri had monopolized the cabin with their lusty shrieks and flailing limbs while competing to see who could bring the other more pleasure.

"Hey..." I smiled.

"Hey..." She took my hand under the sleeping bag and squeezed.

"Happy?"

"Ecstatic!" She leaned her head on my chest while her hand drifted to my erection. "Is this the piss hard-on, or..."

"Sorry, the former..."

"Mmmm, I'm happy enough, from last night..." She kissed my nipple and I had to remove her hand from me.

"Let's get cleaned up and go for breakfast." I said.

"Let's have breakfast here - let the two of them sleep some more."

I started the propane BBQ on the deck railing and made sausages and steaks while Sara prepared coffee and scrambled eggs inside the cabin. That woke the stickily entwined pair on the berth.

"Good morning, boyfriend!" Sherri glowed and hugged me.

"And how's my Lezzie Lover today?" Brenda started licking Sara.

"Some lover! Our first date and you end up in bed with somebody else!"

"But honey! You know I have to sow my wild oats before I settle down with my woman!" Brenda drew a finger down Sara's breast.

"Hmmmm!" Sara kissed Brenda, "I forgive you, but I get to be the boy today!"

We ate out on deck. It was cool and slightly overcast, which was good for the photographers but a slight breeze had sprung up, which could mean a weather change later.

"Hmmm, let's take breakfast to Kelly." Brenda said as she carefully licked my lips clean. "I can't wait to hear about her night!"

After cleaning up we went to her trailer. "Kelly! We brought you breakfast!"

She mumbled something and we let ourselves in. Her bed was in a curtained off area behind the makeup and change space. She was naked with just a sheet across her.

"Did you come to tempt me some more?" She peered at us.

"Only with breakfast, and to check out your yummy bod..." I said.

She made a move to cover herself, then stopped. "Oh hell, after letting you watch me get myself off twice yesterday, I don't suppose I have anything to hide."

"Plus you've been waving your boobies at us ever since we met!" Brenda added.

"Yeah, like I told you, it's for my image. My way of saying I don't care what they think, I'm still good enough." She sat up with her sheet around her waist and sipped at her coffee.

Cautiously she looked at Brenda, "Brenda, I'm so petrified of you. I can't believe anyone can bring me off the way you did. I came back last night and fell asleep, alone, but not lonely - a strange, strange feeling..." She paused, "I think I'm falling in love with you..." She shook her head, "I still lust after James, but I get all woozy when I think of you..."

"Don't fret it, Kell. Way back, Nicole told me I could be in love with any number of people and I wouldn't believe her either. But think about it, by admitting feelings of love for me, you're afraid somehow it could be used to disadvantage you, because, to you, love is a liability, a weakness." She paused, "But I won't abuse that love, that trust, you should know that. So what's the harm in admitting your feelings?" She smiled, "It's not like I'm gonna molest you, or anything..." She looked around, "That's why I have these degenerates with me!" She pulled Sara close, "Like my lezzie lover here!"

"Hey, back off! I'm the boy today remember?"

"Oh..." Brenda sighed and hung her head. "Sorry - dear..."

"God, woman, sometimes you just don't know your place!"

Sara turned Brenda's face and licked her nose, "So, sweet lips, what say you we go back to my place and I put you through your paces?"

"Whatever you say..."

"An' I don't want you to be flirtin' with my friend, neither, hear?"

"Yes dear..." They kissed lazily as Sherri held on to me, laughing into my neck.

Kelly was rolling on the bed, chortling madly. "You guys kill me!" She managed and wheezed some.

After she could breathe again, she said, "I better get some clothes on in case somebody walks in and accuses me of contributing to the delinquency of minors!" She burst out laughing again and ran into the change-room with her clothes.

She was still giggling when she came out, wiping tears from her face. She sat and started into her breakfast. "But seriously girls, I'd appreciate it if you can stay and help me with the makeup. What you did to yourselves yesterday was great."

She sent me out, saying there was nothing she could do to improve me. Sherri kissed me and told me it was because I was already too handsome. So I went to help Todd marshal the others waiting their turn at makeup.

"You guys are going to earn your keep today." He said. "For starters, you and Sherri will do the young family shots - we've even got a little girl for you. Brenda will be everybody's sweetheart - lot's of wig and suit changes, I'm afraid. And Sara will have the pleasure of working with Chuck..." He coughed, "Have you met him?"

"Yep..." I growled, "Call me Chuck!"

"Yeah, that's the guy. They're going to do some 'Father-daughter' fun-in-the-sun shots and..."

"More like grandfather-granddaughter shots!" I grumbled.

Todd waved a little blond girl of around 10 over and introduced us, "This is Anna, James. She's a real water baby - knows everything about boats."

I smiled at her and she shook my hand and said, "Hello, I hope we have a good time today."

"I think so, I like boats too and I can't wait to try these ones out." I said, impressed by her charm, "Which one is your favorite?"

"Oh, I like them all, but for this lake, I think the 22' runabout is best, what do you think?"

"Hmmm, it looks fast. Actually, if I'm going water skiing, I prefer smoother rides, I think the fins on the sides and bottom would make a choppy wake... I mean the water behind the boat."

"I know what you mean. The fins are called strakes, by the way."

"Wow, you sure know a lot about boats!" I said.

"Hmmm, but you're right, the wake is not good for skiing. Weak ridges..."

"My friend Brenda loves water skiing, maybe later we can do some!"

She brightened and smiled, "That would be nice!"

"Ah..." I lost my voice when Sherri came out. She wore a blue bikini with an impossible amount of boobs and legs showing. Her golden brown hair was done up and she was a walking dream, sultry and mysterious.

She came up, "Hello..." and softly kissed me, "Husband of mine."

"Wow!" Anna and I murmured.

"Are you my... mother?" Anna asked.

I hastily made introductions.

Sherri knelt and held her hands, "I would love to have a pretty girl like you as a daughter, even for a day!"

"Er, are you married... to James?"

"He's my boyfriend in real life, so we're sorta married - right?" Anna nodded as Sherri stood up, "Wait here, I'll be right back!"

"You have a really pretty girlfriend!" Anna said.

"I think so too. She's very nice as well!"

"I can tell."

Sherri came back with a small makeup kit and started applying it to Anna.

"I'm not supposed to wear makeup!"

"It's OK, we'll just wipe it off later..."

The shoot was taking place at both ends of the lake simultaneously, with shore shots on the sandy strand separating them. Todd had us start in the smallest runabout.

"Wow, I'm impressed!" I enthused as we came back in the 17' bowrider, "The acceleration is really nice, the planing surfaces and the stepped hull really do the job!"

"You think so?" Anna asked, "It's good?"

"Oh absolutely, and it works really well with the smaller V-6 engine... Although it may have problems with the V-8's."

"How so?"

"The extra power will make it hard to control in turns. Already it's relying too much on the chines to do the job."

"Yes, we knew it was a tradeoff, but..."

"Anna," Sherri said, "How come you know so much about these boats..."

"My family owns the company." Anna stated, "But anyways, we knew early on that would be a problem, but since straight-line performance is more important, we decided to go with it."

"Hmmm, I guess it's one way of looking at it, and it would probably be apparent in the smaller hulls only."

"Exactly," Anna crossed her arms. "How come you know so much about boats as well?"

"Oh, we work at a Marina and Sara, she's the one out with Chuck, she does the tune-ups and setting up of hulls like this."

We took the 22' Cuddy cabin out next. It was nothing like the 'fat' cuddy that the Gyro 2 was, but had long and sleek lines. It had a really nice ride, the problems I had felt with the small boat all but eliminated.

After that we were given three hours off while Brenda strutted her stuff with her bevy of young men. We took Anna back to Jewel and I started the BBQ again.

"What are you doing James? We had breakfast just 2 hours ago!"

"I'm hungry again - I need my nutrition!"

We were interrupted by Sara roaring up in the 22' bowrider. She looked grim, like someone had told her she couldn't play with her Lezzie Lover any more.

She looked at me, "Don't say anything - just give me the toolbox."

I was not about to say anything, not even how she was so amazingly ravishing and how much I would have loved to ravish her. Even covered under a top, and fuming mad, her simple black one-piece oozed sex.

"Listen..." Chuck was slouched in the passenger seat. He was not smiling either.

"Wait, Chuck, you wanted to do this. Your way doesn't work. Period. Now let me do my thing. If it doesn't work, you can laugh at me and I'll publicly apologize to you, fair?" She gave him the full treatment of 'The Look', "But for now - Please. Shut. Up."

She pulled open the engine cover and gifted us with a view of her lovely backside while she fiddled inside.

She slammed the toolbox back in my hand, restarted the engine and roared off.

"Kaboom!" Sherri said.

We waited for the dust to settle and looked around for Anna.

"Anna, you can come out now! The fire breathing lady is gone!" She had been lurking behind the cabin door. It took a bit of reassuring before she ventured out.

"Is he gone too?"

"Yes, Anna, it's safe now. Sara is the world's sweetest person, I have no idea what happened just now!"

"You know I've never heard anyone talk to him that way before?"

Suddenly the skin crawled on my head, "Er, Anna, what's your relationship to Chuck?"

"He's my grandfather."

"Uh-oh..." I looked at Sherri, "Do you think we should warn Todd?"

"It's probably way too late..." She sighed.

Ten minutes later Sara pulled up again. She grabbed the tools from my hand and disappeared under the hatch again.

"OK," Chuck was saying, "You were right that one time! But I've done this for a long time, much longer than..." He faded as Sara turned 'The Look' on again.

"Listen Chuck, experience does not automatically make you right! I KNOW what I'm doing. What you should be interested in are results, not who's right or who's wrong!" Sara said as she roared them off again. We went back down to retrieve Anna.

They were gone even longer this time, I calmed my nerves by eating my steaks and polishing off the leftover salad. Sherri sat and chatted quietly with Anna and wove tiny braids in her hair.

Kelly walked up, grinning ear to ear. "That Sara of yours, she's something or what! I'm glad I didn't try anything before she gave me permission! Oooh mama!"

Apparently Chuck wanted some shots of the boats doing hard turns to show off the fancy strakes and chines but the speed and the spray made photographing them impossible. Then over Chuck's vehement objections, Sara did something to make it work.

Then Sara told him there was a problem with the handling of the boat they were in and, of course, had to convince him the hard way.

"We got off less than half the shots with them. Good thing Todd's got all the shore shots in the bag or else we'd be seriously behind!"

They came back and Sara climbed silently on board. Without a word Chuck took off.

Sara looked intently at me, then she took a deep shuddering breath and turned to Sherri, "Sher, Can you take your friends for a walk, please?"

She watched as they left and then took me below decks.

"Don't move!" She hissed as she slipped out of her clothes, getting sexier by the second. She was flushed all the way down to her navel and her breathing was already labored. She knelt to take my shorts off and held my erection as she laid back on the berth.

"Fuck me 'til I scream." she commanded.

Ten minutes later, the entire lake heard us.

I held her in my arms, all curled up and tiny, still shaking from the exertion and adrenalin.

I stroked her soft hair, "Better?" I whispered.

"Hmmm, MUCH better. I liked that, you just swept me away." She nestled closer and kissed my chest. "Remember when I said I could do anything when I'm with you?" She shivered, "Never in a million years could I even envision something like that!"

"You just made your point and didn't back down, that's all, you should be very proud of yourself."

"Hmmm, we have to get up... Chuck's giving me a tour of his operation."

"Really?"

"Really. It's his way of making up for his bull-headedness. I've got to say this for him, he's not afraid to admit when he's wrong... Trying to prove it to him is the problem!"

She kissed me and stretched up. I watched as she sat on the edge of the bed to fix her makeup. She turned at my murmured appreciation.

"Am I a sexy fox?"

"You're a sexy just-fucked fox!" I caressed and kissed her back.

"I'm YOUR sexy just-fucked fox." She smiled, in a husky whisper, "And don't you forget it!"

"What exactly did you do to the boat? The turn shots?" I asked as we made our way to the girls waiting at the pavilion.

"It was simple, really. I disabled one of the trim tabs and lowered the other one during a gentle turn, the drag made us list way over, as if we were making a 50mph turn instead of a 15mph one!" She shrugged, "But by then I had also realized that at around 25mph, there was enough of a gap between the sets of strakes and the chines that allowed the boat to slip out from under us."

"So you had to prove it to him, again. I noticed that on the 17-footer as well, but it was way down around 14, so it's not as serious. It didn't seem to affect the 22' Cuddy though."

"Hmmm, but why the runabout, then?" Sara drifted off in thought.

"You OK?" Sherri asked as we walked up.

"One hundred percent!" Sara beamed.

"We heard the hi-speed drill on the boat, was that you?" Brenda snickered.

"Nickel steel," I said, "Tough to punch through." And got punched.

"I'm going to the plant. Chuck's invited me on a tour." Sara said.

"Me too! Anna's taking me."

"Me three!" Cried Brenda, "The boys want to show me their hardware..." At our looks, "Computer hardware!" She grinned, "Actually it's software - what they use for modeling and wave simulation."

I turned, "Er, have fun girls, if you need me, I'll be in Kelly's trailer."

"You, buster, are staying with us!"

"Kelly!" Sara smiled at her, "You will never, under any circumstances, even THINK about touching James, right?"

"Oh, great and powerful mistress, your very wish is my command!" Kelly bowed deeply. "May this unworthy one retire to the ranks of the cloistered nuns now?"

Anna took Sherri's hand and led us along a tree-lined road by a river towards a large compound.

We must have been announced as Chuck met us as soon as we stepped inside the huge reception area. He introduced the man with him as Bob, the chief engineer.

"This is the young lady I was telling you about! She put me in my place but good!" He took Sara's hand and bowed over it, "Sara, please accept my apologies for assuming that your great beauty could not be matched by your intelligence!"

Sara grinned happily and made introductions.

"Ah yes, James, the cabin cruiser. And of course the lovely ladies who had my staff in turmoil since yesterday!" He bowed over their hands as well.

"And Anna! Have you been bothering Sherri?" She was half-hiding behind us.

"No, Chuck, Anna's been a real angel." Sherri smiled.

"I asked Bob to be here to explain to Sara why she had the problem with the 22 Bowrider just now..."

"That's fine, Chuck," Sara said, "It's probably because someone matched the cuddy hull to the runabout top. The dynamics got screwed..."

"How did you figure that out?"

"Actually James did. He took the cuddy out and it rode fine, but with the lighter bowrider, the chines would not be low enough to be effective at certain speeds."

"Sara, you amaze me!" Chuck exclaimed, "You are absolutely right - but I'm glad it was a matter of expediency, for a while I was afraid we had to redo a mold!"

"I presume you know about the 17-footer at 14mph?" Sara added.

"Yes," Bob looked pained, "It was such a small window..." He sighed. "It was also an earlier test model."

"Chuck," Sara turned to him, "I have to tell you that we do some consulting work for one of your competitors, so I'll understand if you don't show us around."

"But if I do, you'll not use anything you learn for my competition?"

"Of course I won't! You have my word." Sara stuck her hand out and, after a moment, Chuck shook it.

"No, I don't expect you will..."

Chuck looked at us, "Sara has told me she wanted to see the lay-up area. I propose we take a quick tour first and you can decide what interests you."

We went to the upholstery section where they put together the seats and berths; then to woodworking where they produced and assembled the decking, cupboards and shelving. Each section took up a corner of the huge assembly plant and was as large as a football field.

Brenda was intercepted by 3 of her young men and was whisked away to the R&D area, where wooden scale models were milled from computer designs and hydrodynamically tested. There the interior was mocked up to test for efficient usage.

After a design was finalized, robots would cut a replica out of foam, then it was carefully and painstakingly hand finished, so that molds could be made from it. A series of these were waiting in the Fiberglass lay-up, or 'Laminating' area, which was over 400 feet long and about half as wide.

Each carefully protected mold was hand cleaned and waxed, then a layer of clear protective gel was sprayed on the inside, upon which successive layers of fiberglass, foam and other material were applied and built up. The chines and extended running surfaces were further reinforced with Kevlar. The finished mold was gently heated and, after they separated, the fiberglass insert became the hull of a new boat.

The top and cabin were similarly constructed and attached to the hull after the engine and other fixtures were installed and tested.

At the end of the assembly area was the engine shop, which had a wide water channel leading out to the river. Upstream, away from the twin lakes used for the photo-shoot, was another large lake where top-secret tests were conducted.

Sara became intrigued by a low squat craft moored in the channel, similar in shape to Neta but double the dimensions all around. Finished in cobalt blue, it was almost all engine behind the dual bucket seats.

"Wow, small-block V-8!" She breathed as she turned to me, "They modified a car engine for water use!"

"That's Bob's baby - a 351 coupled to the XR transmission."

Bob was obviously proud of it, "Guess the top speed..."

Sara hmmm'd, "75... 80?"

"Ninety-five!" Bob glowed.

Sara was impressed, "Who'd think - smooth hull, a century!"

"Well, not quite, we got up to 95 and the engine quit pulling." He fired it up and it rumbled most impressively. At the rear, two vents for cooling started spitting water and steam. He tried to say something but was unable to get himself heard. Sara signaled for him to cut the engine.

"I'd offer to take you out but it's a bit too choppy now."

"Bob, was it on choke?" Sara asked.

"No, it's warmed up already. Idling at 1000."

"920," Sherri corrected. Bob looked at her.

"Sherri can tell rpm better than the tach." Sara explained, "But Bob - you know you're losing power by running it rich, why?"

Bob looked back at her, "You can tell just like that? Geez..." He looked in amazement at the girls, "But we have to - we're still having cooling problems, the water intakes lose contact and so..." He shrugged.

"How 'bout a sponson?"

"That's what we're going to try next." Bob admitted, still shaking his head. "We're just trying to determine the exact placement for it..."

"Well!" Sara hugged me and smiled widely, "Gentlemen, it just so happens the genius boyfriend here has a patent pending on a device to locate plane points!"

They looked at me and Chuck said, "How much?"

"It's not for sale - we're using it for our consulting work... For this boat though, I'd figure \$1200, 2 weeks, maybe quicker. Placement to within an inch, two load groups." I thought about it. "Perhaps, if I can make a suggestion? I can see a tunnel working better than a sponson once we have the placement. Inductive take up will be less resistance."

"Is he a genius boyfriend or what?" Sara grinned.

"And my Daddy!" Anna chimed in. That got her a dark look from Chuck until we explained about the match-up for the photo session.

"Speaking of photo session, we have to get going!" I said.

"Can you stay over tonight? As my guests?" Chuck asked. "I would like to talk some more. Besides, I also owe James for the delightful meal he made me!"

"Yes, please! And then we can go water skiing!" Anna urged.

"Well, then it would be our pleasure to accept. Thank you in advance."

Chapter 45

The afternoon was a lot of fun, like honeymooners we laughed and giggled insanely and Sherri was soft and loving. I was content and happy just to be doing things with her. Anna too was a joy to have around, her intelligence and precocity and her knowledge of the boats and the lake made the shoot even more enjoyable.

The final sequence was with a 21' deck boat using a new hull design they were introducing. Instead of the complex patterns of ridges and grooves, this one was just a sharp, deep V-hull that flared to a smooth, rounded base. There were only two chines per side, one at where the transition ended and another further up. Both were severe and angled downward to deflect spray.

Unlike the older design this one was very well suited to more powerful engines. The wide upper body gave us lots of room all around and boasted a 7' lounging area at the front. Also unusual were the centrally located controls with double bucket seats, housing a deep walk-in changeroom/potty that opened forward. There was even a sink and fridge, called, in this case, a 'Refreshment Center'.

"Everybody has been trying to copy the Stepped Hull we developed," Anna explained, "And this one is good for skiing. Good wake, you know?"

"And it planes really strongly. More consistent feel at all speeds."

Todd gave us the "All Done" call and we sped back to collect the girls.

Sara and Brenda had been out on the 17' with Bob doing skiing shots. They were grinning and waving happily as Sara shot by and threatened to swamp us. Then she looped about and did a gyro, much more sedately than usual, in deference to Bob's panicked looks, no doubt.

She pulled up and yelled, "Can you beat that?"

"You're on!"

Bob shook his head and said, "No way! Not that boat! The chines are designed to scrub speed off in hard turns and the center of gravity is 12% forward of this one... I designed it to be idiot-proof!"

"Bob, you don't know James." Sherri sighed, "Not only is he a bigger idiot than most people think, he's also the most obstinate." She handed Anna over and stepped into the other boat where Brenda and Sara were grinning at me.

I adjusted the tilt and trim settings, then backed 50' away from them into deeper water. Without waiting to stop, I pushed the throttles full ahead and the boat shot out of the water, its bow lifting high. By turning the wheel slightly and adjusting the power, I was able to spin the boat around on its tail in a descending spiral to finally smack down in the water.

Thunderous ovation, from the boat and from shore, greeted me as I drove back up. Anna and Sherri were clapping and screaming. Bob still had his mouth wide open.

Sara kissed me, "That, my sweet, was even better than I had expected!"

Brenda grabbed me and kissed me too, "I knew you had something devious up your sleeve!"

Bob was sputtering and shaking his head, "That CANNOT happen! I see it but I cannot believe it!" He stopped, "Is there a design flaw?"

"No Bob!" I laughed, "This is probably the sweetest boat I've ever driven in. I just cheated, that's all!"

"Oh? How?"

"First, it's wasn't a gyro, more like a reverse-gyro, you'll notice I didn't make any turns.

"Secondly, you couldn't see it but I stole Sara's idea - I tilted the prop up and the trim tabs down. So when I backed away, the stern dropped an extra 4 inches. Then when I applied forward power, the combined backward momentum and the angle of the prop just pushed me up to a tail-stand. The rest, as they say, is history." I smiled.

He blinked with relief, "That's good to know. After all the screw-ups you uncovered today, I wasn't sure I still have a job here..."

"Bob, don't be hard on yourself. Sara's already told you we do Marine Consulting. Our job is to find the little details that may get missed. We WORK at noticing these things. I just dramatized it a bit just now, that's all."

Todd and Kelly waved me back on shore. "Chuck wants to see you," she stuck her tongue out and mimed strangling herself, "RIGHT. NOW." and gestured at the pavilion.

"Oh, and James," Todd said, "If we still have a job after, can you come back and show us that trick again? I'd like to get it on video."

"Just ask Sara - she can do more tricks than me. Comes from hanging around Amanda too much!" I grinned.

Chuck regarded me grimly as I walked up, "Is it as bad as you made it look?"

"That design is going to set the boating world on its edge. There is absolutely nothing wrong with it." I said seriously. "What you saw out there was just grandstanding on my part, and if I caused any problems, I apologize." I explained the trick to him and he was visibly relieved.

"I was going to offer you a job tonight but this is as good a time as any."

"Chuck, you have to be aware that we're just finishers; we look at existing problems and offer solutions. We are not visionaries like Bob." I paused, "He does things that makes one go, 'Geez, why didn't I think of that?' and then we'd come in and say, 'Now, if only you could change this...'. Do you know what I'm getting at?"

"Yes," Chuck laughed, "But you're perhaps too hard on your own abilities."

"I'll let you come to your own conclusions. However, I would like to propose this - let us work with you on the new hull. As I said, it's revolutionary, and I'd like to see if I can find a solution to the capacity problem."

"You know about that too?"

"The only drawback of that design, as far as I can see, is that with the sharp V-hull you have no space belowdecks. Obviously that's why you have to go to the somewhat unusual center console design. And obviously this will make applying it to cabin cruisers a major hurdle."

"On that basis alone, you're hired."

I named him a rate and added, "Normally, we require an annual retainer but I'm willing to forego that if we can have use of your plant facilities, including Bob's brains, if possible." He nodded as I continued, "It will be limited to five people - the four here and one other, Amanda."

"A good deal..." we shook hands, "And I insist you stay at the house."

"Oh, is it possible for Brenda to start tomorrow? She would like to work with R&D with their simulation program."

"Of course!" He laughed. "One thing, though! Please tell her, no bikinis? She's distracting enough as it is!"

The howl of the motor turned us back to the lake as Sara took the 17-footer out and started weaving in the still water. She made it look like a choreographed dance - I could almost hear ballet music weaving in with the lusty growl of the engine. She did loops and turns and managed a chine-walk which looked like the boat was about to capsize. She finished with a tail-stand like mine but spun the boat at tremendous speed, holding the bow above water for long minutes.

Chuck shook his head, "What that amazing young lady of yours can do with a boat..."

"Then I assure you, Chuck, you will thoroughly enjoy Amanda - she worked with Sara on many of these tricks!" He was still chuckling as he turned to go back to the compound.

They were waiting for me down by the boats. I smiled, "Nobody got fired. In fact we are now consulting for Chuck as well!" There were broad smiles all over.

"But the bad news - Bob, you'll have to be working closely with Sara." I sighed, "I know it's a chore, but I hope you can put up with it!" Sara delivered a punch that clearly demonstrated what a pain in the ass she could be.

"I only hope my wife can put up with it!" He grinned.

"And Bren? I'm afraid I also promised your services to the R&D guys this weekend. Apparently they have some concerns about your statistical assertions and need more time to validate your claims."

She beamed and said, "See? Didn't I tell you someday someone would appreciate my C++?" She took a deep breath, "Both of them!"

"Just make sure they're not just imaginary numbers!" I quipped.

"Oh, don't worry! I have ample math to show them they're very real indeed!" She leaned up on me and impressed me with hard, tangible proof. She kissed my nose and turned, "Bob, is it true that all your computer nerds are sexual deviants and spend all their time on the Internet inventing the sickest, most perverted sex acts?"

Bob tried to tear his eyes from both her C++'s and stammered, "Er, no... Probably... Maybe..." Suddenly he blinked and said, "Sorry, I have to go..." and scurried off.

I outlined my talk with Chuck and when she found out we had access to Bob's genius, Sara clutched my arm, "Oh, thank you, my sweet man, I love you!" She planted a sloppy kiss on me.

Brenda was twinkling and asked, "Did he really say I'm distracting?" I nodded, "That lovely man! I'll have to find a way to show my appreciation!" She looked around, "Shit! I have nothing to wear for the weekend!"

Kelly spoke up, "Bren, I've got a trailer of clothes from last season. Help me load it in your boat and you can try them out for size." At Brenda's lusty gleam, she held out her hands, "And NO, Bren, I do not need you to show me your appreciation!" She ran off, with Brenda and Sara in hot pursuit.

I invited Todd to the opening of the Marina and he promised to check with Kelly, then he went off to organize the dismantling of the equipment and to supervise the loading of the trucks.

Anna was clutching Sherri's arm and was whispering urgently in her ear. Sherri smiled radiantly and turned to me, "Anna wants to know why I let Sara and Brenda kiss you..." She turned back to her, "Does it look like they were hurting him?" Anna shook her head, "Were they unhappy about it?" Another shake.

"In fact, it seems to make them happy, right?" She looked at me, "I love James, so why shouldn't I want him to be happy? And Brenda and Sara are my dear friends as well!"

Anna seemed perplexed, "But..."

"And seeing them happy makes ME happy too!" She looked at Anna, "Suppose you have a bag of candies, and your friends also like candies, wouldn't you want to share it with them?"

"I suppose..."

"Wouldn't you?" Sherri pushed, "If you were really good friends and they shared their candies with you as well?"

"Yes - yes I would!" Anna decided.

"That's exactly how I feel. Real friends share; they don't hog, they don't pig out either!" Sherri ran her hands over my chest, "Besides, just LOOK at how fat he is! I can share him with half a dozen people and there'd still be plenty to go around!"

"He's not fat!" Anna blurted, "He's, he's just big..." She blushed.

"No - he's not fat." And conspiratorially, "He's a HUNK!" They shared a giggle. Sherri leaned on me and kissed me, "He's my best friend in the world and he makes me so happy. That's why I want so much for him to be happy. That's what friends want for each other."

Anna looked at us, "Am I your friend...?"

Sherri knelt and tugged me down, putting her arms around us, "Yes, Anna, we're your friends, for as long as you want us." She paused. "But James and I, and Sara and Brenda... We are Forever-Friends. Once you become Forever-Friends, you can never be unfriended, OK?" Anna nodded.

Sherri stroked her face, "Anna, when I first asked James to be his Forever-Friend, he told me to think about it. So I did. Every day, and at night, I'd lie awake in bed, thinking about how I could make him happy. And when I was sure I could make him happier than he could ever be, I told him yes, I want to be his Forever-Friend." Sherri turned her big eyes to me, brimming with love, "And because he had been thinking about making me happy as well, I'm now happier than I could ever be without him." She kissed me and held me gently. "Do you understand?"

"I-I think so..." Anna looked at us, "It's not enough to SAY you're 'Forever-Friends'... You have to understand..." She shrugged, "Understand lots of things first." She smiled, "I'm sure I'll get it when I'm older!"

Sherri kissed her hair, "You're right - you'll get it if you really want to. Start with what we talked about before - about candies and sharing and not hogging..." Sherri hugged us to her warmly.

Sara came back, alone, "Kelly is being appreciated..." she pulled us up, "We've got an hour before we have to get ready for dinner. Let's go get soaked!"

We went out on the deckboat and, after I did my obligatory spectacular wipeouts, I was allowed to stay behind the wheel. Sara showed us the 360 slide and the other tricks she had been practicing on the wakeboard, then Anna amazed us with her agility and skill on water-skis.

We tied up next to Jewel as Kelly staggered out, "I hate you Brenda!" She yelled at the cabin, a dreamy smile on her face, "If I turn gay, I'll have my butch lover beat you up!" She looked at me, "Your girlfriend is EVIL! EVIL, I tell you!" She giggled, "I'll probably need to change panties each time I wash my face now!"

I invited her to the grand opening of the Marina. "We'll be there! But I gotta run, or Todd will pull out without me! Love you all!" She blew us a kiss and jogged off.

"Guys, come take a look at this!" Brenda stuck her head out. The cabin was full of original and first-run outfits; dresses, pantsuits and gowns. Kelly had also left 2 large cosmetic cases.

As the girls screamed in orgasmic throes over their new wardrobe, Anna sat by my side and gave directions, taking us along the river past the factory.

The river opened out to a large lake, almost 10 miles around. "Lake Deanna, named after my Mom." Anna said quietly.

"Where is she, your Mom?"

"She... went away." Anna looked at me and my heart lurched, her pain was so tangible. "I haven't seen her since I was six." She did not elaborate and I could find nothing to say, I just held her little hand.

We pulled up to the docks next to a large, barn-sized boat house. At the end of the docks and up wide granite stairs was a stone and wood structure, all curves and flowing lines. Quickly I called the girls out.

I pointed, "That's a Frank Lloyd Wright!" To Anna, "Am I correct?" She nodded. Again I found nothing more to say. We just stood and marveled.

A maid came down and escorted the girls up with their outfits while I stayed to clean up. We had a long trip ahead and we had to leave early the next day. Anna helped me with the shore connections and the refueling.

She took my hand and we went up the sweeping steps through a manmade jungle. Living trees were cleverly interspersed with cedar posts to maintain a natural look without allowing the grounds to grow wild. Peat chips on the ground helped retain moisture and reduce weed growth. It was carefully hand-tended while looking completely natural.

We rounded a turn and a garden opened up before us, lush and green and lovely with blooms. The main building loomed above that and the entire lake-facing side was curved glass. Anna urged me up stairs along the side of the building and she showed me the little plaque by the entrance with the 'FLLW' insignia.

The foyer opened to the sunken living room, finished in mahogany and cedar. Oaken stairs swept upwards. Chuck came up and shook my hand.

"I'm overwhelmed, Chuck! I wasn't aware there were any Frank Lloyd Wrights in the State!"

"Except for the State College and one other commercial site, you're right. There are no Wright originals," he warmed to the subject, "This one was designed in 1956 for one of his sons but was never built. He intended it for a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan and it suited this location perfectly! His name for it was 'Spring Vision'." He stopped, "Please forgive me, I tend to ramble on. Anna, please show James the Taupe room." He looked at me, "I took the liberty of placing you and Sherri together." I smiled my thanks and let Anna take me up the stairs.

I turned in the room Anna showed me and she skipped down the hall, "I'm at the end here. The Pink room."

Our room was big and luxurious, with pine and beech post-modern furnishings. The wide windows looked into the garden and the forest beyond.

Sherri stepped out of the ensuite bathroom, toweling her hair, heart-stoppingly naked. She stood and smiled as I gaped my appreciation.

"You are so lovely..." I went before her and gave her a soft kiss. "Remember the first time?" I whispered.

She glowed, "How can I forget? I took you to my bed..." She sat me down, knelt before me, and looked up, "I NEEDED to show you, and to show myself, that I was good enough for you."

She hugged my waist and laid her head on my lap, "I knew I had a lot to learn, but know what? It was nothing like that! I didn't have to learn a thing. Everything with you has been so natural and so RIGHT! You took my life and gave me a new one - one that's so much richer and rewarding. I AM yours, my James, my master." She looked up, "All of me. My heart too..."

She looked back at her hands working on my lap, and sighed, "...and the sucking thing, of course!" She chuckled throatily.

Softly she slipped me out and kissed the tip as her hands moved on my sensitive flesh. Her tongue licked down the sides as her light touch brought my cock to hardness. She paused to kiss my testicles and moved her lips with fluttery kisses back up the shaft, her hands still moving slowing, tantalizingly on me. I sank back on the bed as she slipped me tingling past her lips into the heated wetness of her mouth.

"Hmmm, that's so good..." I breathed. She increased her hand speed as she surrounded the tip with her warmth. She worked her mouth and tongue on me, slipping me deeper as my hips thrust at her mouth. I reached down to pull her head down and she slipped her hand off, allowing me to slide deep into her yielding softness.

With long, deep strokes her mouth and tongue caressed my cock until, with a shuddering gasp, I held her to me and shot, shivered and shot again. She reached under me and hugged me against her lips, her swallowing throat sending waves of pleasure up my spine.

She licked and sucked me until I was withered and clean and pulled me up. With a soft smile she leaned to peck me and stroke my cheek, "I love you... Now let me get ready. I want to be beautiful - for you."

Chapter 46

Chuck poured us a Cabernet and we stood at the wide picture windows, "It's hard to believe I'm standing in a Frank Lloyd Wright home."

"Unfortunately, there're only about 200 of these remaining!" He shook his head, "The greatest architect of all times, and they tore down over a hundred of his originals!" After a pause, "You know something about Wright too, why is that?"

"I live in a house designed and built by his contemporary, Bertram Mueller. In fact they worked together on the Guggenheim Project." I waved my hand up at the swooping ceiling lines. "Mueller holds the patent on a number of design innovations dealing with circular building elements and may have influenced Wright with the rotunda structure, but we'll never know for sure."

I turned, "Chuck, in 2 weeks, we are officially unveiling the world's first Mueller designed 'Wheel' building. His widow will be guest of honor and I'd like to invite you as my guest to be part of the festivities." He nodded quickly.

"Furthermore, it will be used as the showroom of our Marina and it would mean very much to me if you would let us represent your products." He nodded again.

"Finally, the young lady who is instrumental in the construction of our Mueller structure will do me serious physical damage if I cannot beg an invitation for her to see your beautiful house."

Chuck laughed, "That's easy to arrange - especially if she is anything like present company!"

"Celeste would be thrilled, she is passionate about architecture..."

"Did we hear someone mentioning our sister?"

We turned and basked in stunned silence at the lovely visions the ladies afforded. Brenda was in a chiffon skirt and loose top, while Sara was in a slinky blue thing that was tight EVERYWHERE. Sherri's pastel flowing outfit was frustratingly opaque but there was no doubt everything underneath was nakedly hers.

Chuck and I shared a low appreciative whistle.

They presented Anna in a beige minidress. She had the tiniest bit of makeup on and it was obvious she knew how good she looked. She glowed and walked with a proud swagger into the room. While the others looked glamorous and exotic, Anna's look CHALLENGED you to do something about it.

"Sweet Jesus!" I heard Chuck murmur under his breath.

Sherri glided over and kissed me, "What do you think of our gorgeous young lady?"

"Just amazing! Anna, you are absolutely mind-blowing!" She smiled and glinted.

"Anna, you know what I said about makeup?" Chuck suddenly said. Anna's smile melted and she looked at Sherri.

"Chuck, I'd like to ask for your indulgence, if I may." Sherri said.

"No, my granddaughter is my responsibility..."

"I'm not about to dispute that, but all I ask is for you to give full consideration to what I'm going to say next, alright?"

"Go ahead." He growled.

"What I want to say is, Chuck, your granddaughter is not wearing any makeup except lipstick."

"So...?"

"So, Anna comes down and you see this wonderful, lovely and confident young lady and you automatically assumed it is the result of the makeup. Think, man, it is not a trick, Anna IS a wonderful, lovely and confident young lady!"

"Well..." Chuck allowed.

"Chuck, to be honest, the lipstick? It's more for Anna." Sherri turned, "It's true, Anna. We fussed over you until you KNEW you must be gorgeous, right? So, guess what, you fooled yourself - you even fooled your grandfather!" Sherri smiled. "Chuck, let's do this. Anna will go wash her face and, when she returns, you tell me if you can see any difference..."

"That's fair..."

"Anna, remember, you ARE who you are, even without the lipstick. You've proved it." We watched as she turned happily and went upstairs.

"I'll be shot down in flames when she comes back, won't I?" Chuck said quietly.

"You'll be pleasantly surprised, let's put it that way..."

He sighed, "I've been dreading this day, since..." He took a breath, "You should know about Deanna, Anna's mother." Another breath, then, "Deanna was... smart, outgoing, and pretty." He pointed to a picture of a teenager on the mantle. "She was seventeen when she had Anna. Still in school, unmarried..." He sighed, remembering, "We had words... And I said some things I shouldn't have - a lot of things I shouldn't have..." Brenda went and took his hand and smiled encouragement.

"Did I mention she was very proud too? Well, a year later, she left, taking Anna with her." He shook his head, "But I couldn't let go, so I had her tracked down and forced her to give up Anna. I realize now - I did it out of spite, out of hate. She took my baby so I had to take hers. She took my happiness..." He buried his face in his hands and was shaking as Brenda put her arm across his shoulder. "The first few years, she'd come by to see Anna, and then..." He choked into his palms.

"And now you're afraid of history repeating itself?"

Chuck looked up, "Yes, partially. You know me Sara, I'm not an easy person to live with - all morning I've been wanting to strangle you... when I wasn't wishing fervently I had a daughter like you..."

Sara smiled, "Likewise, Chuck - only I was leaning towards strangling MOST of the time." She blinked, "I think I can relate with your concerns, Anna is fast reaching the point in her life where you feel helpless, where you've made mistakes before."

She waited, and when Chuck said nothing, she continued, "Without sounding too trite, I'm happy with the way I'm handling life. I can face each challenge because I have a weapon - and this has everything to do with you and Anna." A deep breath. "That weapon is confidence. Confidence to try things, confidence to finish things, and confidence to face failures..."

She sighed, "Chuck, but this was not always mine. I had to find it, to learn it." She took my hand, "And this man showed me. He made it happen by being my support... He never yelled, never pushed - but he was always there. I'd be flat on my face after a stupid mistake and he'd say, 'You have a gorgeous butt, you know?' and help me up." She smiled at me, "With James, you never fail, you're just getting there." She smiled dreamily and kissed my hand. "So, Chuck, just be her support. Don't intrude, don't be too quick either with your help, and don't give up because she isn't as appreciative as you'd hoped. She has to try, and sometimes fail, in order to succeed. Give her that confidence Chuck." She finished quietly.

Anna returned, flushed and excited. And radiant. The 'Come Hither' look was all over her.

"Saucy..." I muttered under my breath.

Sherri kissed my ear, "Plus all your other favorite 'S' words as well!"

Chuck sighed, "Anna, I was wrong. You are without doubt a most wonderful and lovely young lady... Just amazing!" He stood and kissed her hand. "I am charmed to make your acquaintance, m'lady!"

Anna blushed, giggled and made a curtsy, "Thank you M'Lord Grandpa!"

"Shall we?" He offered his arm to Anna and, turning to us, "Dinner is served," he announced.

The dining room was on a raised dais at the other end of the open area. Anna was absolutely thrilled when Chuck pulled out the chair at the foot of the table and seated her.

We started with salad and consommé, then white asparagus flown in from Germany, lightly steamed and buttered, sprinkled with prociutto ham bits. They were the ideal, prime size of 5 oz each, the size of large cigars, pure white, succulent and perfectly textured.

A lemon sorbet followed and then the entree: Cornish Hen and Rack of Lamb, with baby potatoes and Rice Pilaf. The maid hovered behind to clear plates and refill glasses.

We had dessert of fresh fruit and pastries and they waited patiently as I tried to finish everything. Finally Sherri took my hand and we returned to the living room, sipping our coffee and watching the birds return to their nests as the sun sank into the marshes.

Anna had been inseparable from Sherri and now leaned on her, holding her hand.

"It's been a long time since we've had young people like you in this house," Chuck said quietly, "And even longer since we had the joy you have brought. Thank you." He looked at us, "I want you to know that this door is always open for you. And I hope that you return often, if not for my sake, then for Anna's." Anna was smiling delightedly.

"Thank you, Chuck. It has been a very rewarding experience for us as well." I said, "And I can guarantee at least one of us will be here every month - so you'll have ample chances to regret your invitation!" I turned, "And Anna, we've invited Chuck to the Marina in two weeks' time, I would be very honored if you could be there as well."

"Oh, could I?"

"Of course, Anna, young ladies are expected to go see the world and experience life." Chuck said solemnly, then he stared at the sky outside and said, "I have some music that I'd like to share with you. It was my wife Helene's favorite. She'd play it at her favorite time of the day - at sunset..."

He returned to the sofa as the music started.

Suddenly Sherri said softly, "Anna, would you like me to tell you a story?" and aside to Chuck, "The story just popped in my head the first time I heard this piece - Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Symphony. And I made up the words to go along with the music." She smiled, "If I do it right, my story and the music should finish at the same time. And it sort of goes with the occasion as well."

Sherri relaxed on my arm, eased Anna on her lap and began.

"Once upon a time, in a lovely valley full of blossoms, there lived a beautiful little bird named Anna-bird. She lived in a little house surrounded by beautiful flowers that had yummy nectar to eat and she would wake up every morning and she would sing to Mr Sun, and Mr Sun would smile and shine brighter, making it warm and lovely..."

"One day, as Anna-bird was flying in a new part of the valley, she saw a rainbow. She had never seen a rainbow before because it only ever rained in the nighttime in the valley. She flew closer and saw a huge waterfall that was making the beautiful colors, but the noise was so loud she was scared away. But Anna-bird could not forget the sight of the rainbow and, even though Mr Sun urged her to stay away, she kept flying back to look at the wonderful colors.

"Then one day, she flew too close to the waterfall, and before she knew it, she was caught by the force of the water and she was pulled almost to the river below before she could free herself. By then she was terribly tired and could not fly back up the fall, but the sides of the river were sheer and steep and she could find no place to rest. So Anna-bird followed the river and kept flying and flying and it got darker and darker. She tried calling for Mr Sun but he was too far away and could not hear her. Pretty soon she could not see him any more. More than once, she thought of just dropping into the water and going to sleep, but no, she said to herself, I will be strong, I will not give up!

"Then she smelled something, something different. It wasn't flowers and it wasn't water, so she flew towards it and finally she saw a patch of land and she had barely made it there before she collapsed..."

"Anna-bird woke to a wonderful taste in her mouth. She opened her eyes and the most handsome bird was feeding her the delicious food." Sherri smiled and squeezed my hand.

"She found out that his name was James-bird and he was feeding her fish he had been catching in the river when he found her. James-bird lived in a small meadow and caught fish for a living. He had never seen anybody as beautiful as Anna-bird and he fell in love with her right away." She smiled down at Anna and stroked her face.

"James-bird took care of Anna-bird and soon she was able to join him and fly over the meadow to where the tall trees grew. She learned to dive into the water and catch fish and she started to smile and sing her song again.

"But Anna-bird was still very homesick for her Valley of Blossoms and could not wait to be strong enough to return home. She tried to tell James-bird about it but he'd only seen grass before and did not know how lovely the flowers were. He didn't want Anna-bird to leave, but to stay with him forever in the meadow.

"But Anna-bird was very determined to find her way home. So as soon as she was strong enough, she left James-bird a note to thank him and to say goodbye before flying back up the river.

"She reached the waterfall and she knew she had to fly straight up before she got caught in the water so she flapped and flapped her wings, going as high as she could. Higher and higher she flew but just as she thought she could smell flowers, there was a huge lightning bolt, followed by a big BOOM of thunder. Anna-bird had arrived in the middle of the night and a storm was blowing. The lightning flashed and the thunder roared and Anna-bird was never more scared.

"Suddenly she heard someone calling in the wind and it sounded like, 'Anna-bird, Anna-bird, where are you?' Then she heard it again, closer, 'Anna-bird, Anna-bird, where are you?' It was James-bird, he had read her note and decided to follow her. He was scared by the storm too but he was determined to save his beloved Anna-bird.

"'I'm here!' Anna-bird cried out, so glad that he had found her. 'Oh! James-bird, I'm here!' He flew up to her and they were so happy to see each other, they were not afraid of the dark or the storm anymore.

"'Fly higher!' James-bird said, 'Higher!' And soon they flew over the storm clouds and they could see Mr Sun just starting to light up the sky and chase the rain away. Slowly the land grew bright and cheerful again. They circled to the ground and James-bird was amazed, 'So this is a flower, smells so sweet, and the nectar tastes so good! And it is so beautiful, almost half as beautiful as you!'

"'Oh, James-bird,' Cried Anna-Bird, 'I'm so glad you came and found me, now we can stay here and live happily ever after! And I'll never leave again because I'm home...'" Sherri blinked her tears and whispered, "'And I've found my Forever-Friend...'" she took a shaky breath, "The End!", just as the music finished.

"Ooh, that was just wonderful!" Anna sighed. "I'm sorry I made your dress all wet!"

"That's perfectly all right." Sherri said softly, "I'm glad you like the story..."

"Thank you. For the beautiful story, and for sharing James-bird with me." She sat up and looked around, "I think I will go to bed now... Goodnight everybody." She stood and kissed Sherri on the cheek. "I will think about your story tonight." She kissed Chuck and left.

As we watched her go up the stairs Chuck said, "Yes, Sherri, thank you for giving life to that music. I will treasure it as well."

We watched the sun set in silence, then Chuck turned to Brenda, who had stayed beside him, "You mentioned that Celeste is your sister, is she..."

Brenda laughed, "No, she's not really my sister, but we - " She waved her hand about, "Celeste, Sara, Sherri and James, all of us who work for JamPC share many of the same goals - not the least is to better ourselves and maximize our potentials." She shrugged, "And be nice people."

"But how do you juggle your work? You have a marina, you model, you consult and... what else?"

"Oh, we study too, but that's about it. We're busy but it keeps us motivated."

"You certainly are... And your intelligence and insight has me dumbfounded."

"Well, thank you," Brenda laughed, "We like to learn and do things. And as Sara said, we have strong support from each other."

I rose, "Chuck, please excuse us - we have a long trip ahead and we have to get up early in the morning. Thank you very much for your hospitality."

"And if you'll excuse me as well, Chuck," Brenda added, "I'd like to see them off tomorrow."

We went up the stairs and behind us, 'Pastoral' started up again.

Sara turned into her room and pulled Brenda in with her, "I'm still the boy...". They blew us a kiss and closed the door behind them.

Anna stuck her head out and waved us to her room.

She looked at us, "I-I just want to say goodbye if I don't see you tomorrow..."

Sherri smiled, "That's very nice of you." She took her hand, "Why don't you climb into bed and James and I will tuck you in... After all, we still have you as our daughter until midnight..." Her voice caught in her throat and she held my hand as we waited for Anna to slip into bed.

Sherri knelt down, "Anna, remember, we're friends. Whenever you need us, we're just a phone call away. And Brenda will be here - and she's our Forever-Friend, that means anything you want to say to us, you can say to her too. And you can use our secret code..." Sherri took Anna's hand, kissed the palm and leaned her face into it. "This means you want to talk to her as a Forever-Friend and she will understand..."

"Like this?" Anna repeated the gesture, tightly holding Sherri's hand against her cheek. "Thank you... for everything." Anna smiled sadly, "Goodnight..."

"Goodnight, sleep tight, my Anna-bird."

(To be Continued)

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