

James

A Novel by MikeC
Chapters 47-57

(C) Copyright 2001-2003. MikeC.
All Rights Reserved.
All Reproduction for fee or profit forbidden.

Send all comments and suggestions to MikeC@NSpace.net

Copies of this and other stories can be downloaded from:
<<http://www.asstr.org/files/Authors/MikeC/>>

It should be pointed out here that many of the 'side stories'; Jules01, Brenda01-03 and Nighthawk's inimitable Kelly series all occur around this same storyline period. If you haven't yet, this is a good time to download and read them from the ASSTR website listed above.

Part VIII. Lofty Goals

Chapter 47

We boarded Jewel in the cool of the early dawn. Brenda was there to kiss us goodbye and, while she was picking out more dresses, had a quick update from Sherri about Anna and the 'Forever-Friend' scenario.

I held Brenda's hand and kissed her goodbye. She looked at me, softly, "James..." I nodded and we shared a little smile.

Chuck came down and shook our hands, "Thank you for all you have done for us. I will re-extend my open door invitation - anytime you or anyone from your group wishes to visit, they would be most welcome... And if there's anything I can do, just ask..." He held out a box for me, "And this is a small token of my appreciation." Inside were a dozen of the beautiful white asparagus stalks we had for dinner. My mouth watered.

"Thank you Chuck, and also know that anytime you or Anna wish to visit us, you would be more than welcome." I said with feeling.

Chuck helped Brenda with her extra clothes up the stairs and stood there waving until we cleared the bend.

Once out in the main river, Sara came out with a coffee and a kiss. Then she disappeared down below with Sherri. Their heartfelt cries of glee and pleasure serenaded the peaceful shores as we coasted down the canals but soon it became peaceful again and a quick check showed them fast asleep, curled up against each other.

I followed the canal then turned up the side channel and once more stopped at the showroom where Rhianna worked.

I found her at the back, inspecting a 55-footer about to be shipped out.

"Rhianna?" I shook her hand, "I'm James Mitchell..."

"I remember, Max's Marina." She stopped, "How was your visit?"

"It went very well... Can we go somewhere and talk?"

We went to her office and she fetched us coffees and croissants.

"I want to say up front that anything we say here will not go any further without your say so." She shrugged.

"You're Deanna Regan, aren't you?" And when she said nothing, "I saw your picture in the house. And you haven't changed that much in ten years..."

"So? I changed my name because I don't want to be a Regan anymore. And if you think you can talk me into..."

"No - I'm not trying to talk you into anything. I just want to tell you that you have a very lovely daughter..."

"She's not my daughter... anymore..." She looked away and sighed.

"She has never forgotten you - she knows to the day how long you've been away." Her eyes suddenly filled and she bit her lip. "The first things Anna said about you were, 'Lake Deanna, named after my Mom.' and 'I haven't seen her since I was six.'"

I waited until she dabbed her eyes and blew her nose. "You may not be aware of it, but you very much have a daughter..." I sighed, "And for what it's worth, Chuck regrets deeply the pain he's caused you." I held up a hand as she looked up at me, "No, he doesn't know you're here, or that I'm even aware of your whereabouts."

"What do you want me to do?" She murmured.

"Nothing - it's entirely up to you. I just want you to know that Anna's fine although she misses you. That must've been the reason you stayed here all this time - so you can be close to her..." She covered her face with her hands.

I sighed, "She really is a lovely young lady and despite what happened between you and your father, he's been treating Anna well, and obviously loves her."

"A lot has happened since then and... I'm not unhappy." She looked at me, softly, "I've come to realize that really, I should bear at least some of the blame for what happened. I was stupid and proud... a terrible combination. And yes, I stayed because I want to be close to them." Her eyes swam again, "Both of them." she whispered and dabbed her eyes.

We looked up at the knock on the door. The girls were looking through the glass at us. Sherri came dashing in and stared at her. "You're Deanna!" Then she hugged her. "I have to tell you what an amazing person Anna is! She's so smart and pretty like you!"

I made the introductions and we went over the previous evening.

"He even played the Beethoven for you? He must think very highly of you..." Deanna sighed dreamily, "Helene was his strength, his life... After she died, he was devastated and he became different... hard..." She sighed. "I was fifteen, and..." We waited, but she said nothing more.

Sara nodded sympathetically, "I can empathize - I spent yesterday morning with Chuck and I seriously considered throwing him off the boat. Twice." They shared a sad smile.

"Listen, Deanna, you've waited 4 years, there's time for you to think it over and decide what you want to do." I said, "Brenda, who was here the other day, is with them and I can promise you, she'll look after Anna for you."

"There's another thing..." Deanna looked up, "I'm married now... and I... I haven't told my husband about Anna, or Regan Boats..." She looked at us, and waved her hand, "He... WE own this operation. Do you understand?"

Slowly I nodded, absorbing the revelation. "Hmmm, right - but there's really no rush to decide on anything. Do what you feel is right for everyone. Anna is happy enough - just give her the closure she needs." I took her hand, "In fact, you shouldn't be hasty about this..." She nodded and buried her face in her hands as we took our leave.

The girls leaned on me as we followed the canal out to sea, each of us preoccupied with our own thoughts. I called Brenda and quickly updated her on the situation.

"Don't talk to Anna or Chuck until Deanna has a chance to think things through. I don't think a mother-daughter reunion is too likely..." I sighed.

Brenda had been seconded by the computer simulations people and was working with them on the wave modeling software, then she would be spending time with the dynamics group as they performed measurements on scale models. Many of the staff had volunteered to continue her intensive training in computers and hydrodynamics over the weekend. Then she had promised to spend time with Anna.

"A girl could get used to this kind of attention!" She giggled, "It's not easy being so popular!"

I called Max and he located Celeste for me, "Hi honey!" she said excitedly, "The exterior's done, right on schedule!"

I told her about our delay, "We're just starting out so we may not get there until mid-afternoon."

"Don't worry, I'll go pick up Nicole if you can't. I have an appointment in town for tomorrow; the TV station needs the videos Jules took overflying the building." She giggled, "They're doing a special on the Mueller Building! And me!"

The interest after the local station broadcast the lead had led to the Regional affiliate picking up the story and they would be taping a 60 minute special on the unique building and its even more unique designer.

I took us 20 miles out to sea, explaining to the girls that it would permit us to take full advantage of the 12mph current, allowing us to sail directly to The Eyrie in 5 hours and bypassing the filthy harbor completely.

"Oh, we won't be going by Brookhaven then!" Sherri said, disappointed, "I like the people there!"

"And we won't have time for more fishing!" Sara added. She spelled me at the helm and I cooked the asparagus for a midmorning snack, deliciously drenched in butter.

"Ultralight MiniMax to private vessel Jewel. Ultralight MiniMax to private vessel Jewel. Over!"

We stared at the UHF.

"Ultralight MiniMax to private vessel Jewel. Ultralight MiniMax to private vessel Jewel. Come in! Over!"

Sherri grabbed the mike and I pointed to the push-to-talk button. "Private vessel Jewel to ultralight MiniMax. Over!" She excitedly replied.

"Go channel 17... I say again one-seven! Over!"

"Confirm it, then switch." I told her.

"OK... Er, 17. Gotcha... I mean... We copy, over!" I helped her change the channel to 17, the local communications channel.

"How are you kids? Over!" Amanda giggled over the set.

"We're GREAT! How are you sweetheart?" Sherri yelled, "Over!" She added.

"We're good! We're FLYING!" Amanda said excitedly, "Say your 20, I repeat say your 20. Over!" Amanda shouted over the speaker.

I replied with our position and added, "35 mph effective, heading 012. Over"

"That's a four, lover!" Amanda repeated the numbers back, then, "Maintain present heading, ETA..." a pause, "17 minutes. Over and out!"

"See you!" Sherri laughed, "Jewel out!" she giggled as she replaced the mike, "This is way cool, it's so like the movies!" I took the chance to show them the guard channel on the VHF set so that we could monitor emergency broadcasts as well as our own private communications.

"C'mon, let's go look for the plane!" Sara dragged Sherri to the front deck.

What was just a small speck on the horizon grew rapidly as we watched. The amphibian was a gleaming white with red accent stripes along its graceful lines as it soared majestically over us, its small engine mounted above and behind the wings buzzing sedately. Once astern of us, it executed a looping turn and followed us, slowing as it deployed its flaps. It floated alongside as Jules grinned and gave the thumbs up to the girls jumping and screaming from the fore deck. The plane was about the same length as the boat and its smooth lines spoke of agility and speed.

With a small splash MiniMax kissed the water and settled to coast alongside us as we matched speeds. Jules slid the cockpit canopy back and tossed us a line which I made fast to the side.

Amanda scrambled into Jewel and I feasted on the sight of her in her aviator shades and two little pieces of bikini - long and lean and unspeakably sexy. "You look real good." I murmured.

"Did you like my landing!" She beamed at us as I handed JulieAnn over. "Jules says I'll be ready to solo with a couple more flights." She leaned on me as Jules was greeted exuberantly by the others. "You really think I'm sexy?"

"Yes honey. I hope you haven't been showing up at Harry's like this!"

Amanda glowed, "This is all for you!" she kissed me softly, "Celeste called and said you were a little late so we figured Jules can fly you back to the Marina. And we can have time for some fishing!" She turned to the others and they started talking excitedly as Amanda showed them around the little plane.

I took Jules' hand, "How've you been?" I stroke her soft blond hair as we kissed. She was in a white tube top and little shorts and I checked to make sure every part of her was tanned and smooth.

"Mmmm, things are going well. Celeste has been more human now that the exterior work is done." She dimpled, "Actually we've all been so busy we don't see each other more than a couple of hours a day." She hugged Amanda, "And my sweetheart here has been just wonderful. Harry's been busier than he's ever been and he's already thinking of expanding."

Jules showed us the basic steps in flight preparation, starting with the walkaround to make sure things look and feel right on the plane before boarding. Although MiniMax was longer than Jewel in overall length, the actual cabin was only 9 feet long and not even 4 feet wide. It had side-by-side seating for 2 plus a small jump-seat bolted on the bulkhead in the baggage space behind. I climbed in the co-pilot seat and Jules fit lightweight headphones on us. We cast off and Jewel pulled away, heading for a sunken wreck about ten miles ahead.

"And James," Jules voice cut in over the intercom, "There's no potty on board, so you'll have to hold it or use a barf bag." She showed me where a supply was under my seat. "And there will be NO meals served!" she laughed.

The controls were simple, foot pedals to turn the rudders - one for flight and a smaller one for in-water navigation, which also worked the brakes on land; a simple throttle and a control stick to control up, down and banking to the sides. Each seat had its own individual set of controls.

Jules started the engine and turned us with the current, advancing the throttle as she did. Quickly the craft picked up speed and leapt up into the air with the second swell it crested. Jules showed me the angle-of-climb, or attitude, indicator as she reduced the flaps and throttled back a bit to optimize our climb rate at 800 feet per minute. At 500 feet asl, or above-sea-level, she adjusted the engine mixture for efficiency and trimmed the plane for level flight. We were traveling at almost 90mph as we made a lazy circle over Jewel to head back towards the lake.

The plane had a small screen GPS as well as a marine radio with Emergency Weather channels. We would not be landing at airports so there was no need for an aviation radio, although there was an emergency receiver on board for both frequencies.

From this height, Jewel was a little toy boat in a vast glittering blue ocean. The girls were barely discernable as they waved up to us. We could see the earth curve around us, the land, sky and clouds merging into the hazy distance.

"There is a simple way to estimate distance to the horizon." Jules said, "Take the square root of our height in feet and multiply by 1.2 to get the miles to the horizon. We're at 500 now, so the horizon is about 23 times 1.2, or about 27 miles away. At the maximum operating height for this plane of 18000 feet, we get to see 165 miles all around us." She paused, "There is breathable oxygen, but the temperature is minus 35." She knocked on the thin canopy, "We'd freeze in about 2 minutes..."

I had a chance to try out the controls next and Jules walked me through some gentle turns using only the pedals and I practiced taking the little craft to different altitudes with the 'stick' or yoke. Once I got the hang of the response delays and the coordination between rudder and ailerons, I managed quite well.

As we angled towards shore, the extent of the area affected by the dying seaweed became obvious. Huge swirls of green and brown refuse were clogging the channels and harbors. Jules held my hand as I took us up to 800 feet and watched the blight pass under us.

We followed the shoreline and the feeling of total freedom was exhilarating. It was easy to understand Icarus' fatal flight to the sun - there was an inner need to fly higher and encompass the world.

At 4200 feet, we were kissing the lower fringes of the clouds and far below us, the roads and the land were reduced to lines and patterns; the tallest buildings, the largest mansions, were

mere specks. We could almost see the Lake in the far hazy distance. The view and the god-like power was addictive.

"You're loving this aren't you!" Jules whispered over the steady drone.

"Yeah, it's like one HUGE power trip! The control, and the freedom!" I waggled the stick and grinned. We found an opening in the clouds and soared up.

Jules watched the spinning altimeter, then she announced, "This is the unassailable territory of all true aviators!" she looked at me and smiled, "Welcome to the Mile-High club!" as she removed our seatbelts and loosened my shorts.

She gave me a warm kiss as she tenderly took my cock out, running her fingers on me, smiling as she watched her soft touch bring me to hardness. With a happy moan she draped herself over my lap and kissed me, adding her tongue as I sighed and caressed her soft hair.

She looked up, "You won't crash us and you WILL keep an eye out for other planes, right?" she lapped me, "I KNOW you'll tell me if I'm doing a good enough job or not!" as she turned her attentions back to my now throbbing shaft. I sighed my gratitude to the designers of the plane, the narrow cockpit allowed Jules to use both her hands as well as her mouth and lips.

There was only time for her to sink her mouth on me a dozen times when I erupted into her. Again and again, to the most blissful agony, I emptied myself deep into her churning throat as she milked my balls of their load.

She untangled my fingers from her hair as she cleaned me with soft kisses and licks, as I resolutely kept an eye on the Artificial Horizon, gasping and trembling with the force of my explosion.

Jules tucked me away and sat back, fumbling out of her shorts. She guided my hand on her very wet crotch, then she took my finger into her mouth for a generous dollop of my fluid and joined me in drawing hearts on the dashboard.

"Ahhh!" Jules breathed as I returned my hand to her warm cunt. "You have the conn, Mr Mitchell, take her outta here!" And so I did, accompanied by her lusty screams and gurgling. Cautiously I adjusted us so I could lean down and taste her sweet cunt. With a moan Jules wrapped a leg around me and grabbed my hair, squealing delightedly and grinding herself on my face.

"Mmm, you're such a gifted cunt nuzzler!" Jules sighed as she finally let me retrieve my tongue, "I come all the time - even when you don't touch me in the proper places!"

"Maybe that's why!" I croaked as I gingerly felt my neck for dislocation.

She leaned over and kissed me softly. "I love you James, you ARE the best lover a girl can have!" she leaned on my chest and said dreamily, "Amanda had a theory that because of the lower atmospheric pressure at this height, there's more force when you come, and so it's more enjoyable. Is she right?" She smiled up at my vigorous nods.

She buckled us back in and spoke into her microphone, "Come in Jewel, Come in!"

"Jewel here," Amanda's excited voice crackled over the set, "How'd it go?"

"Real well!" Jules grinned at me and winked, "The experiment went according to plan - with maybe better than anticipated results!"

"Oh goodie, we'll know what to expect next time!" Amanda giggled, "Jewel out!"

"Did she say what I think she said?"

Jules nodded, "You have to do it with everyone who gets a license." she dimpled enchantingly. "And since I'm the designated instructor, I can pretty much assure you it'll be everybody!"

"Why don't you just let me crash? You're gonna kill me either way!"

"Oh...? But I'm glad you mentioned that," she grinned, "Looks like you're ready for your next lesson!" Without waiting for my answer she reached out and turned the engine off. The sudden silence was eerie and little plane seemed to hang there, as if waiting for me to start screaming before plummeting down. Jules cinched her seat belt tighter and watched me.

I tried not to stare at the earth rushing towards us, "Honey, is slamming into the ground part of this lesson too?"

JulieAnn smiled, "There are times when you have to implicitly trust the instruments, and this is one of the most critical ones. Our attitude is -30 degrees, bad, but not as bad as your brain tells you. But our speed is climbing too high - the wings are only designed to take 180mph so first thing is to pull us up, GENTLY!" She waited as I slowly leveled the plane according to the instruments.

"OK, hand lightly on the stick and feel for it. As the air-speed drops, the surfaces will start to flutter, just before they lose control. The key is to angle the plane by using the stick or, if we're high enough, to use the trim to tip the nose down JUST ENOUGH to maintain the minimum speed you need for control - that's the bottom of the green band on the airspeed indicator, or around 65mph." She watched me and, apparently satisfied, continued, "Power outs are a major concern for single engine aircraft so proper reaction and recovery is crucial." She looked at my performance for a few minutes, "In case you think it's just a trick, remember there is a chance the engine will NOT re-start! So as you stretch your glide path, start looking for a good landing spot. Keep an eye out for signs of an updraft - usually it's a lake or a rise in the land. On the ocean, look for dark bands of water. Thunder-storms are notorious for them too, but I wouldn't advise flying near one."

Once over the initial fear of falling from a mile up and the strangeness of flying without power, there was a special tranquility as we sat and listened to the wind whispering outside the cockpit.

"This is nice too," I sighed, "We're more bird than airplane." I felt the sudden tilt of the plane as we hit a small updraft and quickly turned both wings into the lift and rode it, not unlike a rickety elevator, gaining about 200 feet of the 1000 feet we lost during our lesson.

"OK, time to find out if this is a real emergency or not!" Jules laughed as we leveled off and she reached for the ignition switch. Fortunately, the little 4-stroke fired immediately and we turned back on course. "I was watching the temperature gages here," she pointed, "CHT is the Cylinder Head Temp and it should be above 200 for easy restarts.

"The Exhaust Gas Temperature gage, or EGT, allows me to correct the gas mixture. Too rich, I waste gas and foul the plugs. Too lean, I get overheating in the cylinders." She talked me through the adjustments as we coasted back down to 400ft - the cabin was becoming quite chilly at the higher altitudes and the view was much more interesting closer to the ground.

I looked around the boundless sky and sighed. Jules smiled, "That's what we felt too - even after the PPC, this was amazing. And the guys I teach at Harry's get all wide eyed at this."

"Are you sure it's not because of what you're wearing, or NOT wearing?"

"Could be!" She laughed with me, "At least at the start that would be the reason." and confidentially, "You know how turned on it gets me with all those guys coming on to me?" she sighed and gripped my knee, "Then Mandie and I have to sneak off and pretend you're there with us..."

"Was I any good?"

"Um-hmmm! The darling girl sure is hot..." she sighed, "I think Celeste got a little scared of us, the way we attacked her every night!" she giggled. "What about you, did you have a good time?"

I grinned and started telling her about the trip.

She stopped me after I told her about Brookhaven. "I'm glad you told me about the reaction to the boats; with that kind of reception, once the new models come out their shares may well start strengthening again." She hmmm'd and bit her lip, "We'll have to speed up our program and pick up as much as we can, we can either cash in when it's stronger or... maybe we can short it and get a big enough block to put Nicole on the board." She grinned, "Although that should be no problem. The industry trend is to put high visibility members on the board, and Nicole is EXTREMELY visible! But we'll definitely need the confidence votes once they realize she intends to DO things while she's there!"

Within an hour, we turned inland to follow the river. Jules laughed, "Harry calls this ifr, lower case, which, instead of meaning Instrument Flight Reference, which we definitely don't have, means 'I Follow Rivers' because they are such useful landmarks. Following rivers also helps avoid the number one killer of ultralight pilots - tangling with power lines. Most of the light poles are about 50 feet off the ground, but the high-voltage grids are 200-300 feet high. A critical point to remember! We'll have to watch for bridges, though!" she laughed.

"Can we fly to pick Nicole up?"

"No - the plane needs to be FAA certified for flights in and out of airports. And we're supposed to stay a thousand feet from any commercial flight paths. Given how closely we're skirting the legalities here, I think it's best we avoid being noticed."

Less than 2 hours after we took off from Jewel, we were already approaching the dam and the lake - MiniMax had saved 4 or more hours of sailing time. We got down to 150 feet as we flew over the lake and she showed me how to zero the altimeter to account for the increased elevation. The marina looked completely different from the air and the Wheel was easily visible. Its smooth curves seemed to flow out of the rugged terrain but exuded a warmth, like a smile in an empty room.

Celeste had added a second storey of offices over the front of the existing building leading out to a patio covering the wheel, with a wooden mosaic that clearly spelt 'MAX' from the air. At our approach, Celeste came out on it and waved to us. Jules slid the canopy back and we grinned back and blew her kisses. Then we turned to the mouth of the small bay, skimming over the water's surface.

"Eyeball the landing site to make sure it's clear of boats and debris!" She yelled over the wind noise. A mile down, we made a 180 and Jules added flaps as she went off the throttle. MiniMax sank sluggishly until with a light splash she settled in the water at a docile 30 mph.

We taxied up to the marina and Jules smiled, "This part is why it's called an amphibian!" She reached forward and pulled a ratchet back, "The bar lowers the wheels, and..." she applied some throttle and the little plane rolled up the ramp to the parking lot. By modulating the pressure on the foot brakes, we maneuvered the plane into a parking spot freshly marked out in yellow paint.

Jules powered down and I took her hand, "Thank you Jules, it was an amazing experience."

She twinkled, "Oh, the blowjob wasn't THAT good, and I should thank you for MY amazing experience as well!" She smiled and kissed me softly.

I held her hand and we looked out at the incredible sight of the Wheel. It sat 12 feet above the lot and reached out almost 30 feet over the water. Its gleaming side panels absorbed our attention as they reached skyward. It was exciting, it was powerful, and it was a breathtaking reminder that this was home.

Chapter 48

I helped Jules tie MiniMax down using small hooks set into the asphalt and Celeste hurried up to us. I kissed her, then I turned her and hugged her to me as we looked at the Wheel. "Do you know how much I admire your wonderful building? And how much I admire you?" I nuzzled her neck.

"Dammit James, I had all this bitching saved up and now I can't anymore!" Celeste sighed, "I was gonna yell at you for leaving me with your two immature girlfriends..." she whispered, "They wore me out by making me come all night!" Jules giggled and kissed her.

"C'mon!" Celeste took our hands and we went up the stairs and inside. Max and Marjorie were there showing a small group of their friends around. All the walls were in place, just waiting for the floors and lights and power to be installed and a couple of coats of paint. The entire outside wall was made of transparent Lexan sheeting, providing an unobstructed view of the lake and the little bay.

"This is so wonderful, James!" Marjorie took my hand, "I cannot imagine Bert doing a better job." She placed her arm around Celeste, "And this darling girl has made it all happen." She turned to Celeste, "You have the eternal and heartfelt thanks of a very happy old lady!"

"Which old lady are you referring to?" I smiled, "I see three very lovely YOUNG ladies here..."

"Oh go on! You sweet talker!" Marjorie smiled happily and blushed as Max took her hand. We excused ourselves and they turned back to their group.

"Max and Marjorie had been inseparable since the first day." Celeste giggled, "We call them M&M 'cos they're so sweet together!" as she took us up the metal spiral staircase built around the center pillar which led up to the offices and patio.

"That's Brenda's office," Celeste pointed to a large room, then she showed me two smaller adjoining offices, "This is where her fawning lackeys sit." She smiled and pinched my ass.

A large staff room took up half of the structure. Four desks, each with its own desktop computer, lined one side while a kitchenette with a large L-shaped eating counter occupied the opposite side, along with a large dining table with a dozen chairs. There were 2 couches along the wall with the walk out to the deck.

Celeste took me to the computers, "The DSL guy said it's up and running but he wouldn't connect the network." she squeezed my hand and giggled, "Unless I went out with him..." She looked at me, "He was kinda cute too!"

"And I saved your precious girlfriend's virtue," Jules smirked.

Celeste laughed, "We got him to hook up one computer and Jules figured out the router and connected the others."

"Actually I only did half - they've all got the Internet, but they can't share files or the printers yet." Jules said apologetically.

I showed them the simple trick to enable sharing on the computers and finished installing the laser and Celeste's poster-format color printer by her drafting table.

"We'll also need to hook up the offices and the laptops as well." Celeste added.

"Hmmm, the router only has 4 ports, so we'll have to add another hub or two. We'll need to run some lines - a couple down to the test areas in the main building would be useful..." I mulled, "And ideally we should hook up a wide-area-network to link to the computers at Nicole's and find a way to connect the Eyrie as well..."

We took our drinks out to the patio. It was a 40' wide circular cedar deck that sat over the Wheel, providing a weather barrier and a temperature sink to reduce the load on the heat pumps. It was also a huge comfortable area for sunning and for just admiring the view.

I hugged the girls, "What an amazing accomplishment! The Mueller Wheel..." I sighed, "After so many years."

We talked briefly about our plans for the week and Celeste added, "It's almost time for you to go pick Nicole up - make sure you get back at six. M&M are planning a corn roast to welcome you guys back!" We could see the BBQ drums already set up over by the restaurant.

We went inside and I said to Jules, "Er, are the cars still working?"

She laughed, "If anything, it'll run better. Mandie was driving us up the wall so Max got her doing maintenance on the cars. She's changed the oil and filters, regapped all the plugs, cleaned the injectors and replaced the gaskets."

"Yeah," Celeste giggled, "She gave me shit for taking off without warming the engine properly and that one of the tires was low on air! Then she made me learn where the dipstick and all the fluids go!"

"So we're covering all the bases!" I laughed, "Max Performance, for sea, air, now land too!"

I waved Celeste over and pulled her close, "And you had BETTER learn where the dipstick goes when I get back!" I slipped my hand over her ass and kissed her softly, "Otherwise we'll have a hell of a time when we try to christen all the rooms of the Wheel!" I looked at her.

She started, then sighed and hugged me fiercely, "Yes sir... Master."

"Honey Pie, can I help?" Jules offered, "He gave me a refresher course on the way up here..." Softly I locked the door behind me as they made themselves comfortable on the sofa.

= = =

"Hello good looking!" She whispered in my ear. I jumped and then stared. Her blonde hair was teased up and her full lips were made more luscious by red lipstick. It took me three tries to say "WOW!" and I stared some more at the loose white top and skin tight jeans she barely had on.

"Aren't you gonna greet your woman the way she needs to be...?" Nicole chuckled throatily and slipped her arms around my neck. Pretty soon I could only think of how quickly I could get the outfit off her.

"Er..." I managed in between gasps, "How did you get out here? I never took my eyes off the exit!"

"Oh, the crew insisted I come in with them." She glinted, "Something about preventing a riot..." she smiled, "Do I pass muster?" and did her fist-on-hip pose. There was a long moment of silence when every pair of eyes were focused on her. She glinted at me and, to a chorus of sighs, she turned and took my arm, as I took her small luggage. She leaned on me as we strolled through the airport, drawing admiring looks and whistles, which she smilingly acknowledged.

I had just seated us in the car when she held my face and crushed our mouths together. Finally she threw herself back on her seat, gasping, "God, you're such an amazing kisser! I could come just from that!"

"Why did you stop?" I quivered, not that far from making a mess in my pants myself.

"I'm saving myself for when you can properly ravish me!" She sighed, "Well, what are you waiting for? Get us home now!" she urged.

We got on the highway and she slipped her heels off. "I wanted to impress you but even these 2 inch Mary Janes hurt!" She started rubbing her feet and I gestured to her. She turned and sat with her legs across my lap.

"Ahhhh!" She sighed as I started rubbing her feet, "Oh what decadence, to have a foot-rubber!" She started giggling as I pulled one up and began kissing her toes.

"Oh wait!" She sat up, undid her jeans and started shimmying out of them, "Ugh! Took me forever to put them on this morning... This should save a bit of time..."

She stretched out again with her long legs on me and sighed happily as I stroked them. We had just turned off the interstate when she moaned, "Honey, James, hurry..." She bit her lip,

"I'm getting close... Look!" At the lights she parted a leg and showed me the dark wet patch on her silk panties.

The traffic took pity on us and allowed me to race to the house in a minute flat. I slewed the car on the driveway and carried her to the door and up the stairs two steps at a time. Giggling, Nicole took her top off and I almost tripped, she had nothing underneath and her nipples were already hard and puckered.

I dropped her on the bed and buried my face between them, nibbling and licking as she tore at my hair and arched her hard nipples into me. Slowly I let her push my head lower and trailed my tongue down. I kissed past her fine blond patch, getting a gasp from her as I nibbled the hood over her clitoris, followed by a happy sigh when my tongue followed and started to coax it out. Nicole caressed my hair and her legs shivered against my back as she sighed her soft release.

"That's good, James..." she whispered, and pulled my head up, "Why are you still dressed? How do you expect to fuck me fully dressed?" She watched me scramble out of my clothes, "Hurry dear, or I'm gonna start without you!" She licked her lips as her hand slipped over herself, "Mmmm, wet... so wet... for you." she sighed as she watched me gingerly extract my angry erection.

Nicole held my face and gently kissed me as I slipped over her, then with one hand she reached between our bodies and helped me slide into her. She was soft and so hot as she urged me deeper with her nails on my back. I started rutting myself in her, her cries urging me on. I slipped my hands down to her ass and clasped her against my thrusting cock as she wrapped arms and legs around me, groaning in lusty abandon. I slowed, trying to prolong the agonizing pleasure. Suddenly Nicole cried loudly, digging her nails in my shoulders, and SQUEEZED her cunt on me.

"Oh god!" I shuddered and my come poured in her. Our bodies shook and we moaned our pleasure.

=====

"So, how was the trip?" I asked as we drove to the lake.

"Busy, 5 companies in a week is tedious. We have lots to talk about, but later, when everybody's there." She sighed, "Tell me about YOUR trip instead, how was Sherri?"

I was still telling her about the amazing Regan shoot and Brenda's 'job' there when we drove in the marina. Nicole sucked in her breath at the imposing sight of the Wheel, "Wow, this is better than I've imagined..." she breathed against my shoulders.

She had me take her on a walk around the outside before we went inside. We followed the girls' chatter and laughter to the staff room upstairs.

"Nicole!" Jules shouted and ran into her arms, to be quickly joined by Celeste, then Sara and Amanda.

Nicole kissed them warmly, then she turned to Sherri and gathered her in an embrace, "Welcome Sherri dear, I'm glad I'm finally going to have the chance to get to know you." They kissed softly, then Nicole said, stroking her cheek, "You are such a lovely girl!".

"Nicole..." Amanda leaned on Nicole, sighing, "You should know that Sherri was very mean to me..." and licked Nicole's neck.

Nicole wrapped her arms around the two girls, laughing, "And you allowed her to live? So honey, how was she mean to you...?"

"She..." Amanda fidgeted, rubbing her body on Nicole, "She bit me!"

"Oh...? Where exactly..." Both Amanda and Nicole were now getting quite flushed.

"Here..." Amanda guided Nicole's hand inside her bikini top, "Oooh, er, I mean, ouch!" she squirmed.

"I'm very sorry, Mandie," Sherri said with downcast eyes, "Can I kiss it better?" She went over and started kissing and licking a boob.

"And, Nicole..." Sara slipped behind Amanda, "I think I may have accidentally bit her too!" She nuzzled Amanda's neck, murmuring, "Can you forgive me?" Her hand went inside Amanda's briefs. Giggling they waltzed her over and on to the nearest sofa.

Nicole sighed and looked at me, "I think I've been jilted."

"No you haven't!" Celeste gave her a long tender kiss. "How WAS the trip? Did you miss me?" Without waiting for an answer, she locked their lips together again. They were both bright eyed when they pulled back.

"Yes, I missed you, love..." She turned and pulled Jules close, "And you..."

I politely waited a few minutes and cleared my throat, "Er, ladies, which way's the food?"

"That's all you can think of?" Celeste glared at me, "We're having a SERIOUS conversation here!" She pulled her hand out of Nicole's blouse to check her watch, "Oops, we should get over there to set up..."

They fixed up their clothing and filed out the door, pointing me at the three bodies squirming over the sofa.

I went over and pulled Sara and Sherri off a very disheveled and dazed-looking Amanda. "Ah..." she blinked at me a few times, "Oh, James..." she wrapped her arms around my neck and tugged me down beside her, then quickly clambered on my lap, "Where were you while I was being molested?"

"Was that what they were doing?" I kissed her, "You didn't seem to mind."

"Hah, little did you know. I struggled and fought!" she sighed, "But they were too strong... Hey! Wait for me!" She yelled at the girls who had disappeared behind the closing door.

"Not until you get some clothes on... There may be people with weak hearts out there!" I reminded her.

"Will you help me...?" she murmured against my neck.

"It will be my pleasure." I smiled into her deep blue eyes.

I unhooked her bra as she hummed and squirmed on me, trailing her tongue on my collar. Her top slipped unnoticed to the side as she moaned and tugged my shirt off, drawing her hard nipples across my chest as our lips met.

Frantically, without breaking our kiss, Amanda struggled out of her briefs and then yanked my pants down.

"Unnmph!" She grunted as my rampant cock found her hot, tight cunt. Gingerly, with slow short strokes, Amanda slipped down until I was completely surrounded by her tender heat.

"God! I missed you!" She moaned as she started stroking herself on me, "Ahhh!" She dropped herself on me and hugged me as she shook weakly. After a while she resumed fucking on me.

"So good! Sssso good!" She moaned as I grabbed her ass and drove our bodies together. She bit my lip and grunted her release, just as I pumped my come into her. She collapsed on me, sighing and kissing my neck.

"Where're your clothes?" I whispered when our shivering stopped. Reluctantly Amanda climbed off me and padded over to the kitchen counter, her saucy little ass twitching. She turned at my heartfelt cry of appreciation and smiled broadly. Then she turned and spread her legs as she ran her hands over her boobs and down to her glistening crotch. She licked her finger slowly and blew me a kiss.

She slid into her jeans and a thin top. I stared, if anything it was even more provocative than her bikini. "Sweetheart, if YOU don't get dressed you won't get any food!" She pulled me up and helped me with my clothes.

Arm in arm we walked over to the restaurant. Max stopped us and waved us over to a tall cylinder made of 3 stacked oil-drums. It had a short smokestack on top and an inverted "U" scoop at the base which sat over a slow wood fire.

"This is a cold smoker." he told us as he opened the door on the smoker's side, showing us 3 fish hanging inside. One of them was a huge 6-foot jackfish. The girls had caught quite a few fish earlier and the larger ones were being smoked, using Max's 'Secret Recipe'.

We followed him to where people were gathering for the corn roast and started working on the fires. Sherri grabbed our arms and took us into the restaurant, where Sara and Marjorie were washing up after filleting the fish.

"James, help us bring the fish out!" Sara said, then looked at Amanda, "Did you tell him...?"

"Er... No." Amanda blushed, "I forgot - I got too carried away."

"Tell me what?" I asked.

"Well, Sara and Sherri and I got to talking and we thought it might be a good idea to invite our parents up here this Sunday, then they can see the marina and what we do here..."

"Hey, that's a great idea. They'll be so proud of you!"

"Yeah, and then we can stay up here tomorrow. Gyro 2 needs a bit of work still."

Amanda sighed, "But James, it sorta means you can't hang around..." she fidgeted, "Is that OK?"

"I suppose," I sighed, "I'll just have to drown my sorrows somewhere..."

She gave me a kiss, "Thank you, love!"

"Don't worry James," Marjorie added, with a twinkle, "We'll look after your girls. And we'll make sure their folks get a great reception."

The girls ran off to make their arrangements and I wandered out with the 30lbs of battered fillets they had prepared. The corn was being roasted at one end of the grill and Max had dressed the flame with mesquite chips and was doing burgers and steak at the other. Sitting in the middle was a skillet of oil, which I used to cook the fillets. Marjorie started serving the food to the thirty or so townspeople who had collected.

"We started doing this when the restaurant ran out of seating earlier this week. Everybody leaves five or ten bucks which goes back to the restaurant." Marjorie stopped me when I reached for my wallet, "You, and all the girls, are our guests." She looked at me earnestly, "For what you've done for the whole town, and what you've done for us..." she smiled, "For the first time in a long time I feel happy, and alive." She gripped my hand.

We ended up with over fifty 'guests', most of whom had dropped by before to watch the Wheel being built but came back for the food and the company. Some also brought cooked food, garden vegetables or fresh caught fish and game. More than a few brought home-brewed beverages.

Everybody seemed to know Celeste, and Jules and Amanda had quite a following themselves, especially after Harry brought his student-pilots in.

It was not until past eight before we finished cleaning up and made our way back to the Eyrie.

We stood out on the patio and looked out at the lovely warm welcome the sunset was providing. Nicole put her arm around me and leaned her head on me, "I miss this - much more than I could ever have imagined." She sighed, "I just hope I never get used to the mosquitoes and flies!" She shuddered.

Celeste and Sherri had disappeared inside but soon Sherri came out. "We have a special presentation... Follow me." She took us up and out to the clearing behind the house. Sherri sat at the Yamaha that was set up there.

Celeste spoke, "This piece we want to play you is called Intermezzo. It was written in the 1890's by an Italian composer named Pietro Mascagni - this is the song that most symbolized the Wheel to me." She took my hand and kissed me, "After James made me see, really see, the genius of Bertram Mueller's work." She looked at us, eyes glowing. "It is a song of beginnings, of growth, and a search for new horizons. I promised myself I would play it for them - the two most important men in my life."

She opened the case and tenderly took her violin out, a vibrantly striated rich wine color with a satiny ebony fingerboard. Celeste caressed it as delicately as a mother her newborn.

She looked at it, and said quietly, almost whispering, "This was the creation of the great 18th Century master, Vincenzo Panormo," she looked up at us, "And there are two very unique things about this particular instrument." Celeste paused, then dreamily, "She is one of the sweetest and most powerful sounding violins, and is only 7/8 size..." She softly stroked the strings and they whispered back. "Panormo named her 'Sweet Girl'...

"Secondly, and this is both her greatest weakness and her greatest worth." She looked at us, "Most great instruments like this, if cared for properly, can last for centuries. However, 'Sweet Girl' was born with a defect." She turned it over, "There is a hairline crack here in the wood. It's just less than an inch long, and some say that's why she sounds as amazing as she does." She looked up, sadly, "But, although it has been meticulously repaired, one cannot tell when it will split further and destroy the instrument... It could be years, or it could be tomorrow..." She sighed. "And knowing that, there is a driving force, a need to let her sing her sweet song, because - when it happens, she'll lose her voice, and her life..." She held it in her hand and gazed lovingly at it before nestling the instrument under her chin. She raised her bow.

And Sweet Girl sang.

Chapter 49

Saturday morning saw me busy stringing computer cables through the Wheel. I wanted to install Wireless Networking but its limited bandwidth was forcing me to add hardwired hubs to service the offices and the main display area. I also dropped a wire down to the main workshop where Sara and Amanda were getting ready to test the modifications that were made to Gyro 2.

They had removed the huge coolant intake scoops that were slowing the boat by 10mph or more and replaced them with a single 2" diameter intake inside a V-shaped notch on the keel, 4 feet from the stern. Sara was double checking Brenda's calibration measurement from the laptop.

"We'll start with this and work up if we need to." Amanda showed me the engine compartment, "We had a hell of a time getting this far though, Max was still working on this stringer strut yesterday to build up enough support for the keel." I could see the heavy fiberglass bridge that he had added around the opening. "But now the 2" opening matches the coupling to the cooling hoses so it simplifies things there." The other additions from the factory included a wicked-looking racing propeller and variable-assist hydraulics designed to give better control of the boat at the high speeds we were expecting.

"Peter's really excited; they've got a lot riding on this. They have at most two seasons to try and gain market-share before the other manufacturers jump on the bandwagon. And a lot of their reputation is riding on it too." Sara started fiddling with the network connection on the laptop, "Oh great and powerful computer geek-person, I can't get on the Net!" as she pounded on the keys, "Peter's got this web-based Inviscid Flow calculator for us and I need it now!"

"Sorry - I'm still just stringing the wires. It'll be an hour before you can get service."

"Men!" Sara glared at me, "Good thing we have a more reliable source..." she pointed me in a chair and sat on my lap as she dialed the phone.

"Hello, can I speak to Brenda please..." She leaned on me and nibbled on my ear while we waited. "Oh, hello, you came highly recommended as someone who gives great head..." Amanda burst out laughing and rolled around wheezing on the ground, "Er, do you have any free time? My girlfriends and I would like to book you for a few hours of good cunt nuzzling..." Sara started giggling as she held the phone out so I could hear.

"Listen, you... you meanie!" Brenda said in a fierce whisper, "There're six guys here all coming on to me and all I need is for ONE of them to overhear you!" She paused, then softly, "But yes, I believe I can accommodate you and your friends on Monday..."

Sara purred, "Then it's a date, lover... And your boyfriend wants to know if you have an opening for him..."

"Hmmm, tell him it'll be tight, but I just might squeeze him in..." Brenda breathed.

"Honey, we've asked our folks to come up tomorrow, you sure you can't come back then?" Sara continued.

"No, we've got too much planned - I'll be up early afternoon on Monday. But I'll check with mine now and see if they want to go up anyways..." Brenda replied.

"Do you know your flight number? We'll come pick you up!"

"No, I'll manage. Just stay by the phone Monday!"

"No problem, and sweetie, can you run some numbers on the computer for me? I need the Reynolds matrix and Bernoulli's integration for..." Sara rattled off a bunch of measurements and added, "Yes, that's 55 to 95, in 5 mph intervals, can do? And can you email them to me? The genius here says we'll be online in an hour. Thanks - we love you and miss you!" We added our kisses and goodbyes before hanging up.

"So you want to go for a test cruise?" Amanda asked, "We're going to the house to pick Sherri and Celeste up."

"Er, perhaps later, I'd better get the wiring done before I lose my job!"

Sara kissed me, "Bet you miss the fringe benefits more!" She pulled Amanda down on me and helped me investigate the more tangible aspects of our benefits package.

After giving their cute fannies a fond farewell caress I returned to my cables. I went around to the back where Max had his apartment, throwing another log onto the fire under the cold smoker as I passed it.

"Max!" I pushed the door open, "Oh, hi Marjorie!" She was in a house dress and was cooking at the range, "Er, I just have a question for Max, I'll come back later."

"Oh pshaw, James," Marjorie scoffed, blushing just a little, "Come right in, it's not as if you're likely to be shocked by anything WE can do!"

"Hello James," Max came in the room, clean shaven and smelling of cologne. "Marj has been making sure I eat breakfast before I start work." He looked at her tenderly and she smiled back.

"Max, I was wondering if you'd like me to set up a computer here..."

"James, you know I can't..."

"Say yes, Max." Marjorie said, "Thank you James, it would be lovely. Max and I should get acquainted with the 21st Century," she looked at him and took his hand, "Because we intend to live every second of it."

I snuck a wire into his living room and crimped the ends to the plug. "Max, what's that contraption you have in your workshop? It looks an awful lot like an airplane fuselage."

"Yeah, Amanda found me this plan of a homebuilt which uses car engines. And I happen to have 2 decent VW air-cooled engines around, so I figured I'll build one and maybe Harry can use it. Or maybe we can take up a new hobby!" He smiled at Marjorie, "We've talked about touring the country before we got too old..."

They convinced me to stay and I finished their breakfast as we talked about the marina and the Wheel.

"You know the community center is looking at an addition and the RFQ is coming out Monday, do you think Celeste might want a crack at it?"

"Let me work something out - I'm thinking the best bet is to join up with the contractors in town. They do good work and Celeste can consult with them. She shouldn't be designing independently until she gets her degree." I reminded her.

"Yes, I agree," Marjorie nodded, "We'll have to help her get it as quickly as possible!"

After my coffee I went back to the offices where Jules was working on the Internet with Nicole.

"Scuse please ladies, coming through!" I said as I crawled under the desks with the ends of the cables and started crimping the connectors on.

"We've got 2 months before they peak." Jules continued, to Nicole, "What I plan to do is to sell in a month, at about 90% of fmV and then transfer to Peter's company. We'll buy short and get about 7% of the holdings, which should give us a..." She stopped, "Nicole, I think somebody is looking up my skirt." She peeked down and grinned, "I can hear your panting from up here!"

"Lady! Who do you think you're talking to!" I said indignantly, "I wouldn't look up your skirt even if you had your sheer panties with the pink hearts on!" Jules started laughing and kicked her feet up, waving her sheer panties with the pink hearts at me.

Suddenly she reached down and whipped them off, then she rested her legs on my shoulders and sat back, "Hmmm, when was the last time you worked for a pair of my panties?" She hiked her skirt up and scrunched down even further. "You still remember what you're supposed to do?"

I kissed my way along her thighs. Then I looked up, "Can I borrow a flashlight?" She started cackling again and drummed her heels on my back. With a sigh I slipped back down to give her light blond muff a wet kiss.

"Oooh, oooh," Jules squirmed, "That's good sweetheart, mmmm... Nicole, gimme your hand... Ahhhh, oooh, oh my, oh my god!" She stroked my hair as she sighed and shook, "Mmmm,

god J-James, you do all the wrong things and I j-just keep coming and coming! Ahhh! Oh my god! Ooooooh!" She sighed as I gave her another long lick. "Mmm, that was good... Ahhhh..." She slumped in her seat, "Nicole... honey, where're you going?"

"Going to change into a skirt."

We managed to get very little done the next hour and I barely had time to hook up the network boxes before Gyro returned. They piled in the room and Amanda flopped down on Nicole, almost in tears.

"Oh, the usual good news, bad news." Sara said at my look, "Good news is we cracked 80mph. Bad news is we almost got killed doing it."

"I'm sorry..." Amanda whispered.

"Oh we all know it's not your fault." Sara continued, "The boat was great until 75, then it porpoised and shimmied and, at 82 it kited and almost flipped over."

"If I hadn't dropped the prop so low..."

"It was cavitating like crazy, even at 70. No way you could tell." Sara shrugged.

Nicole hugged and kissed her, "Hush... Don't think about it. Everybody's safe, you're fine, and that's the important thing."

"And Mandie?" Sara said, "If it wasn't for you, we would've really been in trouble. You SAVED us!" Sara and Celeste went over and kissed her.

Sherri took her hands and stood Amanda up, "You know, if you hadn't told me about it, I would've thought you did it on purpose. It scared the bejeesus out of me..." Sherri smiled, "And got me SO horny!"

"No..." Amanda stared at her friend, "You are SO sick!"

"It's like why people go for rides at the amusement parks!" Sherri giggled, and hugged Amanda, "But I always feel safe with you." They kissed, "OK?"

"OK." Amanda whispered, "Love you..."

"Love you too..." Sherri purred and gave her lips a little lick, then she looked around, "Are you guys waiting for something?"

"We thought you two might start getting hot and heavy, we wouldn't want to miss that!" Jules dimpled.

"But apparently WE missed out when YOU guys got 'Hot and heavy!'" Sherri retorted.

"I have NO idea what you mean!" JulieAnn scoffed.

"So why is Nicole down to her panties?"

"Hey, don't get me involved! I was changing!" Nicole answered and crossed her legs over the damp spot.

"Then why are YOUR panties on the desk, Jules?"

Jules looked at them, "They're not MY panties!" she sniffed.

"They were when you put them on this morning! Do you want proof?" Sherri reached out and Jules jumped back.

"Hey, that's sexual harassment! James, stop her!" Jules hid behind me, "Besides I know somebody else who's got no panties!" She pointed and we all looked at Sara, whose un-pantied-ness I had discovered firsthand.

Sara smiled, "Wanna bet?" She pulled up her dress and she had black bikini bottoms on. They were tight and molded her exquisitely. We all sighed when she dropped her skirt back down.

"Hey, those are mine!" Amanda yelled, "Where'd you find them!"

"Oh, in the cabin." Sara smiled, "Where you left them yesterday!"

"And why are you wearing my stuff?"

"Because," Sara grinned, "I was leaking - your crazy stunt got ME horny too!" She stroked Amanda's cheek, "Horny for you!"

"I can't believe it!" Amanda shook her head, "I almost killed everyone and all you think about is sex!" She turned to Celeste, "And you? Did you get turned on with my stupidity too?"

Celeste shrugged, "Ehh, you know me, I'm always horny for you..."

"Arggh! I can't stand it! You're supposed to hate me and yell at me."

"And instead everyone is telling you how much they love you." Nicole said tenderly as she tugged Amanda back on her lap. "Because we DO love you. And we don't like to see you unhappy." Nicole stroked her hair, "Especially not for doing all the right things to save your friends!" Amanda sighed and curled up tighter.

After a while, Amanda whispered, "Are you getting horny too? Why are your nipples hard?" as she reached for one and caressed it.

"Mmmm," Nicole sighed, "Who wouldn't get excited with a beautiful, squirmy little girl in her lap? With the softest skin and the yummiest boobies!" She demonstrated with soft kisses and caresses.

Then she kissed Amanda on the nose and said, "Feel better?" and at Amanda's nod, "Now what you have to do is to go and fix the boat so it behaves! Right?"

"Nicole..." Amanda got REALLY squirmy, "Can we do this again? Later, I mean..."

"Yes, honey..." Nicole smiled softly, "We'll do this, later..." They kissed again and Amanda raced off downstairs, hand in hand with Sherri and Sara.

"Nicole..." I sighed as I slid on her, "Can we do it... NOW?"

"Spare me!" She laughed as she dumped me on the floor. "Celeste and I are going back to town to get her ready for the taping." She looked at Jules, "Are you coming along?"

"No..." Jules helped me up, "I'll stay..." she sighed as she hugged me, "He wants me to do something for him..." She leaned on me and kissed my cheek.

"Well enjoy yourselves..." Nicole looked at us, "But you two had better start studying - next Friday is Exam day!" She smiled demonically, kissed us softly and left.

We looked at each other. "Oh shit!"

"I'm toast." I said. "I haven't cracked a book for ages!"

"Me neither!" Jules sighed, "Do you think she'll give us an extension...?"

"No!" We agreed.

We went down to the boat and by their shell-shocked looks they also got the news.

"I'm gonna flunk!" Amanda looked ready to cry again.

"Don't worry!" Sherri said, "I'll study with you!"

"And our folks are gonna be here all day tomorrow... And the boat..." Sara added gloomily, then paused, "Oh, wait..." She ran off.

A minute later she returned with Max in tow, "OK, Max, you gotta help us out." She outlined the situation, then she took him to the boat, "The first problem is the coolant intake - there's barely 15 psi of pressure so we need to get that up by about 5 for insurance.

"Second is the cavitation starting at 70. A lot of our problems stem from that..."

"And third, the instability and kiting. Max, can you help us on the first 2 problems? Oh thankyou-thankyou-thankyou." She kissed Max before he could answer, but he smiled and nodded.

"You know what?" Amanda's eyes glinted, "I'll bet Brenda doesn't know about the exam yet..."

"Oh, let the poor girl enjoy her last good weekend!" Sara sighed, then turned, "Sherri, we'll be busy, so you'll have to study up on Gyro 2, then work with Bren on the computer numbers." She blinked and dusted her hands, "So, that's that. Let's go study!"

"We have a problem." I noted, "The books are THERE and the Internet is HERE!"

"Let's go back to the Eyrie and save the research for later. We can work something else out if this doesn't pan out." Jules looked at me, "But I can see another problem..."

"Food!" They all shouted.

"OK - let me get lunch at the restaurant and you can..." I stopped. "No - change of plans. We'll bring the books here. And the manuals. Amanda and I should be able to handle it. You three stay and get things ready..."

"And don't forget the food!" I yelled back as we took off for USS Dweebus.

I held Amanda in my arms as she steered us out of the bay. "How are you feeling?" I said, kissing her ear.

"Aside from having my short life flash right before my eyes, twice, I'm fine." She managed a weak giggle.

"Are you that worried about the test?"

"No, not really. I'm OK on most subjects, and in some, like physics and maths, I'm WAY ahead!"

"You want to talk about Gyro?"

"Hmmm..." she shrugged.

"As long as you know nobody's blaming you for what happened."

"Yeah, I know. I did pretty good, under the circumstances." She turned around and hugged me, "You drive, I just want to cuddle on you for a bit." She wrapped her legs around my waist and laid her head on my shoulder. "I was just giving myself a pat on the back about getting the extra speed when the thing just launched itself out of the water. No warnings, just lost it in less than a second! It felt like it was going straight up and we were gonna flip over for sure. And all I could think about was us smacking into the water at 80mph." She shivered, "Sara, and Sherri and poor Celeste!"

"Fortunately, the experience in the planes taught me not to trust my senses all the time, so I was able to throttle down. Thinking back, I don't think at any time the bow was more than 5 feet out of the water. But it scared me, and worried me that nobody would trust my driving anymore." She burrowed deeper on me, "And you know what was the absolute pits? The worst thing was that I got horny too! We were still shaking and thanking god we were alive and all of a sudden I was wishing you were there and you would hold me and touch me..."

I pulled her close, "Honey, don't let THAT get you down! It's not that uncommon, and you know it affected the others as well." I stroked her hair, "It's instinctive - when your mind feels threatened, it reacts with the urge to have sex, and have babies - for the survival of the race."

She looked up, "Really? It's not sick or unnatural?"

"No - it's VERY natural. So it's nothing to be worried about!"

She sighed, "Hmmm, about that horny thing? I STILL want to have sex with you, but not now... Right now I just want to hold you and be thankful you're here, OK?"

"OK..." We kissed as I stroked her soft hair, our bodies nestled in warm companionship.

It took an hour for us to load all the books, manuals and bookshelves back into Dweebus and return to the marina, where Max was already putting Gyro 2 through her paces in the bay.

The girls met us at the dock and together we transferred the books up to the large room. Jules returned from the restaurant with sandwiches and drinks, along with salads and a huge roast-turkey sub for me. We sat around the counter and munched on the food and looked at the printouts of Brenda's calculations.

Sara showed us one. "This is the Reynolds Matrix of the flow characteristics along the sides and bottom of Gyro 2 at a specific speed. Normally this is used for preliminary calculations only, but because we can pinpoint the plane locations of the boat, we can be much more accurate in defining the displacement geometry.

"Now, each number here represents the 'quality' of the water flow. Under 2 means it is smooth, or laminar, and over 4 is pure turbulence. The area in between is a transition area with a mixture of both. We've connected the transition points together to get an idea of the overall performance.

"Let's start with the chart at 55mph, you see how the transition band is almost uniform in thickness all the way round." She selected another chart, "Now at 75 we see a thinning of the

area, this is normal in all curved surfaces, and it is desirable because it permits controlled aeration.

"Now the rest are projections - at 80 and 85, things progress normally, but look at the one for 90, that area has suddenly moved back and is almost completely pinched off. In other words, the boat is generating so much turbulence here that it is actually fighting against itself. And that's where it starts to lose cohesion and becomes airborne."

"But why did it happen to us at 82?"

"Part of the reason I can see is the cavitation, which is simply air dragged under the stern, decreasing the buoyancy, and THAT made the back of the boat sit lower. Then by lowering the I/O unit, we changed the attitude of the boat by a couple of degrees; the combined effect is to cause the problem to occur sooner." Sara paused, "And it may have been a good thing, because this chart shows that if it had happened at 90, it would've been even more abrupt and much more powerful." She smiled at Amanda, "So we were actually lucky it happened then!"

"But take a look at this!" She pulled the remaining chart out, "At 95, it's smooth sailing again! Which tells me that it's a fairly small inconsistency in the hull profile which is causing this."

Jules said slowly, "Can't we use MiniMax to follow and watch...?"

"That's exactly it!" Sara glowed, "With a pace plane monitoring the performance, we can narrow the problem down even faster!"

Jules mulled it over, "Why don't we let Max do his thing today, then we work out a systematic plan to test the boat on Monday?"

"Yeah, and I wouldn't feel too good unless I got some studying in soon." Sara sighed, "Jules, what will you and James be doing tomorrow?" then she added, "That's different from what you'll be doing tonight, I mean."

Jules dimpled, "We're gonna fly up to visit his sister." They looked at me and I told them about the Gymnastics Camp and my invitation to visit them there.

"James, if you're supposed to be used as a model of good eating, why are you still packing the food away?" Sherri observed, "You must have put on 10lb since last week!" They all nodded and added their observations about my rapidly deteriorating physique.

"I was planning to burn it off with some incredibly strenuous and acrobatic sex tonight."

"Are you kidding me? Our PARENTS are coming up tomorrow!" Sherri said, shocked, "I don't want them to even think I know the word 'Sex', let alone smell it all over!" Then she grinned, "At least not until after they OK my modeling contract..."

"Yeah maybe we should bunk here tonight and James can..." Sara bit her lip.

"And I suppose I'll be stuck babysitting him..." Jules sighed, and batted her lashes at me, "You won't be too demanding, will you?" She asked eagerly.

"Ladies," Amanda drawled as she hugged me, "It appears we still have a while before tomorrow yet and MY mommy's told me never to study until my meal's fully digested. So I propose we use the time to help our friend here burn off his embarrassing layers of fat."

She slipped a hand down, "Mmmm, are you keeping another lunch in there or do you just LOVE my idea?"

Chapter 50

I padded naked through the unusually quiet house into the kitchen, drawn there by the smell of bacon and eggs. Jules was cooking at the range, her back to me, wearing an apron which covered her front and nothing else. I stood and drank in the view of her sleekly toned body; muscles that shifted smoothly under her tanned flesh as she moved and dimples on her ass cheeks that winked at me each time she shifted her weight.

She turned at my low whistle of admiration and added two more dimples to the wondrous picture. "Morning love. I take it you approve?"

"Not too shabby. Not too shabby at all..." I breathed and, covering the distance in 2 large steps, hugged her tightly to me. My hands wandered down her body.

"Alright," I licked her ear, "Who are you!? You look, and feel, like my sweetie Jules, but you can't be her - you can COOK!"

Her face glowed with laughter, "I had no choice! I would've starved if I didn't learn." She gave me a quick kiss, "Can I get back to the breakfast - before it starts burning?"

Reluctantly I let her go, "OK - but don't think you've convinced me! We will have to put you through some strenuous tests!"

"Mmmm," she reached back to pull me against her butt, "And you'll no doubt be making things hard for me!" She breathed, leaning back and kissing me. "Make yourself useful - go pour the coffee, ready in five."

I set the table and sat with my coffee, and almost choked on it when she bent to get the toast out of the broiler.

"Oh my god, Jules. Don't do that again!" I wheezed, "I could've maimed myself permanently if I'd spilt the coffee!"

She placed the food in front of us and settled on my lap, "Ah, so you accept who I am now?"

"I'm giving you the benefit of the doubt. But I'm keeping you where I can keep an eye on you!"

"More like an eye and both hands." She smiled as I stroked her firm full breasts to attention. With a quivering sigh she cut up the food and started feeding me.

"Hey! You almost got my eye!" I ducked and picked the piece of bacon from the fork she was waving around my face.

"S-sorry!" She sighed, "Then s-stop doing that!"

"This?" I caressed a nipple and rolled my fingers on it.

"Ah..." Jules wheezed as she shivered wetly on me.

"Or you mean this?" I twiddled my other hand that had the two fingers in her soft hole.

"Ohhhh, oh, oh..." The fork fell with a clatter as she leaned back on my arm and lifted a leg on the table. I cupped my hand over her mons and slowly caressed her until she crested the peak. Her hand grabbed my hair and pulled our faces together.

"Oooh, ahhh... K-kiss me you fool! Oh, oh-mmm!" she moaned and welcomed my lips and tongue, her body still quivering and writhing on my fingers, held there by her hand.

Slowly she relaxed in my arms as her gasps faded. She smiled at me, then sat up slowly.

"Where's the darn fork? Oh... Not to worry!" She rolled up a slice of bacon inside a fried egg and crammed it in my mouth. Then she took a small bite of the toast herself. We finished off the food in record time and Jules was again draped weakly on me, wheezing from her latest orgasm.

"Uhhh, that was a LOVELY breakfast..." I said, licking my come coated fingers as she giggled weakly.

"Not too shabby. Not too shabby at all!" She said from my shoulders, "But tell me what we'll be doing at the camp?"

"It's Family Day there today and Angela, Erin's coach, wanted a guinea pig for her nutrition talk."

"...So anything to do with food, you're naturally volunteering for." She grabbed my hand and kissed it, then she stretched and twisted like a cat on my lap, "Mmm, hon, then let's go clean up, I want to take off before the day warms up."

With an early departure in mind, we had brought MiniMax out to the Eyrie the evening before. Taking advantage of the Ground Effect phenomenon, we had skimmed across the lake at a height of 30 feet, going 70mph while on 1/2 power.

After a check of the small windsock we had attached to the dock and a preflight visual around the aircraft, we strapped ourselves in, Jules letting me take the Pilot-in-Command position on the left.

"OK, this is an official training flight, so I expect you to be doing the flying and making the decisions!" she reminded me after we adjusted the intercom headsets.

She had me warm up the engine and watched as I cast off and taxied out into the steel blue lake, traveling downwind to preflight the takeoff groove.

"Planes traditionally go through a windup, accelerate and rotation sequence, but with these ultralights, the plane is ready to rotate almost as soon as the engine reaches full speed, but for safety's sake, stay at the transition point until the airspeed is another 10mph above that, so that if the engine develops a problem, we have more speed to recover." Jules said as she watched me calibrate the altimeter and the navigational systems.

"Another reason to hold at that point is so you can familiarize yourself with the position of the plane. What works for takeoff works for landings as well. Memorize that, then aim for the same approach and speed when you are landing. Alright, 180 here and start your takeoff sequence." We ran through our checklist, "OK, hotshot, ready to fly?"

"Ma'am, yes Ma'am!" I saluted.

She grinned, "Why can't you be so obedient in bed?" Then, "OK, remember, choke off, full flaps, full throttle and after rotation, gear up, then climb throttle and flaps; at altitude, go cruise throttle, trim, lean..." She rattled off the instructions from the manual she had made me read the night before.

At her nod I opened up the throttle and the little engine behind us spooled up to a furious whine, accelerating our craft into the wind. At 30 she was already fighting to lift out of the chop. I held the nose down to maximize the hydroplaning and watched the speed climb to 40, 45... At 48 I allowed the plane to lift herself off, reduced throttle and flap and leveled at around 35 feet to build up speed. Suddenly to our left a flock of gulls, disturbed by our passage, burst out of the mangrove and flew by around us.

"THAT'S another reason why it's safer to stay low a bit longer. If we get hit by one of them, we'll still be able to land without much trouble..." We watched the flock recede behind us before I pulled gently on the stick. The wings bit into the dense morning air and we surged up like a loosed arrow, taking my spirits along.

At 700 feet I throttled to cruise and trimmed for level flight, then adjusted the fuel mixture. I breathed a big sigh and realized my heart was thumping and I had a big grin frozen on my face.

"Honey, that was very well done." Jules glittered, "But I hope you're gonna do something about those!" She pointed ahead.

"Oh!" There was a series of small hills directly in our path. "Slight oversight!" I offered weakly.

"Be careful, don't get tunnel-visioned with just the instruments or the scenery. But this is a good time to change course..." Jules banked us in a North-Westerly direction as she showed me the map on the clipboard. "We're here and this is the lake the camp is on, but we cannot fly there directly because of the airport in our path. And then there's this little patch here labeled Air Force Gunnery Range. So we'll detour around to follow this river." We grinned at each other, "Yep, ifr,

I Follow Rivers!" We marked our progress on the GPS so we could backtrack and have an alternate record of the flight.

The sun had just started to dissipate the ground fog and its beams lit the land in stark rays of gold, the vales and hillocks outlined in gilded relief. We joined hands as we passed over the forest enclave that surrounded the Eyrie, then over small towns just waking up for Church.

Further on, houses gave way to fields of vegetables, then corn and rice, and the large elevated highways became narrow, single lanes before turning into gravel back roads. She pointed to the river sparkling in the distance and I steered for it.

She glanced out the cockpit, "Oh! Look at that!" One bank of the wide river was taken up by a large orchard with rows upon rows of trees, heavy with apples, peaches and cherries.

The plane's cabin had become much warmer as the sun rose and Jules shrugged out of her jacket. My mouth dropped at the little black nothingness she had on. "That's... that's..." I gasped, "That's against the Law!"

She dimpled enchantingly, "Honey, you're so sweet! It was part of the collection Kelly left in the boat." She twisted about to show me how it covered and showed everything all at the same time. "Do you want to see the bottoms?" She blinked.

My heart lurched again. "Ahh, no, not yet." I sighed, "But the minute we land and find a secluded spot..." I paused and looked at her, "In fact I wouldn't be too disappointed if we were to land now..."

She laughed and stroked my cheek, "You are such a tease, my lovely man!" Then she glanced down at me, "Oooh sweet baby! You're not kidding me are you?!"

She mulled it over. "OK, Romeo. You're gonna get your wish. But let's make sure we do this by the books first!" We dropped to 40' on flaps and cracked the cockpit to eyeball the site. "Looks good... Over 30 inches deep." We went another 1/4 mile upstream, looped back, checked and looped yet again.

"Always land facing the current. The plane has no reverse and if we're pointed the wrong direction, we'll be screwed before you could get your pants off." She smiled at me. "OK, I've got the conn... Prepare for landing..."

We beached on a small sandbar and I tied up between 2 apple trees. She switched off and climbed out, handing me a beach blanket as she took my hand. We went between the rows of neatly pruned trees and found a dry spot where I spread the towel out. She gave me a soft kiss and began tugging her sweatpants off. Underneath she had black velvet shorts on, barely covering mid-thigh. A soft breeze tugged at the fabric and I realized it was made from inch-wide strips of material which overlapped enough to hide, until the wearer moved or the wind blew, then it revealed tantalizing glimpses of the mysteries within. There was a small triangular covering underneath but it made no matter, there was NO mistaking the intent of that design.

I pointed to it with a shaking finger, "OFF!" I growled and lurched forward as Jules smilingly danced out of them and laid down on the blanket. With frantic haste I flung my shorts off and smothered her body with mine.

With one smooth thrust I was in her hot, tight, and wet cunt. "Mmmm..." Jules moaned as she wrapped arms and legs around me, "Fuck me my sweet lover... Take me..." She hissed as I made long strokes in her, slowly increasing the rhythm as she wheezed her pleasure, arching under me, nails digging in her climax.

Her eyes opened and she pulled me down for a kiss, "Mmm, James, love... I love you..." She sighed in my ear as her breath caught in pleasure.

My strokes became shorter, more demanding, and I tensed in release, crying out as I pumped my sperm in her, both of us lost to the ecstasy we were sharing.

Minutes, or was it hours, later, we heard noises from the bank. "C'mon Ginny, I told ya - I saw it crash!" said a boy's voice. A moment later, "Look, look! What did I tell ya!"

We scrambled into our clothing and went back towards the plane, as another voice, apparently one belonging to Ginny said, "Pooh, it didn't crash! It's not broken at all!"

"Hi kids!" We greeted a boy of about seven, and a slightly older girl. "Are you from the farm?"

"Yeah, Pauly said your plane crashed and dragged me out here to see." Ginny cocked her head, "You didn't crash, did you?"

"No," Jules laughed, "We came to see if we can buy some fresh fruits from you."

"Oh, you'll have to hurry, we're just on our way to the city."

We followed them to a rambling ranch house and were introduced to their father. He had trouble keeping his eyes from Jules' black top as well.

"How much do those weigh?" I pointed at the bushel crates stacked up. To Jules I added, "Lets get enough for Erin and the camp."

"For peaches, they're 12lbs; apples, 15 and cherries, 22."

I ran the numbers in my head, "How 'bout 1 case each of the cherries and Macintosh apples, and 2 of the peaches." I looked at Jules, "That's all we have room for."

"Yeah, we can carry another 50lbs, but there's only room for four of these cartons."

We paid and they helped us load the plane. Soon we were on our way, still following the river, which had become deeper and faster running as we neared the lake.

The shoreline to both sides was thick with oak and deciduous trees, with more and more evergreens towering up as we flew into higher grounds.

The camp was on an island situated inside a wide bay, about 500 feet from the mainland. From 200 feet up we could see little stick figures moving about and a couple of little canoes on the sheltered side of the island.

We made a couple of passes while losing altitude and a small crowd started collecting on the beach, some of them waving as we began our landing procedure. There was a clear calm strip of water over a mile long that we picked for our landing.

"On strange waters the best way is to go in a trifle fast with flaps and some throttle, then use the stick to drop the craft down. All too often you'll find yourself too high and, without the speed, you might stall and end up in the drink." Jules said as we started the final. "Why don't you take this one? Wave off if you're not comfortable..."

I brought us down to about 25 feet off the water, staying at about 50mph and 1/4 throttle. I rocked the nose, dropping a few feet each time until we made contact with the water. Landing in wide open areas allowed for extra safety margins not possible in a crowded airport or flight park; still, I had used up almost 1/3 of the course.

We slowed to 25mph before I turned for the beach, which was now filled with dozens of gawking and screaming kids and counselors.

As we neared the shore I engaged the landing gears and rolled MiniMax up the sandy incline to the edge of the grass.

"James!" Erin screamed as I climbed out. She launched herself at me and gave me a bone-breaking hug. I smiled at her coach Angela who was coming through the throng and managed to extricate a hand to shake hers.

"Welcome!" She smiled, "I see you made it!" She looked at the plane, "In a somewhat unusual way!"

"We've also brought you some fresh fruits." I said, as I boosted Erin up and together we handed the cases down.

"This is so thoughtful of you! You have my heartfelt thanks." Angela said as she grabbed the cases we handed her and sent them off to the kitchen.

Jules came up from tying the plane down and I introduced them. Angela looked at Jules' hot trim bod and said, "I would like you for the demo too - are you game?"

Jules smiled, "Sure, no problem!" then exchanged hugs and greetings with Erin.

Angela looked over at the milling crowd and stuck two fingers in her mouth and released a piercingly loud whistle. Everyone went dead silent. "OK, you've wasted enough time, back to your groups!" The beach was deserted in 10 seconds.

Then she said to Jules, "Please come with me so I can get some information on you..." she turned to us, "James, why don't you go with Erin to practice and I'll come for you in a little while?"

"That was the coolest entrance I've EVER seen!" Erin gushed as soon as we were alone, "How'd you manage to get THAT!" pointing at MiniMax.

"It belongs to the marina..."

"And you FLEW it up here?"

"Yeah, isn't it something?" I grinned, "Actually, Jules has been giving me flying instructions."

"JULES!?" Erin's eyes popped, "The numnut? What happened? How'd she suddenly get so smart and SO hot?!"

"Yeah - she's really come into her own..." I laughed.

"I'll say!" She pulled me inside a large quonset structure. Inside were about twenty kids Erin's age or older working on apparatus. She whispered, "They've been pumping me about you all this time and now after this, Brother dear, the Peanut's gonna RULE!"

We walked up to a white haired man at the uneven bars, "Coach Brian, this is my brother James." Erin announced. We shook hands and she continued, "Can I show my brother around the gym first?"

At his nod she took my hand and gave me a quick visit to the vault, the balance beam and the floor, along with explanations of what the girls were doing on each. We went back to the balance bars with my mind buzzing with round-offs, layouts, Yurchenkos, flairs, Sukaharas, punch-fronts and Portocarreros.

Erin started chalking up and introduced me to a girl who had just come off her bars routine, "James, remember Ami?"

"The Beanpole?" I blurted. Ami used to be this really skinny kid about a foot tall who hung around the house with Erin. The girl turning bright pink in front of me was buff, 5'-2" and had CURVES. "Sorry, Ami, er, hi!" We shook fingers.

"Coach, can we try the 'Mitchell'?" Erin said after showing me where to sit.

"No - not until you've done a full routine with the 'Chev.'"

"What's a Mitchell?" I asked Ami, who had settled next to me.

"It's a move that Erin's invented, like a front Hindorf on a half-eagle."

"Mm-hmm, if you insist." I nodded, "And a 'Chev? Or shouldn't I ask?"

"Short for a Tkatchev. Just watch, she's getting ready for it... now!" Erin had been doing giant swings on the high bar and, as she reached the top of her swing, suddenly released her grip, allowing her momentum to carry her flying bum first over the top bar. Then she reached down between her split legs to grab it again.

"Whew! That looks scary!" I breathed sincerely.

"It is! I've been trying to get it all week but..." She sighed.

"Not working out?"

"No, and I need it to qualify for the National team!" She grimaced.

Erin flopped down next to me, "Did you like my routine?"

"It was excellent, Peanut, although the Eagle was a little off." I nodded.

"Will you please stop being an idiot, Jam?" She elbowed me, "I didn't do the eagle grip this time!"

"Didn't I tell you it was off?"

She giggled, then elbowed me again. "I'm not talking to you. You're too stupid for words."

Then it was Ami's turn, we all wished her Luck. "Poor kid," Erin sighed, "She's really worked hard, and this is affecting all her other routines!"

"What's her problem?"

"It's her 'Chev! Her legs are not clearing the high bar, and when she tries to drive herself higher, she can't catch the bar in time..."

"Is that why she's wearing the bandages on her foot?"

"Yeah, they're just heel protectors... Ooof!" Ami's ankle clipped the bar and she slammed face-first into the crash mat 8 feet below her.

"Oh my god! Is she OK?"

"Yeah, the mat dissipates most of the force, but it still hurts... Brave kid." Erin sighed again as Ami dusted herself off and climbed back on the apparatus.

"Ouch!" We cried, as Ami crash dived again.

"Geez," I said, shaking my head, "Now I know why gymnasts have no boobs!"

"Don't kid! THAT'S really painful!" Erin said.

"Peanut, when you do yours, how do you know when to release and when to catch?"

"Hmmm, I don't know. Just practice until you get the timing, I guess!"

I scratch my chin, "You know, the word timing implies that there's some way to measure it..." I stood as a tearful Ami came back to us. "Ami, can I talk to you for a minute?" I took her hand and we went to the side.

"I can't do it..." she sobbed, "I can't..." She broke up on my shoulder.

"Ami, hush... Don't cry..." I stroked her hair, "Let's talk about the 'Chev for a sec, there's something I'd like you to try..." She looked up, "I was watching your routine and I noticed that you are starting your splits a little before Erin does hers." She frowned as I continued, "And that looks like the reason why you can't clear the top bar." She still looked unsure. "OK, try this, you do 2 giants before the 'Chev, right?" She nodded, "OK, start counting at the bottom of the first one, like this, one, and, two." I used my extended hand to illustrate. "Now you're starting your splits at 'two', which is too early, try adding a *click* before you do it, like this, one, and, two *click*-splits, Release, catch!"

I could see her working it out in her head, "One... and... Two, click-splits, release... Catch..." She held my hand as we returned, still mumbling and nodding to the rhythm. Erin had just finished a flawless routine culminated by another Tkatchev.

"OK..." Ami breathed, standing, "One... and... Two, *click*-Splits, Release... Catch... Keep your fingers crossed." she gave me a small smile.

She went and spoke to the coach. Instead of her mount she just climbed on to the high bar and started her giants. I found myself counting along with her, "One... and... Two, *click*-splits, Release... Catch." Except this time she sailed clear over the bar, her hands completely missing the catch. She rolled on the mat, then jumped up and ran back on the low bars, starting her sequence again.

"That's good," Brian encouraged her, "Cleaner than before!"

She also missed the next attempt - although her hands had actually touched, they slipped and 'pinged' off the bar. She was smiling widely at me as she tried it again. This time her grips slapped with authority on the bar and Ami finished her grab. She had made her Tkatchev.

She pumped her fist at me with shining eyes and I pointed a finger-gun at her. Click.

Chapter 51

The girls went crazy, crowding around Ami to congratulate her and it was ten minutes before some order was restored.

A very breathless Ami sat back down next to me and whispered, "Thanks!". I reached over her shoulder and gave her a hug and a smile.

Erin came back and pecked me, "Whatever you did, it was just the thing! That was so rave!" then she dragged my ear down, "You want I should fix you up with her?"

"No thanks, I already have a girlfriend." I murmured back

"You know, just because Jules flies a plane and is a walking wet dream shouldn't bias you against my friend!"

"I'm sure your friend is quite the fox, but I'm reasonably happy with my walking wet dream." I smiled.

"Erin!" Ami hissed at her, "Brian is waiting for you!"

"Oh, oops." Erin jumped up, "My turn!" As if a switch had been thrown, the levity disappeared from Erin's face, to be replaced by a mask of detached concentration as she chalked her hands. Breathing deeply, she slowly approached the bar.

"She's gonna do it... The Mitchell." Ami whispered.

Erin was poetry in motion, her fluid moves from hand to hand, bar to bar looked totally effortless. Only the humming of the guy wires and the creaking of the equipment belied the tremendous forces she was keeping at bay with just her fingers.

As Erin wound up for her named move, I suddenly realized that Ami had taken my hand. "One... And... Two..." we murmured together. At "Release!" Erin threw herself over the bar, legs pointed straight out her sides. As she passed the zenith, she reached down to catch the support, but with hands crossed, one over and one under the bar. As the force tumbled her in a whip, she was also twisted to face the opposite direction. A front giant later, she dismounted with a single front tuck.

"Excellent!" Brian cheered, "The best one yet!" as Erin came back grinning and shared a high five with us.

"That was truly awesome!" I said, "You did our name proud!" I hugged her warmly.

"Thanks, it's not 'mine' yet. I have to compete it successfully nationally before it gets recognized." She slowly caught her breath, then continued, "It's technically only half a Mitchell - I've decided that I have to leave out the last giant and land the front tuck to be a full Mitchell." She looked up smugly, "But it's considered a high-E move and too difficult for my level."

The practice session came to a close as Angela came in and gathered the girls around, "OK, shower now, then into your track suits. You all know your duties, let's get everything perfect for your family!"

She held a brief conference with Brian and gave Ami a warm hug, then she came over, "Let's go get you settled and we can have a bite before the guests start arriving." She led the way out, "Ami tells me you helped her get the Tkatchev."

"Oh, it was nothing Ami couldn't have done herself."

"Still, it couldn't come at a better time. She was quite stressed out by it and now she can share the good news with her parents!"

Jules waved to us where she was giving a small group of girls a guided tour of MiniMax. Over her black top she was wearing a T with 'Camp-counselor' across it.

"That young lady is a remarkable role example for our kids." Angela nodded back, "Too often they are shunned by their friends at school because they don't hang out at malls or movies. I think they can look at JulieAnn and realize what a lot they can accomplish if they would think for themselves and not bow to peer pressure."

"They already seem very focused and positive."

"They are, and I'm very proud of them. The downside of this sport is that for the 30-plus hours of work each week, most of our girls don't get the recognition they deserve, even less than track and field athletes.

"Then, before they reach their late teens, physical growth will all but end their competitive career. So we try to give them skills beyond the jumps and spins; the tricks you see on the apparatus. Instead we hope to teach useful and healthy life-skills they can carry with them their entire lives, even if they don't stay in sports." She looked back at Jules and then smiled at me, "Although, soon enough they'll find what a firm, toned body can do for their social life!"

I filled in a form with information about basic health and diet information as Angela continued, "And also let me thank you for the fresh fruits. We're an hour round trip from the town and it's hard keeping 60 healthy and active kids properly provisioned!"

She did a few more simple tests on me, "You and Erin seem to share a good physiological makeup; strong, fairly dense bone structure and good muscle mass. She's very lucky, artistic gymnastics is a high impact sport which requires a high power-to-weight ratio, so the bone density is critical, otherwise we'd be risking stress-fractures at the intense training level she's in. And we are expecting her to excel at the Novice level.

"That's it. Now I have to go to the mainland and round up the parents and get them organized to be ferried over to the island. So why don't you and JulieAnn find Erin - she's helping out at the food table. She was somewhat insistent on that job. For you, I think." Angela smiled and dismissed me.

I wandered out to the beach where Jules was surrounded by a crowd. As I drew near I realized the interest was not so much in MiniMax or Jules as a pilot, but it was in Jules the model, as they gawked at her pictures in the boating catalog.

"Hi love!" Jules waved to me, "And here is the OTHER reason modeling is fun! You get to meet cute hunks!" She gave me a hug.

"He's just Erin's brother!"

"Lookit! That's him here!" There was frantic flipping of the catalog pages, "And here!" Almost worshipfully, I thought. "He's so fat!" But I could have been wrong.

"Have you finished all your tasks?" I asked, then added the magic phrase, "Angela's gonna be checking!" The crowd vanished in an eye blink.

"Don't you find being a public figure really exhausting? I'm famished!" I said as I took Jules' hand.

"Ah," She smiled, "Then we'd better get some food in you before you lose your charming boyish figure!" She patted my tummy, "Although I think you've already got enough charm for two here!"

We found Erin at the hotdog stand and she quickly shoved 2 in my hands. "Now see if you can finish these without scaring the kiddies too much!"

"Yeah!" Jules laughed, "We don't tell him it's dinnertime until we're halfway through. He sits and the meal's gone!"

I finished the dogs as they were still chittering away. "MORE!" I snarled at them as I grabbed Jules arm and started nibbling on it.

She leaned over and bit my ear, "Yeah baby, eat me! Give Mama a good lickin'!"

"Guys!" Erin hissed, "You're embarrassing me!" and handed me another dog and a juice.

"And stop wiping your mouth all over me!"

By the time I finished the food they were giggling and swapping gossip like long lost friends.

"JulieAnn, can we talk to you a bit?" Ami was with another girl, even taller and very pretty. "This is my friend Cara, and, uh, we wanted to know if we can go into modeling as well."

"I can get in touch with our agent and find out." She smiled. "But I don't see why not - if you can spare the time, that is."

"This is probably our last year. I'm getting a little too tall and big for competitive gymnastics." Ami said sadly, then, "And Cara's 14 and she's like 5'-5" already!"

"You know you must have your parents' go ahead first?"

"Yeah, we figured we'd check with you and then talk to them when they get here."

"Yeah, do that, I'll be here or down at the plane." She smiled as they ran off.

The place had started to fill with visitors so I took Jules to get some dessert and fruits and went and ate at the water's edge. Jules came back from the Ultralight and opened up a book, "The Synergy of Mathematics and Business, a Treatise".

"You know, I get all these charts and analyses of current and projected income from the companies and nobody ever tells you how they're derived? It's like they have public relations talking about accountants talking about management and nobody understands where the others are coming from!" She sighed as she leaned against my leg, "So I guess I'll have to learn all three to really get to know what they're saying!"

"And you can't wear a bra while you're doing that?"

"I took it off, that outfit's HOT!"

"You can say that again!" I leered as my mind supplied the details.

"Besides, most of the girls aren't wearing bras!"

"Most of the girls don't have what you have, love!"

She looked up and took a slow deep breath, "You think so?" she smiled happily, "What about Ami and Cara?"

"Hmm, that Cara sure looks yummy!" I ran a finger lightly along the side of JulieAnn's breast and we watched her nipple grow. "Of course I'll need to verify that; after all, looks CAN be deceiving!"

"Mmmm, don't worry love, IF and when the time comes, I can do the verifying, so don't put yourself out!" She sighed and squirmed on me, "Mmm, James stop. I can't study..."

"I was hoping for some distraction here."

"Distract yourself, I'm not going to let you make me flunk this Friday!" She turned her back to me and started reading.

I had just drifted off when Erin's voice woke me, "See I told you he's here!"

I roused myself, "Hi Mom, Dad!"

"Hello James... JulieAnn!" Mom hugged me and took Jules' hand.

"Hello James." Dad shook my hand, "JulieAnn..." Dad looked at her, "The numnut" not quite making it to his lips. "Erin tells me you FLEW up here?"

"Yeah Dad, Jules is an instructor at the Flight Park..."

"That's right, Mr Mitchell," Jules took over smoothly, "I hold a BFI flight instructor's license which allows me to fly ultralights and give solo-ing instructions on them."

"This" Dad pointed, "This is an Ultralight? An airplane?"

"Yes, the ultralights are designed to be as safe as technology can make them. In fact they have the best safety record per passenger-mile of any form of transportation. Can I show you and Mrs Mitchell around?" Without waiting for an answer she took Dad's hand and led them to MiniMax.

"Uh-oh, more trouble!" Erin nudged me, "That's Ami and her parents... and Cara and HER parents!"

Erin made introductions and Ami's father said, "Ami informs me that you helped her get her, er..."

"Tkatchev!" Ami supplied.

"Yeah, that. Thank you very much!"

"Yeah! Thanks!" Ami gave me a quick peck on the cheek.

"And she also says you and your friend are models?"

"Well, we've only just started..." Ami produced the catalog and started showing it to them. I continued, "We did this one and then, last week, we were on another shoot, also with boats, but out of State."

"Did you fly there?" Cara asked.

"We could have, but we sailed there on our boat."

Jules came back with the folks, saying, "...the BRS can deploy anywhere above 300 feet to lower the craft and her passengers to safety." She paused for Erin to make introductions again.

"JulieAnn has been telling us about her flying school at the Lake." Mom announced proudly.

"And the capabilities of her Airplane!" Dad sounded indecently pleased too.

"But what about this?" The others waved the catalog about.

"I told Ami and Cara to consult with you, and make sure it is alright with you first." Jules answered, "Then we can speak to our agent."

"Are they old enough?"

"Oh, models can be any age; in fact," Jules flipped to another picture, "Amanda's even younger than them!" In a whisper, "D'you know what she's studying for?" She blinked, "Engineering! That's a rule we have, if you want to model and have fun, you'll have to study and make yourself the best person you can be. Otherwise you'll just concentrate on the fun and easy things and forget about the important things in life."

"In the summer too?"

"Yes, ALL the time." Jules paused, "It's like your training, do you think you can get this far by taking time off all the time?"

"No," Ami agreed, "We have to do our exercises even when we're on holiday. Every day."

"And that's why you're good at it, right?" They nodded. "It's the same with your brains. If you want it to be any good, you can't stop exercising it." She stopped, "It's the RULE! Take it or leave it!" There were nods and smiles all around. "Now the studying is not just talk." Jules cautioned, "It's very serious, in fact James and I will have our exams this Friday. On EVERY subject, all at once."

"Oh my god! Really!?"

"Oh yes, I have to finish another grade next month, and James, he has to get his high school diploma and start University!"

"How's that going?" Mom asked me.

"Pretty good, except I had to take time off to visit my sister."

"Don't blame me, you volunteered!"

"And you could've brought your books along!" Jules scoffed, "_I_ did!"

Mom looked at the others, "We've very impressed at what these young people have done for themselves. They have a paying summer job, plus a job modeling; they study hard and never once complained."

Dad nodded appraisingly at Jules, "Quite the pleasant surprise, I assure you!"

Jules smiled, "You still have one more week of gym camp, so why don't I arrange a meeting for you to meet with our agent in ten days or so?"

The loudspeakers began calling for our attendance in the main gym. They turned to go and Cara's voice drifted back, "Did he say they have their OWN boat?" and another voice, "Did you SEE the name of the book she was reading?"

Smiling, Jules took my hand and followed them to where Angela was starting her welcoming speech, then she continued, "I want to take this chance to speak with you about nutrition and your daughters. With such an intense training program, it is imperative that they get the right amount of nutrition and IN THE RIGHT RATIOS!"

"All too often we just look at the large numbers and ignore the details, which could be dangerous for an athlete training at the edge of her abilities. Your daughters need carbs and protein, true, but don't forget her sugars and fat!"

At the gasps from the audience, she smiled, "See? The popular press has you believing that all sugar and fat is bad, but omit to say NO sugar and fat is equally undesirable! Now most of us get enough sugar and fat from our snacks - a pop here or a bag of chips there is all we need. But these ladies are on a strict regimen, so there may not be as many chances for them to get the correct amounts of sugar and fat!

"NO - I'm not suggesting you start eating chips and drinking pop! Sugar is alright in small quantities; and fat should be in the form of polyunsaturates, like vegetable or olive oils and NOT butter or animal fat.

"We have spent the last week compiling an exhaustive chart of your daughter's physical makeup and a recommended diet for her.

"Let me warn you, a diet, contrary to what TV may want you to think, is NOT a short term, one-off feeding program. A diet is a regimen she should follow rigorously for the long term. And we will have to monitor her as her body develops and its needs change."

"What about BMI?" A hand rose and a voice asked.

"Good question. Anybody know what BMI, or Body Mass Indicator is?" She waited for the murmurs to fade, "Simply put, it is a STATISTICAL representation of an AVERAGE person." She paused, "But let me emphasize it now, your daughters' bodies ARE NOT AVERAGE!" She waved Erin up, "The gymnast's body has 25% more bone density, 50 to 100% more muscle mass and less than HALF the fat of the average. She simply does not fit into the norm that BMI uses as a basis!" She turned to me, "And this is Erin's brother. He's an athlete from the other end of the spectrum, he has the muscle tone and bone mass for weight support and dexterity. His fat content is also less than half of the average person, yet according to his BMI, he is dangerously overweight!" She waited for the laughter to subside, "So you see the danger of following a popular indicator blindly."

"Now, so you don't go away thinking BMI is not useful," She waved Jules forward to a sea of oohs and gasps of wonder, "This young lady is the perfect specimen for the BMI model. She has the ideal median mix of muscle, bone and fat as used by the BMI calculations.

"Those of you who want to find out more about our concepts of nutrition should look up 'Modern Nutrition in Health and Disease' in your libraries. The section on 'Fads and Quackery' is a particularly interesting read. It outlines how our press and news media are being manipulated into changing our lifestyle into one of expensive artificially enhanced supplements instead of relying on natural and inexpensive dietary changes."

Angela continued with an explanation of the training schedule and the goals set for each group of girls. Then the girls went and gave demonstrations of their skills.

Ami completed her Tkatchev to great applause and gave me a grinning finger-gun. Then Erin showed us her 'Mitchell'. We went around to congratulate them, Mom with tears in her eyes and Dad pumping Erin's hand madly. Cara presented her Floor routine and mesmerized us with her flowing, dreamy dance moves, punctuated by 4 separate tumbling lines, ending with a high flying double front in the tucked position.

Everyone was in fine spirits, but, after a short mingling period, most had to leave for the long drive home.

They got warm hugs from Erin and Jules. Then Mom took my hand as I leaned to kiss her goodbye as they left in the ferry, "Keep up the good work son. Concentrate on your studies and stay focused!"

Dad took my hand, "Listen to your Mom! We're very proud of you! All of you!" His fond look took in Jules as well.

Chapter 52

"Can I get a ride on your plane?" Erin asked.

Jules grinned, still waving at the folks on the departing ferry, "Hmmm, I wonder why it didn't occur to you before? Sure, but let's clear it with Angela first!" We waited until the boat was docked before heading to where Angela stood talking with a group of parents.

"Angela, we're going to get some gas for the plane, do you want us to pick up some more fruit?" At Angela's nod, Jules continued, "We're gonna ask Erin to help us, OK?" Angela nodded again before turning back to the group.

"You know, I'm gonna be so dead once she finds out we pulled a fast one on her!" Erin smiled.

"Well, if you rather not risk it..."

"No, no. I'll chance it." Erin looked at me, "You're cool with it, right?"

"Yeah, enjoy yourself. I know Jules is good and the plane's safe... In fact, maybe next weekend I can come pick you up," I said, as we untied the plane and turned it around for takeoff. "I SHOULD have my license then... And also provided I survive Friday's exam, that is. Let me talk to Mom and we can fly straight to the lake and stay the day."

"Oh awesome!" Erin's eyes lit up. "Thanks!"

"OK, let's make this a flight lesson then," Jules said, "We'll cover the basics and then you can help your poor brother next week." then aside, "He's kinda slow at things, you know!" They shared a knowing smile.

They did the walkaround, as Jules pointed out the various control surfaces and links. "Now, aside from making sure everything's tight, nothing's leaking and there's enough gas, this is the next most important thing." She climbed up and started wiping the windshield down, "From a mile away, this plane looks like a fly-splat. But in a head-on situation, that distance is covered in 15 seconds!"

I buckled Erin in and adjusted the intercom over her head. "Aren't you coming?"

"No, the plane only has two proper seats, and you'll need the space for the fruit." Jules helped me clear all the gear from the back and strapped herself in, giving me a kiss and thumbs up as I slid the cockpit closed.

They taxied out into the lake and Jules made a beautifully elegant takeoff, did a loop and waggled her wings as she zoomed by. In a minute she had all but disappeared.

I spread the beach towel out and flipped open Jules' Financial textbook. All the words appeared to be in English but nothing made any sense to me. After the first chapter I gave up and dove into the water. I swam a quarter mile out in the cold crystalline water and back crawled towards the beach, watching an osprey wheel and tumble in the clear blue sky.

I got out of the water and Ami and Cara were sunning themselves, still in their leotards and watching me. "Can I have the towel please?" They jumped up and handed it to me.

"Where's Erin?" Ami asked.

"She's gone for a ride with Jules." I pointed downriver.

"Oh, she's so lucky!" Ami pouted, "You think we..."

"Not today, somehow I don't think Angela's gonna like the idea. But let me mention it to Jules and we can arrange something..." I said, then, "Where's everybody disappeared to?"

"They're all on the shore side with sports and swimming." Ami pointed behind her, "We're part of the KP crew but dinner's a bit delayed because of the parents."

"How come nobody's swimming here?"

"It's deeper and there's more current here so we're not allowed to swim without supervision." Cara replied, blushing sweetly.

"You mean if I had started drowning, you wouldn't have come to save me?"

"I couldn't swim that far anyways!" Cara laughed.

"Me neither! I sink like a stone." Ami nodded.

"That's the problem with most athletes, there's not enough fat in your bodies to maintain decent buoyancy." I laughed, "The secret is to develop a good strong kick that can keep your head out of the water. Otherwise you'll develop the bad habit of taking shallow breaths, afraid of sinking once you release it."

"Can I ask you why you're, so... analytical about these things? Like the problem with my legs throwing my Tkatchev timing off, Brian said he was just noticing it!"

"I think I can blame it on my wrestling training, where timing is crucial. A split second is all you have to decide if it is an attack or just a feint. I'm not as strong as some of my competition, so I have to rely on speed and leverage to win my matches, and THAT makes being able to read body language and judge timing extra critical. And I'm glad the *click* is working for you. It was a very impressive routine you did!"

Ami grinned, "That was probably the best one I've ever done! Thanks to you!"

I turned, "By the way Cara, that was a very lovely floor routine you did too!"

"Thanks." She squirmed and blushed. "I just got it this year."

"The double front at the end was nice too!"

"It wasn't, really... I had to pull it - I was going to step out." Cara shook her head, "But I took that step anyways."

"But yeah, look at how much you had to relearn!" Ami said, adding, "Cara grew over 6 inches the last year, mostly in her legs."

"And 15 pounds..." Cara added, sighing.

"And THAT was mostly in her..."

"Stoppit! It's not nice!" Cara yelled and blushed.

"Well, anyways, it really screwed up her centers of rotation, right?"

"Yeah, I lost all my bars skills and had to redo everything starting from hip-circles." She sighed, "Last summer we went on a long vacation and I got really tired and lazy, but I was hungry all the time..."

"And don't forget Josh!"

"I TOLD you never to talk about it!" Cara yelled, incensed. "Anyways, it was a disaster all around. I came back 10 pounds heavier and had to get new leotards." She sighed, "And outgrew THOSE a month later."

"But you had more power, right?" I asked.

"I guess..." Cara looked at me, "How could you tell?"

"Timing, again." I smiled, "Your run up to the vault had extra steps..."

"How do you mean?"

"The run up is designed to generate maximum speed for your vault trick, right?" She nodded, "Well you reached maximum speed two strides before you did your roundoff. Which says to me that you USED to need those two extra steps to get to speed, but all it means now is that you're actually starting to slow, plus it's tiring you out quicker!"

Cara thought about it, "I'll try that, although when we were working on the floor tumbling lines, we had to take 3 steps out, mainly because my strides are that much longer... but, yeah, you're right, even starting on my wrong foot, I'm getting better height and speed!" She smiled happily, "I just have to watch my landings is all!"

"And I'll bet I can tell you where else you've improved in!"

"Where?"

"Your dance! Hasn't your dancing become a lot more expressive?"

"Oh yeah!" Cara beamed, "And you know, things I did before that were just cute? All of a sudden, they're... sexy!" She concluded with an excited whisper.

"Hey, you wanna show him that step?" Ami pulled her friend up. "We're working on this routine with Erin for our review show. It uses a J-Lo remix."

"She means Jennifer Lopez..." Cara explained, as if to a geriatric.

"He knows who she is!" Ami peered at me, "Don't you?" as if to a geriatric.

"Yes," I blinked, "I was young, once."

"OK then," They took a stance, arms crossed in back, feet shoulder width apart, Ami hummed a beat, then counted off, "1, 2, 1-2-3-4! Hey - hey!"

They launched into a sequence of intricate footwork, somewhat reminiscent of the Charleston, legs and arms flashing, along with a few very interesting parts of their bodies. They flung their hair and sang, "You gotta move it... You gotta do it... Do it! Huh! Huh! Boom-shaaaa!" They froze, heads down, just bouncing on their heels to keep time. Their limpid eyes peered out from under their hair and they slowly raised their arms at me, "You gotta do it... NOW!"

They collapsed in a giggling heap. Finally Cara sat facing me, "What do you think?" She said breathily.

I moaned, holding up an arm, "C-can't talk. Heart attack!" They burst out laughing again, and, after we slowly caught our breath, I added, "Do your parents KNOW what you're planning?"

"Yeah," Ami laughed, "They saw parts of it before. But Dad was watching Cara all the time!"

"You're both very watchable!" I concluded.

"You think so?" Cara glowed, "So you think we can be models?"

"Oh, for sure! Without a doubt!"

"What bothers me," Ami said, "Is that I'm not a very good student."

"It's not that hard - it really boils down to focus and following a schedule. And not getting distracted by TV or friends on the phone."

"I don't have many friends at school. I talk to Cara and Erin more than anyone else."

"Same here. They've given up on me - I could never go to the movies or parties with them." Cara sighed.

"But look at what this has given you," I said, "You've traveled around, met new friends the world over, you've learned so much more about yourselves and your strengths. Plus got these very watchable bodies!" I added with a big grin. "And, you know the best part?" I looked at them, "You can STILL go to movies and parties after this! So you haven't really missed anything..."

Cara nodded slowly and began to smile, "Yeah, I guess, overall, I haven't missed anything I can't do later... It's just hard..." She stopped at the humming noise.

I looked up, pointing, "The plane's back..."

The fly-splat in the sky grew as we watched and soon we could see JulieAnn's blond hair streaming as she tugged the cockpit back. The plane paralleled the beach, 30 feet from us and about 10 feet off the surface. Jules shrugged, lifting both hands in the air. Next to her, Erin was wearing her av-shades and a shit-eating grin as she piloted them to the end of the strand and angled out to the middle of the bay.

The plane drifted down on flaps, tickled the water's surface and pulled up again. Light as a dragonfly's dance, Erin repeated the routine 3 more times before allowing the plane to settle into the lake and steering back towards land.

They were all smiles as we greeted them on the beach and tied down. They passed down the cases of fruit and we carried them to the commissary while Erin jumped up and down with excitement.

"Didya SEE! Three touch-and-go's! Ten more hours and I can get my license!" but quickly added "After my tests." at Jules' look.

"Erin's REALLY good." Jules agreed, "Her training gives her really quick hand-eye coordination, and an incredible depth perception! Normally, we can judge distances up to about 6 feet, but I guess in gymnastics, you have to be good to 30 feet, or maybe even more." She grinned at me, "She could tell the instant we were gonna touch down."

We left the crates in cold storage and sat to sample the produce. "James..." Erin started slowly, "I think I might want to do modeling too..."

"No Erin!" Cara snapped, shocking all of us, as she took Erin's hands, "Don't SAY that. Don't ever feel you're being left out because you've taken up gymnastics. You have the gift, and you owe it to yourself to make the most of it... And anytime you feel abandoned, say to yourself, 'I can ALWAYS be a model, or go to parties. But NONE of the others can EVER be a gymnast, or do what I've done!' Do you understand?" Cara blinked her tears back, "James explained it to us and... feeling the way I do now, I would rather be doing gymnastics than anything else in the world! So you HAVE to be good at it, for yourself, and for us who CAN'T do it anymore!" The tears were flowing freely now as Erin hugged her back.

Erin smiled tearfully at her friends, "Thanks, I guess you're right... and I'm gonna do it! I'm gonna make the National Team and take this as far as I can!"

"Erin, there's nothing more valuable in life than good friends," Jules took our hands, "We all have to face many problems on our own, but they're much more SOLVABLE knowing that we have good, dependable friends to support us." She smiled, "And I think you know that those friends are here, around you..." We all hugged and got teary again.

Finally Jules said, "Guys, we have to get going now, but as soon as I hear from our agent I'll let you know, OK?"

Arm in arm, they walked us to the plane, then wordlessly, everybody hugged. Erin gave me a kiss and then grabbed Jules again, "Thanks, Jules, you're so COOL!" and helped us with our walkaround and prepped us for flight.

I made the takeoff in the pilot's seat and I tipped the wings as I circled them and they waved and blew kisses at us from the ground as we flew over the river, homeward bound.

The route took us on a South-Easterly direction and behind us, the sun was beginning to paint the sky in warm pastel colors, like a brightly colored brush drawn through still-wet blue paint.

Ahead, the moon and the first stars were making a ghostly appearance, silently preparing for their command performance in a few hours. There was a pause in the activities of the land below, as if taking a deep breath, savoring the end of the day before settling to rest.

I looked at Jules and sighed happily.

"Did you say something?" She glittered.

I looked her up and down, "I said, 'So much woman, so little time!'"

She smiled widely, "I could've sworn you said, 'So MANY women, so little time!'"

"That too..." I took her hand and kissed it. "But nothing will ever convince me that I would ever find anybody better than you, my sweet."

"Oh my!" She dimpled, "Such lovely words! Makes me want to throw myself in your arms and let you have your way with me!" She paused, "But I won't, not until we get back."

"Why not?"

"Because the lake is not equipped for night landings, and I would like a nice long fuck from you. No more quickies for THIS chickie today! Thank you very much." She crossed her arms over her chest.

I looked at my chickie's lovely attributes and turned to rap a finger on the indicator, "Can't this tub go any faster?"

Chapter 53

We flew MiniMax over the Eyrie and it was dark and empty, so I landed at the Marina, after promising Jules extra touch-and-go's because I had "dropped us like a stone".

Sara was alone on the couch, curled up with a stack of books. She greeted our kisses blearily.

"How long have you been studying?" Jules asked.

"Oh, a couple of hours; since five, right after my folks left."

"And where're the others?"

"Celeste and Nicole are still in town - Celeste has another interview tomorrow morning. And Amanda took Sherri to work on Gyro..."

"Funny, they weren't in the Lake, just now..." I commented, looking around, "Any food here? Did you eat yet?"

"We had sandwiches around 4, but that's it." Sara stretched, "I'll start some veggies and steaks."

"Why don't we go look for the others first, you need to stretch your legs."

Sara got shoes on as I pulled out some steaks to defrost. Then arm in arm we went outside and into the marina.

"James, must you have your hand on my ass?" Sara murmured.

"I'm making sure the wind doesn't flip your T up and expose you to the world!"

"Didn't your parents have something to say about that?" Jules laughed.

"No, I changed out of my swimsuit when I showered." Sara said, "Although they looked quite a few times at my bikini! And Mom asked why I had no tan lines!" She giggled.

"And...?"

"Well there are no guys here, right? So we can tan in the nude..." More giggles, "And then Mom said, 'Wow! What happened to the young lady who wouldn't change unless she had a towel around herself?'" After a pause, Sara murmured, "Jules, do YOU need your hand on me as well?"

"Just making sure the wind doesn't flip the other side up." Was her answer.

The workshop in the rear was ablaze with lights and Max and the girls were there working on the VW-powered plane. Amanda and Sherri greeted us enthusiastically.

They were in the process of stretching the Stitz microfiber over the wings. Each half of the 25 foot long assembly was constructed from wooden "D"-forms that shaped the wing surface. The leading edges were finished with tapered spacers and thinner laths on the upper and lower surfaces gave additional support.

"We borrowed this post-stressing idea from Celeste." Amanda smiled, "The main spars were made from oversized composited 2x2's and after assembly, we ran this cable through it to compress the structure. That gives us 40% more strength with 50% less bracings... But it is the 250% torsional strength that'll let us run rings around the original design..."

"Aren't these awfully big stabilizers?" I asked. The two set of wings were almost identical in size. "And aren't the main wings a bit small?"

"Ah!" Amanda grinned, "This is not a monoplane! It's a staggered canard bi-plane, or a tandem wing!" She led me to the blueprint on the wall, which showed the side view of a conventional looking plane, but its main wings were further back, behind the cockpit, and it had the smaller set of wings directly over the landing gears. There were no rear stabilizers, just a rudder.

"This is the so-called Scotch Canard, developed at the University of Glasgow. Because we get lift from both sets of wings, with only 26 feet main span, we still get under 10lb/sq inch loading, but the real advantage is its inherent attitude authority. Tell him Sherri!"

"Er, well, I've just started learning this, but all planes have to have a negative attitude for stall control. In other words, the plane has to have its weight ahead of the center of lift so that when it stalls, it dives to pick up the necessary speed to regain control. But that nose down tendency has to be compensated by an offsetting elevator pitch, which translates to wasted power and inefficiency." She took a deep breath, "In cases when different loads can drastically change the Center of Gravity, the main wings may end up 20% behind the optimal. The canard plane, on the other hand, automatically pitches forward as we lose lift from the smaller front wings, so it is inherently safer and more efficient."

"One drawback of the canard design," Amanda continued as Sherri stopped to catch her breath, "Had been the pitching caused by the differences in performance from the 2 wings at various speeds; which the Scotch design all but eliminates."

"Of course the main reason the canard isn't more popular is because it's too stable!" Sara added, laughing, "That makes it useless for acrobatic and combat aircraft. And with the Air Force funding most, if not all, the flight research these days, there's hardly any work done on the design that the Wright Brothers used to discover flight!"

"But all this just makes the design perfect for a simple 2-seater using an air-cooled automobile engine!" Amanda smiled, "Which Max finally got running today!"

"Come, let me show you!" Max enthused as he led us to the small engine mounted on wooden blocks, "This is a Long Block 1835cc Type 1 VeeDub with the solid lifters." A heavy belt ran around a pulley on the engine, weighted at one end and attached to a scale on the other was, as Max proudly declared, "My dynamometer! The weight simulates the propeller load on the engine and, once we figured out the friction, we can calculate the HP by the scale here." He grinned at Sara fondly, "And your little Sara showed me how! Right?"

Sara laughed, "Only we can't run it more than 20 minutes before the belt overheats. The next one will use an alternator as load and we can use the output to measure both the HP and the torque."

Amanda added, "And we've even got the electric starter wired up." At Max's nod, she pressed a switch to start the engine as Sherri took a clipboard and started noting readings on it. The little 4-cylinder job filled the place with a competent rumble. Max added throttle, watching Sherri until she nodded, then he turned the ignition off.

"The problem with car engines is that they are designed for peak power at 4000rpm and up, whereas aircraft propellers can only spin at 3500rpm or less," Amanda filled in, "At that speed, the prop-tips would already be traveling above the speed of sound, which causes shock waves and wasted energy." She went around and hugged Sara, "But Ms Genius here has a plan to pop a 'C' transmission box on it and run it with just 2 out of 4 cylinders. Tell them, honey."

"The engine's output is an inverted bathtub curve which levels off around 5800rpm so I figure the 'C' transfer box with a 1.84 ratio would spin the prop at 3500rpm with cruise at 2750rpm. By removing the unused cylinder heads and pistons, we can just about offset the weight of the 'C' box. The 2-cylinder job should give us 35% better fuel efficiency at about the same power..." She trailed off as she looked at the chart Sherri was compiling, "Hmmm, 10 percent more? That much?" She looked at Sherri, "Let's run that test through again..."

They started up the engine again and began checking and making notes.

"We're going back to get washed up... Don't be long!" I yelled in Sara's ear, as I waved goodbye to Max and led Jules back to the Wheel.

"Are you ready to be done by an expert?"

"What - in the bathroom?" Jules giggled, "You're SO kinky!"

== =

The girls were sprawled out over the sofa and looking at us with bemused smiles when we came out. Jules was still giggling and draped weakly on me. She threw herself onto the sofa atop the girls as I sat at the end next to Sherri.

"You two look very satisfied!" Amanda laughed as she stroked JulieAnn's naked back.

"Mmmm, I've just been done by an expert!" Jules sighed, nuzzling against Sara.

"By the sound effects inside, we weren't sure how long you'd be..." Sara said, her voice fading as Jules managed to get her face under the T.

"So we waited before starting dinner..." Amanda added.

"Oh, honey," Sara gently pulled Jules off her, "Let's do this later - dinner first, OK?"

They shared a little kiss as Sara got up.

"Here," Amanda grabbed a T-shirt for Jules, "Put this on in case Marjorie comes back for her pot - she gave us a stew for our meal."

"What about James?" Sherri said, leaning on me, "He's got no clothes here!"

"You can give him your shirt!" Amanda laughed as she and Jules made their way to help Sara, arms around each other, "Or you can hide him in the john again..."

"Or we can do this." I suggested, as I pulled Sherri over my lap.

"But I'll have to sit with my knees together!" Sherri laughed, "Peek-a-boo!" She flashed me and looked down at the results. "Gosh, you're SO tiny!" She laughed.

"Hey! You're giving me a complex!"

"Ohh, poor baby!" She slid off and over my lap, "But he's CUTE!" and gave it a kiss. She looked up, eyes aglow, "Better now?"

"Hmmm, a TINY bit better."

She took me in her mouth and licked it. She looked at the results, "Wait, let me guess, a LITTLE better?" and bent back down to her task. We were up to SUBSTANTIALLY better when Sherri stopped, "What are you guys looking at?"

"We're just trying to learn from you!" Jules laughed, "I don't think any of us could get him hard so soon after... after..." she blushed.

"The EXPERT treatment?"

"Yeah, that!" She sighed.

"Maybe you would like to demonstrate?"

"No - it's best done in the shower."

"Don't worry about it - just describe it and Sherri will demonstrate, OK?" Amanda laughed, "If it's agreeable with you, James!" She smirked as Sherri began to move her head up and down quite agreeably. I could only sigh and blink.

"OK, then," Jules said, "So like assuming you're both nice and wet, right?" I had no problem verifying that indeed Sherri was VERY nice and VERY wet where she was touching me. "And you sorta place yourself where James can have no trouble getting both hands in your hair..." I demonstrated as I gathered up Sherri's soft locks.

"So far this sounds like the 'Same old, same old' to me!" Amanda said to Sara.

Sherri pulled off me, "Is there a lot more to the story? I get the impression someone's gonna jump to the conclusion real soon."

"Oh, that's it..." Jules shrugged.

"That's it - what?" Sherri ignored my frantic jabs at her lips.

"Then he starts shampooing..."

Dead silence, then they burst out laughing, Sherri burying her face in my groin and choked out her glee, while I tried to look dignified with my erection beating time in her hand.

They wailed their merriment and, just as they were recovering, Sherri waved my cock at them, "Just watch, Marjorie's gonna walk in here right now!" Which renewed their inane chortling.

Finally Sherri managed to wheeze out, "S-sorry James!" She popped me into her mouth and managed a couple of licks before she gave up and started cackling again.

"Now you're REALLY giving me a complex!" Which, for some reason got them rolling on the floor too.

"Oh honey, I'm really sorry!" Sherri grimaced with tears streaming down her face. "Don't be mad, OK?" She rolled over and unbuttoned her jeans, "Gimme a hand..." Together we slid the jeans off her. She climbed on my lap and kissed me, "No more jokes..." Her eyes closed as she reached down and inserted me inside herself. "Just love me, OK?" She groaned, then shivered.

"Does it hurt?"

"No - just feels so FULL..." She sighed and made slow strokes on me, her head nestled in my neck. Gradually she worked herself fully on me, sighing her little shivery climaxes. She started moving jerkily on me as her excitement built, then, wrapping her arms tightly around me, she ground out her pleasure.

"Mmmm, can you go on top, love?" She murmured softly, "Too weak..."

Still joined, I rolled us over the sofa with Sherri grunting softly each time I jabbed into her.

"Ahh, ohh, James... I'm close!" I maintained even strokes in her until she started shaking under me and she pulled me against her. I increased my thrusts in her and my actions became more frantic as my cock flexed and choked out its climax deep in her heat. Sherri clutched my hair and held our faces together as we shook and quivered, completely lost to our feelings.

"Mmmm, I love you James..." She stroked my hair as I nibbled on her ear lobe.

"I love you Sher..."

She stroked along my back and down to my ass, holding me in her as she murmured her joy. We held each other until I slipped out of her and the girls were there to help us clean up.

I sat up as Amanda and Sara gently cleaned me with a warm cloth while Jules did the same for Sherri, adding little kisses as she wiped.

"Mmmm, Jules, that's soooo nice..." Sherri breathed, "This is what I call being pampered." Her eyes closed as she shivered delicately, then eased JulieAnn up and they shared a soft kiss.

Jules smiled and stroked Sherri's face, "Let's make sure we spend some time together. I'd like to get to know you a lot, lot better!" They sighed and kissed again.

"James, let's stay here at the Marina tonight," Sara said, "And then we can catch Celeste's interview in the restaurant in the morning."

"As long as there's food." I shrugged.

"Oh, for sure!" Amanda laughed, "We wouldn't dare starve you!" We trooped over to the eating counter and they had made salad and potatoes but had left the steaks until we could eat together.

Sara made full use of the kitchen Celeste had installed - a modernized version of the one Nicole had at home; a 4-burner Propane range with a griddle in the center, dual ovens and a 1200cfm ventilation hood. There was even beer in the built-in fridge.

We watched Sara as she seared the steaks to perfection and prepared two in a garlic-herb sauce and the rest in a spicy peppery condiment, each garnished with a generous dollop of butter.

"So tell us about your parents' visit!" I urged as I finished my food and began invading theirs.

"But first, tell us about the EXPERT Treatment!" Sherri asked Jules, "I can understand the shampoo bit, but all that bumping and moaning at the end COULDN'T have been from that!"

"No," Jules grinned, "After he did me, AND rinsed AND repeated, I was like putty in his hands..." She sighed, "So I was powerless to stop him from satisfying his animal lust on me..." She glowed, "Besides, by then we could've screwed on TV and I wouldn't have cared."

"How come you don't do things like that for the rest of us?" Amanda rested her head on me.

"I DID!" I protested, "The first time...?"

"Oh yeah - I guess," Amanda sighed, "But I was already putty in your hands..." She stopped, "Hmmm, was that why I ended up on my knees again getting my jaw rearranged?" She looked at the girls, "And I was so ashamed! All week at school I couldn't talk to anybody - I was SURE everybody could see I had been lewdly USED by the heartless brute!" She leaned on my arm and bit me, very tenderly.

"Oh, we KNEW!" Sherri laughed. "The day Amanda Cipola shows up at school and NOT talk, we all hear about it - it was announced over the school PA system!"

"Oh it was horrible! I poured my heart out and offered my body." Amanda sighed, "And he turns me down! And I was SO scared I wouldn't see him again!"

"But everything worked out in the end..." Sara hugged her.

"Of course! Thanks to you!" Amanda brightened, "You are my sweetheart!" They kissed tenderly as I snagged her steak.

"Tell us about the visit!" I repeated, as I cut a piece of meat and fed Amanda with it.

Sherri, who was clearing the dishes, giggled, "The first thing they said was, 'Where's the TV?'"

"No!" Amanda laughed from my shoulder, "The first thing was, 'You WEAR that!'"

"Oh yeah," Sherri said. "so we explained that we wore the bikinis just to impress them. And boy! Were they ever!"

"My folks, especially!" Sara added, "To say they were shocked would have been an understatement! But they were more impressed that we were actually studying and not goofing around! Most of all they LOVED M&M! They kept thanking them for looking after us and everything!"

"Oh, and we showed the folks the shots from the catalog and Dad said I can do it!" Sherri glowed. "Start modeling, I mean! But he'd still like to talk to Kelly though!"

"We'll arrange something with her tomorrow." Jules added, "I have to talk to her anyways." The girls led me back to the couch and we curled up on it.

"So we took them out on Gyro 2." Amanda continued, "And... Oh yeah! James, Max found the kiting problem - part of it anyways. The off-shore racing propeller was causing the cavitation, so he put a wider stroke in and it's behaving much better now. Not the eighty-five top end we were hoping for, but much more stable! So, anyways, we took them fishing and Sara and I, we caught five. And Sherri got four all by herself!"

"What were your parents doing?"

"Oh they sat around gabbing and complained about their kids."

"No, our Moms did, our Dads talked golf."

"Yeah, can you believe it? A bunch of grown men talking about whacking a little ball!"

"Does Brenda's Dad play?"

"They didn't come," Sara thought about it, "But I'm sure he does."

"Yeah." Jules added, "My folks are the only ones who don't golf."

"Oh, you poor thing!" Sherri said, "We'll have to try and fill the void left in your life by not having a golf-addict for a Daddy!" They gently touched as they kissed.

"Neither do mine..." I suggested.

"Oh no! That can't be!" Sara laughed, leaning to kiss me, "How horrible! How 'bout if we let you yell 'Fore!' next time you come?"

"Sara! That's disgusting!"

"See what happens when you take a shy, repressed girl and give her confidence?" Sara glowed, "She goes WILD!" She twirled around, hair and T-shirt flying.

"...and pantiless too!" Sherri laughed.

"Come here." I pulled Sara down, "Let me be the first to offer to fill YOUR void!" and slipped my hand over her sex. Quickly the others added their contributions.

Sara sagged against us as she started moaning and shaking. She took a deep shuddering breath and whispered, "Fore..."

Chapter 54

"...then your Mom asks, 'Is Amanda still seeing her boyfriend?'" Sara was saying as she and Amanda came out of the shower.

"So what did you say?" Amanda whispered back as they sat by me to towel dry their hair.

"Well I told her you talk to him on the phone a lot and he came up Saturday and you two went out for dinner; like we discussed!"

"That's good... Did she ask anything else?"

"Only about the time he left, so I said you came back around 9, or 9:30."

"Whew, that's good. She'd worry if we stopped seeing each other. Of course she'd worry if we're seeing too much of each other too!" She paused, "Ooooh, Sara, what big hands you have!" They watched as I ran my hand along her thigh and up to a breast, with long soft strokes up the sides to the tip.

Sara leaned down and kissed me as Amanda nestled over my side.

"Good morning! They've gone over to the restaurant." Amanda supplied as I glanced over at the other bed, where Jules and Sherri had spent most of the night. "But we're here..." she murmured throatily.

"So am I correct in saying the minute I turned my back you started seeing somebody else? And having dinner with him as well?" I said as I eased Sara's body over mine.

"And why not? He was a perfect gentleman!" Amanda pulled my hand off and kissed it before placing it back on her breast, "Not like some guys I know!"

"Yeah, you have to watch it - there are some real animals out there." I agreed as I played with her nipple.

"Hmm, what's this animal squirming under me, I wonder?" Sara smiled.

"Come here..." I pulled her up and kissed her, allowing my cock to slip up between her thighs. "THAT animal is looking for a home..."

"Mmmm, is this a real thing, or are we gonna get interruptus for pee-us?"

"Try me!" I grinned and pushed up, as Sara reached back to help.

"Oh, slowly, I'm still dry."

"How can you be dry after coming out of the shower?"

"Fat lot you know!" Amanda turned down, "Let me help..." She leaned to lick Sara and trailed her tongue down, then she sucked me in her hot mouth and ran her tongue around.

"Ahhh..." I sighed, as Amanda reinserted me in Sara's soft, tight cunt. The shower may not have been wet, but it made her twice as hot inside. Sara started lubricating immediately and began humping herself deeper as I sighed in contentment. When she had completely surrounded me with her incredible warmth, she moaned shakily, and Amanda leaned up and kissed her, softly at first, lips grazing lightly, then their tongues met and slowly wove around each other, Sara's cunt squeezing me as they locked their mouths together. They were shaking and grunting into each other as Sara slipped her hand down to Amanda's groin.

I held Sara's ass tightly against me as I began making short thrusts in her, matching myself to Amanda's moans as she grabbed Sara's hand and worked it deep inside herself.

With a small shriek, Sara started coming, shivering as she transferred her lips on mine. Then Mandie started moaning and shaking, a hand gripping Sara's at her cunt while the other pressed mine against her breast.

Gradually their thrashing slowed and Amanda turned and buried her face in my neck, murmuring, "I love you, I love you..." interspersed with little kisses.

"Do you want to trade places?" Sara murmured.

"Do you?"

"Not really..." Sara sighed weakly, "Feels good..."

"Go ahead, finish him," Amanda whispered, "Let me watch you two come..."

=====

We took another shower and met Sherri and Jules in the restaurant carrying food out from the kitchen.

"We saw you guys staggering over," Sherri laughed, "Must have been hard work..." she kissed us, "We've got the place until 10." She sat and took Jules' hand.

"And the food is all yours - we've eaten already." Jules leaned her head on Sherri, "In all senses of the word."

"Hmmm, I LIKE eating you!" Sherri nestled warmly against her.

"I would never have believed that such an innocent looking sweetie like you could be so, umm... accomplished!" Jules laughed.

"I had GOOD teachers," Sherri glowed, "VERY explicit training from some of the sickest minds in the country!" She smiled widely and blew kisses at us.

"Hmm, THAT I can believe!" Jules sighed, "They should be very proud of themselves!"

We turned the TV on just as M&M came in and greeted us. Celeste was being introduced as the special guest of the current affairs slot in the morning newscast.

"That's a very lovely outfit you have on!" The commentator gushed as soon as the introductions were done. We nodded in agreement, her slinky cobalt blue one-piece showed a bit of cleavage but it was what it hid that had everybody glued to the set.

Celeste smiled, "Thank you. It's just a hand-me-down." From Dior's Spring Collection, she didn't add.

"Tell us about your remarkable building!" Clips of the construction began flashing on the screen.

"Remarkable it is, but please don't call it MY building. The design was completed twenty years ago by its inventor, Bertram Mueller."

"And where is Mr. Mueller now?"

"Mr Mueller died soon after he finished the design and I was fortunate enough to be shown it by his widow."

"And you decided to build it?"

"Mrs. Mueller, through the Mueller Foundation, kindly offered me the opportunity, for which I am very grateful. We need to be reminded of Mueller's genius and the Wheel is a most eloquent statement."

"That child," Marjorie said as the interview closed, "Is the blessing of my soul." She sighed and held Max's hand. Then she turned and smiled at us, "And Harry called - there's a new plane there with Amanda's name on it!"

Amidst much screaming and yelling, the girls headed off to Harry's, Jules taking Sherri in MiniMax and Amanda taking Sara in the Bimmer.

M&M helped me clean up our dishes and I turned the TV back to the Sports Channel so the restaurant would be ready for business in two hours. I went back to the Wheel and tackled my books.

The workers showed up and I presented them the schedule Celeste had drawn up for them. I took a break and stayed to watch.

"Hi James!" A beat up jalopy drove up and a young girl called out the window, "We're looking for Max!"

"Oh hi!" I had to look over at the driver to realize who she was. "Hi Jessie! Didn't recognize you without your racing outfit!" I shook her hand and then her brother's as Patrick came around the car. They were the brother-and-sister team we met when Amanda raced the Junior Speedboat 'Neta'.

"Amanda called and said we should come by here if we're looking for work." Patrick explained, "Jessie wanted to work a bit before deciding about College, and I'm looking for a Summer Job since Jessie has had her racing card rescinded."

"What happened?" As I walked them into the Marina.

"Oh, Bob Needham raised a stink and said we should be disqualified from the rest of the season because Jessie was over the age limit!"

"And...?"

"And the committee upheld it! They let me keep the win, but they tacked on a 12 months' competition ban!"

"Oh shit... that's the pits!" I looked at Jessie and she just shrugged.

"Yeah, whatever... I was going to quit after 3 more races anyways, so no big deal... But the best part?" Jessica grinned, "After they banned me for a year, they decided that Needham's son, 'Black' Angus, was also guilty, so HE got banned as well! Which means the dumb fuck's gonna have to contend with the BIG boys next year! He can't go around beating up on kids who're just getting into the sport and don't have his kind of money and support."

I introduced them to Max and he was all set to offer them a job on Amanda's recommendation, and they were excited that they would get the chance to work with more than just boats.

"Where will you be staying?" Marjorie asked.

"We were thinking of renting a place in town..." Patrick mused, "Would you know of any?"

"I just happen to have a 2-bedroom by the water for rent, complete with a boat. If you want it, we can just deduct it off your pay." Marjorie smiled and winked at me. "You can help me move a few things out of it." Together they decided on Wednesday for them to start work so they could go home and come back with their belongings.

Marjorie took them over and Max was showing me his VW wonder-plane when we were interrupted by cars honking outside for gas. "It's become a really lucrative side business since we switched to 99 octane gas for the planes." Max was grinning ear to ear. "The Lamborghinis, Ferraris and American muscle cars with the Hemi's and high-compression mills come here now to get their high octane gas and we get the servicing as well - they can't get av-grade gas anywhere else close by!" He pointed to Nicole's Mercedes coming down the drive, "Plus those over-engineered, over-priced German cars your girlfriends drive!"

By the amount of fishtailing and the skid marks it left, it was clear to us which girlfriend was driving, which was confirmed by Nicole's pained looks as she stepped out of the passenger side. Max was snickering as he went to help his gas-jockeys with the line-up of cars.

"I take it your pounding heart and shortness of breath is not entirely due to your happiness on seeing me?" I asked as she sagged against me and I supported her in my arms.

She smiled weakly and hugged my neck, kissing me softly, "Not right now, but it could be arranged... After I murder somebody!"

Celeste came round and hugged us, "That car is amazing! Did you know I could pin the speedo? 155 plus before the rev-limiter kicked in!"

"And did you notice the hole I dug in the floor, where the brake pedal is supposed to be?" Nicole complained.

"Oh, honey, you gotta let your hair down and live a little!"

"There are better ways to live life than trying to throw it away!"

"Like what you did to me yesterday?!"

Nicole started laughing, "That, my love, was priceless!"

Celeste grabbed me, "You know what this heartless woman did to me? She started my exams yesterday!" She drew a finger between Nicole's breasts, "After I worked all night to please you too!"

"And did I not show you how grateful I was?" Nicole glittered.

"Hmmm, and I got to burn rubber on your SL!"

"You better tend to your Baby Bears, they're starting to look a bit lost." I suggested.

"Oh well, ta-ta then, I'm sure you two can find some ways to stay busy!" Celeste gave us kisses as she strode off.

"And how are YOU doing with your studies?" Nicole said as she snuggled her arms around my waist.

"Not too good," I sighed, "I could sure do with some extra lessons!" I looked at her hopefully.

Her eyes crinkled and she smiled, "I was about to suggest the same thing!"

"Did you think that because of my dumbfounded look?" I held her to me and kissed her softly, "I always feel that way when I see you."

She laughed, "Why don't we take that, and your eagerness," She squirmed against it a bit, "Somewhere private and start working on it?"

We went into the Rec room and collected my books, then I took Nicole to Gyro 2. "But first, help me finish some tests on the boat..."

We had just pulled away from the marina when Nicole disappeared into the cabin and returned wearing Jules' 'Camp Counselor' T from the Gym Camp, which she must have discovered in the laundry we did the previous night.

My mouth must've been gaping wide open with the ease she slid her tongue inside. She looked at me, "That's a VERY good imitation of a dumbfounded look!"

I sighed, "And THAT is a very good imitation of an incredibly beautiful woman!" She laughed happily and kissed me again.

I handed her a pad, a pen and a stopwatch, "I called them just now and, when the girls arrive with the plane, we'll accelerate with Jules filming us. What you need to do is start timing when I raise my hand, and note down the elapsed time for each 5 mph of speed increase."

We heard the drone of the little engine as MiniMax drifted down towards us, with full flaps. "We have to start accelerating before she gets too close - the plane can't go much slower than 50mph so we can't let her pass by us. Start the clock now." I said as I raised my hand at the plane and pushed the throttle forward.

The boat leapt out of the water as the 7-liter engine spooled up to its gas-guzzling peak of almost 5000rpm. We hit 40mph almost immediately as I signaled our progress and tab settings with hand signs while Nicole noted the same on her notepad.

Even with the lower performing propeller, it was all I could do to hang on to the wheel and keep the boat from launching itself when we reached 80. I signaled a stop and waited for the plane to loop back before repeating the procedure once more in the opposite direction. I was shaking with effort after the second run so I indicated an end to the tests, waving goodbye to the plane as it winged away.

We tied up at the Eyrie and I hugged Nicole to me as we stood looking out of the patio. "I miss this place, the serenity and the wildness." I sighed against her ear.

"Strangely enough, I do too. I was actually looking forward to the freezing showers and the long line ups for the bathroom!" Nicole leaned back and kissed me, holding my arms against her body. "But I miss the big bed the most!" she said softly.

"Why go that far? The sunpad's right here!"

"Hmmm, that sounds good, give me a hand..." She turned to spread the pad on the ground and sat on it, "What subject do you want to start with?"

"Huhh?"

"Get your books here and let's get started! The quicker we get this done..." she smiled and licked a finger slowly.

I must have reinvented speed reading, going through the textbooks in record time, but by the time I finished answering the questions to Nicole's satisfaction, I was seeing stars.

Nicole went for a drink and helped me up to take a sip, "You did quite well!" She smiled, "In fact I'm quite impressed, I didn't think you'd been studying at all!" She leaned my head on her lap and hugged me softly. "In fact, I'm ready to give you a pass, subject to one other thing..."

"That would be MY pleasure!" I grinned as I rolled over her. "Anything for the teacher!"

"Wait, slow down, that's not it!" She held my face and smiled, "At least not ALL of it." She gave me a little lick, "You've finished all your assignments right?"

"Oh, that was my big concern," I grinned, "But they're done now!"

"That's good," She said as she tried to squirm out from under me.

"You want to see them NOW?!"

"Heck, no!" She smiled, "How else can I get our clothes off?"

I rolled off as she slipped her panties off and knelt to remove my shorts. I ran my hand along her back and down to her ass, sliding a finger along her sex until I reached her clitoris. She shuddered and sighed as I slipped my finger softly along her crease.

"Let me taste you." I whispered and helped her climb over my face. She shrieked softly as I licked her wetness and inserted my tongue inside, causing more happy cries and liquid from her.

"Ohhhh, good... so good!" She moaned and shook, burying her face in my groin, and kissed along my cock. "Mmmm, lick m-my clit..." she sighed as she humped herself on my face.

Her hand stroked my erection as she slowly licked my cock to the tip and fit the end inside her mouth. Moaning and sucking she started coming as she ground her sex on my mouth and tongue. Then she forced her mouth deep on me, her groans buzzing and driving my excitement.

"Ohhh, stop... Wait honey!" She said as she lifted off and turned to lie beside me, "Save some for this..." She pulled me on top and reached to insert me, closing her eyes as I worked myself slowly into her wetness with short strokes. Her hands clawed on my back as our passion grew, and when I was fully inside her, she gripped my ass cheeks and started moving me at her pace.

I smiled down at the lovely vision of my friend, who had given so much for and to me, just softly stroking deeply into her warmth. She smiled back and mouthed, "I love you!" and caressed my face tenderly, before wrapping her arms and legs about me. Slowly I increased my movement and she shivered under me, moaning incoherently.

"Yes, love, Yessss..." She whispered, "Do me, ugh, make me come..." Her legs squeezing me against her in time to my frenzied pounding.

"Ahhhhh!" She wailed hoarsely and held on in her climax. The familiar warmth spread from my groin and soon I was joining her in crying out my pleasure.

I pounded my climax and pumped my sperm in her, her moans echoing mine as I continued fucking her until she climaxed again. She held me to her for long, delicious moments before allowing me to roll off, turning with me to nestle face-to-face on our sides.

"You're so addicting..." She murmured, kissing me softly, "I could never have enough of you..." as I locked our lips together.

Lazily she slipped her hand down to hold my sated cock, then leaned down and carefully cleaned it with her tongue, then sucked it in her mouth. I twitched a bit but it was all I could do for now.

She looked up at the sound of MiniMax buzzing over us, to be followed by an almost identical one with bright red trim. They circled and waved, then disappeared behind the rocks as Nicole returned me to her mouth to finish cleaning me. We could hear the planes being noisily tied up on the docks when she rolled up and shared soft kisses with me.

"Are you going to get up?" She murmured against my neck.

"Hmmm..." I urged her hand down on me, "Not for a while yet... But keep working on it!"

Chapter 55

"We're not interrupting anything crucial, are we?" Amanda laughed as she came up the steps to the patio, followed by Sara, Sherri and Jules. Sara and Jules were carrying groceries which they took inside to make lunch after giving us kisses.

"Have you two been working in the horizontal position all morning?" Amanda continued, pulling Sherri down to sit by us.

"Excuse you!" I scoffed, "Nicole has been helping me study... And guess what? I PASSED!"

"God, that's so low!" Amanda cried, "Screwing the teacher to get your grades... Hmmm, where do I take a number?" She crawled between us, "And you promised me some private tutoring time too..." She draped herself on Nicole.

Nicole smiled softly and added a kiss, "How 'bout later, this afternoon?" She turned to Sherri, who was cuddling in my arms. "And this young lady still hasn't given me a kiss!"

Sherri giggled and wormed her way over my and Amanda's bodies to lie over Nicole, who started kissing her softly.

Amanda turned to me and said, "I think we've been jilted!"

"How 'bout you get 'comfortable' and I'll try and console you?" I kissed her nose, sliding a hand over her ass.

"How 'bout you get your pants and I'LL give you a thrill?" Amanda grinned at me. She helped me with my shorts and dragged me down the steps.

"Where're you guys going? Lunch is gonna be in half an hour!" Sherri lifted her mouth off Nicole long enough to ask.

"Hmmm, seven minutes for takeoff, six to get to altitude, then seven to land... Ummm, we'll be back in exactly 30 minutes!" Amanda grinned.

Amanda proudly showed me the new plane, equipped with the new 125hp horizontally-opposed 6-cylinder engine and larger wing tanks to double the range to 1000 miles.

"Hey! Let me fly, I need my hours!" I complained as she booted me out of the PIC seat.

"Not today, boss!" She kissed me, "This is MY plane today and I get to fly her!" We started the take off procedures and, as we taxied out, she pointed out the one major modification in the cabin, "Side-sticks, instead of regular joysticks coming out of the cabin floor, these extend six inches out from the side panels, which gives us more legroom..." She grinned, "and less weight, although the co-pilot has to live with flying with his right hand, is all."

She settled her mirror shades firmly and applied power. With the added push from the larger engine and only a light load of fuel, the plane had no problem with the warmer midday air and we angled up with authority as Amanda took us ever higher in a spiral over the Eyrie and the dense greenery surrounding it.

"Look at that!" Above the cliffs that spawned the falls at Rainbow Head was the barely discernible shape of an old homestead buried in vegetation.

"Hmmm, looks too big to be just a house - we're 600 feet up and it's still quite substantial," Amanda noted, "It must have been some kind of fort, they look like walls there."

"You're right, and I think we could walk there from the clearing too - those look like deer trails around it." I noted.

"Does that mean it's our property too?"

"It's ON our property but we're not allowed to do anything with it. All natural resources and 'artifices of Historical significance' remain under Federal jurisdiction."

"Let's go explore - maybe we'll find treasures there!" Amanda grinned excitedly.

"Possibly, but again, we have to apply for salvage rights and pay the government 100% in taxes."

"A HUNDRED percent? Geez, that makes no sense at all!"

"That's not all; you discover something, not only do they take it from you, you have to wait until they decide whether you're fit to continue excavations. As often as not, they'll give the contract to a huge national salvaging firm whose interest is in gold and precious metals, much less the cultural aspects."

"Kinda makes it not worthwhile doing!" She said, "Or telling them about it!"

"That's generally the case, that's why you see so much desecration of historical sites. The government just focuses on the monetary aspects and to hell with the other, less tangible values." I paused, "Although that fort will have little of value aside from possibly some stone tools and bullets - not much would be left from the War of Independence."

"It goes back that far?"

"Or further. The Civil War was not a static war; after Richmond, the North basically roared through here, concentrating on the 'true South' down the coast. But in the 1700's the British army had a number of fortlets around here and, when they started losing the War, fought a retreat further inland into the mountains." I placed my hand on her leg, demonstrating what a fighting retreat is, "If you're interested, we could go visit some of these spots, and..." I slid my hand further up where the skirmishing raged up into the hills and down the valleys, which were shivering as I undid her buttons and slipped my hand inside.

"And, ahhh, I have to suffer the ravages of war..." Amanda sighed, "But I'll gladly offer my body for a lasting peace... Mmmm, take the helm, sweetheart. It's time we got the festivities underway!" She squirmed out of her shorts as I set us up for a steady climb.

"Let me." I eased her over my lap and helped her remove her T-shirt, marveling at the lovely smooth flesh of her breasts. I gave them an experimental lick and she sighed happily as their tips hardened in my mouth. She caressed my hair and held my head against her peaks, sighing her need.

"Ohh, babe," She moaned, "Why am I the only one naked here...?"

I ripped my shirt off and skinned my shorts down, as she held my face between her warm boobs. "Keep an eye on the altimeter." She whispered hoarsely as she nudged herself on my cock. "We have 3 minutes before we reach altitude, don't you dare come before that!"

"Hmmm, what do you suggest we do until then?" I carefully wove my tongue around her breasts and up to her lips.

She grunted around my mouth as she slowly squirmed down my cock, "Ah... We might engage in something c-called foreplay..." She sighed as she gained an extra half-inch over me.

"I know that! I mean the 2-and-a half minutes after!" I looked at her.

She burst out laughing and shook deliciously on me, "Oh, oh, oh... Ooof!" She slipped all the way down, moaning and sighed, "Ahhh, ow, that... that feels good... but don't move... and don't make me laugh anymore," She hugged me softly and made short strokes on me, "Mmmm, tell me you love me..."

"I love you, my sweetheart. You are lovely and smart and sweet, and you're really good to me..."

She rested her head on my neck, grinding her little cunt on me "Uh, uh... Do I make you happy?"

"That you do, and so proud..." I sighed, increasing our pace as she started wheezing and dug her nails into my skin. With her approaching climax, she started moving more energetically on me, as I held her and stuck my tongue out to lap at her nipples.

"Oh baby, oh sweetheart!" She moaned, as she worked her torso madly on me, grabbing my neck and gripping my hair. Suddenly she raised herself and dropped on my prick and my cries joined hers as I started coming as well. I humped desperately against her as she murmured in my ear, "Oh, oh fuck, so good... So fucking good... I love you, my sweetheart..." She panted against me, shaking in her orgasm.

"Mmm, that was so nice." She sighed after we could catch my breath, "Oh shit! Are we a mile high yet?"

"If we're not, does that mean we'll have to do it again?" I kissed her softly.

"If you want... you know that. It's just that we promised to be back for lunch."

"Looks like we just squeaked past the 5500 mark." I bit her lip, "Whew, I don't think I could do anything for a few hours after this!"

She smiled happily, "And I don't think I could take much more of you." She hugged me, and giggled, "You're BIG!"

"Not any more!" I laughed as I started slipping out of her.

"Oh damn it! We forgot the christening too!" She sighed, "You got me so bleeping horny I forgot everything!"

"That can be arranged!" I gave her a kiss, then I held her to me and flipped around so she ended up in the seat and I knelt before her. "Scrunch down darling..." I lifted her little butt and lapped up the fluids flowing out of her hole, as she squealed and moaned while I drove my tongue in for the remainder. I dribbled liquid on her finger and added my heart to hers on the dashboard of the plane.

"I christen thee, 'Maxome Gymbler!'" She stated solemnly, then looked at me and started laughing, "Why's your tongue still sticking out? Just swallow, honey... It's got proteins!" She laughed some more, then slowly leaned forward and kissed me, sucking my tongue into her mouth.

"And now..." I wet my finger and drew a heart between her breasts, "...this makes you mine..." She looked strangely at me then she grabbed my hair and crushed me to her.

"Damn you, James Mitchell!" She sobbed on my shoulder, "I'm all yours already, now and forever...! I love you so much, I'm ready to burst!" She looked at me with tears in her big blue eyes, "My darling James," She said softly and kissed me, "I know you will always be there for me, and with me. My love, my sweetheart, I AM yours, and you will always be my life, and my being..." She sighed and touched my lips, "And that's the way it is... Capische?" She blinked at me.

"Capische..." I kissed her softly and we held each other. "You are my Mandie Chip, forever..."

We looked into each others' eyes, "I love you..." we whispered together, and shared a soft, sweet kiss.

I helped her straighten out her clothes, saying, "Why don't we go off tomorrow and we can go inland to the lowlands and look at some of the places where we fought the English!"

"Can't, I have to help Celeste with her interview..." She sighed, "But how 'bout the day after?"

"You got a date!" I kissed her and climbed into the seat and started dressing.

"I KNEW you just wanted to get to sit as Pilot!" Amanda sighed, "And to leave me with the wet spot!" As she squirmed her little behind on the seat. I leveled us and turned back towards the Eyrie.

"Here, do this," She reached and turned the ignition off, "We don't need any more push from the propeller, and the static blades have more drag, so this allows us to get down much quicker. Oh, and head for the marina, we're supposed to pick Celeste up for lunch as well!"

In the sudden quiet, I banked us in a shallow circling dive, just under the loading limit of 180mph. The wind noise rose to a shriek and the lake rose up towards us with alarming speed. "No matter how scary it looks, we're still a thousand feet up." Amanda stated calmly, "Always double check your altimeter and angle-of-attack before going with your senses. Panic reactions are by far the greatest cause of in flight accidents."

I restarted the motor at 400 feet and coasted into the Marina, using the powered landing method rather than a low-altitude zero-power flair to avoid 'dropping like a stone.' Celeste was in

the lot patiently handing out autographs to a crowd of about 20 people as two of her Baby Bears stood guard. Amanda scrambled out to fetch her books as I taxied up the lot and turned the plane.

I escorted Celeste up into the plane, "Your carriage awaits, my lady." I bowed, helping Celeste strap herself in while Mandie loaded the books in the back and moved into the jump seat.

"Thank you sir, and madam," Celeste smiled sweetly at us, "This is exactly the kind of treatment a girl needs. And I'll bet my autograph is worth more now too!" She waved a cheery goodbye to her fans and the baby bears, "Although how many of them see me as other than a blond in a tight dress I can't tell." I flew us back, the air at 30 feet too turbulent for using ground-effect. Amanda started Celeste's flight lessons with a running commentary of what I was doing wrong.

I made the perfect landing, idling the engine with flaps down, and kissed the water so lightly, even sun-bathing fish were not disturbed.

We tied up and Amanda commented, "See? Jules was too easy on you! You need me to whip you into shape!" And aside to Celeste, "That landing was very good, but let's not get his head any more swollen than it already is!"

Lunch was roast chicken and 5 varieties of vegetable and pasta salad which were consumed with relish and wild abandon, as we loudly brought each other up to date on the weekend's happenings. It was also a joyous occasion, being one of the few times so many of us were eating together, with the exception of Brenda, whose arrival was eagerly awaited for later that day.

After we cleared the dishes, we sat back at the table as Jules set up the camcorder so we could watch the replay of the test with Gyro 2. We crowded around the length of the side, with Nicole perched on one of my knees with her notepad and stopwatch and Amanda on the other.

"Amanda did the filming and, as you will see, the commentary as well..." Jules explained as she started the tape, "She wired up the intercom microphone to go into the camcorder. She could hear me but everything she says goes into the machine."

The picture was jittery as Amanda fiddled with the zoom in the confines of the cabin and, when it settled, started her narration in a very solemn voice, "Performance test for Gyro 2, conducted by James and a very sexy Nicole in a tight T-shirt with obviously no bra underneath..." Then a tight zoom to show what she meant.

"You rascal!" Nicole laughed as Amanda leaned on her, giggling.

"Shh! The show's starting!" I poked their asses.

Nicole started her stopwatch in real time as the shot panned back to show me raising my hand, and we could see me holding up one, then two fingers as the speed picked up.

Amanda's matter-of-fact voice resumed on screen, "The tab was late, do it at 7 to improve the hole shot, you lost 2 seconds there. Good transition, the draft could be shorter..." We watched me signal 40mph before the wind and the need to concentrate on steering made the hand signs impossible, but Nicole filled in from her notes.

"Too much trim!" Amanda's voice warned at 75 as I tried to compensate by dropping the lower unit, but the boat see-sawed and waffled until I had to cancel the run.

"That was scary, even watching from here!" Sherri breathed, "Anybody else horny?" There was some shuffling and she sighed happily as Sara and Jules shared her between themselves, and that prompted Amanda to slip her hand under Nicole's T-shirt.

"But it was a really good demonstration that the system works, the angles and plane points are clearly visible." I poked Amanda who was busily fidgeting with Nicole, "Are you paying attention?"

"Yes, boss..." She giggled, "I'm paying VERY good attention..." She kissed a squirming Nicole softly, "Aren't I honey?"

On screen the plane had finished its loop and was again approaching the boat when Amanda resumed on tape, in the cool, distracted voice of a TV commentator, "Ladies and Gentlemen, we take you to the enchanting Lake-" Here she strung the 2 words together to sound

like, "-Thierry, where world famous sexologist Dr Nicole Petitcoeur is conducting a study with another subject, one of little consequence. Ah, she is starting her test now, let's listen in..."

In a throaty French-accented voice Amanda continued, "Ah, monsieur, let us get started, shall we? What do you think of my boobs?" and, on screen, the boat moved off and I stuck a finger up, "Ah oui, number one, the best, ah, tres bien, you 'ave good eyes!"

"Now, if you could touch them, would you use one hand, or..." Obediently I stuck up 2 fingers, even as we stamped our feet and gasped our laughter. "Eh bien, you have potential!" Amanda continued in her Nicole-voice.

"Now, monsieur, dit moi, how big is your, er, 'ow you say, pee-pee?" I was afraid to look as Sherri and Jules collapsed on the floor, cackling.

"Ohhh, mon Dieu, only t'ree? And when you are 'ard?" Regretfully I responded with a pitiful "4". Fortunately by then, none of us could see the screen, we were crying and laughing so hard, but we could still hear Amanda calmly saying on the tape, "So, we now know your pee-pee is wee-wee, but," A sad sigh, "I did promise you oral delights such as you have never experienced..." Some rustling noises, then, "Uhhhh, look at h'it! Quelle horreur! Mais... Ummmmm..." Followed by sounds not unlike a washing machine with a heavy load.

I staggered up on my chair and Sherri and Celeste draped themselves on me in time to see a close up of my face as I struggled with the bucking boat. My eyes were squinted in concentration and my jaw was clenched with effort, but a casual viewer could easily be misled into believing I was having a soul-shattering climax as Amanda added the choking and sputtering quite realistically.

We fell back on to the floor to join the others, thrashing and gasping in the throes of delight. Amanda was weakly cackling on the floor, spasming breathlessly as Nicole nibbled and tickled her on her bare stomach.

Then Nicole scooped Amanda up in a fireman's lift and marched up the stairs, a very red-faced Amanda grinning and blowing kisses at us. They turned into the bedroom and after some giggling and rustling of clothing, we heard Nicole's voice saying, "Now, mademoiselle, dit moi, 'ow many times should we slap your be'ind?"

Chapter 56

Jules took Celeste back to the Marina in MiniMax, to check on our investments and to call Kelly about Sherri's parents' decision and about Erin's friends, Cara and Ami, who wanted to take up modeling.

As Sherri and I finished stacking the dishes, Sara had rewound the tape and started replaying it. Sherri sat next to her and began correlating the information with Nicole's notes.

We watched through it a couple of times, but had to turn off the sound to avoid bursting into spontaneous giggling fits. "There!" Sara cried, "The oscillations started there..." She paused the image, "What speed was that?"

"Around 71, or 72. I have to take the time the boat reached 70 and interpolate it with the time it reaches 75..." Sherri said apologetically.

"That's pretty close... But we'll need a better way to correlate the tape position and the speed."

"Wait... The camcorder is supposed to supply a time-mark signal" I said, "But we'll need the Firewire connection on the computer to access it."

"What about the counter here?" Sherri pointed.

"That SHOULD work, except that it's on the wrong side of the screen!" Sara said.

"I think there's a way to display it on-screen, let me look at it." I reached for the video recorder but Sara stopped me.

"Let's take Gyro back to the Marina. The camera battery needs recharging already and I want to try a few things out first."

We packed our things and turned to leave, just as the soft murmurings up in the loft grew to moans. "We're leaving!" yelled Sherri, "You two can scream as loud as you want now!" We ducked outside just as a pillow launched from above landed on the spot we had just vacated.

Sara carefully tied everything down on Gyro before turning to us, "I'm going to test the stability at 70 and above, so let's get the PFDs out!" Then, as we were buckling the life vests in, she said to Sherri, "You should ask James if he can show you his special crash position!" She grinned as Sherri look inquiringly at me.

I led her back to the stern and settled her in my embrace. I turned her face and kissed her.

"Mmmm, that's good, was that in aid of something?" Sheri asked, bright-eyed.

"Never know if we'll need to do mouth-to-mouth." I stated.

"I see!" She squirmed around and leaned on my arm, "Would this make it easier?"

We tried a number of positions, exhaustively testing each one for accessibility and availability. Sara watched us with a patient smile as she waited for the engine to warm up. At our urging, she came aft and leaned to get slobbering kisses from us.

"What's that for?" Sara asked, pointing at my hand inside Sherri's life jacket.

"Heart monitor." I told her.

"And this?"

"Hard monitor." Sherri deadpanned.

== ==

Sara took us out and slowly brought our speed up, the lake was dead still and the heat made shimmering mirages around us. As the boat sped up we had trouble maintaining a good grip on our respective monitors and there was much fumbling and squirming inside our clothing.

I was sprawled over Sherri and worming my hand inside her pants when Sara stopped the boat.

"Ahhh, ahhh," Moaned Sherri, as she bit my arm and shook against my leg, "Mmmmm." She sighed, then she opened an eye at Sara, "That was very good honey! I went straight to horny without even being scared ONCE!"

"That was it? There was hardly any shaking!" I marveled at Sara.

"I wouldn't say that..." Murmured Sherri.

Sara was frowning, "Nothing... clean all the way up to 78!" She tapped her nails on the steering wheel, "And even when I dropped the lower unit an extra degree like you did on the test run, there were still no problems!"

"Let's try it again," I led Sherri to the cockpit seat and hugged her to me as Sara turned us about and applied power again. The boat jumped forward and accelerated quickly, then, just as we reached 70, the plowing and unstable conditions returned. Sara made some adjustments and, when the situation did not improve, cut the motor in disgust.

"What's wrong now!?" She mumbled.

"Could it be the direction?" I mused, "Shouldn't..."

We turned the boat about but obtained the same, disappointing results.

"We have to get more gas." Sara sighed as we turned back for Max's, "It's not the trim or the tilt... Shit, and that first run was so promising too!"

"Maybe we should start making out in the back..." Sherri's laughter froze as we looked at each other.

"In the back!"

"Could it be...?"

I took Sherri's hand and led her astern, "Assume the position, dear. It's for a good cause..."

With a sigh, Sherri laid down and started loosening her pants, "What we have to do in the name of science..." She grinned as she pulled me down over her.

It seemed like we had barely begun to breathe hard when the boat slowed and Sara pulled into the test bay in the marina.

"Well, now we are certain it's a duplicatable phenomenon!" She smiled as she switched off after tying the boat down.

Sherri writhed out from under me and pulled her down for a long kiss, "Mmmm, what, that I get wet and horny?"

"That's a phenomenon I seem to share around you!" Sara laughed softly and caressed her face. Hugging Sherri, she looked at me, "That certainly narrows the problem down a whole lot!" She paused and thought, "We'll need some really precise weight measurements... Hmmm, maybe Peter can FedEx us the blue prints for this specific configuration."

"Don't forget Celeste's printer can do 14x17 inch prints too!"

"Yeah! We can start with that - once he emails us the CAD files... We should also get the displacement profiles... Center of Buoyancy..." Sara handed Sherri to me and stood, "And the CG..., and lateral moments..." she strode off, still muttering to herself.

"I don't think Peter can give her all the figures she needs..." I said slowly, "We'll also need the weight distribution when we are at the stern and when we aren't..."

"Seems like someone's solved that problem a long time ago!" Sherri said.

"How do you mean?"

Sherri thought and then looked around, "Can you ask Max or somebody to come to give us a hand?"

I found Max working on an engine and led him back to Gyro. "Max," Asked Sherri, "Could you mark the bow and stern waterlines for us?"

Max nodded and went and slid a set of low barricades across the mouth of the water channel, explaining, "Sea gates, they keep the current out so the boat doesn't rock." He returned with a pump sprayer on an extension arm, "WD-40, the mechanic's best friend. Also leaves a mark on the exposed boat hull but disappears tracelessly in 20 minutes."

We made the measurements we needed, after which we lifted the boat up and added chalk lines where the spray had left its mark so I could take shots on the camcorder.

"Did you find the cause of the problems?" Max asked.

"Definitely weight distribution related." I said and explained our findings.

"Hmmm, that's certainly not normal..." Max looked under the hull, then he looked at Sherri, "What are you trying to do with the measurements?"

"Well, Archimedes used this method to determine how much things weighed, because the boat will always displace an amount of water equal to its total weight. We can also approximate the center of buoyancy when the weight is shifted to one end - it's almost right where the waterlines intersect."

Max looked at Sherri, sighed and muttered, "...and smart to boot!" as he sauntered away, shaking his head.

We caught up with the girls as they came rushing out of the wheel. "Brenda just called! She's flying in with Chuck! In his plane!" Sara gushed as she guided us to the parking lot.

"Where are they landing?"

"Right on the lake! He's got an amphib too!" Sara hugged us.

"Does he need a guide? Brenda's never done a water landing here!"

"Yes, but apparently they called the house first and interrupted Amanda and Nicole." Jules laughed, "So they're doing the honors!"

We went outside as Amanda's bright red Gymbler soared by and disappeared into the south. Minutes later she returned, leading a larger airplane in gleaming metal. It was massive compared to the light and nimble Gymbler, which seemed to dance alongside.

Amanda flew down towards the lake and touched down 10 feet from the mouth of the bay. She veered off as the larger craft made its approach. It dropped and finally, seemingly with a sigh of relief, sank into the water. Amanda trailed it as it taxied into the bay.

I waved Chuck's seaplane up to the parking spot, its 30+ ft wingspan and huge structure dwarfing MiniMax next to it. It rumbled and shook and growled as Chuck drifted it into the tie-down spot. Its aluminum fuselage was fully eight feet tall at the cabin and a huge engine and propeller assembly loomed over that.

"Welcome to Max's Marina!" I greeted Chuck and shook his hand as he stepped down. Anna hopped down from the back and gravely shook my hand, then she hugged me and kissed me, blushing prettily. Brenda came out from the co-pilot seat and squeezed my hand. I stopped her and collected a kiss from her as well.

Chuck was being profusely welcomed by Sara as she made introductions to Jules and Celeste. Sherri was hugging Anna and they were whispering and giggling.

"We saw Deanna last night..." Brenda whispered in my ear.

"Everything OK?" I looked at her.

"Yeah!" She smiled and hugged me, "As far as Anna is concerned. But Chuck doesn't know of it yet... I don't think he's quite ready." She sighed.

"Anna certainly looks no worse for wear."

"She's had to do a lot of growing up lately... Poor kid." Brenda sighed and leaned her head on me.

"And you, did you have a good time?" I kissed her softly.

"Hmmm, yeah, it was a blast. But I missed all of you." She sighed and turned to me, "James we need to talk."

"About?"

"I have a lot of ideas and I need you to help me sort them out."

"Hmmm, I think I can squeeze you in my busy schedule!" I smiled.

"No, honey, *I* do the squeezing in." She corrected me, "You have to do something else..."

"Like what? I have to find an opening? Push for a slot?" I kissed her ear, "Would my efforts get me ahead?"

Brenda laughed, "Mmmm, yes... Keep it up and maybe you'll even get to jump the queue!"

"Hey, stop monopolizing her!" Sara elbowed me out of the way as she and Jules crowded around Brenda.

"Tomorrow?" She mouthed as Amanda roared her plane out of the water. Quickly I nodded and we shared a smile.

Amanda rolled up past the parked planes to her parking space. She came out and busied herself with tying down as Nicole, elegant and sophisticated in a long white dress greeted our visitors. Soon she and Chuck were discussing their wine collections.

Amanda was wearing a light pink blouse and a short blue skirt, her golden hair in a ponytail, looking cool and professional in aviator shades.

Amanda skipped up to Anna, "Hi Anna, I'm Amanda!" She announced and gave her a big hug. She turned, "And you must be Chuck, I've heard so much about you!" She went on tiptoes, wrapped her arms around his neck and fastened her lips on his. His eyes widened in surprise but quickly accepted the greeting. He was smiling widely as Amanda waltzed over to Brenda, who was deep in conversation with Jules.

"Oh Brenda!" Amanda wailed, "I'm SO glad you're back! They were so mean to me! You'll protect me won't you?"

Brenda smiled and looked at us helplessly as Amanda locked her in a bear hug. "What is it they've done to cause your ire now, my love?" Brenda placed a kiss on Amanda's brow.

"James made me cry and... and Nicole was going to HIT me!" Came an indignantly pouty voice.

"Hmm, that sounds bad. I'll have to have to talk to them and find out why they would treat you that way!"

"You don't have to talk to them, believe me!" Amanda said, "They'll just tell you it's all my fault!"

"And is it?"

"Maybe...!" Amanda giggled, "Just promise me you'll take me with you next time you go away!"

"Ah!" Brenda laughed, "You want to come with me to Regan Boats, is that it?" and, as Amanda nodded energetically, "I was going to ask you anyway!"

"Really?" Amanda brightened instantly. "Can we go on Thursday? I have to help Celeste tomorrow and James on Wednesday."

"Of course, darling, anything you want!" Brenda grinned.

"Now that that's settled, let us offer our guests some refreshments..." Celeste said, leading us back to the Wheel.

"Chuck," Amanda asked, "Can you tell me about your plane? Its profile and the Sea Sprites we fly are essentially the same."

"I was about to comment on that!" He laughed. "The 'Silver Goose' here was a prototype by one of the most prestigious aircraft designers of the 60's and 70's."

"Before going into seaplanes, David Dunsten was already famous for designing the Air Force's Panther and Tigercat fighters. His first commercial success was the fabric-skinned Lake Skimmer, later developed into the sheet metal Buccaneer, which is still one of the most successful single engined amphibians around. Then a while back he conceived of an improved aluminum version to replace it and he came to me to work on the hull design."

"It was an incredibly ambitious project. He wanted a plane that could carry 1500lbs, with a range of 1000 miles and amazingly, he wanted it to be able to SAIL, like a boat, when flight was not practical. He envisioned the plane servicing river and remote waterbound communities."

What he could not foresee was the vast network of highways our nation had been building which made demand for this new plane a lot softer than he had counted on.

"He built this one prototype and took it to the FAA for certification, but about a year into the process, his company went bankrupt. I bought the plane and, last I heard, he was in Canada to continue development of the Sea Spirit."

"And our model is called the Sea Sprite!" Jules laughed, "It clearly is a scaled down fiber and carbon version!"

"Yeah, 1/2 the size, half the payload and instead of the huge inline six he's gone with the lightweight 6-cylinder horizontally-opposed 4-stroke." Sara added, "He's kept the sliding cockpit but switched to a pusher configuration instead of the mid-ships engine placement."

"The mid-ship pylon was expensive in weight and balance but was the only way we could accommodate the seven foot propeller," Chuck explained, "The inline sixes had a usable power band from 3000 to 4500 rpm, which means we had to go with these long twin blades with adjustable pitch." He pointed back at the power housing, "As difficult as it is to believe, that engine, since its introduction almost forty years ago, has had only one single improvement - fuel-injection, for a 50hp increase!" He shook his head, "Part of the reason is that it's almost impossible to get the FAA to certify anything in a timely fashion. A lot of very good designs, and designers like David, were lost to the industry because of the bureaucracy. Let's just hope the popularity of the ultralights will force them to start doing the right thing!"

He stopped as we entered the Wheel and whistled in amazement. Celeste happily gave him a tour and brief history of its designer. He was also quite impressed by the row of computers inside the staff room and Celeste's printer busy churning out the technical drawings of Gyro Sara had requested.

The workers had installed two cloth awnings over the patio and the girls quickly set up drinks and snacks on a large table under them.

"This is certainly an intriguing building, how long ago did you start construction?" Chuck asked Celeste.

"Exactly a week ago..."

"This kind progress is practically unheard of!"

"That is the genius of Mueller's design. The 'Wheel' requires only one single support point, which simplifies alignment and site preparation. Then over 70% of the construction can be pre-finished on the ground and simply lifted into place. And each major support can be fine-tuned for optimal fit."

"I have this feeling that you would've made it work even if some of the answers were not quite in place..." Chuck smiled and continued over Celeste's protests, "Don't forget I've seen your friends at work. Defeat is simply not in your vocabulary!"

"Chuck, can you stay for supper?" Asked Sara, "I would like to reciprocate and make dinner for you..."

"Please do not talk about reciprocating." He took her hands, "What you and your friends have done for Regan Boats is already beyond repaying; and together, you have given me more work..." He stooped to kiss her hand, "And more eagerness to begin work, than I've had in a long time!" He smiled fondly around, "However, my intention is to take off in an hour, otherwise I'll be flying into the sun, so I must regretfully decline. I assure you, we will be visiting you every chance we have. There is a lot more we need to talk about!"

"Perhaps you can help us with a bit of a problem we're having now..." Smiled Nicole as she and Jules led him inside into one of the newly furnished offices, "I need your advice on a company we just bought into..." They closed the door behind them.

"Well, I have a building to get back to!" Smiled Celeste as she swirled out to join her workers.

Brenda took my hand, "What've you been doing with Gyro 2 so far?"

Sara explained to Brenda our problems as we went down to the marina, adding, "So it's quite clear that the dynamics of the boat with this motor is badly set up. By compromising the aft area to fit the larger engine, they've created the undercritical instability."

Brenda smiled at Anna, "And the solution is...?"

"Is to go Stepped Hull!" Anna grinned.

"Which is somewhat late for THIS boat!" lamented Amanda.

"Wait, let Sherri tell you what she's done first!" I urged.

Sherri pointed out the tape marks on the side, "It occurred to me that we'll need to know how the dynamics will affect the center of buoyancy, so we marked the levels with us in the middle, and at the stern..."

"While doing the old one-two!" Sara laughed and hugged Sherri.

"Which you invented." Added Amanda as wrapped her arms around them.

Brenda covered Anna's ears, "Don't listen to them, they're a very undignified bunch here."

"That's true!" Amanda pulled them into their group hug, "But it was Brenda who taught us all those things!"

"Hah! You were a debauched woman long before I met you!"

"Says who?" Amanda cried indignantly, "In fact, the very day I met Brenda, I-I had my innocence sullied!" Her lips quivered as she leaned weakly on Brenda.

"Oh goody!" Sherri smiled, "I haven't heard THIS version before!" She kissed Amanda softly and said to Anna, "My sweetie here had a night fairy-tales were made of, but she's afraid we'll get jealous, so..."

"That's not it!" Amanda retorted, "It WAS terrible! I kept saying 'Yes!' and he kept saying 'No!'" She looked at me and started laughing, leaning on the girls as they held her and caressed her. She stuck her tongue out at me and whispered, "Brute!", then she took my hand and pulled me close. "Why didn't you defend me!"

"You seemed to be doing a pretty good job!" I smiled and kissed her.

"Is he... too?" Anna said, blushing.

"He is, hon." Sherri smiled, "He's OUR bag of candies..."

Anna turned to Sara and giggled, "And I know what you were doing with him, last week, in the boat!"

Brenda laughed, "I think everybody at Regan's knew!" She took Anna's hand, "But, except for a couple of timely outbursts, our little Sara is the quiet strength we all count on."

"Yeah, we'd be dead of hunger if she hadn't insisted on feeding us!" added Sherri.

"And she's my little sweetheart!" Gushed Amanda with a hug.

"Not to mention someone who has a REALLY soft spot for our hero here!" Grinned Brenda.

"Can we get back to the boat now?" Sara said weakly. "Please?"

"Yes, let's!" Brenda smiled as she pushed Sara in my arms, "And your job is to keep his chubby lordship from interfering." She pointed me at a chair and I tugged Sara over my lap as Brenda turned and they started examining the tape marks and loudly discussing the problem.

"James..."

"Shhh," I kissed her, "Let's see how badly they screw up before they ask for our help." I put my hand on her thigh, "Do you have a really soft spot for me? Can you show me where?"

Sara bit my ear, "D-don't, Anna's here..." She squirmed closer to me and sighed, "James... don't... hmmm, mmmm... Ahhh... ahhh... Mmmm..." For a long time I could only feel her sweet lips on mine and our hearts pounding. Finally she whispered, "What are they doing?"

"Watching us..."

Sara hooked her arms around my neck and tipped her head to look back at the girls, "Do you need our help now?"

"No!" "We're fine!" "Go back to whatever you two were doing!" They said as they leaned on each other and scratched their heads.

"Hmm, nothing for us to do..." I tilted her lips up and licked them, "Where WERE we?"

"I was about to suggest we go upstairs." Sara sighed against me.

"Really?"

"Yeah," She kissed me, "And get the printouts for them." She took my hand and tugged me up to a chorus of whistles and cries of "Have fun!"

We had just climbed the stairs when Nicole and Jules escorted Chuck out of the office. He turned to us, "You people just never slow down, do you?" he turned back and shook their hands, "I'm sure this will work out very well indeed for all of us... See you next week!"

Celeste joined us as we accompanied Chuck and Anna to their plane and we went through fifteen minutes of hugs and kisses before they taxied out and lifted off. We waited and waved until they were out of sight.

"OK, conference!" Jules exclaimed and led us back to the staff room. We sprawled in the sofas and chairs with drinks and snacks.

"First, we now own 51% of Regan Boats, in exchange for 15% of InterCoastal, the company that owns the outfit Peter works for. The plan is for us to start taking over the day-to-day at Regan's until such time as Chuck can resign and assume a board position at InterCoastal, which is just possible with his 15% and the 7% we still control. Their AGM is not for six months so we'll have to use the time to finalize the transition at Regan's and further solidify our holdings at IC.

"Now, how close are we to giving them the Monster Cuddy they seem to be banking everything on?"

"We'd be done if James and Sara weren't sitting on their hands!" Amanda complained.

"I think Sara was sitting on James' hands." Sherri corrected her. "Squirming, more like." she corrected herself.

"Sara had the answer, but she was overcome with lust by being close to me." I explained.

"Since when did *I* have the answer? I thought YOU had the answer!" She laughed.

"Well, even if I did, I'm sure yours would be better, so..."

"Skip the crap guys," Jules said, "Do we or don't we have an answer?"

"We will," Brenda nodded, "Today." She smiled at us, "I have faith in them!"

"OK," Jules continued, "We are stretched thin with this gambit. I'd hate to see our new car get repossessed when we can't meet payments next month!"

"What?" Celeste exclaimed, "Are we talking about MY car? I would like to remind you that I'm the ONLY person currently working here!" She sniffed, "And I'm starting on the town's new Community Center next week!"

"Honey, I know you're getting top dollar for that job," Jules smiled, "But you have to add 2 more zeroes to it to cover our short!"

Celeste's eyes rounded, "Eeek, THAT much?"

"You said it! I don't think even Nicole can cover that!"

"Oh, alright then, I'll sell my fur coat! It's getting too old fashioned anyways!"

"The point is that we gambled for a drastic improvement on Intercoastal's share prices to cover the money we still owe on it." Jules looked at us, "And we'll get that if we can deliver the Cuddy." She looked thoughtful for a minute, "Can we schedule a demonstration for Peter the end of the week? And a press conference early next week?"

"Yeah - we'll do it." I said, "We can already hit 70mph, which is just below their target of 72."

"I can maybe push it to 75." Amanda added, "Without making it look sloppy."

"Why don't we schedule the public demo for Brookhaven?" Sherri said, "They've got the facilities there..."

"Yeah! And everyone will expect the speed to be discounted some in open ocean!" Sara added.

"What about your idea?" I urged.

"That may take a bit of experimentation..." Sara hummed.

"My idea will always work." I stated and reached for Sherri, "Provided you can sneak us on board first!" I grinned. Something very heavy hit me from behind, "Ow!"

"Will you get serious? Do you or don't you have a fix that doesn't involve you and sex with any of us?"

"Maybe... Ow!" I was hit again with the cushion. "OK! Dammit, it's getting so a fella can't even get gratuitous sex around here any more!" I crouched to duck under the next swing, "Alright, stop already! I've got an answer! Even without involving sex!"

"Really?" Sherri said, "Damn, I was kinda getting used to being used for ballast!" She straddled my lap and whispered, "Does that mean I have to do up my pants now?"

"OK!" Jules laughed, "It's a go then! I'll call Peter with the news and Sara, can you and Sherri set up Brookhaven? I suspect they will welcome a splash like that!"

"James! Wake up!" Jules pulled a giggling Sherri off me, "When can you get your brilliant idea into place?"

"Two hours or so... I just have to talk with Max."

"Oh, then I can try my idea out too then!" Sara said.

"OK, that's one down." Jules continued, "The next item on the agenda is Brenda."

"Does she want gratuitous sex too?" I started but was glared into silence.

"Brenda, you'll have to shuttle between Regan's and here until we can get something permanent at both ends." Jules turned to Amanda, "Make sure Brenda gets her wings on Gymbler this weekend so it'll be easier for her to get back and forth." She looked at Brenda, "Hon, you OK with that?"

"Yeah, I can do it. Max is still a week from completion and let's see how much I can get going at Regan. What's my title there?"

"Chuck was a little more generous than us, so you're GM at Regan's."

I whispered, "Gorgeous Model?"

Brenda flashed me a brilliant smile, then said, "There are a few things I need to discuss with James..." She looked around, "So can I have James tomorrow?"

"Hey Brenda, you promised us the gratuitous sex first!" Amanda objected.

"Whoa! Young lady, your exams are not over yet!" Nicole said.

"Ohhh!" Amanda grinned widely and sat on Nicole's lap, "Would I be spanked for each wrong answer this time?"

"After I'm finished here we'll get to you, and your lovely bottom, how's that?" Nicole kissed her softly and, to Jules, "Do you have anything more?" And, at her smile and shake of the head, Nicole continued, "Then I'll bring you up to date on my trip last week."

"The three construction companies I visited had been using one or more of Mueller's patents and I went to arrange payment terms and, in one case, a transfer of shares in lieu of payment."

"Then I visited SurgInt, the manufacturer of robotic surgical devices and I am waiting for approval to install one of their machines at the clinic. We will know next week."

"Finally there's Commercial Electrics, whose august board now boasts a certain Madame Petitcoeur." She blinked her lashes and preened, a vision somewhat marred by Mandie's hands wandering over her top.

"Its primary industry, as crazy as it sounds, was the manufacture of traffic lights. CE was the first in the industry to use integrated circuits to replace the timers and relays that were prevalent in the 70's, and introduced the concept of competitive Cost of Ownership. Because, even though their products were 3 times more expensive to purchase, lower maintenance and close to 100% reliability made the total costs much lower. And in 1982, they further strengthened

their hold on the market when they adopted the first commercial calculator chip, the 4004 for their use. That chip, incidentally, went on to become the 8008 and started the company that is now known as Intel.

"Then in 1996, CE was again first to introduce the all solid-state system, using arrays of Light-Emitting Diodes. Abortive costs on yellow colored LEDS put a hold on the marketing, but now, they can produce virtually any color, from infra-red to ultraviolet and most colors in between, with impressive intensity as well.

"In the early nineties, they also experimented with a special kind of light bulb which promised to double, or even triple the life of the originals, which was a major cost issue - by reducing the rate the tungsten molecules get 'boiled' off the filament. In regular bulbs, you may see that as a dark coating on the inside of the glass bulb.

"A Swedish chemist had shown that within certain temperatures, tungsten molecules on the glass can be made to form tungsten halide which is a colorless gas. When this compound circulates around the bulb, it will make contact with the hot filament - at which point it will decompose and re-deposit the mineral back on it.

"This was good news, because the higher temperature needed actually allowed a bulb to produce more brightness, but the added stress called for expensive tempered quartz-glass and a lot more heat to dissipate. Although it was only in use for the traffic lights for a handful of years, it did spawn CE's consumer division with their first Halogen bulb. An industry they are now supplanting with similar-sized bulbs made from solid state LEDs - lower powered but with a life of over 100,000 hours.

"I have a few brochures and annual reports here, if you want to find out more about the company we own a fifth of."

"Are you finished now, Madame Board Member?" Amanda murmured as she resumed her caresses.

"One more thing." Nicole laughed, "They gave me this, a lab curiosity..." as she retrieved a large clear globe from a case and plugged it in. "They were trying to strengthen the light filament by bonding the tungsten to a nickel-titanium alloy and... watch!" As the filament inside glowed and heated, it slowly stretched like taffy on a hot day. As it stretched, the brightness dimmed, and, upon cooling, it returned to its original size and brightness, at which point the cycle repeated itself.

"You may have noticed," Nicole continued, "That the wire more or less snapped back as it cooled. That is a phenomenon known as negative thermoelastic martensitic phase transformation, and the material commonly referred to as a memory metal - its basic usage is something called a muscle wire. Heat it and it 'relaxes', then by cooling, it 'tenses' with something like a 200,000 psi pull."

"Like a bi-metal strip!" said Sara, "But linear."

"Yes, and it has a 25% stretch ratio. Quite amazing..." Nicole stared at the oddly hypnotic dancing light, "But despite the promise, it remains, in scientific parlance, a solution looking for a problem."

"Hmmm," Amanda squirmed against Nicole, "Does that thing make you horny too?"

"Quite, my love." Nicole nibbled her lips, "But not nearly as much as you make me!" With that she lifted Amanda in her arms, and smiled at us. "We will bid you all a fond farewell then; we have HOURS of studying ahead!"

"...and HOURS to do, or die..." Giggled Amanda, followed by a resounding 'Crack!' on her bum.

"For that, you will spend it learning Tennyson!" Nicole laughed as they disappeared out the door.

Chapter 57

I waved Celeste over. "When did you land the Community Center contract?"

She let me pull her on my lap and gave me a kiss, "Since Marjorie pulled some strings at City Council. She had asked me to prepare a press release with a discourse on Mueller's design philosophy, which she then sent to a few universities, including Mueller's alma mater," she grinned, "And back came a handful of supportive letters and she used them to convince sundry and all that I'm even better than she made me out to be!" Her eyes glowed, "Not bad for a second year arkie student, huh?"

"Oh, you passed your exams?"

"Yeah, I think so, a miracle considering the extreme circumstances I had it sic'd on me! Mmmm, although the lovely sweetie DID make it up to me, afterwards..." Celeste sighed dreamily.

I stroked her arm, "Are you enjoying all this? We haven't seen you all that much lately!"

"Mmm-hmmm! I LIKE making buildings, and to be able to watch them take life is fascinating and gratifying as hell." She kissed me softly, "Hon, I have to go..."

"Back to the boys?"

"No - I didn't know how long the Regans were staying so I told them to go early, so Jules is going to fly me over the Community Center to do some sight prep work."

Jules was with Sara and Sherri as they made arrangements with Al Jeffray at Brookhaven Island. Now she came over and tugged Celeste up. She looked at me, "Don't you have something to do?"

I pulled a sad face, "So I had hoped, but nobody seemed interested in having sex with me!"

JulieAnn laughed and pulled me up as well. "I'm sure we can dig up one or two willing candidates! But later! Right now we need our big strong brute to be our big SMART brute," She nibbled my lips, "So he can impress us girls with his LOVELY brains."

"Talking about being impressed," I whispered, holding her against me, "Have I told you lately that you're a real sharp cookie?"

"Why thank you, Sir!" She dimpled and leaned into me, "I'm glad you approve!"

"I'd offer to give you a real treat, but I'm a busy man." I sighed, "Perhap I can fit you in my social calendar - in a day or two?"

Jules laughed and kissed my cheek, "With bated breath, my love, with bated breath..." She took Celeste and me by our hands and waltzed us out the door.

Max and I were working on Gyro 2 when Brenda came down with the printouts Sara had made. We had the engine hatch open and were making measurements with the boat up in slings. Brenda borrowed our tape measure and paced back and forth, making pencil marks on the side of the hull.

She watched as Max helped me install the neoprene bladders in the engine compartment. "Are you thinking of filling these with water for ballast?"

"Close." I said as we bolted the second 40 gallon container to the other side of the superstructure, deep in the ship's hull. "They moved the fuel tank forward to make room for the Magnum engine, so I'm moving it back into the space they used to have the scoops." I dusted my hand, "All we have to do now is reroute the fuel lines and pump the fuel out of the old tank and we're done!"

"Hmmm, that's a really good idea!" She mulled it over, "Come look at this." She led me to the side of the boat and pointed to a small blue mark, "That is the Center of Gravity for this boat according to Peter's figures," She pointed to a red "X" just in front of it. "And this is the plane point for 80, which acts like a fulcrum; like a teeter-totter, slight shifts of weight or speed will cause the boat to see-saw, and that, I'll bet, is the cause of the instability."

I consulted Brenda's drawings and made more pencil marks, "The new tank position is 32" behind the old one; so with 80 gallons of fuel, that will give us about 600lbs of ballast, and replaces the 500lb 10" on the wrong side..." I sat at the laptop and plugged in the numbers as Brenda hugged my neck and watched. "Look! That should move the CG a safe 19" behind the plane point!"

"That's great, hon! Now run the regression down to empty."

I added the formulas and watched the Center of Gravity inch forward as the fuel load decreased, "Oops!" At 10 gallons, the CG touched the plane point again.

"It isn't so bad - that's the fuel reserve point and most people will never go below that..." She sighed, "But then there are always SOME who'll disregard all caution. Hmmm..." She sat on my knee and started adding to the program. "But look, if we added a 45lb ballast at the stern, it would keep the CG behind the plane point - even at 85mph!"

"Hmm, and that would help keep the props from cavitating too." I observed, just as Sara and Sherri joined us.

"It's all set!" Sara smiled, "In fact Al's gonna reserve us a 3 bedroom villa by the marina starting Thursday."

"Sweetie-pie," Sherri sat on my other knee, "We'd like to invite our parents up there for the weekend, is that OK?"

I nodded. "What about your folks, Bren? Why don't you ask them?"

"Hmmm, I'm not sure. They said no last time, let me ask again..." Brenda stood to go to the phone.

"Just tell them they have two private courses there. And the third's designed by Jack Nicklaus." Sherri added.

Brenda spoke for a few minutes, then covered the mouthpiece, "Is it Harbour Town?" Sherri nodded.

"Wow!" Brenda said as she came back, "Dad's gone crazy in the office! He's always wanted to play that PGA course and it's his dream come true!" Brenda paused, "Is it true it's \$300 a round?"

"No, it's \$180 for guests. Only!" Sherri laughed.

"Wow, \$10 a hole!" I marveled. "What a bargain!"

"But it's only \$2.50 a stroke!" Sara joined in.

"Not MY Dad!" Sherri giggled, "He'll triple bogey every hole just to make it last longer!"

"Yeah, mine would brag and say he's played EVERY bunker and water hazard!"

"I'll bet if they only used their putters, they could make each hole last two hours or more!"

"Can you imagine? A 2000 handicap!"

"Hey, that's EXACTLY my Dad's score! On a good day!" They broke out laughing. I was extremely glad I didn't golf, my ego would not be able to take that kind of abuse.

Max had finished working the fuel connections and showed us the small drill-driven rotary pump which we used to empty the old tank into the new one.

Brenda explained the need for the extra ballast on the stern and Max produced a pair of 10kg anodized steel dead-weights for me to bolt down before he returned to his workshop.

"James, can you put it where it can be removed if necessary?" Sara asked, "I want to try something out... Remember we were going to add a scoop under the boat to increase the pressure to the cooling intake? I was thinking we could use an angled foil to do that AND to pull the stern lower in the water."

"That would work, but wouldn't it slow the boat down like before?"

"Hmmm, yeah..." Sara sighed.

"Wait, why can't we use an airplane foil instead, but upside down - to provide downward pressure instead of lift?" Sherri suggested.

"Right! And the faster we go, the more pull!" Sara brightened.

"What about the drag?" I asked.

"That's the secret of air-foils, the drag is minimal for the lift, or the 'sink' it provides!" Sherri said.

"And it's a straight-forward relationship too!" Brenda cried excitedly, "Inviscid flow simply depends on the density and the speed! What works in air would work in water - just fifty times stronger!"

"Right! And we already have the D-forms worked out for Max's plane!" Sherri quickly retrieved the wing foil templates on the computer.

"So we need 45lb downward force at 80mph, then add 50% because it's 1/3 closer to the plane point..." Sherri mumbled to herself as she worked at the keyboard. "Bren, is the density of water exactly 50 times that of air?"

"It is, at 4 degrees; at 20C it's 55.5 times." Brenda supplied, then as Sherri made changes and we waited for the results, "How are we going to fabricate it? Fiberglass alone would probably not take the stress, and carbon fiber would take days to lay up, then we have to trim for balance..."

"If it's not too thick, we can use marine plywood and I think I still remember how to plane and sand." I offered.

"You're on!" Sara said, "How long will that take?"

"Depends on the size, and the incentives." I wagged my brows lecherously, "Maybe a couple of hours..."

"And if we both offered our bodies?" Brenda leaned on me.

"Four hours." I answered, and at their looks, "So I can do you ladies justice."

"How 'bout me, babe?" Sherri wormed her warm fingers in my shorts, "I have some time on my hands too!" She paused and smiled at her hand squirming inside my pants, "Hmm, seems like I just got my hands around a WHOLE lot more of it!"

I stroked her hair and sighed weakly, "I LIKE the way those time management courses are teaching you to maximize it!" I shivered and had to lean on the girls as they crowded around to hold me up.

I was shaking and sighing as Sherri softly caressed me, then suddenly she stopped, "Oh no!" She withdrew and opened her hand, showing us a glistening spot, "Look, the sands of time are running out!" They burst out in laughter and draped themselves on me, cackling and wiping their faces on my clothing. When they showed no signs of stopping, I adjusted my pants and went to bolt the dead-weights in the propeller assembly well, just above the waterline.

After they were mostly recovered, Sara and Brenda took Gyro for tests while Sherri helped me with the measurements of the sea-foil and we took it over to the workshop. I was thankful Max kept it so well equipped and well stocked. I was also thankful for the training the school workshop had given me.

Sherri's 'wing' was 15" wide with a 8" chord that tapered to 3" at the tips, and about 1 inch at the thickest. For the 'lift' it provided, Sherri's calculations showed less than a 1:10 ratio in drag. For simplicity, Sherri had kept one surface completely flat. "Not optimal - there will be more declension and eddy turbulence, but it's mostly on the intake side and negligible for our purposes."

She watched me as I roughed out the form in 1-1/2" marine-finish plywood, then coarse trimmed the shape on the mitre saw, before smoothing it on the belt-sander.

"Can I help?" Sherri asked, as I started hand-sanding with #1 wet-dry.

"Mmmm, in a moment..." I used a straight-edge to check for trueness and applied a coat of lacquer on the large boomerang-shaped wing. I washed my hands and we headed upstairs, "We have to wait for it to dry..." I informed her, "Which, curiously, takes ten minutes..."

A bit more than ten minutes later, we were back in the workshop and she was clutched against me, red faced and giggling drunkenly, "I'm rich; rich with the spoils of time!" She cackled some more, "Get it? Spoils of time?"

"Yes, dear..." I sighed, "I got it after you explained it the first 2 times."

"I'll bet Thomas Gray never expected anyone to use his line quite that way!" She giggled some more, then she kissed my chest, and, looking at me, sighed,

"Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send.
He gave to Misery a tear,
He gained from Heaven a friend."

She pulled my face down for a soft kiss, "I love you, my friend..."

By the time Sara and Brenda returned triumphantly with Gyro for more gas, I had mounted the wing on 6" standoffs machined out of heavy aluminum. The static pressure that permitted Ground Effect flying also worked here, provided we kept the wing 'height' between 1/3 and 1/2 of the span. We removed the weights and fastened the wing securely in place, carefully matching the planing angle so as to offer the least resistance at speed.

Brenda had carefully documented the results of their earlier run and now she made meticulous notes on the plans so that Peter could duplicate it. We stood back to admire our handiwork. The dark protective coating was clear enough to show the different wood patterns exposed by sanding the layers down and made it look like an expensive piece of furniture. An expensive boomerang, at least.

We went out again and spent a long time testing the boat's performance at the lower speeds and we all took turns at the wheel to get a personal feel. The time to plane seemed to suffer a little but the boat showed much better tracking and the wake at skiing speeds was very good indeed. The intake pressure was running consistently in the green as well.

We were nearing the Eyrie, so I drifted into the channel and leaned on the horn. "Waddaya want?" A very naked Mandie looked down at us over the patio, then she was joined by a similarly attired Nicole.

I was too agitated to speak so Sara called up, "We were just about to see how fast Gyro could go..."

By the time we pulled up the docks, Amanda was waiting there in a T shirt and little else, made evident when she jumped into the boat. Nicole followed in a less hasty, but equally disheveled state.

We stared at her as she made her way down the stairs and whistled our appreciation. Her caftan was just thick enough to keep her from being arrested, but as soon as she stopped moving, she might as well have been naked for all the good it did her. I was so appalled at her lewd public display that I sat her down in the back so that I could cover all her sensitive parts with my hands and my body. As good sense prevailed, she too tried to reciprocate, with her hands on the sensitive parts of my body.

Amanda was busy with the girls going over the changes we had made, so Nicole and I satisfied ourselves by trying to find out exactly HOW sensitive our sensitive parts could get.

"Hmmm, I LIKE your Nikki the Bimbo outfit!" I said, breaking from a kiss.

"Do you? I'm glad." She glittered, "But be gentle, love, my whole body is aglow, and tender." She looked at Amanda and shivered, "The sweet darling has such lovely hands... and lips." She sighed, "With such careful attention to DETAILS!"

"So she passed her exams?"

"Mmmm, all except her English; anyone who deliberately misspells Manxome as Maxome deserves to be failed, but she'll get another chance tomorrow..." She giggled and leaned on me, "And it looks like someone's been pampering you a bit too!" She unzipped me and looked over my satisfied equipment, then she leaned down and tasted me in her soft mouth. After she

cleaned me and tucked me back in my pants, she waved Sherri over and pulled her down in a kiss. "Honey, was that you I tasted?"

"Mm-hmm." Sherri giggled and blushed as Nicole pulled her down on her lap.

"I never had the chance to welcome you to the Family properly, so how 'bout you reserve some time for me tonight?" Sherri smiled widely, nodded and sealed it with a kiss.

Amanda fired up the engine and, within seconds, to her delightful laughter, we were powering along the lake at breakneck speed. I cuddled the ladies in the back, my hands in their familiar heart-monitoring spots.

An incredibly short time, and another empty gas tank later, we were berthed at the marina. Although it did not break any speed records from the load it had to carry, the boat's much more competent performance gave us all reasons to celebrate.

We ordered food from the restaurant and brought it over to Jules and Celeste at the Wheel, abuzz with our optimism for the upcoming demo of the Monster Cuddy.

"Good news indeed," smiled Jules, "Peter will probably 'leak' the results this Thursday and the InterCoastal stock will start climbing. By the time we show the results to the world on Monday it will be ready to take a real hike, especially with the late trade boost from the Portfolio Managers on Friday to make their holdings look better. We will start selling our surplus shares gradually and, in 3 weeks or so, when it starts to stabilize a bit, we can see how much more we can buy back with the profits."

"How can we sell our shares and then buy it back to make money?" Amanda wanted to know.

"At the risk of oversimplifying; we basically use leverage to buy double, even triple the shares we want. When the share values go up, we sell this portion, but slow enough so as not to change the upward trend. If the shares appreciate enough, we may end up paying for ALL our purchases with the revenues, effectively getting the shares for free.

"Now it's not easy to generate that kind of increase in share values, but Intercoastal's worth has been languishing at a 3 year low and this may be the catalyst to revive interest in them."

"But why buy the shares back?"

"We won't unless the shares again drop below the company's valuation, or we feel we can accrue enough to put Nicole on the board with Chuck." Jules looked around, "What we are doing now is short term, flipping the shares so we can make money or increase our holdings. But once Chuck gets involved, it will be for the long haul. We would want to keep the company and its share values as strong as we can. And that's why we won't try any of the other, less savory gambits like a reverse or a hostile takeover, where we borrow against the shares we WOULD be acquiring so that we can buy them in the first place.

"Our strategy is founded on the principles advanced by Warren E Buffett, unquestionably the foremost investor of our times. He started Berkshire Hathaway less than 40 years ago and it now owns everything from See's Candies and Dairy Queen to Geico Insurance to Benjamin Moore paints to Brown's Shoes and Fruit of the Loom, with holdings in literally thousands of other firms, including many of the S&P 500 companies. To many, with 170 BILLION dollars in BH assets, Buffett IS the S&P."

"BH always paid cash for its acquisitions and offered no stock options to the executives; if you wanted a share of the company, you had to pay for them, like everybody else. That way, he reasoned, you'd WANT the company to do well and your efforts are reflected in the added worth of your holdings.

"Amazingly, he runs his empire of 11,000 employees with a staff of under 20, and he's not had a single CEO quit his corporations to work elsewhere. Despite not having declared dividends since 1967, his company has grown an average of 22% every year, so each dollar invested in his company is now worth \$2000. Today a SINGLE Berkshire Hathaway share issued with a \$5 par value is worth over 70-THOUSAND dollars."

Smiling widely, Jules pulled a oversized certificate out of an envelope and held it up. "And this is IT, just arrived by courier! A solitary share of the most astounding company in modern history, courtesy of Nicole." Jules bowed in her direction, "When Nicole started investigating companies who were using Mueller's inventions, she came across a BH subsidiary, which manufactures the V-support plates used in the construction of the Wheel, and she negotiated a payment in BH shares. There is a similar certificate in Marjorie's possession." She passed it around and we handled it gingerly, likely the most expensive piece of paper we would ever own.

"To reiterate the fallibility in playing the stocks," Jules continued, "Just three years ago, even this venerable company was in the doldrums, when its shares fell disastrously to \$40,000." Jules smiled, "Due mainly to its resistance to participate in the phenom of the day - the dot-com companies. Now of course we realize just how sound that decision was!" She sighed, "I only wish I had picked up some BH shares then - a 95% recovery rate is inspiring!"

After dinner, Brenda, Amanda, Sara and Sherri again went down to Gyro to test and look for improvements in its performance and handling while Jules and Nicole continued their plans to take over the world.

I had cleaned up the dishes and was outside watching Gyro on the lake when Celeste came with my coffee. She took my hand, "It's hard to believe all that's happened to us; The Eyrie, then Max's and Regan, InterCoastal, now high finance..." She sighed, "And the Wheel is 99% complete." I hugged her tight and she leaned her head on me, "What a beautiful dream..."

"And one that's not about to end any time soon!"

"Only one thing I wish for..."

"Hmmm...?"

"That you help me christen a room, or two..."

"Now?"

"Now."

(To be Continued)

(C) Copyright 2002. M.C.

All Rights Reserved.

All Reproduction for fee or profit forbidden.

Copies of my stories can be downloaded from:

<<http://www.asstr.org/files/Authors/MikeC/>>

Send all comments and suggestions to MikeC@NSpace.net