

Kelly

(Inspired by Mike C, based on characters in his novel: “**James**”
Characters and situations copyright by Mike C, 2002)

Chapter 19

Todd grinned up at the indignant brunette as she glared around at the little group.

“Well, hello, Deanna! Would you like a glass of wine?”

Cara and Ami scrambled for their t-shirts to cover themselves, but Kelly just smiled while Laura was more concerned by this hostile female than her bare breasts.

“Do I know you?” asked Deanna, and then was almost rocked off her heels as she was tackled by a 12 year old.

“Mom! You came!”

“Anna?” She wrapped her arms around the thin shoulders and feeling bare skin, looked down at her daughter. “Anna Helen Regan! Whatever are you doing running around topless?”

“She probably takes after you, Deanna,” said Todd. “Chuck told me that you used to be quite fond of skinny dipping.”

“He told you that?” she asked, amazement in her voice.

“He told us a lot about you,” said Kelly. “It was what he spoke of the most. How much he loved you and missed you and how sorry he was for the way he treated you after the death of your mother.”

Deanna slowly slid down to the deck still clutching Anna.

“Would you like that glass of wine now, Deanna?” Kelly asked.

“Please,” she said.

Ami fetched another glass and Todd poured Deanna a healthy portion.

Deanna nearly emptied the glass in a single gulp and motioned Todd to top her up.

“And what brings you here tonight, Deanna?” asked Todd, filling her glass.

“Yes, I thought you weren’t coming,” Anna added in a small voice.

“Anna, baby, after what your grandfather did, I couldn’t stay away.”

Seeing that there was no trouble, Ami and Cara dropped the t-shirts they had clutched in their hands.

“What did Grandpa do, mom?” Anna asked.

“I was working alone this morning and this man walked into my office and asked for me by my real name,” she said. “My husband was off playing golf, and I figured this had to be something important or legal and I didn’t want to answer this man, but he was persistent. He said he had a very important message for Deanna Regan and that I matched the description and a photograph he had. He said all it was, was a message, and that I could do with it what I wanted. He just wanted to be sure that he was giving it only to the person for whom it was intended.”

“And?” Anna urged her on.

“I finally said that I wanted to see some credentials and he showed me a photo ID card that said he was a private investigator,” Deanna continued, “so then I asked him who his client was and he said it was Chuck Regan. I thought my heart was going to stop. Dad had found me after all this time, but the man said that Dad didn’t know where I was. He said it was a specific part of the contract. Dad didn’t want to know, unless it was by my choice. I figured that if the man was lying or not, he had found me, and if all he had to do was find me, then he didn’t have to tell me anything. He could just report to your Grandfather. So I told him I was who he was looking for and he handed me a sheet of paper. Said that he was supposed to read it to me but that I might feel more comfortable reading it myself than hearing it from a stranger.”

“What did it say, Deanna?” Laura asked.

Deanna looked up at Laura and shook her head. “Do you realize that I don’t know any of you? I come on to my boat and find my daughter half naked with five strangers. Yet you seem to know all about me.”

“Chuck talks a lot about you, Deanna,” Kelly said.

Deanna sighed. “The paper said that when I was found I was to be told that Dad was very sorry for having driven me away from my home, my life and my baby girl,” she said, giving Anna a squeeze. “He said that he loved me, missed me very much and if I

could forgive an old fool, he wanted to see me again, but only if I wanted. The rest was just instructions that I was not to be bothered or pestered again, but just asking if I was happy.”

Deanna held out her glass again to Todd.

Todd shrugged and filled it once again, but cautioned her that in her emotional state, the wine might give her a headache.

“Maybe not a headache,” she said, “but I am getting awfully hot.”

“So,” said Kelly, “get comfortable. It *is* your boat after all.”

“You look familiar,” said Deanna as she slipped off her dress, relaxing in just her bra and panties.

“She’s a famous model, mom,” Anna said, “and Todd is a photographer.”

“Are you the photographer who took the picture of Anna?” Deanna asked.

“Guilty as charged,” said Todd with a smile

“Brenda said you took a beautiful picture of Anna. I wish I could see it.”

“Well, you could ask Chuck. He has a copy in his room in the village,” said Kelly.

“Oh, yeah, right. After three glasses of wine! Some homecoming eh?” said Deanna.

Kelly laughed, said that Chuck was probably asleep now anyway. Then she introduced herself and everyone else properly.

“I guess that now we’re all acquainted, I guess I can lose this as well,” said Deanna taking off her bra to expose a nice full pair of breasts. She massaged the strap marks on her tanned skin.

Laura laughed. She too knew the discomfort of having her boobs restrained.

Kelly asked Ami if she would mind bringing up more Evian. “It will help prevent a headache in the morning,” she said as an explanation to Deanna.

When Ami came back with the bottles of water, enough for everyone, Kelly asked Deanna what made her decide to come, and why so late.

“I didn’t know what to do at first,” Deanna said. “I thanked the detective and said to tell my father I was fine. Anna had asked me to come here this weekend, and I wanted to, but I didn’t want to get into it again with Dad. Sorry, Baby,” she said to Anna.

“Then I read the note over again and started to cry. I couldn’t stop. Then my husband came home and I decided that I was coming. I told him that I had to meet with a client about possibly unloading this boat and that I would be gone for a few days. And now, here I am. I don’t know what to do next.”

“Do you want to see him?” asked Laura.

“Yes...yes, I do. I just don’t know how to approach him. He thinks he shut me out, but I was the one who walked away.”

“But that’s all past history now,” said Kelly.

“And I think I might have the perfect solution for you,” said Todd.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Deanna listened carefully, munching on an apple, as Todd laid out his plan.

Everybody agreed that it was a perfect plan and then Cara and Ami excused themselves saying they were tired and headed off to bed.

“You can sleep with me tonight, mom,” said Anna. “It’s not the biggest bed, but I don’t take up much room!”

Deanna laughed and asked Anna which cabin she was in, gave her a big hug and kiss, and said she would be in shortly.

Finally, it was just the four adults left sitting on the deck.

“Do you make it a habit of sitting around topless?” Deanna asked.

“Oh no!” said Kelly.

“Usually we wear less,” laughed Laura.

Deanna laughed as well.

“Chuck talked a lot about when you and he and your mother used to swim at the lake,” said Todd. “I think seeing Kelly, Brenda, Amanda and Anna skinny dipping the last time we were there brought back a lot of memories for him.”

“I haven’t done it since then,” sighed Deanna. “I miss those days.”

“Damn!” said Kelly. “I forgot to ask Chuck if we could christen the baby at the lake.”

“Baby?” asked Deanna. “Who’s having a baby?”

“We are,” said Laura. “Kelly’s just the lucky one to be carrying it.”

Deanna looked at the three of them. “We?” she said.

“Yep,” said Kelly, “the three of us are an item.”

“Actually, we’re going to get married,” said Todd. “Just to make it permanently legal.”

“Oh,” said Deanna to Todd. “So one girl isn’t enough for you? You need two?”

“It’s not like that, Deanna,” said Kelly calmly. “It’s more like us two girls need Todd, as well as each other. Actually, Laura and I were lovers before Todd and I started a sexual relationship. I think our baby was conceived at your father’s house.”

“I feel like I should be outraged or something,” said Deanna, “but seeing the three of you... You all look so happy.”

“That’s because we are!” said Laura. “Though Todd’s dream of the three of us getting married is strictly fantasy.”

“Oh, ye of little faith,” said Todd.

“It doesn’t *have* to be a fantasy,” said Deanna slowly.

“Told you there was a way,” said Todd smugly.

“You mean you’ve already figured out how to make this possible?” asked Laura.

“I’ve had a pretty good idea,” said Todd, “and seeing what Deanna just said, I think I’m on the right track.”

“It will only be valid in International Waters,” said Deanna. “I don’t think it’s legal in any western country.”

“I don’t think that we need society’s approval, Deanna,” said Todd. “I just want to show a few close friends that we are very serious about remaining together, and neither of the girls will want to change their names. Kelly has a history with hers, and Laura is about to create one.”

“Might I suggest legal contracts, then?” said Deanna.

“Why?” asked Kelly. “It’s like you said. It will never stand up on land or in a real court.”

Deanna smiled at Kelly. “It’s not that, Kelly. I see now that I’ve been a bit blinded by society’s codes of what’s right and wrong, but I can feel the love you have for each other. I’m only suggesting legal contracts in the event of illness or, God forbid, something worse. It’s called an Enduring Power of Attorney, and it will give all of you rights to determine courses of treatment and in some places, simply the right to visit if one of you should fall seriously ill.”

“You mean designate each other as spousal equivalent?” asked Laura.

“That’s it exactly!” said Deanna. “It’s not the same as a marriage certificate, but for most things, it’s just as good. It will allow only the other two to make serious decisions for you when you’re incapable of making them for yourself.”

“I hate even thinking about that kind of thing,” said Kelly, “but you have a good point, Deanna. Thanks!”

Then Kelly turned her gaze onto Todd. “You sneaky bugger! You said you’d find a way to marry us both. I loved the idea and I loved you for wanting to, but I never thought you’d find a way!” She threw herself on him, kissing him passionately.

Laura laughed and jumped on top, joining in the kissing and hugging.

“Well, seeing how you three are occupied, perhaps I should go and join my daughter,” said Deanna.

Laura and Kelly disentangled themselves from Todd, who was beaming.

“I’m sorry, Deanna,” said Kelly. “We can pick this up later on,” she giggled as she squeezed Todd’s leg.

Todd picked up Kelly’s cell phone and scrounged in his pockets until he found the number of the Marriott Inn. He dialed the number and left a message with the front desk that Chuck be invited to join them on board the CL1 at 9 o’clock for breakfast and to discuss baby news.

After he hung up, he said to Deanna, “That’ll make sure he’s here in the morning. The rest will be up to you and him.”

Deanna gulped down more of her water. Laura went and got a few more bottles.

“Deanna,” said Kelly, “how about you and me swap some favors tomorrow morning?”

“What do you mean?” asked Deanna.

“Todd told me how Chuck responded to Anna when he saw her posing for him and he thought it was you. You look beautiful, but if you give me a half hour in the morning before he gets here, I should be able to duplicate that look.”

“Yeah,” said Laura. “I don’t understand why someone as beautiful as you dresses so conservatively. You’re wearing hardly any makeup and your hair looks positively matriarchal!”

Deanna raised her eyebrows at Laura.

“I’m sorry, Deanna,” said Laura. “I’ve just gotten used to saying what’s on my mind.”

Deanna was quiet for so long that Laura thought she had really upset the woman, but then she said, “It’s okay, Laura. I guess I’ve been...” she paused, as if looking for the right word, “unhappy for quite a while...”

*(Deanna had married an older man, coincidentally with a similar physical build to her father. He knew her real name and had counted on using her family connection to improve his business. She refused flat-out, and things soured between them when he found he just could not get her to change her mind. (That Regan stubborn trait!) Deanna had actually used **his** contacts to improve her own business life. Their relationship had been mostly in name only for the last 6 – 8 years, but she had discovered about a year ago he had taken a lover. A pretty young thing of 22 - less than half his age. A pretty young **MALE** thing!)*

“What made you unhappy, Deanna?” Todd asked softly.

“I found out something about my husband that he really didn’t want me to know,” she answered with a crooked smile. “And it made me feel, I suppose you’d say... old and unloved.”

“Which of course is silly and you know that, right, Deanna?” said Kelly. “You and I are about the same age, and I could tell you some stories about not being happy, but if I’ve learned anything, it’s that my happiness depends on me.”

Deanna sighed.

“You’re about my size, Deanna,” said Laura. “I’ve got some great outfits with me. Brand new designer stuff. Let Kelly fix your hair and makeup and we’ll dress you up just right!”

Deanna laughed. "All of a sudden I feel like I'm a Barbie Doll. Okay. We'll do it. But what is it you want from me, Kelly?"

"I want you to tell me about giving birth!" said Kelly.

Deanna laughed and said it would be her pleasure. "I think that having Anna is about the only thing I've done right."

"Deanna," said Todd, "I asked Chuck about Anna's father and he said you refused to tell him. Does he know he has a beautiful daughter?"

Deanna's eyes misted over. "I loved him," she said. "But he was older than me. Not by much at this point in my life, but I was only 15 back then. He worked for my dad, and he left before I found out that I was pregnant. The last I heard he was on the west coast and has a wife and child. I've kept this a secret for a long time. I'm not sure if I could intrude on his life now with this news. It wouldn't be fair to his family."

Todd moved over and put his arm around Deanna's shoulder. "I understand," he said softly. "It must have been hard on you all these years."

Kelly slid up on Deanna's other side and said, "and we have to tackle our own demons one at a time. I'm glad that you found the courage to see your father again. You just don't know how happy he will be."

Laura moved to sit in front of Deanna, taking hold of her hands. "We'll be your support group, Deanna. From what you said about the detective finding you, your father left the door open for you to make your own choice. He could have just had you found and come to see you, but all he asked was if you were happy. I'd say that he really cares for you, if he's willing to let you go and live your own life."

"Laura's right, Deanna," said Todd. "Chuck's not trying to interfere with your life, he just wants you to know how much he loves you and misses you."

Deanna put her head on Kelly's shoulder and cried.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Ami and Cara had done their best not to rock the boat after getting into their bed. They found their lovemaking that night to be subdued and tender. It had been a long day and an emotional evening, from the elation of arriving and the excitement of the day, to the arrival of Deanna.

"I wonder if our lives would have been anything like this if we hadn't been on the road from such a young age," Cara had asked.

"I'm not sure, honey," said Ami. "We come from different backgrounds, but if my dad had found out I was pregnant, I'm not so sure that he would have taken it well at all."

"Yeah," said Cara. "My dad would flip, especially after all the time he spent working overtime to pay for my training. I don't think any of the medals I won would have meant anything to him."

"I think we should really work at this opportunity and give our families something back," said Ami. "They've sacrificed for us, let's not give them a reason to regret it."

"Exactly!" said Cara. "Now get on your back again, lover. I'm not done with you yet!"

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

It was after midnight when a cried out, tired yet happy Deanna crawled into bed and cuddled next to her daughter. God, she had missed this. Her baby was growing up and needed her mother. Come hell or high water, she was determined she would make things right again between herself and her father if only for Anna's sake.

Deanna loved her dad, but they were of the same temperament. She had been so pig headed and he could be so stubborn, yet... if he could change, so could she!

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Kelly had a last cigarette on deck while Laura cleaned up the remnants of the picnic that had turned into a surprise party. Todd helped Laura.

"Wow," was all that Laura had been able to say after Deanna had gone off to bed.

"Yeah, for sure," said Kelly. "She's been living with a lot of guilt for a long time."

"But she's going to make it right," said Todd. "That's the important part."

"Better late than never, right, Todd?" Kelly asked.

"Some things can never be set right," said Todd, "but their only downfall has been pride and stubbornness. You and me, Honey, we've dealt with worse."

"And we have the battle scars to prove it, don't we, Babe," said Kelly.

"Yeah, but they're all internal."

“Hey, you two. Don’t you be getting all emotional on me. I know I haven’t had to put up with the crap you two did,” said Laura, “but no matter how hard you try, you can’t go back and change the past. We have each other now!”

“Laura’s right,” said Kelly. “We can’t change the past, but we can sure as hell try to make a better future!”

“Laura, have you given any thought to this crazy idea of Todd’s? About marrying both of us?” asked Kelly.

“You mean, will I invite my folks to our wedding?” Laura laughed. “I think that I’ll just keep that little secret to myself. Mom and dad are pretty open-minded, and could probably accept me having a relationship with either one of you, but both of you? Since we’re going to be keeping our own names anyway, I’ll just let them speculate about who I’m spending my time with. But there is something I want to add to this whole crazy scheme.”

“What’s that, Sweetheart?” asked Kelly.

“Well... Todd is talking about marrying the two of us, but I want to marry you too, Kelly.”

Kelly’s eyes misted over as she reached for Laura. “And I want to marry you too, Sweetheart. I love you!”

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

They made slow gentle love that night. Not quite the rocking, swaying ride Laura had predicted, but the day had been enough of a roller coaster for Todd and Kelly anyway. Laura was the one who held it all together for the three of them, finally understanding Gloria’s cryptic message from her ‘Obi Man.’ Todd and Kelly needed her to be the stabilizing rock and glue to help them hold it all together while the three of them built a lifelong relationship.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Laura woke up first. Her arms felt heavy and she realized she was lying on her back, sandwiched between Kelly and Todd. Somehow, through the night, they had both ended up cuddling Laura, their heads on her shoulders. Laura hugged her lovers tight, but her bladder was calling out to her.

She tried to slide out without disturbing either of them, but they refused to budge. Remembering something she had once read about the sleeping mind, she softly whispered into Todd’s ear, “Honey, turn over.”

Todd didn't move, but he mumbled something in his sleep.

She tried again. "Todd, Honey, roll over."

Todd didn't wake up, but he mumbled, "Yes, dear," and rolled over allowing Laura to extract her arm. Her arm was asleep and it flopped loosely for a few minutes before the tingling sensation stopped.

She tried to use the same technique on Kelly, but Kelly must have been in a deeper sleep state and Laura received no response at all. Failing this, and wanting Kelly to be able to sleep longer, Laura used her nails to gently rake across Kelly's back. That brought a response!

Kelly moaned in her sleep and stretched like a cat before rolling over, still soundly asleep.

Slipping on just a T-shirt, Laura headed for the "head," as Bob had told her the toilet was called on a boat. She still thought that was a funny name for a bathroom.

Sunlight was streaming in through the portholes, and Laura stopped a moment to look at the trusty old Timex on her wrist. "Oops," she thought. "Better hurry and get the others up. It was already past 8."

Laura realized she was standing outside of Anna's cabin door and could hear voices coming through it. At least Anna and Deanna were awake. Not wanting to let others know she was up she listened at the other cabin door where Ami and Cara were bunked. No sounds. Gently she turned the doorknob and slipped into the room to find the two girls sound asleep, nude, and curled around each other. Laura gently shook Ami by the shoulder and held her finger to her lips indicating she should remain quiet.

Ami nodded and whispered, "Good morning," a smile on her face. Laura smiled as well; happy that Cara and Ami had discovered the deeper love they had for each other.

Slipping into the passage way once more, Laura finally made it to the "head" and relieved the pressure that had woken her.

Passing by Anna's door again she could hear soft laughter. It was a good sign, and that along with the sunlight outside spoke of promise for the day.

Back in her own cabin, Laura dressed and then woke her two lovers.

"Come on, Kelly, Sweetheart. You promised to work with Deanna this morning and Chuck will be here in less than an hour."

Kelly grumbled something about mornings, climbed out of the bed and ran her fingers through her hair. Not giving a second thought to her nudity, she stumbled out the door to use the “head” herself, after giving Laura a sweet good morning kiss.

Todd had an early morning erection now, so Laura slowly moved to within range where she could engulf his cock and trap it between her lips. She sucked softly and gently slowly moving her mouth back and forth, feeling his erection grow even more.

Todd moaned softly in his sleep and turned to give Laura better access to his hard-on. His arousal level was rising and he was still asleep! But his body reacted instinctively to what felt good.

Laura started to pick up the pace, wetting her lips, and coating his cock with saliva. Her head was bobbing up and down when Kelly reentered their cabin.

Kelly finished her business, and then checked on Cara and Ami before heading back. She smiled at the sight of Laura sucking Todd awake, remembering a time not so long ago when she had done the same thing.

Laura was intent on her ministrations and could feel Todd’s pending eruption. She redoubled her efforts and was rewarded with jets of cum splashing against her tonsils. She continued to suck until his cock deflated and when she was finally satisfied that there was no more for her to lick or suck, she released him from her oral embrace and stood up. She noticed Kelly watching approvingly and moved to her other lover to share a taste of what she had just enjoyed. The two girls were locked in a passionate embrace when Todd finally woke up.

“Hey!” he said, with a big smile on his face. “Are you two starting without me?”

Kelly laughed. “This, from the only man I know who can sleep through a perfect blowjob.”

Todd looked down at his flaccid cock and saw it was still wet with saliva. “I thought I was just dreaming,” he said. “Who do I have to thank for this morning’s wake up call?”

Laura winked at Kelly and said, “If you can’t tell, then I guess you will just have to return the favor to both of us.”

“That will be my pleasure,” he said as he climbed out of bed. Todd looked at the clock and said, “we better get a move on. Chuck should be arriving within the next half hour.”

Kelly called Sandy’s and asked if they could order breakfast delivered. When she found out she could she said she would call right back and see how many and what.

“You get dressed, Kelly,” said Laura. “I’ll find out who’s in the mood for eating and get the vitamins.”

When she left, Kelly got dressed and pulled out her “on the road” makeup case. Todd changed into a pair of shorts and the inevitable Trek T-shirt. While Kelly and Laura were wearing soft leather sandals, Todd slipped on his moccasins.

Laura came back and announced that everyone was in the mood for breakfast, and the consensus was that whatever Kelly ordered would be fine with them.

Kelly hit redial on her phone and ordered cheese and mushroom omelets with thick slabs of ham, and three large containers of orange juice, enough for seven people.

Giving her lovers a kiss and taking the clothes, which Laura had suggested, from her wardrobe, Kelly left to do a quick makeover on Deanna.

Cara and Ami, with Anna’s help, set up the dining table on the open upper deck.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Chuck woke at his usual seven o’clock and lay for a moment looking at the play of light on the ceiling. He kicked off the sheets and stretched for a moment, then rolled out of bed and padded into the bathroom, had a piss then gave his teeth a quick brush. He examined his reflection in the mirror for a moment. *‘I suppose you’re not doing too bad for an old guy,’* he thought then went to slip on a pair of shorts.

The phone on the desk showed a blinking message light. He frowned to himself; who would be leaving him a message here? He called the front desk to receive Todd’s invitation to breakfast. Baby news? Perhaps Todd was accepting his offer to be a part of his family. He certainly hoped so – he and Anna had been alone for so long, and they and the James Gang had brought a wonderful change to their lives.

He rang room service for a pot of coffee and a bagel, enough to tide him over till nine o’clock, and then called his message service. Hmm, nothing there his new CEO couldn’t take care of.

He was sitting on the balcony watching the boats come to life on the lake when the busboy brought up his coffee and bagel.

Chuck had his feet propped up, sipping on coffee watching the time go by. He hadn’t done enough of that in the last decade, always working harder and longer than the people he hired. The last two months had changed that for him and he was enjoying his granddaughter now more than ever, and was developing new friendships. “If only I had done this before,” he thought to himself. With a sigh, he got out of his chair and checked CNN Headline News for a few minutes. Satisfied that the world was not going to hell in a hand-basket today, he turned off the idiot box and noted with irony that he hadn’t even

bothered to look at the New York Times that came with his coffee and bagel. He was rich, didn't need to gain more money, and the company was now in the Brenda's capable hands. It was time to start enjoying life. Build on his new friendships and maybe spend a bit more time in Helen's garden.

He was still smiling as he stepped into the shower.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

"For the umpteenth time, stop playing with your hair!" Kelly said to Deanna. "Just try and sit still for a minute so I can get this eyeliner on you."

"But it looks so ..." said Deanna.

"Big? Full?"

"No," giggled Deanna. "It looks like it's alive!"

"And that's the look we're going for," said Kelly, "so if you can stop playing with it for a minute..."

"Oh, all right," pouted Deanna. She secretly loved the way she looked as she viewed her reflection in the mirror. And Kelly had made it look so simple. Under her care, Deanna watched a dozen years fall away from her face. Her hair hung loose but shaped. Her lips were fuller thanks to a careful application of liner and gloss, and what Kelly had managed to do to her eyes made them look deeper, more striking.

The clothes that Laura had picked for her were so casual, it reminded Deanna of her teenage years. Flared shorts with multiple pockets in a soft green and a cream colored collared blouse with dual front pockets completed the outfit. It was a perfect combination and they fit so comfortably. She had no casual shoes to wear with it and promised herself she would get a pair of sandals. It had been so long since she had worn anything like this.

Kelly checked the time, saw it was close to nine, and called Todd in for a final inspection. Todd whistled and said how good Deanna looked, which made her blush.

"So are we all set with the plan?" Todd asked.

"Yes," said Deanna. "Though I'm really nervous."

"Don't be," said Kelly. "He really does love you and he has missed you so much."

“So, when Chuck comes on board, you’ll be waiting in the other stairwell and you can hear what’s being said. When he asks about the other place setting, I’ll say something that you’ll recognize as your cue to come on up,” said Todd.

“Got it,” said Deanna.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

At ten to nine, Chuck had the Marriott driver take him down to the marina, looking for the CL1. He caught sight of a delivery boy heading towards a large wooden yacht then saw the name on her stern. She was a fine looking craft. Chuck walked leisurely towards her and was just admiring the craftsmanship when the delivery boy left.

“Ahoy, CL1,” Chuck shouted. “Permission to come aboard!”

“Oh, Grandpa,” said Anna who stuck her head out from the top deck. “You don’t have to be that formal!”

“For a lady this grand,” said Chuck, “it’s only right we follow tradition!”

Todd stepped out from the main cabin and welcomed Chuck aboard.

“I knew you were staying on a yacht,” said Chuck when he was seated, “I just never expected it to be one of such high caliber!”

“She is a beauty, isn’t she?” said Kelly.

Chuck was checking out the fittings, admiring the quality of the workmanship. “This kind of work, you don’t see much of it any more,” he said. “People don’t want to pay the money, and few builders want to take the time.”

“If you like I can introduce you to the designer,” said Kelly as everyone sat down.

“That would be an honor,” said Chuck, then he noticed the empty seat. “Are we expecting someone else?” he asked.

“Well,” said Todd. “The designer and builder of this yacht arrived late last night, so we invited her for breakfast as well.”

“A woman designer?” asked Chuck. “Of this boat? I’d love to meet her!”

Todd and Kelly both looked at the stairwell behind them. Anna was holding her breath.

“Hi, Daddy!”

*To be continued...*