

Wednesday, May 3, sometime in the late afternoon, over the US, en route to Greenville, SC (having crossed the IDL)

"I hate the International Date Line," Cherie groused as she sat in her seat in Tracy One.

"I can't imagine why," Dianne replied with a roll of her eyes.

Thinking this was a legitimate question, Cherie hastened to explain. "We leave early on the fourth, fly all the way to Greenville, get to Grandma's in the early evening on the third and I have to wait a whole day for my friends to be out of school so we can go to Wyoming. However, my brothers get to go straight there together and get there earlier and have a whole extra day at the ranch!"

"Don't you want to actually be there when we pick up your friends?" her mother asked.

Cherie made a grumpy face. "Well, yeah... but I'd like to spend some extra time at the ranch, too, instead of going back with Grandma and the boys while you and Dad bring my friends home." She sighed heavily, the weight of a teenaged girl on her shoulders. "Couldn't we stay an extra day? Please?"

"We've talked this over already," Dianne reminded her daughter. "You have school and exams are coming up fast. You can't afford to miss much more than you're going to. And Tyler has a lot to catch up on since he was sick."

"I think he got better just in time to go the party," Cherie groused, folding her arms across her chest emphatically.

"You're pushing it, girl. You know very well that's not true," Dianne warned, her voice getting tight with annoyance. "The way you're talking, it's as if you didn't worry about him at all."

"Hmph." Cherie said, turning her swivel chair around.

Dianne shook her head with an exasperated sigh and got up, heading for the cockpit. "Mind if we change places for a bit, Tin-Tin?" she asked the Malaysian girl. "I'm tired of being the mother of a teenager. I'd much rather be a co-pilot at this point."

Tin-Tin chuckled. "Of course, Dianne. Be my guest. I'll go back and see if Cherie would like some 'girl talk'."

The two women switched places, but not before Dianne bestowed a kiss on the pilot's head. "How're you doing, dear?"

Jeff rolled his shoulders one at a time. "I'm okay. A bit stiff, I guess. I'll be glad to get to Greenville."

"How much longer?" his wife queried as she put on her headset.

"An hour, I figure. We're halfway across the US by now."

"What's the weather like?"

"Clear all the way to the eastern seaboard, but there's a low pressure system over the upper tier. The boys'll be in for some rain."

Dianne chuckled. "Well, how about that? Maybe Cherie will feel better if she knows her brothers won't be out horseback riding without her."

Jeff snorted a laugh and got back to his piloting.

From: Tikatu Sent: 8/20/2005

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