

Dianne breathed deeply, enjoying the smell of pine and water and leather and... horse. She chuckled under her breath and glanced ahead to the lead rider, his salt and pepper hair almost fully hidden under a cowboy hat. It was the last ride for the girls as a group, and the only ride Dianne and Jeff would enjoy while they were here. After this, the guests would be flown home and get to Greenville in mid-afternoon, while the boys would take Cherie out for one last ride before returning to the island.

"Mom?" Cherie said, dropping back a bit where the path by the river was wide enough for two, "Can't we stay a little longer? Please?"

Dianne shook her head. "I'm sorry, hon, but no. Your friends have school tomorrow, and because of the IDL, you and your brothers will miss a day anyway. Tyler can't afford that, and neither can you with exams coming up and all. Plus, I'd really like to get the rest of my birthday present underway. But don't worry; we'll find time to get out here this summer, maybe even bring some of yours and your brothers' friends out again."

"Hrmph," Cherie said with a pout. "You'd think that because we're rich, we'd have time to do whatever we wanted whenever we wanted."

"Cherie," her mother said in a warning tone. "That's a bad attitude to have and I won't stand for it. Yes, we're rich. But with that wealth comes responsibilities. I was just talking to your Dad last night about how much I sometimes wish we lived just like ordinary people, and he pointed out that even if we didn't have the 'family business', we'd still have responsibilities to the other family business, the one that generates the wealth. So get it into your head that we can't come and go at our leisure." Dianne sat up straighter in the saddle, stretching her shoulders back a bit. "Besides, you'd still have school, and for you and your brothers, that comes first."

Cherie looked down at the pommel of her saddle. "I'm sorry, Mom. I guess you're right." She sighed. "I just sometimes wish... this kind of thing could last forever."

"If it lasted forever, you'd get bored of it," Dianne said with a small smile. "Better to let it end so you can come back and really appreciate it when it does happen." She looked ahead at the trail. "Uh oh. The trail's narrowing again. You'd better pull ahead of me."

"Okay, Mom," Cherie said with another sigh. She gave her horse a light kick and Dianne pulled back on her reins so that Cherie could get ahead of her.

~Sometimes I have to agree with her, Dianne mused. ~Sometimes I wish our lives were one big party. But then, would I feel as fulfilled as I do working with IR? And would our kids be the selfless, giving people they are or are becoming? I'm sure Jeff's boys would have to work hard not to fulfill the "playboy" image they often cultivate, despite Jeff and Lucille's smart training. But my kids? Without IR and the example of giving they see every day, they might not become the selfless

individuals that I want them to be. So in that respect, I'm glad that we're not the usual "rich and famous" family. She sighed, then turned her attention back to the scenic area they were passing through.

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