

Tracy Island, May 14th -- 10.30 a.m.

Kat's phone began to play her familiar pop tune ring tone. Reaching for it, she answered it with, "Kat Williamson."

"Kat, my dear, how are you?" Lady Penelope looked particularly glamorous; her hair was piled up on top in curls, with some falling down over her shoulder, and her diamante drop earrings sparkled as she moved her head.

"Lady Penelope, how lovely to hear from you!" Kat headed for the balcony and sat down on a chair to carry on the conversation.

"Well, I am just ringing to catch up with the latest gossip. I understand you were helping with the tsunami rescue."

"Oh, yes, that rescue. I have never mended so many old generators, nor worked on such archaic vehicles in such a short time. Nor have I been so dirty! I think I have become known on the island as little Miss Grubby!" She laughed.

"Well that must have been a worrying time for the Tracy's, as the wave washed over the island," Lady Penelope remarked.

"Yes, it was. But, I'm sure they found it a relief to know Mrs. Tracy, Kyrano, and the little boys were safe at Bongo-Bongo."

Kat thought about the island when they had returned from the rescue. She remembered the broken catamaran, and could imagine Gordon's face when he saw the state of the boat. She shuddered as she remembered the massive clearing up that they all had to help with.

"So," Lady Penelope asked in her cool manner, "is there any more news?"

"Well, Christopher has gone, been sacked really, but I'm sure you may already be aware of that," Kat answered. She was still unsure as to what had really happened between Christopher and Mr Tracy.

"Oh, my dear! I'm so sorry." From what Jeff had told her, he had entertained high hopes for Mr Jordan.

"I think maybe things started going wrong when Christopher talked to a reporter when we were rescuing the British Prime Minister from Tower Bridge," Kat added, although she didn't sound too convinced. She changed the subject. "Lady Penelope, you remember when I left, Lil gave me a wok as a leaving present?" Kat gave a short laugh "Please tell her that I have had a lesson with Kyrano on learning to cook with a wok."

"How did that go?" Lady Penelope asked.

"Well, the lesson was a success and Kyrano kindly leant me some ingredients. I had intended to cook for my friends. But things didn't go according to plan."

"Oh?" Lady Penelope queried. "What happened?"

"Well, you see I was doing a dummy run for practice, but, um, you see, while the oil was getting hot, I knocked over a glass dish. It broke, and when I went to fetch something to clear the debris away, I sort of forgot about the oil. Suddenly the room was full of smoke and the sprinkler was set off."

Lady Penelope raised her eyebrows, looking surprised. "Oh my dear, really? That doesn't seem such a catastrophe."

"Oh, but it was! You see, my smoke alarm set off the alarms in the villa, and I had John, Virgil and Gordon come running with fire extinguishers to see where the fire was."

Lady Penelope laughed out loud. "Oh, Kat, that could only happen to you!"

"They were very good about it, but I suffered from Gordon's wisecracks and jokes all the next day."

Lady Penelope smiled at Kat. "That is so typical of Gordon, he always has had a sense of mischief about him. The pranks he has played in the past! I would have thought you got off very lightly with him just teasing you. Anyway, my dear, the main purpose of my call is to advise you that a friend of Lofty called and saw your car in the garage. He seemed very interested in purchasing it. Apparently his present Lotus is rather beyond repair and he would dearly like to get another one. I told him that it was not for sale, but he seemed so keen that I promised that I would get in touch with the owner and ask whether it could be sold."

Kat was silent. ~Sell my car? My pride and joy? Oh I couldn't part with it! It was a twenty first birthday present from my parents.

Noting the silence, Lady Penelope continued. "Of course, if you do not wish to sell it, it can remain here. So when you come back for a holiday, it will be there for your use."

"Lady Penelope, could I think about this and let you know?" Kat said quietly. "It would be a wrench to sell it and, to be honest, I don't really need the money at the moment. However, if the gentleman is a keen collector of Lotus Elise's then, well... maybe."

They chatted for a while longer, with Kat enquiring about her parents, then Lady Penelope advised she had to go. She had an appointment to launch a ship, and so the conversation ended. Kat wandered down to the beach, deep in thought. She loved her little car; it was so speedy and her pride and joy. She was so immersed in her thoughts she didn't see Alan until she almost walked into him.

"Hey, Kat! You look as if you have the weight of the world on your shoulders."

Kat smiled a little. "I have quite a dilemma," she told him.

"Need some help, or friendly advice?" Alan asked as he fell in step with her.

"Alan, have you ever had something that you were really fond of, but knew it was no use to you, and you had the chance of getting rid of it, what would you do?"

Alan looked at Kat. "Hm, I don't quite follow, Kat. Sure, there are lots of things that I have been, and still am fond of. I was extremely fond of motorcar racing. I am fond of my family, and where I live, but apart from the racing, there is no question of getting rid of anything."

Kat looked thoughtful. "Alan," she began, "on my twenty first birthday, my parents gave me a Lotus Elise. It was, still is in fact, my pride and joy. When I left for Tracy Island and International Rescue, Lady Penelope agreed to my car remaining at Creighton-Ward Manor."

"You have a Lotus Elise? Wow!" Alan said. "What a beautiful car! No wonder you are so proud of it. That's one car I would sure love to drive."

"The thing is, though," Kat said, "Lady Penelope has been approached and has been asked to contact the owner, with a view to the car being sold."

"And now you are not sure what to do?" Alan asked gently.

"What would you do, Alan? You like cars; would you get rid of a favourite, in fact, only car?"

Alan hesitated and looked at the young woman walking by his side. "I would say, Kat, go with your gut feeling. Do you really want to sell your prized possession? True, you won't need it now, nor maybe in the future, but I assume that you will occasionally go back for vacations. If you sell your car, I think you will really miss it. If I were you, I would hang on to it for the moment."

Kat smiled at Alan. "Thank you for your advice; it has really made my mind up for me. Yes, I am going to ring Lady Penelope and tell that the car is definitely not for sale."

The two headed back to the villa chatting about cars, mechanics and Grand Prix races. Alan told Kat that he was going to the Monaco Grand Prix later that month. There followed a lively discussion on the present drivers, who were and who weren't doing well, and why.

"I think Pete Johnson, British driver for the McLaren team is so cool. He was just beginning to race in his first season, when Dad and I went to Silverstone last year. He is doing very well," Kat stated.

Alan had to agree, although he told Kat that he really rooted for the American driver for the British-American Racing Team.

With a grin, he said. "Say Kat, how about a little bet on which Driver--your British Pete Johnson or my American Dexter Thompson--gets highest in the points at the end of the season."

"You're on, Alan," Kat grinned back at him and they solemnly shook hands, before continuing

back.

From: Tawnyangel22 Sent: 9/24/2005

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