

Tracy Island, Wednesday, 23rd May 2068.

The celebrations of the barbeque died down slowly and most of the Island occupants began to leave the beach and head to the villa in small groups.

Gordon frowned when he noticed that Tin-Tin and the new female recruits were walking off in a different direction. He also Dianne tenderly kiss his father before joining them. "Hold up, where are you going? The villa's this way."

"We know, but we had something planned for Kat over at Nikki's apartment," Elise explained.

"Really? What?" Alex asked sounding excited.

"Just a little girls' night."

Gordon put on a look of someone who just got their feelings hurt. "And you didn't invite me?"

"You're not a girl," Cherie replied snarkily, as she followed her father up to the Villa.

"Then why aren't you going?" Alex taunted.

"She's not old enough," Jeff replied. "Come on, boys, Cherie."

"Sorry, Gordon." Nikki shrugged. "Maybe next time."

The women left Gordon pondering on what would happen that night. His thoughts were interrupted by someone tugging at his sleeve. Gordon looked down at his younger brother.

"I bet it'll be boring anyway." Alex wrinkled his nose slightly.

"Maybe, maybe not. I want to know what they're going to be up to."

"Gordon, don't you dare," John warned as he walked past his brothers with Scott and Virgil.

"I wasn't going to." Gordon held up his hands as if surrendering to someone. When his father and elder brothers disappeared, he pulled Alan and Alex towards him. Brandon and Dom curiously joined them. Gordon looked at the group. "I've got a plan."

"If it has anything to do with crashing their little do, count me out." Dominic shifted Josh from one arm to the other.

"Same here," Brandon said.

"Ok, then. It's just my brothers and me." Gordon put his hand on Alan and Alex's shoulder. He

then looked at them as he voiced his plan. "Right! This is what we'll do."

Kat looked back at the three Tracy brothers. "What do you suppose they're whispering about?"

"Probably up to no good, if I know Gordon," Dianne replied.

"Well, they had better not try any tricks," Elise added, laughing.

Tin-Tin and Dianne followed Kat and Elise to Nikki's apartment. Nikki had gone ahead to organise the drinks and nibbles. Kat and Elise brought in extra chairs. Soon everyone was chatting and enjoying the fruit punch that Elise had provided.

"So then, Kat, are you looking forward to seeing your parents?" Dianne asked.

"Will there be any old boyfriends waiting to see you again?" Nikki asked.

Kat shook her head. "I never had any boyfriends."

"Can't believe that," Nikki said. "Surely, there must have been one."

Kat laughed. "Well, yes, there was one."

"Do tell!" Elise and Nikki chorused together.

"He was more a friend than a boyfriend."

"There is a difference?" Tin-Tin asked.

"We went out with a crowd of friends, though sometimes on our own. Nothing serious. Bowling, skating, that kind of thing. His family moved away and we lost touch. It was never that serious."

Gordon crept along the balcony with his brothers. He was hoping that they could see and hear what was going on without being detected. Alex edged his way past Gordon only to feel a firm hand on his shoulder.

"I'll go first. I don't want you to get in trouble," Gordon said. "At least, if I'm seen, you can make a run for it."

Alex was about to protest, but then thought of what might happen if he got caught. "Go ahead."

Gordon continued his creeping until he reached Nikki's window. Alan smiled before whispering, "Score."

Kat glanced at the others. "So who's next for the confessional?"

"I don't have any interesting confessionals," Nikki stated.

Elise laughed as she said, "Oh please. I know a certain story..."

"No."

"Where Nikki..."

"Elise. Don't go there."

"Was absolutely..." Elise saw Nikki's eyes narrow and laughed once more. "Never mind." A few faces had a look of disappointment.

Nikki shook her head at Elise.

Outside, a few other faces looked disappointed, too.

"I wonder what the story was?" Alan asked.

Gordon shrugged. "I don't know. Why don't you go in there and ask her?"

"Sure Gordon, sure," came Alan's reply. He lightly punched Gordon's arm. As Gordon wasn't expecting it, he stumbled forward ever so slightly and knocked one of the balcony seats. "Maybe they didn't hear it," Alan hoped.

His hopes were soon dashed when they heard voices calling, "Did you hear something?" and "It sounded like it was coming from the balcony".

Gordon turned to his brothers and whispered for them to run. When they reached the bottom of the steps, they hid in the shadows as they heard a door open and Nikki speak before closing the door again.

"Whoever it was is nowhere to be seen," Nikki said as she sat down.

"Why do I get the feeling it was the three whispering Tracys." Tin-Tin got herself a drink before relaxing in her seat again.

"Well, whoever it was, they're gone now. So we can continue," Kat replied.

"You know what I want to know is, if it's not too personal?" Nikki looked at Dianne. "How long did it take to realise that you needed to and could move on after your first marriage?" Nikki thought about it. "I'm sure there was a better way the phrase that. You don't have to answer it if you don't want to. It's just that after my mum divorced my father, she felt for a long while that she would be betraying us, her children, if she got into another relationship."

Dianne took a deep breath before answering. "About three years, I guess. My relatives, my mother and uncle in particular, kept pushing me to move on--not necessarily to remarry, but to get away from the sad memories and the bad feelings that had surrounded us as a family as a result of the bombing."

She sighed. "A lot of people had blamed my husband for the bombing, and as a result, I wasn't the most popular woman in town, especially since I refused to keep silent about my husband's

innocence. I thought that as the investigation progressed, and it began to become clear that Rick had nothing to do with what had happened, that he'd been as much a victim as everyone else, things would change. But they didn't. And I was getting weary in spirit trying to defend him. That weariness didn't do my kids any good, and I could see that I had to do something to give myself a new purpose so I could be the mother that they really needed. Uncle Andrew's recommendation, and Jeff's hiring me seemed to be the perfect solution. Coming here was as much for my children as it was for me. It was an attempt to start fresh."

Dianne blushed and smiled. "It wasn't long before Jeff and I butted heads! I don't know if you've heard the story, but Jeff didn't tell me about IR right away." She went on to tell the listening women about her first weeks as the Tracy family physician and the stunning way she found out about the family's secret.

"I remember!" Tin-Tin said, shaking her head. "The next few weeks were not pleasant. Dianne was either giving Jeff the cold shoulder, or they were having shouting matches in the lounge. My father finally took a hand and told Mr. Tracy he should apologize."

"Did he?" Elise asked. She looked around at the other women. "I mean, if Mr. Tracy is anything like his eldest son, apologizing isn't high on his list of things to do."

The women chuckled, and Dianne said, "Yes, he eventually did. That broke the tension and we started getting to know one another better. And... here we are, married for a year and a half and very much in love." She paused, then said thoughtfully, "I think the difference is that my husband was gone, totally out of the picture, and so was Lucille. That left us free in a way. And the fact that Jeff really wanted to be a father to my kids was a big help. Alex had a real hard time with the idea of getting a new dad, but Jeff made it a point to reach out to him especially. It wasn't just the two of us having a relationship, it was about all of us having one on some level or another." She cocked her head at Nikki. "Does that make any sense?"

Nikki nodded. "Yes, it does. I wish my mother had realized that she could've moved on with her life when she felt ready and not wait until my siblings and I were older. I would never have thought she was betraying us. The same went with my brothers and sister. It's her life and she has the right to lead it the way she wants."

"Is she leading a happy life now?" Tin-Tin asked.

"Yes," came the answer from Nikki.

Dianne nodded her approval. "That's good to hear."

Nikki smirked. "Who wants to move onto something else?"

"You know, I would've loved to see your wedding ceremony to Jeff," Kat smiled.

"Me, too," Elise said.

Nikki held her hand up like she was in a class and wanted permission to say something. "Would it be too predictable if I said 'me three'?"

"Well, I can't say anything. I was there myself," Tin-Tin concluded.

Dianne smiled. "I do have it on vid, and you're welcome to see it if you like. It was quite a production! We knew that the press would be all over us if we held it away from home, so we decided to have it here, on the island. Jeff wanted to make it as private an event as he could, and everyone involved was sworn to secrecy, including the guests." She shook her head and rolled her eyes. "Not that it helped much!"

"An old friend of Jeff's, a former Air Force chaplain, performed the ceremony. My mother and brothers and their families were here, and so were my uncle and his family. There were lots of Jeff's friends and some of his business acquaintances. It was a pretty big party, and Jeff said it was one of the few times that both the Round House and the Cliff House were full. One of the doors that exited into Thunderbird Two's hangar was taken out and a temporary wall put in so that people staying in the Cliff House wouldn't suspect anything."

"What about IR?" Nikki asked. "What did you do about that?"

"We were on stand down for roughly four days. For the first time, Thunderbird Five was empty and on automatic, and we were not responding to calls. It was a tough decision to make, but necessary. All of us hoped and prayed nothing happened while during the wedding preparations and while the ceremony was going on."

"The wedding planners' crews built a big wooden platform between the villa and the Round House, covered it with a tent, and that's where we held everything. It was a really warm day and I have no idea how Jeff and the boys coped with their tuxedos! I was hot enough in my dress and it was sleeveless!"

"Tin-Tin was one of my bridesmaids, and Cherie was a junior bridesmaid. One of my sisters-in-law was my matron of honor, and Penelope was in the wedding party, too, as a bridesmaid. My attendants wore tea length, turquoise dresses with empire waists, spaghetti straps, and ribbons tied just below the bodice. They each wore an orchid over one ear, and carried bouquets of tropical flowers."

"What was your dress like?" Kat asked, her eyes wide and shining.

Dianne smiled. "Well, I didn't wear white. I wore a very, very pale blue that was a pastel of the turquoise. The dress had lace cap sleeves, and beaded A-line bodice, then a chiffon skirt. No train. But it was designed especially for me by François Lemaire, and was made of Penelon."

"Did you have flowers in your hair?" Nikki asked.

"No, Penelope lent me one of her tiaras. Jeff wanted to buy me one, but I didn't see the need for it."

"Jeff had Kyrano as his best man and Scott, Virgil, and Alex as groomsmen. The other boys were ushers. They wore pale gray tuxedos with white shirts and ties to match the turquoise dresses, except for Jeff, of course, whose tie was white. My uncle gave me away, and Tyler was the ring

bearer."

"After the ceremony, we had pictures taken, and while that was going on, the crews cleared the platform for dancing and a buffet. We had a small band playing mostly early 20th century classics and both a male and female vocalist to sing. Kyrano kept trying to hover over the buffet; he was not pleased with the head caterer's attitude. But the food was wonderful, and Kyrano finally had to admit it."

Nikki grinned when a mental picture of Kyrano hovering over the buffet made itself present.

"Who caught the bouquet?" Elise wanted to know. "And did you do that... that garter thing?"

"Yes, we did," Dianne replied, giving Tin-Tin a playful look, which set the Malaysian girl to blushing. "Tin-Tin caught the bouquet."

"Oooh!" the other women said, with Kat adding, "Who caught that garter?"

Tin-Tin rolled her eyes. "Gordon."

That set the small group to laughing. "Oh, I can just see it!" Elise crowed. "I bet he put that thing as high up your thigh as he could!"

"Ahem... yes, he did," was all that Tin-Tin would say.

Kat laughed. "I'd like to see the recording of the wedding someday."

"Same here," Nikki replied.

"Just let me know when you would like to view it," Dianne said with a smile.

The night continued with the girls reminiscing about their past until they were too tired to remember.

Girls night brought to you by Tawnyangel22, Tikatu and Nikki-browneyes. Sent: 10/25/2005

---