

Tracy Island, May 30th 2068, 3.00 pm

It had been a quiet, peaceful day. Everyone seemed to be enjoying the pool. John lay back on his reclining chair and watched the antics of his younger brothers and sister as they played with the new recruits. A water fight was in play and Cherie was aiming her water cannon at Nikki and Elise. Both young women were trying to do some serious sunbathing. Virgil took the cannon out of Cherie's hands and aimed it at Elise who screamed and, on jumping out of her chair, knocked him into the pool.

John had enjoyed his two-month stay on the island, which was coming to an end. He watched all this and suddenly realised that someone was missing.

"Has anyone seen Kat?" He asked.

"Probably Brains has kept her working. You know how involved he gets. He's most likely forgotten the time." Virgil said as he emerged from the pool.

"Go and find out where she is," Gordon called. There was a chuckle from the others around the pool.

John looked around. He felt confused. He was not quite sure how to take his brother's teasing. "I might do just that," he said.

"I thought you would've done that sooner." Virgil laughed.

"Why? What do you mean?" John asked, frowning slightly.

"Oh, come on John! We've all seen the looks you give her," Gordon added, winking at the others around the pool. Nikki and Elise nodded in agreement.

John coloured slightly. "Well, I think she should be here enjoying a relaxing time like the rest of you." And he left to go to Brains' lab.

As John entered the lab, Brains looked up from his work and gave John a smile. "Hi John. What can I do for you?" he asked his friend

"I was just wondering if Kat was still around?"

"She left about ten minutes ago to go to her apartment and change," Brains said. "Otherwise, she said something about joining her friends at the pool."

"Brains," John said, thinking how he could say what he wanted to say. "What do you think of Kat?"

Now Brains was very curious.

"That's an odd question," he said. "Well, as I've said before, she is a very good mechanic. Conscientious, hardworking and she is becoming a very good and reliable member of International Rescue."

"No Brains," John said, running a hand through his hair, "what I really meant was: how is she as a person?"

Brains crossed his arms and shrugged.

"Well, from my point of view, she is very nice. She gets on with most of us here on the island. On the rescues that she has been on with me, she has shown qualities of kindness, thoughtfulness and determination. But why the questions, John?"

"Because I'm finding that I am beginning to like her as more than a friend." He looked hard at Brains. "I would like us to become, um, you know, closer. But I don't really know how to approach her. I don't want her to think that I am pushing my attentions onto her."

Brains looked at his friend. "She doesn't talk much about anyone in particular. But I do know that she very much enjoyed your evening with her on the roof looking at the stars. She talked about that for a long time." He looked at his watch, "I suggest that maybe you should go to her apartment now if you want to talk to her."

John hurried to the cliff house. Would he be in time? He hoped so!

Kat had just come out of the shower, and had changed into shorts and a strappy vest top. She had poured herself a fresh orange juice, added some ice, and was relaxing on one of the balcony chairs. She was just thinking about going to join the others at the pool when the door chimed. She opened the door and was surprised to see John standing outside.

"Oh, hi! Won't you come in? I was just enjoying a drink and debating whether to join the others or not."

John smiled at her, stepped inside, and shut the door.

"Can I offer you a drink?" Kat asked.

"Yes, please. I'll have an orange juice."

Kat poured another glass and went out on to the balcony to join John.

John was watching her. She noticed and blushed. "Are you enjoying your stay back on earth? It must be nice only being up in space only one month in every three."

John agreed. "Yes, it certainly makes a difference having three share the rotation."

After they had finished their drinks, they chatted for a while. Finally Kat got up. "I think I'll go and

join the rest. Are you coming with me?"

"Well, I thought we might stay here for a while..." He gave Kat a shy, almost embarrassed grin.

Kat looked both surprised and pleased. She smiled at him.

"Why, yes, if you want to."

John looked out to sea. He didn't know quite how to approach her. He leant on the balcony rail gazing into the distance trying to calm his feelings. He took a deep breath and turning to face her said, "Kat?"

"Yes, John," Kat replied.

"I know we haven't known each other very long. I'm really glad we met." He looked at her. "I would like us to become closer."

Kat blushed. Suddenly she felt elated and happy. This wonderful man wanted to get to know her better.

"John," she replied. "I would love us to be special friends. To become closer," she added softly, almost to herself. "Oh, let's take in the view on the balcony," she said.

They headed back to the outside and sat talking and enjoying the view.

"How's your mother now?" John asked.

"Getting better, thank you. In fact, she is home now. Dad has hired a part time nurse to take care of her while he is at work," Kat continued. "That email was such a shock. I really had no idea that she was so poorly."

John looked concerned. "How was she when you visited her?"

"She was feeling much better. It was so nice to see Mum and Dad and my brother Andrew and his fiancée. My other brother and family were over from the States. That was a lovely surprise."

"I believe you visited Lady Penelope?"

"Yes, and it was so nice to see Parker, Lil and Lofty again." Then she added, "It was nice to get back here."

They talked softly for a little while longer before Kat stepped away from the rail and stretched.

"Well, I think that I really should join the others," she said, heading for the kitchen with the empty glasses. "They'll be wondering where I am."

John was a little taken aback at the abruptness, but he said nothing. Then they joined the rest at the pool.

From: Tawnyangel22 Sent: 11/1/2005

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