

Saturday, January 5th, 8:45 pm Tracy Island

"Hey, Gordon," Alan said, as he answered the incoming call from his brother. "Wasn't expecting to hear from you so soon."

"Yeah, well, I figured I'd see how you were settling in there."

"About the same as always," the younger Tracy replied.

"Hear from Nikki yet?"

"No. I'm sure she'll write or call soon though. I can imagine she's quite busy with a lot of things right now. How did your day go?"

"I've had better days," Gordon replied, then proceeded to tell his younger brother about the failed joke. As he expected, Alan got quite a laugh out of it.

"Things sure stay interesting down there," Alan commented, after he had stopped laughing. "Wonder how our new arrivals are going to fit in. The Crenshaws arrive tomorrow, don't they?"

"Yeah," Gordon replied. "Their flight lands in Christchurch at noon tomorrow. Dad's sending me to go pick them up."

"You going alone?"

"Yeah. Why?"

"Well, after what I saw when we picked Vince up for his interview, I thought Dad might send someone else along with you," Alan told his brother, keeping his voice light. "Kind of as a buffer."

"There's no need for a buffer! Vince and I are cool, now."

It was something that he was grateful about, too. Working with someone was much easier when you got along with them. While he and Vince hadn't gotten off to the best of starts, Gordon was glad that had changed.

\*\*\*Flashback\*\*\*

"Nice little sub you got here," Vince commented, as he came out of Thunderbird 4.

"Yeah, I'm pretty proud of her," Gordon replied, grinning. He had spent the last half hour showing Vince around some of the underground facilities. "She might be small, but she's a stout little vessel. There's something else I want to show you," Gordon said, as he started walking away from Thunderbird 4.

Vince followed him. They hadn't gone that far when the former SEAL decided to broach a topic he had wanted to bring up all morning.

"I think I owe you an apology. I haven't exactly been the most gracious of guests these last couple of days."

"It's okay," Gordon answered. "I'm sure I didn't make the best of impressions on you in Hawaii. Still, I've got a certain public persona to uphold, if you know what I mean."

"Yeah, I'm sure it can't be easy dealing with the media everywhere you go. Still, the rescue yesterday and just spending time with you and your family, makes me see I misjudged you. Guess what I'm trying to say is that, if I do decide to take this position, then it'll be an honor to work with you."

"Thanks. That means a lot to me," Gordon replied.

They were quiet as the two men made their way to where the new hydrofoil was under construction. "Remember I asked you how you felt about testing out a hydrofoil in the interview?" Gordon asked as he approached the next addition to the Thunderbird fleet. Beside him, Vince nodded in reply. "Well, this is why. She's taking a little longer to complete than anticipated but hopefully nothing else will get in the way."

"Definitely wouldn't mind test driving her," Vince commented as he walked slowly around the partially completed hydrofoil.

\*\*\* End Flashback \*\*\*

"Actually looking forward to telling him a certain project has been completed," Gordon said.

"That's right. The test run is set for Monday afternoon, right?" Alan asked. Gordon answered an affirmative. "You be careful," he said, trying not to sound overly concerned.

"I will, Alan," Gordon replied. Not wanting to go into the same lengthy discussion he had already had with his father, stepmother, and Scott on the subject, he decided to put an end to the conversation. "I should probably make sure I get a good night's rest, with the flight tomorrow. I'll talk to you later."

"Okay. Goodnight, Gordon."

With that, Gordon ended the call. Instead of heading to bed though, he headed for the sliding door leading onto the balcony.