

Chapter 5: A Change of Plans

As Carla was driving home from the pool, she said, “let’s drive by the house before we go home, I wanna see if they’ve finished the painting.”

Carla pulled up in front of grandpa’s house and saw the painters putting their supplies into their truck. Gary and Larry walked out the front door and over to the car.

“Hey,” Gary greeted them.

“Did they finish the painting?” Kenny asked.

“Yeah, but there’s a few places that needed patching, so Bob’s doing that now.”

“Can we go in?” Carla asked.

“It’s still wet, so no not yet.”

Gary looked in the basket, “any sandwiches left, I’m starving?”

“Yeah Uncle Gary,” and Bobby handed him a sandwich. “There’s *lots* of sandwiches left.”

“That’s because they *only* wanted pizza,” Carla said giving Kenny a look.

“Is that pizza still as good as it was when we were kids?”

“Yeah!” Chris yelled out and everyone nodded in agreement.

“Must have cost you a fortune to buy pizza for all these kids,” Uncle Larry said as he came up to the truck laughing.

“Yeah,” Carla said looking at Kenny, “it cost *their* Uncle Kenny a fortune!”

“Ah Kenny’s a softy,” Larry teased.

“Yeah, well, I couldn’t very well eat one without getting one for everyone else,” they all laughed.

“Thanks Uncle Kenny,” Danny yelled out from the back of the truck, and the others yelled out their thanks as well.

“Well,” Carla said, “guess we’d better go home and get cleaned up.”

“You guys wanna come over for dinner later?” Kenny asked.

“Thanks, but I gotta get home. Lynn is making dinner and Vera and CD are coming over.”

Lynn got out of the truck with her basket and she and Larry waved goodbye.

“We gotta get home too, but thanks,” B.J. said, so Gary left it up to her.

“OK,” Carla said and started up the truck. “Is Bob ready to go?”

“I’m comin’,” Bob yelled out as he came around the corner. “Let me get my tools.”

“We’ll talk later about the house,” Carla said as Bob put his tools in the truck and jumped in with the kids.

“OK,” Gary and B.J. waved goodbye as Larry drove off.

“Can we go in the pool when we get to your house Aunt Carla?”

Bobby asked peaking through the little window from the back of the truck.

“Haven’t you had enough of the pool today?”

“No!” the kids yelled out, and everyone chuckled as Carla drove off.

The kids played in the pool until dinner. After dinner, they were too tired to even watch TV, so they went to bed. The adults were finally alone, ready to relax and watch some watch TV.

“So, what do ya think Kenny?” Carla asked as she turned on the TV, “is the house ready to put on the market yet?”

“There are a few little things they need to finish up, but we should get started on trying to sell it.”

“OK, I’ll start on it Monday, but I sure hate to sell it.”

“Understand, but no one in the family wants to buy it.”

Bob walked in and overheard them and asked, “so how much are you selling it for?”

“Well,” Carla answered, “the asking price is \$120,000, but we can go as low as \$75,000.”

“What?” Bob said with surprise.

“Only \$75,000 for a three-bedroom home with a huge yard and garage?”

“Well, that’s what the houses in this neighborhood are going for.”

“If this house was in San Diego, it would be worth \$300,000 at least!”

Carla turned on the TV and sat down next to Kenny and that seemed to end the discussion.

Bob wasn’t able to focus on the news after hearing this and went to the guest room and told Lorene about it.

“Did you know that they’re selling your parent’s home for around \$75,000?”

“Really?”

“We could afford that easily,” he suggested and sat down on the bed next to her giving her a serious look.

“What? You would consider moving back here?”

“Well, we could never afford to buy a house like this in San Diego.”

“You would really consider moving back here? I would love to move back here so the kids can grow up with their cousins,” she said, “and it’s so much safer and more family oriented,” she continued, “and I’m sure Larry will help get you back into the Carpenter’s Local.”

“Yeah, yeah, I know, but don’t get your hopes up. Let’s sleep on it and talk to Carla and Kenny in the morning.”

“OK,” she kissed him on the cheek. “Thank you honey,” and she shut out the light, “I’m so excited, I don’t think I’ll be able to sleep.”

Next morning, Bob got up early and woke Lorene, “I smell coffee brewing, let’s get up before the kids and talk to Carla and Kenny.

Lorene agreed and got up and put on her robe, washed her face, and joined Bob already in the kitchen pouring himself a cup of coffee. He took another cup out of the cupboard for Lorene and poured her a cup.

Carla heard Lorene and Bob in the kitchen and came out of her office to join them. “Good morning.”

“Good morning,” Lorene said, and Bob tipped his cup at her.

“Kenny’s getting up now, I’m sure he smells the coffee.”

Lorene was excited to tell Carla the good news, “What would you think if we purchased mom and dad’s house?”

Carla stopped browsing through some papers and looked up over the top of her glasses. "What?" she said in surprise.

"Are you serious?" Kenny said as he walked into the room overhearing her.

"Well," Bob chimed in, "we were discussing it last night and the more we talked about it, the more we liked the idea of moving back here."

"That's great," Kenny said.

"I'll say," Carla agreed, "we'd love to have you all back here where you belong," she said jokingly, "but seriously," she continued, "think you can swing the mortgage?"

"Well," Bob continued, "I don't think we can come up with twenty percent down," he looked at Lorene and she gave him an agreeable look, "but we can easily afford the mortgage payments," he explained, "which will be lower than what we're paying now for rent."

“Yeah,” Lorene agreed looking at Kenny, “do you think Larry would be able to put in a good word to help Bob get back into the union?”

“I’m sure that won’t be a problem,” he said, “and I can also put in a good word for him. I’m friends with Buddy, the union agent.”

“I might be able to transfer back here with my job,” Lorene said. “But if not,” she seemed to be thinking out loud, “I may not even *have* to work anymore.”

“That would be great!” Carla said.

“I need to make some phone calls on Monday and check on a few things,” Bob said, “but I should be able to let you know something by then.”

Lorene heard the kids coming down the hall, “Let’s not tell the kids yet, until we know for sure.”

“Good idea,” Bob said, and Carla and Kenny agreed and stopped talking.

“What’s for breakfast?” Chris asked as he sat down at the table.

“I’m not gonna make anything,” Carla said looking at Lorene, “unless you want to. I have work to do,” and she went back into her office.

“Sure, how about some pancakes?”

“Pancakes?” Bobby asked as he walked into the kitchen, “I’m hungry.”

“Hey guys,” Bob said suddenly, “how d’you like to go to Virginia Beach today?”

“Yeah!” they both yelled out together.

Bob looked at Lorene, “OK with you?”

“Ah, sure, sounds good,” she looked at Kenny, “you guys wanna go?”

“Carla has to work. I promised the kids I’d take them to the park,” Kenny said. “But I’m sure they would much rather go to Virginia Beach.”

“Virginia Beach?” Kelly exclaimed as she ran over and hugged her dad.

Curtis walked in half asleep and Kelly squealed, “We’re going to the Virginia Beach Curtis!”

Curtis jumped up and down with excitement.

“Did I hear someone say pancakes?” Kelly asked.