

Eddie, The Mechanic

Chapter One The Wedding

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Hiring a wedding planner is the best thing that Kathy and Eddie ever did. It gave Kathy the time to buy Eddie's ring, find the perfect wedding dress, and pick out the bridesmaid's dresses'. Eddie had more time to pick out Kathy's ring, and to pick out just the right warm-up suits for the groomsmen. Selecting the menu for the wedding reception was as easy as check the box, kind of like a multiple choice test where there are no wrong answers. Since they couldn't decide which wedding cake to get, Kathy and Eddie just got three cakes. With chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry-filled vanilla, there will be something for everyone. Jennifer, the wedding planner, certainly made everything easy for Kathy and Eddie. And, with a lot less on their plate to take care of, Kathy and Eddie had a lot more time to plan their honeymoon.

With the late morning weather in the lower 70-degree range, and a nice ocean breeze, it is a perfect day for a beach wedding. Jennifer has all the wheels turning, making sure the reception room is properly set up. Just arriving is the DJ, who is setting up his equipment in the reception hall. The wedding cakes arrive on time, and are promptly placed in the refrigerator until the reception. And, of utmost importance, the catering truck arrives in the parking lot, with the hors d'oeuvres and food all ready to go. And Joe, from the pizzeria, will be on the road shortly delivering pizza along with Arianna.

Joe and Arianna, from the pizzeria, who Eddie and Kathy have known for many years, have both been invited to the wedding. Among the other guests at the wedding today are Vito, from the bicycle shop, Angelo, who is everyone's favorite mechanic, and Vinnie and his crew, from the body shop. Mr. Frazier and Mr. Zunde are also in attendance. Alongside Mr. Frazier is his wife, Dawn, and alongside Mr. Zunde is Miss Amherst. Eddie and Kathy simply could not leave their track coaches, who have stood by their side for years, off the guest list.

Out on the beach, the tent where the wedding ceremony will take place is already set up. Kathy and Eddie will be hearing the crashing waves of the ocean during their ceremony, which is something they both really wanted. Off to one side is the bride's tent, where Kathy and her bridesmaids will get ready for the ceremony. To the other side, toward Kathy and Eddie's favorite sand dunes, is the groom's tent, where the groomsmen will hang out just before the ceremony begins. Jennifer was careful to have side panels placed on the tents, so that Eddie cannot see Kathy until the wedding ceremony begins.

Paula, seeing the DJ setting up the audio equipment outside, hands him two cassette tapes. The first is a musical composition to which Kathy will walk down the aisle. Knowing Kathy, the composition will be anything but normal for a wedding. The second tape has on it two recorded pieces. The first song is the one to which Kathy and Eddie will have their first dance. Paula makes it a point to tell the DJ that he is only to play the song that Kathy and Eddie will dance to just once, and not again anytime during the reception. The other song on the second tape is to be played immediately after the first dance. Paula instructs the DJ that she wants the tapes back immediately after the reception, and not to lose them.

A few of the guests begin to trickle in a bit on the early side. They hang out in the reception hall rather than standing around in street clothes on the beach. Kathy and Eddie have made it well known to everyone that this is not an occasion for classical formal dress. On the invitation, formal beach attire was suggested. Everyone, therefore, arrives in what they consider to be formal beach attire, whatever that may be. That is part of the fun, to see what everyone shows up wearing. Everything from tastefully elegant swimsuits worn with a silk wrap, all the way to formal evening gowns, is seen on the women. For the men, khaki pants or shorts are common, with a few guys wearing swimsuits with a warm-up suit. Apparently, some of the guys got the memo ahead of time what the groomsmen will be wearing.

Kathy's wedding attire is an elegant white sun dress, white sandals, and a Greek Goddess headdress. Kathy's dark tan is accentuated by the collection of white she is wearing today. In yet another departure from what is considered normal for a wedding, Kathy is wearing a wide beaded elastic belt, which was custom made for her. Yellow beads set on a white beaded background read 'The Power of Love'. It's no secret to Eddie, Mark, and Paula where Kathy got that idea. Everyone else, however, is left wondering. If they are astute, they may just figure it out later.

Kathy's bridesmaids are all wearing a yellow sun dress, with yellow sandals, matching Kathy's style. A yellow headdress flower arrangement adorns each of the bridesmaids, also accentuating their dark skin. Yellow beaded bracelets on both wrists complement the bridesmaid's outfits.

Simple, yet elegant, the bridesmaids are dressed in a way that everyone around admires. Best of all, the bridesmaids will get to wear their sun dresses for the rest of the Summer.

If you ask Eddie, he is dressed a bit on the formal side for a beach wedding. But, Eddie is used to wearing nothing but a swimsuit at the beach. Wearing white silk pants, complemented with a blue silk shirt, Eddie looks like he is ready to go out dancing. Wearing tan sandals, Eddie is ready to make the walk through the sand to meet his bride.

The groomsmen are wearing blue Arena warm-up suits, matching the color of Eddie's blue silk shirt. Tan sandals complement the groomsmen's outfits. The groomsmen will get good use out of their warm-up suits and sandals after the wedding, which is exactly what Eddie and Kathy intended. To some, it might look like the groomsmen are ready to compete in some athletic event.

Once the guests have all arrived, those hanging out in the air-conditioned reception hall are directed toward the beach. Eddie's parents, Dominik and Nina, get a special ride from the reception hall to the beach in a classy metallic blue Dune Buggy. The Dune Buggy, having four seats and side steps to make it easy to get in and out, was specially designed for beach weddings. The Dune Buggy driver returns to the reception hall to pick up Kathy's parents, Alexander and Chloë, bringing them out to the beach. Once the parents of the bride and groom are seated, everyone who was standing around conversing quickly moves to their seats.

With Kathy and Eddie's musical selections playing in the background, everyone waits in anticipation for the ceremony to begin. Leaving from the bridesmaid's tent, walking down the aisle, is Paula, the Maid of Honor, followed by Barbara, Erika, and Tessa. Once the bridesmaids are set and in position, Eddie and the groomsmen walk out from their tent. Led by Eddie, his Best Man, Mark, is followed by Johnson, Bobby B., and Hoffer.

With the wedding party all in position, the DJ fades out the music and plays the composition *Snow Frolic*, composed by Francis Lai, with vocals by Danielle Licari, from the *Love Story* soundtrack. This was Kathy's musical choice to which she will walk down the aisle, but no one outside the wedding party knew that. Everyone stands, as Kathy begins her walk down the aisle. Eddie, and the rest of the wedding party, smiles when they see Kathy approaching the aisle, prompting everyone to turn around. Walking down the aisle, Kathy has the warmest smile anyone could imagine. Kathy meets Eddie at the altar, and the ceremony begins.

Dr. Kristibueze Akinmola, who is officiating the ceremony today, announces, "I am so honored that Kathy and Eddie asked me to officiate their wedding ceremony today. I greet all of you in the name of Jesus

Christ our Lord.” Anyone on the track team knows Dr. Akinmola to be the father of Adekunle Akinmola, a core member of the high school track team. Dr. Akinmola has been at all of the track meets, quite energetically cheering the team on.

Dr. Akinmola announces, “we are gathered here today, with God among us, to join this man, Edward Bogenskaya, and this woman, Katarina Karakova, in Holy Matrimony. Let us open with prayer. Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of Edward and Katarina in Holy Matrimony. The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by His presence and first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. It signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and His Church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people. The union of husband and wife is intended by God for their mutual joy, for the help and comfort given to each other in prosperity and adversity and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore, marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.”

Dr. Akinmola continues, “this is a very special day in the lives of Katarina and Edward. Katarina and Edward have chosen to write their own wedding vows, and have carefully chosen the words to express the bond they are entering with each other. They will share those with us in just a moment. Katarina and Edward have chosen an adaptation from a passage from 1 Corinthians 13 for their ceremony.” Dr. Akinmola reads,

Love is patient.
Love is kind.
Love does not envy.
Love does not boast.
Love is not rude.
Love is not self-seeking.
Love is not easily angered.
Love keeps no record of wrongs.
Love does not delight in evil.
Love protects.
Love trusts.
Love hopes.
Love perseveres.
Love never fails.
Love loves always.

Dr. Akinmola continues, “Katarina and Edward will now recite their wedding vows to each other.” Kathy and Eddie, holding each other's right

hand, recite their wedding vows as everyone listens to hear the words they have chosen for their special day.

Looking Kathy in her eyes, Eddie begins, “Katarina, you are my lady. I, Edward, take you, most precious Katarina, to be my wife. I promise to love, honor, protect, and cherish you for as long as I live. I will walk with you wherever the path of life takes us. I will carry you if I need to, and I will see you through.” Hearing those words, tears come from Kathy’s eyes as she recalls how Eddie carried her to the portal when she was sick, back in time, so that she may live. Eddie pauses for a moment, wipes the tear from Kathy’s eye, and continues, “I will be by your side always, loving you in every way I can and know how.”

Looking Eddie in his eyes, Kathy, who can barely compose herself, begins, “Edward, you are my man. I, Katarina, take you, my Edward, to be my husband. I promise to love, honor, protect, and cherish you for as long as I live. I will walk with you wherever the path of life takes us. I will be by your side always, loving you in every way I can and know how. And, I promise to take you home the long way every time I get the chance.”

Placing Kathy’s wedding ring on her finger, Eddie tells his love, “Katarina, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Kathy then places Eddie’s wedding ring on his finger, telling him, “Edward, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Dr. Akinmola then proclaims, “bless, O mighty Lord, these rings as a symbol of Edward’s and Katarina’s vows by which they have bound themselves to each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Dr. Akinmola proclaims, “by the power of God, and by the power given to me by the State, I now pronounce you husband and wife. Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.”

Dr. Akinmola, blessing the couple, prays, “may God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and keep you. May the Lord mercifully, with his favor, look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come, having life everlasting. Amen.”

Tears of happiness flow down Kathy’s cheeks, as Dr. Akinmola announces to Eddie, “you may now kiss your bride.” Eddie and Kathy kiss, leaving nothing to the imagination, and give each other a big hug. Kathy and Eddie turn toward their guests, and Dr. Akinmola announces, “I now

present to you Mr. and Mrs. Bogenskaya.” The guests cheer, as Eddie and Kathy walk down the aisle toward the ocean.

Once Kathy and Eddie are at the end of the aisle, they head toward the bride’s tent. The groomsmen and bridesmaids leave next, walking up the aisle, Mark with Paula, Bobby B. with Erika, Johnson with Barbara, and Hoffer with Tessa. The ushers, Adekunle Akinmola and John Elliot, both from the track team, usher Kathy’s and Eddie’s parents and grandparents down the aisle through the sand. For anyone that cannot make it to the reception hall through the sand, the Dune Buggy is waiting and will take them there.

The newlyweds, Mr. and Mrs. Bogenskaya, hang around outside near the bride’s tent with their wedding party and families for photographs. The guests make the walk through the sand to the reception hall. Some of the guests have a difficult time walking through the sand. The guy with the Dune Buggy offers them a ride, but the thought of getting into the Dune Buggy makes the walk in the sand look like cake. All of the teenagers want a ride in the Dune Buggy, just for fun. The driver is glad to drive them a quarter of a mile along the beach to make the 100-yard trip to the reception hall.

With the beautiful weather and blue sky, the ocean makes a perfect backdrop for the wedding photographs. This is exactly what Kathy and Eddie hoped for. Emily, the photographer, takes many photographs, which include the typical wedding shots of the bride and groom, the wedding party, and Kathy’s and Eddie’s families.

The altar and podium are then moved, and turned around, so that Eddie’s and Kathy’s backs are facing the ocean. More photographs of Kathy, Eddie, the wedding party, and Dr. Akinmola are taken, this time with the ocean as a backdrop. Once the photographs are done, the wedding party and the parents head over to the reception. Kathy, however, has a few more photographs planned.

Kathy, Eddie, and the photographer head over to the sand dunes. These are the same sand dunes where Eddie and Kathy have spent much time during their trips to the beach. Kathy sits on Eddie’s lap, as the photographer begins working. With no one else around but the photographer, Kathy and Eddie dance around the sand dunes, while the photographer gets many candid action shots.

Kathy then tells the photographer, “here’s where you make your money. Get a few shots of this.” Kathy tells Eddie, “catch me,” as she starts running through the sand dunes. It’s a good thing for the photographer that she has a zoom lens, for she could never keep up with Kathy and Eddie as they run around and over the dunes.

Paula and Mark, however, have been riding up and down the beach in Paula's Jeep while the photographs of Kathy and Eddie were being taken among the sand dunes. Once the candid shots among the dunes are finished, the photographer gets into the Dune Buggy, getting her ride to the reception hall. Kathy and Eddie decline the Dune Buggy ride, but rather wave down Mark and Paula. Kathy impulsively decides that she wants a ride through the sand dunes in Paula's Jeep. And, why not? It is her wedding day. She gets to do what she wants. There was certainly no objection from anyone. So, Paula and Mark pick up Kathy and Eddie, and the four of them go for a quick ride through the sand dunes before they head over to the reception.

When Kathy and Eddie walk through the door, all of their guests, who have been waiting for the bride and groom to walk in, cheer. Kathy and Eddie mingle with the crowd for a while, greeting everyone they can. As in every wedding, Kathy and Eddie meet some of their relatives whom they have not seen in many years.

Paula, who was quite surprised when Kathy told her she wanted pizza at the reception, has been waiting for a slice. Paula, for one, is glad when Kathy and Eddie head to the tables where the food is waiting for everyone. Now, Paula can finally have her slice. As she is loading her plate with a slice of pizza and salad, Paula, putting her head on Mark's shoulder, mentions to him, "they had a really beautiful ceremony." Mark agrees, and asks Paula, "so, are we getting married on the beach too?" Paula tells Mark, "I would really love that. But the Summer is almost over." Mark mentions, "there's always the Spring. I won't be finished with our house until the Spring anyway." Paula replies, "yeah, that's a good point."

Erika has also been waiting for a slice of pizza, which has become the staple food for the track team over the past few years. Erika mentions to Bobby B., "it's too bad Braden and Mitchell couldn't make it." Bobby B. replies, "yeah, I know. Braden should be in basic training right now. I wish I was there to see that. And, Mitchell is on the West coast organizing a race." Erika comments, "wow! They're both doing what they like doing. Braden's kicking ass, and Mitchell is running." Bobby B. laughs, and replies, "yeah, but they'll be back. We'll see them again. I just know it." Erika mentions, "yeah, I know. And, Mitchell is probably already missing Amber. And, Braden is missing Wendy. That's really why they'll be back."

When it is time for the bride and groom to have the first dance, the DJ announces, "okay, everyone. It is time for Kathy and Eddie to have their first dance. Kathy and Eddie, please come on up to the dance floor." The guests cheer, as Kathy and Eddie make their way to the dance floor. The DJ continues, announcing, "I have no idea what song they are dancing to. Paula handed me the tape earlier this morning, with a song that Kathy

chose for this special occasion. This is going to be a big surprise to me too. So, here we go.”

The DJ starts the music, and Kathy and Eddie dance to the Céline Dion version of *The Power of Love*. Kathy holds Eddie, with her head on his shoulder, just as they have when they’ve danced to this song a hundred times in the past. During their dance, Kathy starts to cry tears of happiness. Kathy’s song, *The Power of Love*, has been with her since the time she first met Eddie. While they are dancing, the guests comment how beautiful their dance is. As expected, a few of the guests comment how beautiful their song choice is too. And, none of the guests can claim to have heard the song before.

As Kathy and Eddie are dancing, the guests are almost hypnotized by their dance and the music. Kathy and Eddie, paying the guests little attention at the moment, are lost in their own world for these special five minutes. Kathy’s mother, Chloë, mentions to Eddie’s mother, Nina, “Kathy really loves this song. I don’t know where she got it.” Nina replies, “I’ve never heard it before. It’s so beautiful.” Also lost in the music is the DJ, who has never heard *The Power of Love* before.

When Kathy and Eddie have finished their dance, Kathy’s father has the second dance with Kathy. The music for the second dance is another song from the future. As the DJ plays *Angel*, as performed by Shaggy, a Jamaican reggae artist, the guests are quite surprised. Eddie picked up this song when he heard it during his and Kathy’s trip to Amelia Island 30 years into the future. No one present today has ever heard *Angel* either, well, except for Eddie, Kathy, Mark, and Paula.

As Kathy and her father dance, one of the guests asks Paula, “hey, do you know what song that is that Kathy picked out for their first dance?” After all, if anyone would know, it might just be Kathy’s Maid of Honor. Paula, between a rock and a hard place, replies, “Kathy has played it a few times for me before, but you can’t buy it anywhere.” Pressing the issue, the guest mentions, “those are some interesting keyboard effects in that piece. I wonder if it’s a Moog¹.” Trying to end the conversation, Paula, not even knowing what a Moog Synthesizer is, replies, “yeah. It’s definitely a Moog.” The guest, who is obviously a musician of some sort, comments, “yeah, it must be. Those attack and release waveforms couldn’t be done by anything else².” The guest then tells Paula, “I’m

¹ Moog: Moog Synthesizer. A very popular electronic keyboard instrument.

² The Synclavier Synthesizer, not the Moog, was used in recording *The Power of Love*.

going to ask Kathy, and find out what group that is.” Kathy’s been busted. Paula, saving Kathy’s butt, tells the guest, “Kathy had the song specially recorded for her wedding. You won’t find that song anywhere else on Earth.”

Paula sneaks away from her conversation with the curious guest, and alerts Eddie that Kathy has been busted. Eddie waits until Kathy and her father finish their dance. Just after *Angel* has finished playing, Eddie takes action, and goes over to the DJ, and tells him, “hey. I need the tape of the two dance songs.” The DJ asks Eddie, “by the way, who was that singing on the first one?” As if being busted once is not enough, Kathy just got busted a second time. Repeating Paula’s story, Eddie tells the DJ, “Kathy had it made specially for the wedding,” which she did. She made a recording of *The Power of Love* specially for the wedding. After hearing *The Power of Love*, the DJ was going to make a copy of the song for himself. But, having no choice, he reluctantly turns the tape over to Eddie. Eddie places the tape in his pocket, and walks over to talk with Mark and Paula.

While Eddie, Mark, and Paula are talking, Eddie takes the tape out of his pocket. Breaking open the cassette housing, Eddie pulls the tape out of the cassette. He throws away the housing, and goes outside with Mark and Paula. Sneaking around to the side of the building, Eddie and Mark will solve the problem of having a song from the future before it gets worse. With Mark on one end, and Eddie on the other, they stretch the tape, making it forever unplayable. They then throw the evidence in a trash can, and head back inside. No one, of course, will know anything about the song after today.

While a few dances are going on, Emily, the photographer gets a photograph of the track team members present today. Mr. Frazier, Mr. Zunde, and Mr. Zunde’s guest, Miss Amherst, are among those in the photograph. Kathy and Eddie see Mr. Frazier and Mr. Zunde as more than just their coaches. Mr. Frazier and Mr. Zunde have stood by their side during their tumultuous years in high school. Mr. Frazier tells Eddie that he would like a copy of the picture for the athletic office. Eddie assures Mr. Frazier that he will get a copy for him.

Jennifer, the wedding planner, tells the DJ to announce the tossing of the bouquet and garter. After the current selection is over, The DJ announces, “okay, everyone. The time has arrived for all of you single women and single men to gather around for the tossing of the bouquet and the garter! Kathy and Eddie, please come on up here!” Pointing to the left of where he is standing, the DJ announces, “okay, all of you single women over here on this side,” and pointing to the right, he announces, “and, all of you single men over here.”

With the women in position, Kathy looks over to where everyone is located. Kathy knows exactly whom she wants to catch the bouquet, and will do her best to make sure it lands exactly where the intended recipient is standing. The DJ announces, “okay, here we go. And remember, ladies, whatever you do, don’t let the bouquet fall on the floor. It is bad luck if it does.” The DJ just totally made that up, but it ensures that someone will catch it. Kathy turns around and tosses the bouquet in the direction of where Paula is standing. Quickly turning around to see who caught it, Kathy watches as the bouquet falls right into Paula’s hands. The crowd cheers, as a huge smile comes across Paula’s and Mark’s faces. It seems that Paula wanted to catch the bouquet just as much as Kathy wanted her to catch it.

The DJ then announces, “I understand that a lot of you guys are athletes.” Immediate acknowledgment comes from many of the guys, most of them not the least bit bashful in agreeing with the DJ. The DJ announces, “well, guys, this is a competition! Eddie is going to toss the garter, and the best athlete among you will catch it!” The DJ’s comment gets the guys all fired up. Everyone now wants to be the one to grab the garter out of the air.

Eddie removes the garter from Kathy’s leg, and gets ready to toss it. Faking the throw, all the guys move to the direction to where they thought Eddie would throw it. The DJ announces, “did all of you catch that? These guys have awesome reflexes!” Eddie throws the garter, this time releasing it. While the garter is quite high in the air, Mark jumps up, putting his hand on Bobby B’s shoulder to cast himself up even higher, and grabs the garter before anyone else even had a chance. The DJ announces, “and, I think we have a winner! There’s definitely no shortage of energy with this group.”

After a few more dances, the ceremony then moves on to the cutting of the cake. Kathy and Eddie cut their wedding cake together, as the line begins to form to get a piece. Getting the first slices, Kathy and Eddie lock arms and give each other the first bite. If anyone was expecting a cake smash, they are sorely disappointed. Kathy and Eddie then slice the other two cakes, each getting a slice of each one. With a little bit of a sweet tooth today, Eddie eats the frosting, leaving most of the cake behind.

While the line forms to get a slice of wedding cake, Paula asks Kathy, “so, where are you guys going on your honeymoon?” Kathy, totally forgetting that she had not announced their honeymoon destination, replies, “we’re going on a seven-day cruise in the Caribbean! We leave tomorrow!” Word about where Kathy and Eddie are going travels quickly around the reception, with everyone now wondering what ports of call the ship will make. Kathy elaborates a bit, telling everyone that they will be

going to Saint Thomas, the Cayman Islands, and to Key West. There will certainly be no shortage of beaches on Kathy and Eddie's honeymoon.

Hearing Kathy and Eddie's destinations, Paula whispers to Mark, "hey! There's a portal in Saint Thomas. That's where Magens Bay is." Mark replies, "yeah. That was the most laid back and relaxing beach we've ever been at." Paula replies, "lucky them." Mark reminds Paula, "hey, we can go there too, whenever we want." Paula replies, "oh, yeah. I kind of forgot about that. We really should do that sometime."

Upon hearing Mark and Paula's conversation, Kathy and Eddie walk up and join in. Kathy tells Mark and Paula, "hey, if you guys want to join us at Magens Bay for the day, feel free." Paula looks at Mark with the distinct look in her eyes that she would love to do that. Paula tells Kathy and Eddie, "yeah! We'd really love to do that." Eddie tells Mark, "we'll be in Saint Thomas on Wednesday, and probably be at the beach right before noon. Then it's off to the Cayman Islands, and then Key West." Paula mentions, "darn. I have to work on Wednesday." Kathy reminds her, "then come on Saturday, and tell the portal to bring you there on Wednesday at 11:00 a.m." Paula replies, "okay, don't even say it. I knew that." No one says anything, but Paula gets a few interesting looks. So, the plan is set. Mark and Paula will meet Kathy and Eddie at Magens Bay.

Before they head out, Kathy wants a ride in the Dune Buggy. The driver gives Kathy and Eddie a ride up the beach and back, going over a few small sand dunes. Kathy was hoping for a more aggressive ride, but the driver only goes five miles per hour. The driver explains that the four-seat Dune Buggy is built on a full-sized Volkswagen frame, and is really not suited for jumping the dunes. After their ride on the beach, the newlyweds Kathy and Eddie head out to begin their life together.

The guests line up, forming a path out to Eddie's MGB. As they walk out, the newlyweds are doused with a good supply of bird seed. Eddie opens the door for Kathy, who is still wearing her wedding dress. There was really no need to change into anything more comfortable for the reception. Eddie gets behind the wheel, and the guests all wave as the newlyweds drive away.

The day after the wedding, Eddie and Kathy take an early flight out and land in Miami, Florida. Arriving at the docks, they check in, and board the cruise ship. After dropping their luggage off in their cabin, they walk around the ship for an hour or so, familiarizing themselves with the important attractions, such as the deck with the running track, the gym, and the pool. At the pool, Eddie mentions, "I don't think we'll have to check for dead frogs. It seems like they have that under control." Kathy replies, "good! We're on our honeymoon, and we're on vacation!"

Walking around on one deck, Eddie asks, “I wonder why they call this the Lido Deck. In a British accent, Kathy replies, because this is the lido, mate.” Eddie mentions, “there’s a beach near where we live called Lido beach. So, what’s a lido, anyway?” Kathy replies, “I can answer that. A lido is a British term for an outdoor public swimming pool. So, I’m guessing that there’s a swimming pool somewhere in Lido Beach.” Eddie replies, “wow! I never knew that’s what lido means. And, you’re right! There’s a public pool and an awesome park in Lido Beach. I was there a few times, but it’s a long way to ride a bicycle to just go in a pool.”

Kathy mentions, “my parents took me on a cruise once and, on the cruise ship, there was a deck called the Lido Deck. The Lido Deck is the deck with the pool on it. On that ship, it was also the deck with the food, kind of like this ship. So, that’s how I know what a lido is.”

Passing by the pool, Eddie mentions, “I guess we’re not swimming laps in this pool.” Kathy replies, “yeah. I can see that. One push off the wall and, before you can get one stroke in, you’ll be at the other wall.” Eddie laughs, and replies, “I can imagine Tessa’s reaction if we raced in a pool that size. It would be one flip turn after another.”

With a few days at sea, Kathy and Eddie get in a few workouts at the gym. The gym is adjacent to the health spa, where hair stylists, massage therapists, personal trainers, and an acupuncturist are ready to meet the guest’s needs. Also offered are several classes, which include Yoga, meditation, and aerobics classes. And, in the spa is a mineral bath, which is like an Epsom salt hot tub the size of a small swimming pool.

After an intense morning workout, later in the day Kathy tells Eddie, “I guess I worked out harder than I thought. I’m really sore.” Eddie explains, “it’s probably because the equipment in the gym is different from ours at home, and you worked a few muscles in different ways.” Kathy replies, “yeah. You’re probably right.” Eddie suggests, “why don’t you try the massage therapist. Maybe that would help.” Kathy replies, “yeah. I think I’m going to do that.” It didn’t take much to convince Kathy to get a therapeutic massage. Kathy and Eddie head over to the spa to set the appointment, and Kathy manages to get a late afternoon slot.

After a relaxing afternoon in the sun, the time arrives for Kathy’s massage. Kathy heads to the spa, where she is given first-class treatment before she even heads to the massage room. The massage therapist, whose name is Kalisa, tells Kathy that she grew up in Jamaica, and went to massage therapy school in the United States. During her massage, Kathy talks with her therapist while on the table for about a half hour. After that, for the following hour, Kathy zones out, and is in a totally different world. Never having a therapeutic massage before, Kathy realizes

massage therapy is something that she's been missing. The 90-minute session comes to an end, and Kathy is more relaxed than ever.

After her massage, Kathy goes back to her cabin where Eddie is waiting for her. Eddie asks, "so, how was your massage?" Kathy replies, "too good. I don't think I've ever felt this lazy in my life." Eddie then asks, "so, how are your muscles?" Kathy explains, "a lot better. I can move again. And, when we get back home, I'm finding a massage therapist. I'm going to make it part of my training." Eddie laughs, replying, "I can see that. But, that just sounds kind of funny. 'Excuse me, but I have to go and train. I'm headed to the massage therapist.'" Kathy tells Eddie, "well, buddy. We're training again tomorrow. Since we'll be at sea, I booked us both massage appointments in the afternoon." Eddie replies, "awesome!" And, since Kathy is so relaxed, they both take a short nap before dinner.

The first port of call is Saint Thomas, where Eddie and Kathy have been once before. The cruise ship is already docked at the port when they awaken on Wednesday. After having breakfast on the ship, they catch an open-air bus headed to Magens Bay. On the way, Kathy mentions, "this is certainly a different perspective." Riding on the hilly countryside on roads that seem to be half as wide as they should be, the scenery is absolutely beautiful. Eddie replies, "I can see that. And, it looks like Magens Bay is on the other side of the island."

Arriving at Magens Bay, Kathy and Eddie head to a spot near where they set up their towels during their last visit to the island. Eddie tells Kathy, "wow! Check out the waves! It looks like they're nine to twelve high! I'm not sure I can handle it!" Kathy laughs, and replies, "yeah! Nine to twelve inches!" Kathy then tells Eddie, "come on. Let's go in and get wet." They drop their beach bag, and head straight for the water.

The water is very warm but, after all, it is the end of the Summer. Eddie and Kathy head far out into the bay. Eddie mentions, "hey, do you hear that?" Kathy replies, "hear what?" Eddie points out, "we're way out here in the bay, and no one is blowing a whistle telling us to come closer to shore." Kathy tells Eddie, "hey! That's not hearing something. That's not hearing something." Eddie laughs, thinks for a moment about what Kathy said, and comments, "I wonder what Miss Starr would say about your last sentence³."

Getting a good view of the beach from the water, Eddie mentions, "I wonder if Mark and Paula are going to join us." Kathy replies, "yeah, they

³ I.e., "That's not (hearing something)" vs. "That's (not hearing something)".

are. They'll be here at lunch, so they can get pizza." After a fun time out in the bay, Eddie and Kathy slowly swim back to the beach, where they set up their towels and lay out in the sun for a while.

It doesn't take long after Kathy and Eddie lay back to relax before Mark and Paula arrive. Seeing Kathy and Eddie laying out in the sun with their eyes closed, Paula announces their entrance by sprinkling a little sand over Kathy's feet, which are hanging over the edge of her towel. Barely startled at all, Kathy says, "oh. Hey, you guys. You made it." Paula replies, "wow! Aren't you guys relaxed." Kathy tells Paula, "yeah. My brain checked out once we left port. And, I forgot how relaxing this beach is."

Mark mentions, "today is Saturday for us," as Mark and Paula lay out their towels. Thinking about this, Eddie mentions, "so, from your perspective, we get home tomorrow." Mark replies, "yeah. Weird, isn't it? I've finally figured out how the portal works."

Eddie asks Mark, "so, what have you been doing all week?" Mark replies, "working on the house, and working on that storage building for the baseball team with my dad. Bobby B's. working out really good, but I could use another man." Eddie comments, "it's too bad Braden and Mitchell aren't around. You know, you could always hire Jimmy O'Brien and the Chuckie." Mark laughs, telling Eddie, "yeah, right! But hey, you just gave me an idea. I'm going to see if Erika can help us." The couples lay out in the sun for a while, taking some time to relax.

With Mark and Paula's wedding on the horizon, Mark is doing his best to get the house done as quickly as he can. But, he wants everything done properly, so he is doing most of the work himself. And, Bobby B., trained by Mark, is learning how to do things properly.

Around noon, they decide to walk over to the concession stand and get pizza. Kathy asks the lifeguard, "hey, we're going to get some lunch. Do you want us to bring you anything?" The lifeguard replies, "I'm here until two o'clock. If you don't mind, you can bring me back a slice of pizza, with triple pepperoni. I'll pay you for it." Kathy replies, "you got it." The lifeguard was very appreciative of Kathy asking. Many people on the beach totally do not respect lifeguards until, of course, they start to drown.

As they head to the concession stand, Paula asks Kathy, "how many pizzas are we getting?" Kathy replies, "I only want a slice or two. We have unlimited food on the cruise ship. So, one night at dinner, Eddie couldn't decide what to get, so he ordered two dinners. And, so he ate both of them. And, that same night, I ordered chocolate mousse for dessert. It was really good. So, I asked the waiter for another one. And, so then he

brought me another one. And, then I told the waiter, ‘the chocolate mousse is no good. Tell them to bring all the chocolate mousse to my room, and I’ll get rid of it for them.’ He thought that was really funny, and asked if I wanted a third one, but I said ‘no.’ But, he brought me another one to take back to our room with us.” Everyone knows that when Kathy talks using what seems like one big run-on sentence, she is energetically charged. Paula, recognizing that Kathy is wired, asks her, “are you pregnant?” Kathy replies, “no. How are you asking?” Paula tells Kathy, “rewind. I was only asking how many pizzas we are getting.” Kathy laughs, and tells Paula, “wow! It sounds like I’m having fun.”

They all bring the pizza and drinks back to their towels. Kathy hands the lifeguard a box of pizza, with triple pepperoni, just as he asked. The lifeguard tells Kathy, “oh, thank you! I didn’t mean for you to get me a whole pizza. How much was it? Let me pay you.” Kathy tells him, “it’s on us. You can take the extra home, or share it with the other lifeguards.” The lifeguard tells Kathy, “thank you so much! You don’t know how much I appreciate this.” Everyone sits back and enjoys lunch, as they watch the people along the beach.

About an hour after lunch, they all go for a swim in the bay. When Eddie and Kathy are far enough away, Paula whispers to Mark, “so, when are we getting married?” Mark whispers back, “I guess next week is too soon.” Paula tells Mark, “I really liked their beach wedding, but I’m not sure I want to wait until next Spring. We’d better start planning.” Thinking about the seasons, Mark tells Paula, “we’re either getting married inside somewhere, or we’re waiting for the Spring. I’m not too sure a beach wedding will go over too well in the Winter.” Paula replies, “we’ll figure it out. I’m going to work on this when I get back.”

As Eddie and Kathy swim a bit closer to Mark and Paula, Paula tells Kathy, “when we get back, I’ve got to get started on this wedding planning thing. I don’t even know where to begin.” Kathy tells Paula, “call Jennifer. We found out about her from Nora, down at the card shop. She’ll take care of everything for you. I gave you her information, right?” Paula replies, “yeah. I have it at home. And, I’m heading straight for the card shop when we get back so I can start looking at invitations.” Kathy assures Paula, “they’ll make it really easy for you.” The couples swim for a while longer, then head back to their towels.

Later in the afternoon, Kathy and Eddie have to catch the bus back to the ship. Mark and Paula hang out with them until they have to board the bus. While they are waiting, Paula asks, “so, what have you guys done on the ship?” Kathy explains, “we spent some time in the gym,” but that’s no surprise. Kathy continues, “and, the food is awesome. Oh, oh! And, me and Eddie got massages in the spa! Which reminds me, when I get home, I have to find a massage therapist. And, in the evening, there is always a

show in the theater.” Paula remarks, “wow! It sounds like you guys have been having fun!” Looking at Eddie, Kathy replies, “yeah. We’re going to have to do this a lot more.” With the bus ready to leave, Kathy and Eddie get onboard, as Mark and Paula head back to the portal.

The next stop for the newlyweds is the Cayman Islands. Onshore, Kathy and Eddie take a Dune Buggy tour of the beach. There are twelve people in the group, some of which look like they’ve never seen a Dune Buggy before, much less drive one. The tour guide explains to the group what they will see today, some of the places they will be stopping, and a few important things about driving a Dune Buggy off road. The Dune Buggy Kathy and Eddie will be driving is a modified Volkswagen Beetle, with a fiberglass body. Kathy had a short ride in a Dune Buggy on the beach during her reception, but that was a four or five-mile per hour ride.

As they are ready to get in the Dune Buggy, Kathy comically asks Eddie, “so, Mr. Mechanic, do you think you can drive this thing?” Eddie, looking over the Dune Buggy for a moment, replies, “no.” Eddie tosses Kathy the keys, telling her, “I’m just in charge of keeping it running.” Kathy exclaims, “me? I don’t know how to drive this thing!” Eddie reassures Kathy, telling her, “it’s a Volkswagen Beetle. If Crum can drive one, so can you.” That’s all Kathy needed to hear to get into the driver’s seat. Ready to go, she tells Eddie, “let’s go, buddy.” Kathy is not about to be one rung below Mr. Crum on any ladder.

As they are driving along the beach with the group, Kathy drives up and over a few sand dunes. She exclaims, “wow! This is fun!” Eddie replies, “this is what a Dune Buggy is made for. That’s why it’s called a ‘Dune Buggy.’” Kathy, finally making the connection, replies, “oh, yeah! Dune Buggy. Sand dunes. I get it!”

Noticing that Kathy is driving over the sand dunes, the tour guide stops for a moment. The group leader announces to everyone, “do you see the blonde girl? She is driving over the dunes and doing doughnuts. The rest of you guys are driving down the beach like it’s a parking lot.” Pointing to Kathy, the guide tells the group, “you should be driving like the blonde girl.” Kathy, who always manages to be at the center of attention, smiles, and tells Eddie, “see that, buddy! I know how to have fun!”

Once they get going again, Kathy yells out over the sound of the engine to Eddie, “Eddie, I want one of these!” Eddie asks, “what color?” Kathy thinks about it, as she drives onto the wet sand to see how it handles, and replies, “yellow!” Eddie tells Kathy, “okay. I guess I know what my next project will be.” Kathy asks, “can’t we just buy one?” Eddie replies, “well, yeah. But, Dune Buggies are built on a shortened Volkswagen Beetle frame. If you buy one, then someone else has already

modified it.” Kathy then asks, “can you build one?” Eddie tells Kathy, “yeah. Kurt Richter, the guy who modified your Porsche, built one on a square steel frame. He put in a Porsche 911 engine and drive train.” Kathy exclaims, “we’re definitely getting one of these!”

Once the exciting Dune Buggy tour along the beach ends, Kathy and Eddie have two hours before they have to be back on the ship. They use the time to stop at a few shops on the island. Kathy finds a unique handmade straw hat that she really likes. She tries it on, and asks Eddie, “what do you think?” Eddie replies, “I think it looks nice on you. You should get it.” Kathy buys the hat, and they shop around for a while longer. Not finding anything else that catches their eye, they walk in the direction of the pier, back toward the ship.

Just as they walk onto the pier, a gust of wind kicks up, and blows Kathy’s hat off her head into the water. Kathy exclaims, “my hat! It flew away!” It’s not just any hat. It’s one of a kind, and Kathy really liked that hat. But, now it’s gone, floating away in the ocean.

Without any announcement of what he is about to do, Eddie dives off the pier, and swims toward Kathy’s hat. Kathy screams, “Eddie,” as he points to the hat. Eddie out swims the wind and the current and, in about a minute, reclaims Kathy’s hat. Eddie swims toward the rip rap, as Kathy runs to the end of the pier to meet her sweetie.

Getting out of the water, and climbing back onshore, Eddie gives Kathy her hat, telling her, “I got it!” Kathy exclaims, “thank you so, so, so much! I thought my hat would be gone forever!” Kathy gives Eddie a big hug even though he is soaking wet. So happy to get her hat back, a tear rolls down Kathy’s cheek. They head back to the ship but, this time, Kathy holds her hat tightly in her hand.

The last stop is Key West, an island that is only a little more than seven square miles. When Eddie and Kathy wake up, Kathy asks, “so, what are we going to do in Key West?” Eddie replies, “well, the island isn’t very big. We can just get off the ship and walk around. We can figure out what to do when we get out there.” Kathy replies, “that sounds like a plan to me.” Sometimes, the best plan is no plan. They get their breakfast on the ship, and head out to see what they can find going on in Key West.

Taking the short walk down the pier, they immediately find themselves in the middle of the action. A few blocks up the main road, they find a place that rents bicycles. Kathy suggests, “hey! Let’s get bicycles.” Bicycle riding is right up their alley. They rent two townie bicycles, which is a far cry from the precision machines they are accustomed to riding. But, they can cover a lot more territory than if they walked.

Kathy and Eddie start out on their trek around Key West. It doesn't take Kathy much time to tell Eddie, "hey! I think there's something wrong with my bicycle." Eddie asks, "what's it doing?" Kathy replies, "it's really hard to pedal." They stop, and Eddie gives Kathy's bicycle a short test ride. Eddie returns, telling Kathy, "there's nothing wrong with it. You're used to your well-lubricated precision touring machine maintained by a top notch mechanic. But, we can put a little more air in the tires when we find a service station. That should help a little. Mine isn't any better." Kathy now fully appreciates her top of the line Motobecane touring bicycle with Campagnolo components that she has back home.

The first place of interest they find is Ernest Hemingway's home. Kathy asks Eddie, "hey, did you have to read *The Old Man and the Sea* when you were in school?" Eddie replies, "yeah. But, it never made too much sense to me. I could be wrong, but it seemed like a story where a guy goes out to catch a fish for dinner, and comes home with a fish skeleton. How is that even a story?" Kathy mentions, "well, you do have a point. Maybe he should have just tried to catch one of the chickens walking around here in Key West. It seems like that would be an easier catch. But, at least he fed a hungry shark."

Eddie laughs, and comments, "maybe someday we can write our own book about all of our track experiences. I wonder if anyone would buy it." Kathy replies, "well, I think it would be a whole lot more interesting than going out on a boat and not catching dinner." Eddie comments, "and, definitely a lot more interesting than track from McCrutchen's viewpoint." Kathy laughs, and replies, "a book about track from McCrutchen's viewpoint? There's just something seriously funny about that."

Kathy and Eddie ride around Key West for a few hours, finding the Little White House, a pier that says it is the Southern most point in the United States, and finally, a beach. Missing their beach time, they walk along the beach, find a quiet place, and lay out in the sun for a while.

Kathy sits on Eddie's lap, and whispers to him, "this whole trip has been like the long, long, long way home." Eddie kisses Kathy as he holds her tightly. Somewhere between kisses, Kathy whispers, "billions of more kisses to go." Eddie whispers back, "tonight, we'll have to find Katarina's star when we're out in the middle of the ocean." Kathy exclaims, "yeah! We have to do that!"

When they return to the ship, later that evening they head to the upper deck. Pulling two chaise lounges together, they stare at the sky, waiting for Katarina's star to appear. Eddie asks Kathy, "so, do you have any idea where your star will appear?" Kathy replies, asking, "which way is North?" Thinking about this, Eddie replies, "well the sun is setting at the

back of the ship, so I'm guessing North is on the left side." Kathy replies, "oh, yeah. Duh."

As Kathy and Eddie wait for Katarina's star, Eddie mentions, "when we wake up tomorrow morning, we'll be back in Miami. And then, we fly home." Kathy thinks for a moment, and asks, "so, what do married people do?" Eddie replies, "the same things single people do, but they go home together." Kathy, who is getting very relaxed, replies, "oh." Eddie adds, "until babies come along. Then, life gets back to normal twenty years later." Kathy comments, "twenty years later? By then, you'd forget what normal is."

Kathy thinks for a moment, and mentions, "I don't want normal. Normal is getting up way too early, going to a job that you hate, and having stupid people tell you what to do all day long. And then, when you get home, you're in a bad mood. That's normal. I definitely don't want normal." Eddie replies, "me either." Kathy continues, "that's one of the reasons why I want to be a gym teacher. Just look around. The only people that are really happy seem to be gym teachers."

Eddie asks, "what's all this about stupid people telling people what to do?" Kathy replies, "okay, so why is it that, most of the time, the boss is not even qualified to tie their own shoe laces?" Eddie laughs, and interjects, "now, you're beginning to sound like Mr. Zunde!" Kathy laughs, and continues, "yeah! But, seriously, it was like a month ago when Mrs. Jensen, the Summer camp boss, came into the gym and told me, 'it's Wednesday. You're supposed to be outside with the kids playing kickball.' And, so I told her, 'it's raining. So, we're staying inside and Hula hooping.' So, she looks at me weird, and says, 'oh,' and walks away." Eddie laughs, and replies, "that is really kind of funny."

Kathy mentions, "I don't think she's all there." Eddie asks, "what do you mean?" Kathy replies, "I really like my Summer job at the day camp. But, get this. Paula was on a field trip with the kids one day. So, the next day, Mrs. Jensen asks Paula, 'how come you missed work yesterday?' So, Paula tells her, 'I was here. We were on a field trip.' So, Mrs. Jensen replies, 'oh.' I mean, like, she's really nice and everything, but sometimes I think her elevator is stuck between floors." Eddie replies, "that's really not too bad." Kathy asks, "how do you mean?" Eddie replies, "Mrs. Jensen sounds a whole lot better to work for than Mr. Crum." Kathy laughs, and replies, "yeah, I guess you do have a point."

As the sun begins to set and the light fades away, Kathy searches for her star. Kathy and Eddie lay quietly, searching the heavens for Katarina's star. Without any warning, Kathy springs up and exclaims, "there it is! I found it! But, it moved!" Eddie replies, "I see that. It's a little more overhead now!" Kathy sighs, and mentions, "of course it's not in the same

place. We're not in the same place on the Earth, so neither is my star." Kathy and Eddie hang out on the upper deck for a while longer, and then head back to their cabin for the night.

The next morning, Eddie and Kathy wake up early as the ship is just pulling into port at Miami. Heading up to the Lido Deck, they get some breakfast, and watch as the ship approaches the dock. As the ship is docked, the sun begins to rise. Watching the sunrise, Eddie replies, "wow! That's cool! I've never seen the sun rise before." Kathy asks, "never?" Eddie replies, "never. I mean, I've seen the sun come up, but not over the ocean like that." Kathy mentions, "I did once. It was when my parents were on that cruise a long time ago. I woke up early, and I got to see the sun rise. Then, I went back to bed."

As the ship docks, everyone is scurrying around, getting in line to disembark. Eddie and Kathy, not in any rush, hang out and watch the commotion. As they are looking out over the intercoastal waterway, Kathy asks, "so, what are we going to do when we get back?" Eddie replies, "the first thing we have to do is make sure we have a bed to sleep in. Hopefully, Mark was there when our bed arrived. And, we still have a lot of unpacking to do." Kathy replies, "oh." Eddie comments, "now, you're beginning to sound like Mrs. Jensen!" Kathy laughs, and exclaims, "hey! It's better than sounding like Mr. Crum!"

After hanging out on the upper deck for a while, Eddie mentions, "well, we have a plane to catch." Kathy and Eddie grab their stuff, and head off the ship. As they walk off the gangway and into the terminal, Kathy tells Eddie, "welcome back to the real world."