

# Eddie, The Collegiate Sophomore

## Chapter Two Christmas Break

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Now that the storm has moved out, it will be interesting to see how the team does without any interference from Dr. Paxton and his alleged fixing of the events. But, for now, everyone has a well-deserved Christmas break. Over the break, Mr. Frazier, being thrown into the deep end, now coaching the University's track team alone, will have a lot of work ahead of him.

The first thing on Eddie's list is to return to the future and find out what is up with the genetically modified offspring the group ran into last year. Since genetically modified humans were commonplace in the year 2060, Eddie thinks he will return to the year 2040 to find out what is wrong with the track athletes of the year 2060. Eddie picked the year 2040 because that era is right before the genetically modified offspring, as they were referred to, were conceived. Kathy thinks Eddie is crazy to want to make the trip to find out. Nevertheless, she wants to go with him. Mark and Paula also decide to go, just to satisfy their curiosity.

Arriving at the portal, Eddie takes the group of time travelers to the year 2040, in the Spring, since the weather will be better. Heading to Eddie's Service Station, they hope that Eddie's future counterpart will be there. Arriving at the service station, it is clearly open for business. The question of the day is who is running the station today.

Driving up cautiously, they approach the station from the side. Although all three bay doors are open, Eddie mentions, "I don't see anyone around." Kathy observes, "I can see that. It looks like most of the action is down at *Eddie's Tire and Power Cell*." A closer look reveals the mechanic, who is getting up there in years, is in the service area working on an engine. Eddie tells Kathy, Mark, and Paula, "let me go and see if that's me. Wait here." Eddie cautiously rides toward the station, observing several changes that have been made on the property.

Riding into the service area, Eddie yells out, “hey! I need my Johnson Rod replaced!” Seeing Eddie, the mechanic laughs, and replies, “I still sell a few of those occasionally.” Eddie tells the mechanic, “Kathy, Mark, and Paula are here. Is it safe?” The mechanic replies, “yeah. I’m the only one here right now.” Eddie waves to Kathy, signaling that it is safe to enter the service station, and the group rides over.

The mechanic tells the group, “I’m glad you guys came by. I could use a little help around here.” Eddie asks, “what’s up with that?” The mechanic replies, “you can’t find anyone to do any work anymore. In 2040, everyone’s lazy.” Mark asks, “really?” The mechanic explains, “yeah. Machines do all the work. People tell the machines what to do from the comfort of their home office. Things have really changed. And, the work I do here can’t be done by machines.”

Kathy, quite curious, wastes no time, asking, “what’s *Eddie’s Tire and Power Cell?*” The mechanic replies, “all the newer automobiles are powered by batteries and solar cells. Junior works on those, next door. I don’t touch them.” Eddie asks, “so, you just work on the old stuff?” The mechanic replies, “yeah. No one knows how to fix the older cars anymore. It’s a lost art.” Eddie asks, “so, Eddie, Junior, is next door working?” The mechanic replies, “he’s working from home today.” Everyone wonders how Eddie, Junior, can be at home and working.

The mechanic also mentions, “there are two service technicians working over there now. The automobiles drive onto the service platform, and the automobile is scanned by a computer. The computer informs the technician of any problems with the automobile. The service technician picks what needs to be done, then robots do all the work. And, these days, they call that work.” Eddie comments, “wow! It sounds like a lot has changed.” The mechanic admits, “it has.” Kathy asks, “wait! The automobile drives itself onto the service platform?” The mechanic replies, “exactly.”

Eddie asks, “why can’t the customer drive onto the service platform themselves?” The mechanic explains, “no one drives anymore. The cars these days are self driving. Cars drive themselves to the service facility, and drive themselves back home or to the auto repository once the work is finished.” Mark comments, “wow! That’s weird.” The mechanic tells Mark, “what’s really weird is that it’s hard to find anyone who knows how to drive a car anymore. Anyone under 40 has probably never driven a car before.” Eddie asks, “what’s an auto repository?” The mechanic replies, “not everyone owns an automobile these days. The auto repository is an automated taxi service.”

The mechanic informs Eddie, “another thing that’s changed is that the engines and drive trains are very reliable these days. So, the dealerships

can't charge for routine service. Where they make their money is installing the newest options and computer upgrades. And, if one of these modern day cars gets hit, you'll pay an arm and a leg for the bodywork. That's because there are hundreds of sensors for everything imaginable all around the automobile." Eddie replies, "it sounds like it's a good idea to hold on to the older stuff." The mechanic replies, "I would."

After a discussion about modern day work arrangements, Eddie mentions, "we went forward to the year 2060 and watched a track meet. They referred to some of the runners as 'genetically enhanced offspring'. We were wondering what a genetically enhanced offspring is." The mechanic shakes his head, and replies, "I remember that. Kathy can explain this a lot better than me. Hold on a minute." The mechanic pushes a few buttons on his wristwatch. After a few seconds, the mechanic tells everyone, "she'll be here in a few minutes. She'll explain it to you better than I can." The mechanic's new technology on his wrist is quite foreign to the time travelers.

As they are discussing other societal changes, the mechanic's wife drives up in her electric Volkswagen Bus. The mechanic announces, "here she is." Kathy exclaims, "hey! I got a Volkswagen Bus! Check it out!" The mechanic tells Kathy, "and, you still have your Porsche and your Dune Buggy. Eddie, Junior, converted the Dune Buggy to electric for you. It's now four-wheel drive."

The mechanic's wife gets out of her Volkswagen Bus, and exclaims, "wow! I wasn't expecting this surprise today!" The mechanic closes the station, and they all go out back to the picnic table and have a long discussion.

Finally getting around to the topic of the day, Eddie asks the mechanic's wife, "so, what's up with all these 'genetically modified offspring'?" The mechanic's wife explains, "oh, that rabbit hole. Years ago, they started genetically modifying embryos. They thought they had it all figured out. So, they would splice in genes, and edit out genes, trying to make the perfect kid. Boy, did that ever backfire. For every problem they fixed, they created three or four more new problems. Take, for example, intelligence. By genetically modifying a person to be more intelligent, they monkey with neurotransmitters, neurotransmitter receptor sites, and neuronal plasticity. That's how all the nerves connect to each other. So, the brain became really powerful, but the kids had to sleep for sixteen hours a day to recover from the neuronal overload. A lot of them literally went crazy. And, all that sleeping made them get seriously out of shape." Eddie replies, "I can see that."

The mechanic's wife continues, "but, it doesn't stop there. They thought they'd solve the sleep problem by modifying another set of

genes. So, what happened is that the newfangled kids were still really intelligent. But, they would fall asleep in the middle of the day, with little or no warning, and then sleep for two hours. Today, it's a good thing they have self driving cars, otherwise the kids would fall asleep behind the wheel once they learn how to drive. So, they're brilliant, but they're up for only eight hours a day."

Hearing the subject come up again, Eddie comments, "self driving cars? That sounds really interesting." The mechanic tells Eddie, "that's another rabbit hole. As I was saying earlier, people don't know how to drive anymore. I can leave the MGB or the 914 over at the mall with the keys in it, and no one would steal it. Even if they managed to get it started, they'd have no idea how to shift gears." Eddie comments, "in a way, I can understand that. No one at our time would know how to start a car that had to be hand cranked."

Eddie asks, "how about the athletes?" The mechanic's wife laughs, and replies, "don't get me started. Okay, so they modified genes to create better athletic performance. And, what they're finding out now is that they broke a half a million other things. Like, the kids are extremely emotionally unstable." Eddie mentions, "we saw that in 2060." The mechanic's wife laughs, and replies, "yeah, I remember that. I said something like, 'maybe their special little genetically enhanced offspring will take out their space age ray guns and disintegrate us.'" Eddie laughs, and comments, "oh yeah. You were there." Paula mentions, "yeah, we definitely want to stay away from that genetically modified shit. It sounds like a disaster."

The mechanic's wife then mentions, "oh, and about the time they started genetically modifying people, they were creating human-computer hybrids. They put computer chips into people's brains. They started with sick people to try to make them better. Then, they started chipping people. Boy, did that ever backfire too. When the computer chip went haywire, so did the people." Mark comments, "it sounds like that didn't go exactly as planned." The mechanic's wife replies, "not at all. It's a disaster. 'Genetically modified offspring,' as they call them, don't seem normal at all. There is something wrong with every single one of them. So, they had to pass laws to protect them."

The mechanic's wife explains, "oh! So, get this. There's this thing called a remote chip programmer that they use to tweak the chips once they're installed in the people's brains. Some kids found ways to hack into the chips they put into people's brains. So, they get into the chip with a remote chip programmer, and reprogram the kids. Then, they have to go to the implant center and get their programming fixed."

Kathy asks, "what do the chips do?" The mechanic's wife replies, "lots of things. One is that the chips can be programmed to cure anxiety. So, the chip is programmed to do something like decrease dopamine and norepinephrine and increase GABA. So, with the remote chip programmer, the kids reprogram the chip to do the opposite, like they would do for someone with depression. So, the chip makes the person go crazy. Oh! And there was one kid that had a sleep disorder, so they used a chip to make his brain make more melatonin. And, someone hacked into his chip and cranked his melatonin way up. So, he was falling asleep in class." Kathy replies, "wow! That sounds like a real disaster." The mechanic's wife reveals, "it's the modern day version of bullying."

The mechanic tells his wife, "tell them about Mahoney's kid." Paula mentions, "wow! I hadn't heard that name in a while." The mechanic's wife explains, "so, you know how Mahoney always had a drug problem, right? So, Mahoney's kids had drug problems too. And, his son, Brian, was on the track team, and it was the same story, all over again. Little Eddie was three years ahead of Brian Mahoney. So, daddy Mahoney just about lost it when he found out there was an Eddie, Junior on the track team, and that Johnson was the high school coach. He almost ended up in the sanitarium again!" Paula sarcastically replies, "poor Mahoney. Not." Kathy curiously asks, "so, what did Mahoney end up doing with his life?" The mechanic replies, "he worked in the hardware store downtown as a stock clerk for a long time. He's also worked in grocery stores, department stores, and a few other places around town."

As they are getting ready to go, Mark curiously asks, "I wonder where we are right now." The mechanic tells Mark and Paula, "you're probably sitting in your back yard by your pool." The mechanic's wife suggests, "or, messing with McCutchen." Mark asks, "I wonder whatever happens to him." The mechanic explains, "after he got expelled, he came back to the University because of some paperwork issue. Then, Mr. Frazier kicked him off the team. The next year, he showed up at another university after his knee healed." Mark mentions, "where we came from, he's back on the University team because of the paperwork issue. None of that other stuff happened yet." Kathy asks, "what happened to his knee?" The mechanic smiles, and tells Kathy, "I won't spoil that one for you." Eddie, and the group, heads out, on to the second stop of this trip.

After stopping at Eddie's Service Station, the next stop is Second Street. When they get to Second Street, Mark is amazed, to say the least. The storage yard is still there, and is in excellent shape. Mark's brick work and iron railing still look good. On both sides of the street, the yards are filled with heavy equipment and machinery.

Looking over the equipment on his side of the storage yard, Mark asks, "I wonder if all this shit is mine." Kathy jokingly asks Mark, "well,

did you buy it?" Mark replies, "I don't know." Kathy laughs, and tells Mark, "ha! I got you good with that one." Riding past the gate, Eddie points out, "hey! The Abloy locks are still on the gate! They lasted a long time."

Riding a little farther down the street, Eddie points out, "hey! There's a bucket truck. Over there, there are a few Bobcats." Bulldozers, front-end loaders, and a large assortment of heavy machinery cover one side of the two-acre storage yard. On the other side of the street, there is a lot of tree removal equipment, concrete forms and equipment, and a large assortment of building materials. Eddie mentions, "there's enough equipment here to build a small city."

When they get to the end of the street, Eddie sees a few Dune Buggy frames, which appear to be quite a bit different than the ones he's been building. Eddie tells Mark, "yeah, all of this stuff is ours." Mark asks, "how do you know?" Eddie replies, "there's a few new Dune Buggy frames over there. It looks like they're made out of stainless steel. I guess I'm still building Dune Buggies." Kathy asks, "how do you know that it's not Eddie, Junior that's building the Dune Buggies?" Eddie replies, "that could be. But, even then, that would make all this stuff ours and Mark's."

As they get to the end of the street, Kathy points to the back corner of the lot, and exclaims, "hey! Check it out! That's a tank!" Kathy then tells Paula, "and, it's on your side!" Mark replies, "I wonder why we have a tank!" Eddie observes, "it has tires instead of a caterpillar track." Kathy remarks, "yeah. The tires probably came from *Eddie's Tire and Power Cell*."

After a moment, Paula confesses, "yeah. That tank is ours." Kathy asks, "how do you know?" Paula asks, "do you remember when I said something about buying a tank last year when we went to the track meet in 2060?" Kathy replies, "vaguely." Paula explains, "I've always thought it would be fun to have a tank." Taking a closer look, they notice that the gun has been removed from the turret, and replaced with something that they cannot identify. Interestingly, the tank looks road worthy. Now that their curiosity at Second Street has been satisfied, everyone heads back to the portal, amazed at what they have learned.

A few days later, while half of society is out Christmas shopping, Mr. Crum drives into the service station with an engine that sounds bad and is again ready to seize up. Since he is such a pain in the ass, no other service station will work on his car. Angelo and Eddie, however, see Mr. Crum as some potential comic relief from their busy day. So, if Angelo and Eddie are not too busy, they'll replace Mr. Crum's Johnson Rod or Garrison linkage.

Walking into the office, Mr. Crum yells out, "I need some help! I need some help here!" In the service area, Eddie tells Angelo, "ain't that the truth." Angelo asks Eddie, "do you want to see what his problem is, or should I?" Remembering the incident from the pool last Summer, Eddie replies, "rock-paper-scissors. The loser gets to see what he wants." Angelo says, "rock, paper, scissors." Eddie puts out scissors, and Angelo puts out a rock. Angelo laughs, as Eddie says, "I guess it's my turn." Angelo tells Eddie, "good luck," as Eddie walks toward the office to see what ails Mr. Crum today.

Walking into the office, Eddie announces, "Mr. Crum, what can we do for you today." Mr. Crum yells out, "my engine! It's gone bad again! And, I want my house back, Edward Bogenskaya!" Eddie replies, "I can help you with your engine. You'll have to talk to the police about your house." Mr. Crum replies, "they found my money! I'll be getting it back someday. And, I'm going to get my house back too!" Knowing Mr. Crum is headed to jail, Eddie tells him, "well, let's go and see about your engine. But, I'll be right back."

Eddie walks into the service area, and tells Angelo, "there's a warrant out for Mr. Crum's arrest. I'm going to take a look at his engine. Call the police and tell them to get Richard, or someone, here as soon as possible." Angelo replies, "good. I didn't want to work on his piece of shit anyway. This year, I'm spending Christmas with my family, and not working overtime." Eddie walks outside to meet Mr. Crum at his car, as Angelo makes the phone call.

Eddie opens the engine compartment, and tells Mr. Crum, "crank your engine." Hearing the sound of badly worn bearings in Mr. Crum's engine, Eddie comments, "wow! That sounds really bad." Mr. Crum exclaims, "I know! That's why I'm here!" Purely to irritate Mr. Crum, Eddie asks, "are you still using your regular oil additive?" Mr. Crum, exclaims, "no! And the engine hasn't gotten any better since I stopped using it!" Eddie replies, "well, it's not going to repair itself. Your engine was pretty much gone when you came in here over a year ago."

Giving Mr. Crum a false sense of security, Eddie tells Mr. Crum, "you know, maybe it's your Garrison linkage that's making all that noise. Let me take a look at that." Eddie looks in the engine compartment, and disconnects a wire from the ignition coil, causing Mr. Crum's engine to stop running. Eddie exclaims, "wow! That wasn't good. I wonder what just happened. But, at least the grinding sounds stopped." Mr. Crum exclaims, "Edward Bogenskaya, what did you do to my engine?" Eddie, playing stupid, replies, "I don't know. It just quit working. You might want to have a mechanic take a look at it."

Knowing the engine won't start, Eddie tells Mr. Crum, "crank your engine again. Let's see if it starts." Mr. Crum cranks the engine, which does not turn over. Now even more angry than before, Mr. Crum yells at Eddie, "Edward Bogenskaya! I demand to know what you did to my engine!" Learning from Mr. Zunde, Eddie very calmly replies, "I don't know. I must have broken it."

Mr. Crum storms into the service area, yelling out to Angelo, "he broke my engine!" Knowing that free entertainment is waiting outside, Angelo replies, "really? Let me come outside and take a look at it." Mr. Crum continues his tirade, yelling out, "if he broke my engine, I'm going to sue you guys! I can't afford this! First, my house! And now, my car!" Angelo ignores Mr. Crum, knowing that he will be on the way to jail in a few minutes.

Angelo asks Eddie, "what's going on?" Eddie replies, "his car won't crank." Looking at the engine with Angelo, Eddie points to the ignition wire he pulled out just enough to cause the engine not to crank. As Mr. Crum is watching the two mechanics, Eddie whispers to Angelo, "I think it's his Garrison linkage." Angelo whispers back, "it's also his brain." Eddie replies, "yeah. That too."

Angelo stands up, and tells Mr. Crum, "your engine is gone. This is much more serious than your Garrison linkage. Your engine has an ignition fault." Mr. Crum goes into another tirade, yelling, "an ignition fault! What's next? Eddie broke my engine! I demand that it be fixed!" Just then, Officer Richard Hayes drives up and, for once, is glad to see Mr. Crum.

Officer Hayes walks up and asks, "what's going on here?" Pointing at Eddie, Mr. Crum exclaims, "he broke my engine! It won't start!" Knowing he will get better information from Eddie, Officer Hayes tells Eddie, "give it to me from the top." Eddie replies, "Mr. Crum came into the office, yelling, 'I need some help!' So, me and Angelo did rock-paper-scissors to see who gets to help him. I lost. So, I came out to see what was wrong with his engine. And, Angelo called you guys. Then, I pulled his ignition wire so he couldn't drive off. You can cart him off to jail now." Mr. Crum turns red, yelling, "my uncle posted my bail! I'm not going back there again!"

Not delaying the issue, Richard informs Mr. Crum, "Maurice Crum, you are under arrest for running and participating in a gambling operation and attempting to influence the outcome of sporting events." Mr. Crum yells out, "I've done nothing of the sort! You have no proof!" Hearing that same excuse hundreds of times before, Officer Hayes reads Mr. Crum his rights, as Mr. Crum continues to maintain his innocence.



As Mr. Crum and Officer Hayes conduct business, Eddie restores the connection in Mr. Crum's ignition system. Starting Mr. Crum's car, Eddie moves it over to a parking place, locks the car, and tosses Mr. Crum's keys to Richard. Officer Hayes tells Eddie and Angelo, "we'll be back to impound his car later."

Mr. Crum exclaims, "Edward Bogenskaya, you are not getting away with this!" Eddie frankly tells Mr. Crum, "Crum, shut up. Enjoy your night in jail." Mr. Crum is escorted to the police car, and placed in the back seat, where he is still yelling and screaming.

Richard tells Eddie and Angelo, "thanks for calling us. We had no idea where he was staying. Otherwise, we would have picked him up." Eddie informs Richard, "he's probably staying at his rich uncle's house." Thinking Eddie's information might be another piece of the puzzle, Richard asks, "his rich uncle's house?" Eddie replies, "yeah. Crum came by Second Street with his uncle last Summer. Mark told me about it." Richard asks, "do you know his uncle's name?" Eddie replies, "no. But, Mark will know. He hired Mark to build a wall around his family compound. Mark subbed it out, and headed over to check on the work a few times a week." Richard mentions, "I might be able to get some information out of this Crum character on the way to the station. If I can't, I'll talk to Mark."

Before Richard heads out, he pulls Eddie aside, and asks, "so, am I still on for selling three of the stocks before the end of the year?" Eddie explains, "yeah. And, I have a few more stocks that will really perform well lined up for next year. But, I wouldn't buy those until January." Richard whispers to Eddie, "they're really doing good. My wife has her eye on a bigger house, and it looks like we might be paying cash for it. With two kids, and one on the way, all in nine-hundred square feet, we're kind of cramped where we are." Eddie whispers back, "I can see that."

Eddie then informs Richard, "there's a house for sale in Kathy's parents neighborhood. It's about 1,850 square feet." Richard asks, "what street is that?" Eddie replies, "it's on Alicia Drive. I think the one for sale backs onto the school." Richard tells Eddie, "that's a really nice area. I'll drive by and check it out later today after I book this character." Richard gives Eddie a fist bump and heads out. The paranoid Mr. Crum paid particular attention to the whispering that went on between Eddie and the officer, and clearly noticed the fist bump.

Right before Christmas, the tribe gets together for pizza. Since everyone is, for the most part, on their own, has their own transportation, and has little to do over Christmas break, setting the date and time was easy. Joe, at the pizzeria, is glad to see the whole group when they surprisingly walk in. Since they are a large group, and the dining room is

relatively empty, Joe seats them in the formal area. Joe comes to their tables and takes everyone's order. At the same time, Joe gets the rundown on what everyone is doing over Christmas break.

Everyone places their order, which is no secret. Pizza is at the top of everyone's list. While they are waiting for lunch, everyone is talking, and Mark comments, "someone forgot to invite McCrutchen." Bobby B. tells Mark, "what are you talking about? We would have to take out the trash!" Mark tells Bobby B., "yeah. But, if he was here, we'd get rid of him, and he would be that much closer to leaving the team." Mark apparently looks for any opportunity to mess with McCutchen. And, Johnson and Mitchell clearly want McCutchen off the team.

Interrupting all the conversations, Wendy announces, "hey, everyone! I have something to tell you all!" Everyone at the tables suddenly becomes quiet, and Paula is grinning ear to ear. Wendy comments, "wow! Everyone suddenly got really quiet!" Barbara yells out to Wendy, "out with it, girl!" Wendy announces, "Axel and I are getting married!" The group cheers wildly, but Wendy has more to say. The cheering dies down, and Wendy continues, "he asked me two days ago. And, look at my ring!" The excitement level among the women rises as Wendy walks around the tables, showing everyone her ring. The guys give Braden high-fives and fist bumps.

Mark, sitting across from Braden, asks Braden, "how long have you been planning to ask her?" Braden replies, "for a while. Last night we had dinner with my parents and Wendy's parents, so we told them. They weren't too surprised." Wendy and Braden have been dating since the seventh grade. Both Wendy's and Braden's parents were expecting the announcement sometime soon, if not, perhaps, a little earlier. Wendy and Braden get all the usual questions, such as when and where the wedding will be, but they haven't figured out the details yet.

Joe and Arianna serve the pizza, and learn of the news of Wendy and Braden's engagement. Knowing Wendy and Braden since they were kids, Joe is very glad to hear the news. Joe whispers to Wendy, "you made a good choice. He's a winner!" But, Wendy already knew that. And, Joe whispers to Braden, "she's a sweet girl. You found a keeper."

Over lunch, the group discusses their plans for the rest of the Christmas holiday. With a lot of excitement, Kathy mentions, "me and Eddie are going on a cruise after Christmas! We're coming back after New Year's." Paula asks, "when did you guys decide to do that?" Kathy explains, "a few days ago. We were kind of thinking that we needed a break. Especially Eddie. After all that shit Grimsby put him through over the last year, Eddie really needs a break. And, when we return, we'll be back in high gear on the track." And, Kathy needs a break too, if not only

to give her some rest from the last three years of intense training and competition.

Paula tells Mark, “now, I need a break too. I wonder if it’s too late to book a cruise.” Mark replies, “it’s probably not too late.” Paula asks Kathy, “where are you guys going?” Kathy replies, “Saint Thomas, Jamaica, and Cozumel. It’s seven days.” Paula exclaims, “you guys are going to have fun!” Kathy informs Paula, “it’s never too late! Hop on it, girl.” Paula replies, “I’m going to look into that when we get home.”

During dinner, Amber just happens to mention to Mitchell, “wow! All of our friends are getting married.” Mitchell replies, “I see that. I wonder who’s going to be next.” Amber has hinted several times before that she is waiting for Mitchell to pop the question. Amber observes, “most of our friends who are getting married have known each other for a long time.” Mitchell and Amber have also known each other for a long time and, like Wendy and Braden, have been dating since middle school. Mitchell finally gets the hint, and is silent. However, his silence says more than meets the eye. This time, Amber clearly knows that Mitchell got the hint.

Everyone wishes each other a merry Christmas before they head out. For many in the group, the next time they meet up will be at track practice in January. But, Mitchell, Amber, and Akinmola will likely hit the sand track a few times before the semester starts. Mark and Paula might just end up on a cruise with Eddie and Kathy. Bobby B. and Erika will have some time together. Mark has even given Bobby B. Christmas week off, with pay.

Christmas morning, Eddie and Kathy wake up around 9:00 a.m. After breakfast, still half asleep, Eddie and Kathy go into their living room, and open their presents together. In between presents, Kathy and Eddie answer a lot of merry Christmas phone calls, and make a few themselves. If it were not for the phone calls, Eddie and Kathy would likely go back to bed.

Mid morning, Mark and Paula call to wish Eddie and Kathy a merry Christmas. Not being able to wait, Paula exclaims, “okay! So guess what?” Being kind of relaxed, Kathy replies, “tell me.” Paula exclaims, “you didn’t even guess, girl! You’re not even trying!” Kathy guesses, telling Paula, “okay. I’ll guess. You’re out in your pool right now?” Paula exclaims, “no! There was a last minute cancellation, and we’re going on the cruise!” Kathy asks, “the same one as us?” Paula exclaims, “yeah! We found out last night!” Kathy replies, “awesome!”

Briefly interrupting her conversation with Paula, Kathy tells Eddie, “Paula and Mark are coming on the cruise too!” Eddie also replies, “awesome!” Kathy continues to talk with Paula, making plans for when

they'll be away. Eddie, reminded of their upcoming cruise, looks through the travel brochure looking to see what there is to do at the various ports of call.

Kathy and Eddie exchange the rest of their gifts, occasionally answering a few more phone calls from people wishing them a merry Christmas. They get the rest of their breakfast, and get ready to head out to Kathy's parent's house for lunch, where Eddie's parents and John will join them. Then, for dinner, they will all head to Eddie's parent's house, where Kathy's parents will join them. They head out for what will be a restful day before they head down to the Carribean early the next morning.