

Chapter Six

The morning sun cracked over the rim of the reservoir and smacked Tina directly in the face. She groggily pulled the blanket up over her head, then immediately pulled it back down. *Where am I? What happened? I hurt inside...* Tina rubbed her lower stomach. *I remember dancing. Then Tim got me a fresh drink. Then...*

Tim emerged from the small cabin of the yellow ski boat, out stretched his arms and said, "That was some party last night."

A horrible sensation penetrated Tina's psyche! Under the blanket she noted that the band on her cotton shorts was stretched and that her bra felt twisted. "What happened last night?" Tina demanded."

Tim came over and sat on the boat bench seat. "Tina, nothing happened. You know that we're friends. You did drink way too much last night, so I just looked after you."

Tina put her brain in rewind; *I didn't even drink the margarita that Kevin made in the green water bottle. I drank too much the night before but I was careful not to drink that much last night.* Tina kept her thoughts to herself

"Anyway Tina, you told me how Sally got sick in your room. And that Kevin got drunk and puked all over himself. So I folded down the boat seat for you."

"I said, Kevin got drunk and threw up?" Tina questioned Tim and rubbed her head.

Yeah, you told me how, how ... Oh never mind." Tim lied.

"Don't never mind me! What else did I say?" Tina demanded answers

"Tina you said a lot. I guess I'd been going on about me and Sue and I guess you just wanted to let me know that you and Kevin are having sexual problems too."

Problems, me and Kevin. We don't have problems. We've never gone all the way. But... I wouldn't have told that to Tim. The only person I've ever said anything to is Sue.

Tim took Tina's hand. "Tina you're the best female friend that I have. I've never been able to talk to anybody like I can talk to you. If it weren't for Sue putting me in this predicament... "Maybe, we could be more than friends?" Tim started to rub Tina's leg with his other hand."

"That's not a fair thing to say about Sue." Tina snapped at Tim.

"You're right, but after what we talked about last night." Tim hesitated then started

bluviating again. "Hey there's Kevin up on the top deck of the Stargazer!"

Tina jerked her hand away from Tim. "Kevin!" Tina yelled. She tossed the blanket aside, stood up and yelled again. "Kevin!"

The distance from the ski boat over to the houseboat was at least twenty feet; way too far for Tina to jump. Tim pulled on the blue and white ski rope, closing the space. Tina leaped on to the deck of the small house boat, ran down the outside then jumped on to the Stargazer. Passing thru the Captain's room she noticed that the bedding on their bed was missing. Tina climbed up to the sun deck and saw how Kevin had laid out the cushions and made up a place for them to sleep. But, Kevin was gone!

Tina started scanning all the other houseboats and then she walked around the perimeter of the upper deck railing. Below, Kevin was standing on the far side pontoon of the Stargazer casting a fishing pole. Something wasn't right; her lower abdomen throbbed and her cotton shorts awry and stretched. Tina watched Kevin cast the pole several times as she straightened her clothes and ran her fingers thru her blond hair. She stopped in the Captain's bathroom and wiped at some smeared eyeliner and while looking in the mirror she knew something happened last night but it seemed more like a bad dream...

On the outside deck Tina stepped over some scuba equipment and then quietly approached Kevin from behind. "I'm so sorry about last night. I fell asleep or something. I don't know what happened."

Kevin didn't turn around. "Tina don't worry about it. You don't owe me an explanation. The last thing I saw was you slow dancing in Tim's arms."

"Kevin nothing happened. Can we talk," Tina pleaded.

"Tina, there's nothing for us to talk about. Plus, it's none of my business!" Kevin started reeling in the fishing line.

"We do need to talk! Like, I don't know what happened... I was dancing by myself and then Tim brought me a Strawberry daiquiri . . . And then . . . I don't know." Tina rubbed at her forehead.

"Just one Strawberry daiquiri. Sure, just like the night before when you passed out."

"That's the truth Kevin! I don't think I even drank two sips of it." Can't you believe me? Tina pleaded.

Kevin finally turned around. "Tina, it's okay. I can deal with it... Tim's a cooler dude than me. Hey, he was the captain on the basketball team. He's going to be a doctor...He's got it all. He probably even got you, Tina."

Tears started coming down Tina's face. "Kevin please stop! I saw how you made the

bed up on the deck. I wanted to be with you last night. I blew it! I'm sorry... I don't know what happened!" The tears started flowing like a river.

"Tina, I know what happened! You slept on Tim's ski boat last night. I spotted you there this morning after waiting up most of the night." Kevin noticed something way out on the lake over the top of Tina's head.

"The cops are coming! The cops are coming!" Someone shouted out a warning from one of the houseboats across the way.

Frank busted thru the screen door on the smaller houseboat with a set of binoculars. "Two sheriff boats are headed this way! Their lights are on and they have us in their sights." Frank yelled across the man-made lagoon.

Kevin turned and squinted into the rising sun. On the horizon two aluminum sheriff boats were headed toward them with lights flashing and sirens blaring. Quickly it turned into frenzy, as people popped out of sleeping bags, rolled out of beds, pulled on clothes and started digging through backpacks.

Kevin turned back around and Tina was gone! Inside the galley Kevin climbed half way up the ladder. Tina had her back to him digging through her luggage. She pulled out a makeup bag and dumped it out, nail polish, makeup; combs and other items hit the floor. She scrambled for a brown pill bottle that was rolling around on the floor. Tina grabbed the bottle and rushed toward the head.

"Tina what's going on?"

"Nothing Kevin." Tina replied as she got up off her knees.

"What are those pills?" Kevin asked as he climbed the rest of the way up into the room.

"Kevin they're nothing. They're just some diet pills that I got from a friend."

"Diet pills... Well then what's the panic?"

"Kevin, they're not over the counter and I don't have a prescription for them."

"Oh," responded Kevin as he stepped to the side. He watched Tina go into the bathroom and then heard the toilet flush. When he looked back over at the pile on the floor there was a blue container of pills in pop out foil. Kevin snatched the blue container and hurried to Tina. "What about these?"

"Kevin, those are okay. They're my birth control pills."

"Oh..." Kevin handed the blue plastic container to Tina.

Across the lagoon was where the bona fide drug clearing was going on. Tim and two other classmates were on the yellow ski boat digging out there stash. One of the

classman dumped three grams of cocaine over the side of the boat— but the white powder just floated on top of the surface. Tim had a large stash of marijuana. With the sheriff boats no more than 200 yards away Tim flipped up one of the seat cushions of the boat and latched onto a metal tool box. He opened the metal box that was filled with wrenches, spark plugs, and some other tools and stuffed four sandwich bags of marijuana inside. Tim quickly snapped shut the toolbox and kept his cool. The sheriff's started slowing their boats down. Shielding the tool box between himself and the cops Tim casually moved to the back of the boat and reached over the side; the toolbox sank.

The two sheriff boats split up, one going one direction and the other the opposite direction around the flotilla. One sheriff' boat no more than ten feet away slowly idled by. Tim leaned against the motor cowling near the stern and gave a slight wave to the sheriff. Abruptly he got a knot in his stomach—in a cup holder on the dash was the lime green water bottle almost full. When the sheriff passed by, Tim moved to the dash, pulled the green water bottle up from the cup holder and twisted off the cap. The red melted down syrup still had an alcohol smell—it was the dissolved Rohypnol that concerned Tim.

When the sheriff's boat went behind the smaller houseboat, Tim ducked into the cabin and found the shorts he had on last night and pulled out a brown prescription bottle that had a Mexican label on it. He dumped the pills into the red liquid put his arm over the transom and held the green water bottle down until it filled with lake water and then let it go.

The other sheriff boat stopped, there was a big *click* sound as the PA system came on. "Is Kevin Trask here?" blared out from the bullhorn speaker. All eyes focused on Kevin at the bow of the Stargazer.

Kevin waved and yelled. "I'm Kevin Trask."

The sheriff idled over to the starboard side of the Stargazer. "Are you Kevin Trask?"

"Yes Sir." Kevin immediately replied.

The Sheriff tied his boat to the Stargazer while Tina walked down the outside deck toward the pair. The Sheriff pulled out a black card from under the clip of his report board. "Do you know anything about this business card?"

"Yeah, it's a 'Trask' corporate business card with our private number," Kevin replied.

"Do you hand them out to everyone?" asked the Sheriff.

"Not that one, it has a private phone number on it." Kevin replied and then something flashed his memory. "I did give one of our private cards to the boy on the dock a couple of day ago." Kevin rubbed his head. "Let's see, his name is Danny, he works at the marina and I rented this houseboat from his Dad.

"We know Danny..." The Sheriff stepped onto the deck of the Stargazer; he was about a foot shorter than Kevin. "Did you give Danny a ride in your sports car?"

"Yes sir." Kevin answered. "I gave him a ride for helping me."

"Where were you last night?"

"Right here on this houseboat! Is there a problem? Kevin asked in an agitated tone.

"Mr. Trask, I'll ask the questions here." The short brawly Sheriff looked over at the crowd that had gathered. "If there is anyone that can verify that Mr. Trask was here all night please raise your hand!"

Not one person in the crowd of more than two dozen lifted a hand. "Okay then... I need all of you to go back to the other watercraft." Nobody moved... In fact more people were gathering and the Stargazer was starting to list heavy to the starboard side. The scuba tank on the walkway rolled and then banged up against the railing.

One of the girls let out a scream when the port side pontoon rose out of the water. The Sherriff immediately un-holstered his gun and shot a round into the air. "Everyone move off of this houseboat now!" The Stargazer leveled off as the crowd dispersed.

Tina slowly approached, alarmed and just not feeling right. "Officer, I can vouch for Kevin he was here all night."

"And your name young lady?" asked the Sherriff as he shoved his weapon back into the holster.

"Tina Williams. Kevin's my boyfriend."

The officer wrote Tina's full name on his pad. "Then you were with him all night?"

"Yeah, we barbequed, played water-polo and danced almost until midnight." Tina replied while stepping next to Kevin.

"What time did you two go to bed?" The Sherriff asked while jotting down the facts.

"I went to bed sometime after ten," Kevin injected into the conversation.

"Your girlfriend just said that it was around midnight!" The Sherriff replied and taking in an eyeful of Tina's natural beauty.

"I got sick and went to bed early." Kevin answered. "Anyway, is this really necessary?" Kevin asked with an impatience tone.

"It's just routine. But, if you rather I can take you into Redding and you can answer the question down at the station."

"For what? Just because we had a party last night." Kevin quipped loudly.

"That's not why we're out here," the Sheriff snapped back at Kevin.

"Then why are you out here? What is all this about?"

"That young dock boy, Danny..." The officer stared directly at Kevin. "That had a Trask business card and ten dollars tucked in his underwear."

"Yes, I know who you mean. I told you, Danny helped me so I gave him a tip and also a ride in my car."

"Well. . ." The officer stopped; he used his pencil to push up the brim of his cap. "That young boy was found dead in the boat repair building early this morning!"

"Dead!" Kevin put his hands on the railing leaned over and got sick.

There was a horrid stillness in the brisk morning air as the words, 'Dead boy' got passed around the entire flotilla.

Tim casually motioned the other patrol boat over next to the yellow ski boat. A few minutes of discussion went on and then the deputy maneuvered the second boat next to the Sheriff's boat with Tim in the passenger seat. The junior deputy stated. "Young lady this gentleman says that you were with him last night, from around 10:00pm until 7:00am this morning."

The squatty Sheriff glared at Tina when he found out that he had been lied to. He picked up the microphone for the bullhorn. "Anyone that can verify who..." The Sheriff looked at his clipboard for Tina's full name. "Who Ms. Tina Williams slept with last night please come forward!"

Most everyone was gawking from the decks and their different vantage points from around the flotilla. Frank whispered to Laura, "The last time I saw Kevin last night was when he used my swim fins and mask."

Laura whispered back, "I saw Tina dancing with Tim but never did see Kevin last night after the water polo games."

Stan slammed the lid on a cooler then stepped to a railing with a beer in his hand and yelled out. "Last night I saw Tina skinny dipping. I didn't see Kevin but I wasn't really checking out the guys. Tina looked great naked!"

Disgusted; Patty moved down the railing away from Stan. Three days of Stan's crudeness was enough. The friends-with-benefits arrangement they had made her feel like a whore; especially since Stan made sure he let everyone know about their arrangement.

The junior deputy was a skilled investigator, he pointed out the scuba equipment on

the deck. The Sheriff looked directly at Kevin. "Is that your scuba equipment?"

No. It's Frank's equipment." Kevin answered.

The Sheriff pushed the button on the microphone. "I would like Frank, the owner of the scuba equipment to come over here, immediately!"

Frank started working himself back over to the Stargazer. Patty followed in his footsteps; she had information that she needed to share. The junior deputy was still in full investigation mode and noticed the lime green water bottle partly submerged near the transom of the yellow ski boat. What really caught his attention was the circle of white powder floating on the water. The deputy grabbed a pair of binoculars from the dash.

Tim panicked when he saw the deputy start focusing the binoculars on the lime green water bottle. The floating cocaine powder was worrisome but the Rohypnol in the water bottle could put a stain on his reputation! "Sherriff sir, I need to share something with your deputy. It is very important and very personal. If we can move away, out on to the lake I can give your deputy the information." Using a Roofie to relax a woman on a college campus would barely lift an eyebrow—especially if the student was an all-star athlete. But, in the real world it was still considered taboo.

Frank and Patty had just stepped on to the Stargazer when the Sherriff motioned with his arm for the deputy to move out on to the lake to take Tim's statement. Tina's mind was still in a fog and Kevin was in a surreal state thinking about Danny pulling on the brake and how they both could have died just a few days earlier. *Why not take us both then? Why spare me only to take that young child a day later?* Kevin challenged the will of God.

"I'm the owner of that scuba equipment," Frank stated as he approached the group.

"Did you loan or did Mr. Trask use your equipment?" Sherriff Wilson asked.

"Yes sir, last night I loaned my stuff to Kevin." Frank replied in a forthright manner.

"And your full name is?" The Sheriff wrote down Frank's information.

"Mr. Sheriff I was with Kevin all night!" Patty blurted out.

"And would you testify to that young lady?" The Sheriff looked directly at Patty. "Tina tried telling me the same story about being with Kevin all night but I found out that she was not being truthful.

"No sir, I wouldn't lie to you. Frank, Laura, Kevin and I had dinner. We had a few drinks and we all talked for the longest time. Frank and Laura went back to their houseboat and Kevin and I slept under the stars—all night." Patty rambled out.

"Patty, that wasn't last night, that was three nights ago." Frank butted in.

"Like, I was with Kevin two nights ago," Tina butted in. "I passed out. But we all slept in the Captains room. Ask Sally and Mary they slept with us."

"Oh, sorry Mr. Sheriff. I guess it was Sunday night, that Kevin and I slept on the top deck." Patty said in an apologetic tone.

"Okay ladies. Let me get my facts down!" The Sheriff looked up from his notes. "One of you slept with Kevin on Sunday night, one of you slept with him on Monday. But did either of you, or this Sally or this Mary sleep with Kevin last night?"

Tina's, I-hate-you glare at Patty intensified as the Deputy's boat with Tim on board idled up to the side of the Stargazer. "Sir, Mr. Baylor has furnished me with some very pertinent information that I need to talk with you immediately!

Tim stepped up onto the Stargazer and then Sherriff Wilson stepped into the Deputy's boat; they pulled away. Tina's glare was now directed at Kevin... Finding out that Patty had slept with Kevin Sunday night was a battle yet to be fought. Tina flipped Patty her middle finger.

Tim reeled all the lies and deception in... Bearing false witness was a skill that he had refined to perfection. Tim fully understood that the gossip would carry and by the third time around that his lie would become truth. Kevin hadn't moved or spoke; he was still in a surreal state of shock.

After a few minutes Sherriff Wilson and Deputy Pritchard idled back so to board the Stargazer for the second time. They had the same question to ask four different women in private. That one question would make or break the case that Tim Baylor had leveled at the Trask dynasty cover-up and most importantly Kevin's reputation.

"I need Sally and Mary the two girls that slept on this houseboat to come forward," the Deputy's voice yelled out over the handheld bullhorn.

The Sheriff took Tina into the galley and with his notepad in hand said. "Young lady you lied to me one time, so when I ask you this one question, I want you to be truthful."

Tina looked across at the short burly Sherriff. "Like Sir, I didn't mean to lie about where I slept last night. I'm just having a hard time remembering things." Tina replied still in a somewhat confused yet honest voice.

"Well young lady this question only requires a yes or no answer and I'm warning you don't lie to me!

"I won't sir. What is the one question?" Tina asked.

"Have you ever had sexual relations with Kevin Trask? Sherriff Wilson asked in a clear precise voice.

"No, we haven't gone all the way, but..." Tina quickly responded.

"I don't need any buts," interrupted the Sherriff. "I will take your answer as a, no!"

"That's right sir, my answer is no." Tina replied.

"You can leave." The Sherriff said while writing on his notepad.

Sally was the next one to come into the galley. The Sherriff asked, "Did you sleep with Kevin Trask?"

"Yes, I slept in the same room with Kevin. The Captain's room right above us." Sally quickly answered.

"Did you, or have you, ever had sexual relations with Mr. Trask?"

Sally reared back then answered, "I don't think I need to answer that question!"

"You do if you don't want us to haul you into Redding to take your statement." replied the Sheriff then huffed up his chest.

"No! I have never had sex with Kevin." Sally bolted out of the galley.

The screen door opened and Mary sheepish entered. She was asked the same question. "Have you ever had sexual relations with Kevin Trask?" She unwilling confessed that she was lesbian. Her answer was a firm no.

Patty was the last one to be questioned. She had heard Tim Baylor whisper the word 'Pedophile' to Tina way across the deck and had personal experience of Tim Baylor's evil ways. She entered the galley walked directly over to the Sheriff and stated. "I'm not answering any of your questions"

"You will, if you don't want to go to jail." blurted out the Sheriff.

Patty stood her ground and didn't say a word.

"Look here young lady. We found a dead fourteen year old boy. Some information that just came to light put a whole new spin on things."

"What are you going to do? Arrest someone because some egotistical idiot feeds you a line of bull." snapped Patty.

"The captain of the Blue Devils' basketball team wouldn't give a false statement," snapped back the Sheriff."

"Yeah right! Just like all the false testimony against Jesus by the high priests and self-righteous pigs like yourself." Patty mumbled.

"I'm done with you! I'm taking you into Redding!" The overweight burley Sheriff grabbed Patty by the arm pushed her out the screen door and down the walkway forcibly. Tim stopped talking to Tina; Sally and Mary were standing next to Frank, they both gasped.

Kevin turned around from the railing when he heard the commotion. "Let loose of her arm!" Kevin demanded and took a step toward the Sheriff.

Sherriff Wilson put his hand on his holstered gun. "Back off rich boy! No two-bit-whore calls me a pig. She's going to spend a day in my jail"

Kevin stopped. "You can't arrest someone without cause. You already discharged your weapon without cause. Take her in and you have to take me in also!"

"Hey, I'll gladly take you in. You don't even want to know what happens to child molesters in jail." The Sheriff pushed Patty into his boat and yelled at his deputy. "You take the pervert!"

From Redding California Kevin used his one phone call to the call the Trask's corporate attorney. Within an hour Senator Byron Shepherd showed up at the Sherriff Department. Kevin hated playing the privileged elitist card but the sight of Patty behind bars with nothing more than a skimpy green bikini on required action.

The door to the interrogation room swung open and in walked a short, balding man with a scruffy grey beard. "I'm Senator Byron D Shepard. Vincent your attorney called and said that one of my constituents' needed help."

Kevin stood and extended his hand. "Yes Sir. We were being questioned about the death of a young boy at Shasta Lake. Things got heated and Patty and I got hauled down here to Redding."

"Is that your young lady friend in just a skimpy swim suit out there?" asked the Senator

"Yes that's Patty. That Sherriff Wilson locked her up for nothing," replied Kevin.

Senator Shepard yanked open the interrogation room door and yelled down the hall. "Sheriff Wilson; get in here, now..."

The moment the Sherriff entered the room, Senator Shepard let loose. "Why didn't you give that young lady a robe or something? You put her on display like a stripper in a cage at a club."

"That little bitch called me a 'Pig'..." Sherriff Wilson spouted, "Senator, Sir."

"Was that before or after you discharged your weapon in a national recreational area?" Senator Shepard asked as he walked around the table toward the short burly Sherriff.

"A... I didn't fire my weapon," Sherriff Wilson replied stepping back when the Senator got toe to toe with him.

The senator stepped forward. "I think you did fire your weapon. I also have statements from some of the protestors on the Redwood logging site that someone in law enforcement pulled and fired a weapon up there also."

"Those punk-ass hippies are all liars. They're up there in the forest smoking pot and spreading VD. We need to call the National Guard in and shoot the bastards."

"My son is one of the bastards up there on the protest," snapped Senator Shepard while pushing his finger into the Sherriff's chest.

The Sherriff stepped back. The Senator walked out of the room and down the hall. It was no more than fifteen minutes before Kevin and Patty were in the back of the Deputy's patrol car being driven back to the Bridge Bay parking lot. Patty reached over took Kevin's hand and squeezed it—never had someone come to her side like Kevin just did.

Not one word was spoken from the backseat until the deputy pulled into the parking lot. "Pull over there by the Mercedes convertible." Kevin pointed to the left.

The deputy wheeled a one-eighty, pulled up in front of the 600SL, and slammed the patrol car into park. He jumped out, opened the back door for Patty, ran around the back and opened the other rear door for Kevin. "Get out pervert! You're smelling up the back seat."

The patrol car sped off. It was past noon and already ninety degrees. Kevin pushed the key fob and the door locks popped up. The driver's seat was way forward and the car alarm wasn't activated. *That's right Danny parked the car after his Dad added brake fluid, he must not have activated the alarm. I still don't believe it. I only knew that child for a few hours. He didn't seem like a kid that'd be sniffing fiberglass resin fumes. That Deputy let it slip out about Danny's older brother being involved with drugs. But if that were the case why even come out on the lake to find me?*

"Kevin, I know how you are feeling. One person makes an insinuation and you get marked for life. I was date raped and the high school football coach team made me out to be high-school slut." Patty offered in hopes to help.

"What?" replied Kevin, from a bent over position pushing on the seat lever moving the seat back. "Danny was sitting in this very seat less than forty-eight hours ago—now he's gone."

"I'm sorry, Kevin..." Patty paused. "I think it was Tim that put the child molester accusations out there. I overheard the word Pedophile when he was talking to that Deputy Ty Prichard."

Kevin stood straight up and looked directly at Patty. "I wondered where all that pervert child molester stuff was coming from."

"It only takes one false statement and it will hang over you for life. Stan never lets me forget." Patty's eyes looked downward at the ground—still feeling shame. If she had it to do over again she would have never tried for justice at a high school that had a state ranked football program.

Frank and Laura had been waiting and watching from the restaurant. They paid their bill, hurried out the door and rushed across the parking lot. "Kevin," Frank yelled from about twenty yards away. Kevin looked back over his shoulder. "We're thinking about taking off. It's getting too wild for us out there!"

"What, they're not even going to slow down and show a little respect for a dead child?" Kevin replied as Frank and Laura approached.

"I don't think so, as soon as you and Patty got hauled off. Tim asked me to scuba down under his ski boat for a toolbox that he said he accidentally dropped overboard." Frank looked around to make sure no others could over hear. "The tool box was stuffed with weed and a pill container. Two bags of weed stayed dry but the brown pill container got filled up with water."

Patty's head rose up from her shame filled stance; she needed to add her thoughts to the drug conversation. "I think I know what drug Tim might have had in that brown pill bottle; it might be Rohypnol. There was an appalling silence.

"It's so sad about that little boy." Laura finally broke the hush. "The people in the restaurant told us about his cancer, his family and his older brothers' drug problem. They think the glue sniffing might have started from Danny's older brother."

"What the hell is going on? Is the whole world turning into let's get high or change my mood chemical dependencies?" Kevin injected into the new conversation.

"Probably so." Frank added. "The gang was already smoking weed when we pulled away from the flotilla. Tim and Stan were talking about an ecstasy party with cameras or something like that.

Laura wanted to avoid any conversation about Tina; especially what she had observed in the back of the yellow ski boat just after midnight. "I could tell that young boy had cancer the day we got here. He was so helpful but hardly had any strength left in that frill body."

"My twin Sister died from cancer," Patty quietly added to the conversation.

"Sorry to hear that about your Sister," Kevin said.

"Laura walked over to Patty and gave her a hug." "I think about Cecelia all the time. You really fought hard for and with her."

"Thanks Laura, you were a good friend for Cecelia," replied Patty, "and for me too."

"We had the best time, the three of us hanging out in high school," Laura replied and hugged Patty tighter.

Patty hugged back and whispered to Laura. "Could I get a ride back to LA with you and Frank? I can't take another night of Stan wanting to get a threesome going and treating me like an object."

Frank broke the hush, "Kevin, I can take you two back out to the group before we take off."

Kevin looked out toward the lake and saw the yellow crime scene tape wrapped around the boat repair building just across the parking lot. "I don't want to go back out on the lake. Not to all the partying and other stuff. It just doesn't feel right."

"Kevin, I didn't mean to make it sound like it's going to be a big sex-fest tonight. It's just more than Laura and I ..." Frank paused.

"Crap!" Kevin said when he looked to the left at the boat rental shack. "I forgot about the damage to the Stargazer railing and upper deck."

"Kevin, it was Stan that dove off the railing," Patty confessed. "He told me not to say anything so that he would not have to pay for it. I'll help pay for the damage since I came with him."

"You don't have to pay for Stan's actions," Laura spoke up. "He needs to pay for the damage; he has a drinking problem and he's going to hurt someone some day."

"He is an obnoxious ass when he drinks." Frank added, "And he drinks all the time."

Kevin finally jumped in, "I'd like to ask a favor of you three. Could you guys go out and bring the Stargazer back to the boat rental dock? I'll go take care of the damages right now."

"Not a problem Kevin," answered Frank. "I can pilot the Stargazer back to the rental area and Laura can follow in our party barge."

"What about Tina?" Laura asked. "What if she wants to stay?"

Kevin passed his fingers thru his blond hair several times. "That's up to her!" Kevin started rubbing his forehead with his palm. "I just can't deal with all this right now."

"I'll talk to Tina," Patty said. "I want to discuss something about last night and the drink Tim made for her."

Kevin took note of the custom yellow pickup in the parking lot. "I forgot, Tina rode up here with Tim," Kevin paused. "Ask her to catch a ride back with you two."

"I'll let her know," Laura replied.

"Thanks you three!" Kevin headed across the parking lot and froze at the top of the ramp. *I can't go down there.* Kevin made an about-face. *I'll go see if that waitress is working...*

Inside the restaurant, Kevin took a seat at the counter. "Coffee this morning Mr. Trask?" The seasoned waitress asked in a despondent tone.

"No thanks," Kevin replied.

"That was a terrible thing about Danny," offered the waitress.

"It sure was. He seemed like such a great boy."

"He was... The cops say them found him dead from sniffing glue or something. It just isn't true."

"They told me maybe it was fiberglass resin." Kevin said almost inaudibly.

"Well it just isn't true!" Edna argued.

"What about his older brother? The detective told me he was a drug user." Kevin rebuffed.

"You're talking about Conrad." Edna leaned across the counter, so as not to be overheard. "Yeah he got into some trouble with drugs. That's why they fired him from the marina. But Danny, he was the good one... I know for sure he wasn't sniffing glue or resin."

"I don't know? If his older brother was doing dope that's a lot of peer pressure. Or maybe the older brother...."

"Hey listen here Mr. High and Mighty! Conrad smokes a little marijuana but he isn't a bad kid. I bet you rich college kids have been doing more drugs out there on the lake then he has ever done."

"Not me." Kevin quipped.

"Not even drinking booze?" Half of your group is probably under the drinking age.

"I did have a few beers out on the lake, plus I'm old enough to drink. I have never tried pot; a friend of mine got shot while buying weed." Kevin confessed.

"Well, so you are like Danny, that's good." Edna quipped.

"I came in here to ask a favor." Kevin paused, swallowed and then went on. "One of the guys did some damage to the houseboat that I rented from Danny's father. I want to make sure that it gets taken care of."

"What was the guy drunk or stoned?" Edna asked sarcastically.

"He was drunk; I get your point." Kevin answered. "Anyway, I'm going to call the Trask corporate secretary and have a check cut for the houseboat rental company. If I overnight the check here to you; would you make sure the rental shop gets the check.

"Yes, I can do that." Edna replied.

"Thanks." Kevin stood up, took a couple of bills from his pocket put them on the counter and then walked toward the door.

"Mr. Trask, there's one last thing."

"What's that?" Kevin stopped and turned.

"Did you get Danny's note?"

"What?" Kevin asked with a puzzled look. "What are you talking about?"

"The note Danny left for you on your car."

"What note, I didn't find any note on my car."

"I know that he left you a note because he set your car alarm off putting it under the windshield wiper blade. That car alarm of yours went off twice."

"Danny left me a note?" Kevin walked up to the counter.

"Yeah, the day after you gave him a ride." Edna replied while working herself down the counter refilling customers' coffee cups.

Kevin hurried out of the restaurant across the parking lot to the SL600. There was no note, but one windshield wiper was pulled a good distance up from the lower chrome windshield frame. Kevin looked around and under the car for a piece of paper and found nothing. *Probably best I don't know what Danny's last words were...* Kevin pulled out of the resort parking lot. Liberation of Danny's soul was Kevin's prayer as he drove away.

Out on Shasta Lake Frank found the flotilla had moved further up the Pitt River arm to a more secluded area. The plan was to clandestinely untie the Stargazer and then Frank would pilot it by himself; Laura would follow with the smaller party barge. The plan started to unravel quickly when Stan came out of the gallery; the smell of marijuana followed him to the bow.

"Hey Stan, what's up?" Frank asked while pulling up the Stargazer Anchor.

"What are you doing?" Stan asked while expecting an immediate answer.

"We need to return the Stargazer today." Frank delicately replied.

"Oh," Stan mumbled then spotted Patty somewhat hiding behind the awning on the party barge. "Patty you're in for a good time tonight. You're partnered up with the one and only Blue Devil basketball captain and..."

The screen door to the galley opened abruptly! Tina spotted Patty and glared, then gave her the middle finger for the second time that day. Next, Tim Baylor emerged out the door and put his arm around Tina's neck. Tina immediately put both arms backward, around Tim's waist and laid her head into his chest. Tina mouthed the word "Slut," across the way at Patty.

Holding onto a rope between the party barge and Stargazer, Laura took a mental snapshot of everyone. *Tim has everyone under his power. Tina has always admired Tim, being the captain of the basketball team and all. Stan is so under Tim's control. That three-some Stan's been talking about all week is probably going to happen. The look on his Stan's face is creepy... I'm glad Frank suggested that we quietly slip away from this den of iniquity. Poor Patty; she's in way over her head. Please God help Patty find her way back to you... Ever since her twin died from Cancer she has been on a slow decent...*

"What happened? Did they lock up Kevin?" Tim asked while calculating more deceit. "I have always kept Kevin's indiscretions to myself. Looks like things might have finally caught up with the Trask dynasty."

"You're right on the money Tim," Laura replied. "The Sheriff's Department is sending their crime team to go over the Stargazer. We offered to bring it back to the dock. I would suggest any drugs onboard get removed right now." Laura was surprised that she had let such deceit roll out and over her lips so compellingly.

Stan dashed back into the galley, what he had filmed on his video camera needed to be kept hidden. Two lacrosse players and three basketball players grabbed coolers and most all the hard liquor inside and off the observation deck on the Stargazer. Sally and Mary not sure of what to do, started packing up their bags in the captains room. Down in the Galley, they overheard Laura offering a ride back to LA—but Tina refused.

Mary and Sally found Frank and asked if they could stay onboard just until they reached the dock; their car was in the parking lot. Tim grabbed the toolbox and deliberately left the bag of pot that was drying out up on the observation deck and headed for the yellow ski boat.

Frank no sooner got the anchor on board and yelled across the water, "Pull in the rope and start up the party barge!" Patty pulled in the rope and Laura jumped back on board.

Not even a minute passed and Frank was following in the wake of the party barge.

With one hand on the steering wheel, Laura looked back over her shoulder. Frank gave her the thumbs up—approval for her quick wit and white lie about the crime team wanting to inspect the Stargazer.

Patty couldn't look back; she stared forward and prayed. *Dear God, I don't know why you called my twin sister and that young boy at such an early age. Why was your Son, Jesus called at the prime of his life? I don't understand any of this... But, I will never let my trust in you slip like it has since Cecelia died... May the perpetual light shine upon both—Cecelia and Danny...*