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# The Unlikely Announcements

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*The Unlikely Announcements* picks up where *The Unlikely Celebrations* left off. As yet another year for the Merlot's and their extended family draws to a close some close friends/associates make some Unlikely Announcements.

## Chapter 1: Holiday Plans and He's Your What?!

Before we headed back for Scottsdale, I found Linda and told her, "We are going to be leaving shortly. When might we expect you back at the Manson?"

Linda replied, "Not for a while. I am going to be staying down here for the next couple weeks. Going to get our two new sales people for the Oro Valley store trained. So, right about Christmas time, I'll call to warn you!"

I joked, "Are you going to be bringing your boyfriend over for Christmas Dinner?"

Linda replied, "He's not..."

I laughed, "I know...he's not your boyfriend."

Linda continued, "Correct, he is my fiancé..."

I was caught off-guard and took me a moment to reply, "...um....he is what?"

Linda smiled and replied, "My fiancé, we will marry sometime next year. So, to answer your question about Christmas Dinner, I suppose yes."

I told her, "Well congratulations. Who else knows?"

Linda informed me, "Well Olivia, Kayré and her partner, that is about all. Just haven't really found a time to tell anyone else."

I replied, "I see, well some of the family is still here as well as the Zinfandel's and Martina + Marc. My mother and sister only stayed for the wedding."

Linda replied, "Then I suppose this is as a good time as any. I can tell your sister and her partner along with your mother and her partner when Madam Cat returns in a couple weeks. Go round up everyone then."

I told her, "I believe most everyone is out back..."

We made our way to the backyard and most everyone was there. I found Gary and asked him to go find Bambi. I called out, "Attention everyone Miss Holstein has something she would like to announce to us."

Gary had returned with Bambi. Linda stood in the center of the patio and told everyone, "Well, as many you know Nick Dundee and I have been seeing each other for a while now. We plan on marrying sometime next year; likely after Thirsty Cactus is done. I am still going to be involved with The Budget Holstein, but not as much as I have been." Everyone congratulated Linda and she continued, "So, I'll be back in Scottsdale a week or two before Christmas. I have two new sales people and a manager for the Oro Valley store I'll be training over the next couple weeks. Also, I will be keeping The Ranch as I will occasionally still be coming down to Oro Valley. Also Olivia still lives here and basically takes care of the property. Lizzie will be here half the year with the other half in Scottsdale with Maya and Anna."

The last part was news to me, but this explained why Maya was so interested in the residence above Vinnie's as it would be bigger than their current condo. Not quite sure what Lizzie would be doing and why she would be in Oro Valley then Tucson for half the year. Something I would have to ask Maya or Peaches about next time I had an opportunity. Bambi came over and informed me, "I have all of Kayré and Kacie's stuff loaded up. I am going to head out soon, was there anything else we needed to bring back?"

I told her, "Not that I am aware of. Linda is keeping The Ranch so there is nothing she is going to be giving us, not that I have room even if she did."

Bambi told me, "Okay, well then I am going to head out. Wynn is going to come with me and we will stop for dinner somewhere outside of Florence and then she will drive the rest of the way." Her and Wynn left with the Acme Truck as did Gary and Bunny on their Harley's.

Kacie came over and asked, "Kayré wants to know when you plan on leaving."

I explained, "Very soon likely, unless you two needed more time."

Kacie told me, "No, we are ready whenever you are."

A short time later we headed out on the road for the long journey home. A while later Wynn called me, "So we are going to stop off in Gold Canyon for dinner. Want to join us?"

I relayed the info to Sara, "Let Lindsay know we are going to stopping off in Gold Canyon for dinner."

We ended up stopping off at the Greasy Spoon that we always seemed to visit

whilst we are in Gold Canyon. We arrived back the Homestead and I let Kacie and Kayré know, "Wynn just called as we were coming in and informed me they were just entering the Pima Highway, so they should be here in about 20-minutes."

Kacie commented, "Nice. Finally, we will have something different to wear. Of course Kayré went back to Tucson before I did and swapped clothes."

A half hour later Wynn came into the rear courtyard and parked next to the Quail Suite. She told us, "Let's get this swing off loaded first. It will make things a lot easier for getting to their clothes and other items."

Kayré and Kacie came over and took the frame out of the truck. They saw me and asked, "Where are we setting this up?"

I told them, "Wynn suggested over by the Cabana and the Pool House. We'll just set the pieces over there for now and I'll take care of getting it reassembled tomorrow. It is rather late and there is still lots for you to unload and unpack."

Once the un-assembled swing was unloaded Kacie and Kayré helped Wynn with the wardrobe boxes. Kayré told Kacie, "It is rather late so just select something to wear tomorrow and we can unpack the rest when we get home from work."

The next morning everyone was in the kitchen for breakfast. Kacie asked, "So do y'all setup for Christmas still?"

I told her, "Yes we still do. I will likely head up to Carefree soon and select a tree. Haven't really done much else, especially since moving back to this house."

Kacie inquired, "So what type of theme/style do you do?"

Before I could reply Wynn answered, "Bovine!"

While most everyone understood Wynn's joke Kayré and Kacie certainly were confused, "Bovine?" was the response from Kayré.

I laughed and explained, "That is only a small part. A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...oh nevermind....anyways; Laura had gotten me these giant cows in Christmas décor with a 'Have a moo-rry Christmas!' sign. I do have somewhere, a light-up polar bear that sits out and guards the front porch. Otherwise, not a whole heck of a lot. I prefer to keep things clean/simple so kind of a country/rustic or farmhouse theme with white twinkle lights...although we usually put a string of multi-color to 'corral in' the cows."

Kayré commented, "One of our suppliers in Green Valley also does country/rustic décor items and has a huge selection of Christmas/Winter related."

Kacie recalled, "Oh yeah, Green Valley Creations. Most of their stuff is unique/one-of-a-kind."

I told them, "If you two want to take on decorating the house for Christmas you may. I'll take a look later this morning when it warms up some at what we still have, besides the Merry-Moo's. Right now it is too darn cold for my liking to be trying to search through the garage."

Kayré replied, "Yeah, we can do that. When did you plan on getting the tree? Also where do you put the tree?"

I replied, "We usually put the tree...hmm...this is the first Christmas back here and since the downstairs has been redone. I suppose either on the wall by the Library or where the fireplace used to be near the nook."

Wynn commented, "Didn't you usually put the tree on that wall over by the library?"

I told her, "I think so. It has been a while, so I don't recall. Have to look at some of the photos during that time. I think it would work better there as not in the way. I'll have to look at my schedule this week and see when I can head out to Carefree."

Kacie commented, "Lucy owes me some favors, so if I order those items in the next couple days we'd have them by the weekend."

Lindsay told Kacie, "Oh, I need to stop at our store for a couple hours this morning then I'll come on over."

Kacie replied, "That's fine. I know we've all been a way for a week. I suppose tonight after work we should do our last two weeks' reports."

Sara added, "Yeah and I need to go through Ron's job queue."

I had been thinking about this and knew that the end of the year was going to get crazy because of the ACME Henderson job, "You know um...hold off on that until I have a chance to look at a few things and run some numbers. I might actually consider putting a freeze on any new projects until after the New Year. We are heading to Henderson right after Christmas and likely will be out there the entire week."

Andy told Lindsay, "I need to go to Fountain Hills this morning and then should be at Scottsdale this afternoon."

I joked, "Want to make sure the store is still standing after being gone a week!?"

Andy laughed, "Yeah, pretty much or one of the managers didn't jump ship and take everything with them."

Wynn sat at the table and told me, "I guess I should be do the usual Sunday cleaning today."

I commented, "But today be Monday and besides the house has been empty for the past week."

Wynn added, "Yes, but I didn't do a cleaning last Sunday before we left."

I understood, "Okay, that makes sense. Anyway, I will want to discuss our Holiday Plans with you later."

Wynn laughed, "You know when most people talk about Holidays Plans, it has to do with family."

In my defense, "Well, Linda is bringing her boyfriend...I mean fiancé for Christmas dinner. Laura and Madam Cat plus Sophie as well as my mother and Blanche will be joining us..."

Wynn interrupted me, "Oh that reminds me, there was a message from Bunny whilst we were gone, saying they wanted to join us for Christmas dinner."

I thought that was odd, "Hmm...interesting they don't usually stay in town for The Holidays which is why they let my mother and Blanche 'timeshare' their house. Well, we will need to be eating in shifts and that is going to be a lot of people to feed."

Kacie informed Wynn, "Kayré and I will help out."

Sara asked, "Have we heard from Maya and Peaches?"

I told her, "Not that I am aware of. Same with Marc and Martina."

After everyone left I headed to my office. I was looking through my PayPal and noticed a large incoming payment from one of my other premier clients. It was for an annual service agreement to keep their site maintained, updated and backed up. I took a look at the December 2017/January 2018 calendar. The job queue was a bit emptier than usual, but then again this time of year things tended to slow down because of the holidays. I was about to call Wynn to my office when I received an email from Zillow for a new listing in Desert Oasis. I reviewed the email it was a new listing on Sagebrush the street about ¼ mile 'behind' us. It appeared to be a smaller home listed as four bedrooms and four baths, though the pictures seemed to show more rooms. I added the email to my saved folder for reference and called Wynn into my office.

She came in wearing her purple catsuit and judging by the way she was walking she had the dildo pants on, "Good timing, I hadn't put on the gag or fiddle yet. What's up?"

I laughed, "The things you do to motivate yourself..oh well, if it works...Hemingway...I will not accepting bids on new jobs until after January 1<sup>st</sup>. Also other than routine service and/or emergency service will be shutting down operations on the 20<sup>th</sup>. I do believe Laura and Madam Cat...Miss Kitty along with Sophie are coming up that day. Not sure about mother and Blanche, but they are staying over at The Zinfandel's. As far as Acme Henderson goes, I thinking we will leave on the 27<sup>th</sup> and *hopefully* be back by the 31<sup>st</sup>. I really don't want to be out in Vegas on New Years."

Wynn made mental notes, "Okay, so no new bids until after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January..."

I added, "...and new jobs will start on January 8<sup>th</sup>. I should be able to clear out my queue completely in the next couple weeks with this freeze. As far as today goes I need to get caught up on a few things. I thinking though heading up to Carefree for lunch and picking out a tree. Want to join me, though I don't think you would want to dressed as you are..."

Wynn looked at the giant decorative, yet functional clock on the wall behind my desk, "Seeing as it is about a quarter after eight and I need about two hours or so to get things done, that can work. When are you going to check on the decorations?"

I explained, "I'll do that when we get back and after the tree has been setup. I might give Sara a call and ask her to pick up some lights at Target before heading home. Have to see what we still have and in what condition. That is all, have fun!"

Wynn left to get herself locked in to the fiddle before she started her weekly chores. A new email from PayPal came in was for another large payment, this time from Kacie and it appeared her and Kayré not only paid 'room and board' for the month of December, but for the first half of 2018 as well."

## **Chapter 2: An Unlikely Revelation and It is Starting to Look a Lot Like Christmas**

A short time later Kacie knocked on my office door. I was surprised to see her, "Thought you left with your partner?"

Kacie replied, "No. I decided there was no reason for me to be at the store today. Lindsay and Kayré can handle things. I was just coming by to confirm you received our payment."

I told her, "Yes, I did. Thank you."

Kacie replied, "We do really appreciate y'all letting us stay here. I hope this arrangement will work for all of us."

I told her, "Well, it is going to take some getting used to, much like when the McGrawl's joined us. Of course at that time Maya (without Peaches) was with us and I was still married to Martina. Wynn wasn't with us yet. So, you two joining our extend family should be a walk in the park..." Wynn came into the library with her long handled duster cleaning along the bottoms of the shelves as well as along the windows.

Kacie was confused, but not surprised by what she saw. She waited for Wynn to exit the library and asked, "What was that?"

I laughed, "That? Just Wynn doing her weekly cleaning of the downstairs."

Kacie replied laughing, "I know that but..."

I explained, "She likes to 'motivate' herself. Usually involves her locking herself into the fiddle and some other methods of keeping herself motivated. In this case she is wearing double dildo pants under the catsuit. I am surprised this is the first you have seen here like this as she typically does this every Sunday."

Kacie explained and appeared intrigued, "I suppose because on most Sundays I am in Lindsay's office when Wynn is doing her work down here. So, you can lock yourself in one of those fiddles, always assumed someone needed to do that for you."

This was the first I had ever seen Kacie take interest in the more 'intense' parts of our lifestyle, but then again I don't know what her Kayré did or did not do behind closed doors. I explained, "Yes and she is not the only one. She taught Lindsay. Maya used to gag and lock herself in a fiddle when she did her video lecture homework assignments. It was her way of keeping herself from getting distracted. Lindsay likes to try to escape, but sometimes she doesn't quite think things all the way through."

Kacie giggled, "Neat, may be I'll have to talk to Lindsay about that."

Before she left I asked, "Do you have plans later this morning or this afternoon?"

Kacie replied, "Not really, just need to go through some administrative crap...tough most of it can wait until Lindsay and Kayré get back tonight anyway. Why?"

I told her, "Wynn and I are going to head up to Carefree a little later to get the

tree and have lunch. If you like, you can join us."

Kacie told me, "Sure. Just let me know when you are ready." She headed out by office but turned around and asked, "Oh by the way Kayré has been talking about getting a Chastity Bra to go with her belt. I think she is dropping hints for a possible Christmas present. Any idea where I could have one made for her?"

I sat silent for a moment as again was not expecting this from Kacie, "Oh...um...yeah, Gary Zinfandel. He's the one that made all the belts including the one I put Martina in after I caught her screwing my sister. Plus he made Wynn, Sara and Peaches' their armors as well and Maya's 'super max' belt."

Kacie again surprised me, "Oh the armor, those are so cool. Peaches showed Kayré and I hers when we were still at The Ranch. Kayré seemed to think it was a bit too much for her tastes, however I was quite intrigued and excited...anyway then I'll call on Gary later. Do let me know when you guys want to leave." Kacie left and headed up the stairs to Lindsay's office. I decided I needed to get back focusing on my work, especially if I wanted to get the job queued cleared out by mid-December.

Couple hours later Wynn had returned in a purple corset, short skirt tan skirt with fishnets wearing thigh high boots, "I am, done you ready?"

I replied, "Yeah....So when you were dusting in the library earlier Kacie was in here with me. Apparently, that was the first time she's seen you in your house cleaning attire."

Wynn asked, "She freaked out?"

I told her, "Not really. I think she was more curious than anything, especially with the locking one's self into a fiddle."

Wynn teased me, "You know it is the quiet ones you need to watch out for!"

I added, "Yeah, how's it go? 'The quiet ones are the kinkiest!' Then she asked about getting a Chastity Bra for Kayré, something about Kayré dropping hints for a possible Christmas present. I told her about Gary and how he had done Martina's belt as well your, Sara and Peaches' armors. She went on to tell me Peaches had showed her and Kayré the armor while they were at The Ranch for the weddings. She mentioned Kayré didn't seem too interested in it, but she found herself fascinated and intrigued by it."

Wynn laughed, "Well, I guess it was only a matter of time...anyway you ready?"

I told her, "Yeah and Kacie is coming with us. Plus, her and Kayré already sent me a payment for this month and half of next year."

Wynn replied, "Okay then. Well, I'll get The Cruiser ready and meet you two down back."

I called out on the intercom, "Kacie meet Wynn and I outside." I headed outside to meet Wynn. Kacie came out shortly wearing a denim skirt, black tights and ankle boots along with a Budget Holstein sweatshirt. We headed out towards Carefree and stopped at my usual Chuck Wagon Cafe.

Kacie commented, "Oh wow, I know this place. The owner, Stephanie is good friends with Miss Holstein. Good food too." We walked in and found a seat near the rear. Kacie continued, "Thanks for inviting me. Nice to get out of the house."

As we waited to place our order Wynn asked, "So how was your first night here?"

Kacie replied, "Surprisingly, relaxing. We are both in a good place now and the arrangement of Kayré working at the store and myself working from home helps..."

An older lady approached, "Kacie O'Neal is that you?" She came to our table and saw me, "I knew that accent sounded familiar! Oh Mister Merlot and Miss Lee too."

Kacie greeted her, "Good day Stephanie. How's it going?"

Stephanie told us, "Business still a little slow, but the town is going to be starting seasonal festivities soon, so that will bring people in."

I added, "Kinda the reason we are up here. The tree farm I get our trees from every year opens today. So, figured while we are up here we'd stop in for lunch. Brought Kacie with us too."

Stephanie asked, "How's Miss Holstein doing?"

Kacie told her, "She is doing well. Going to re-marry sometime next year. She thinking once she gets the new Scottsdale store up and running."

Stephanie laughed, "Well it is about time she's been seeing that Dundee dude for several years now. Where in Scottsdale is going to be this new store?"

Kacie explained, "Actually she is moving the existing Scottsdale location over to the new Thirsty Cactus development."

Stephanie remarked, "Heard of it, but not sure where that is."

Kacie looked at me as she knew where it was, but had no idea the actual streets.

I told her, "Across from Desert Oasis in the area of Pima and Lone Mountain."

Stephanie commented, "Ah I see. Well, y'all ready to order?"

We placed our order and after Stephanie left I asked Kacie, "Did she say Linda and Dundee have been seeing each other for 'several years'?"

Kacie told us, "May be. Kayré and I have always wondered. It seems Miss Holstein kept their relationship quiet up until recently. Of course Kayré and I were living in Scottsdale for quite a while prior to our return to Tucson. So had they been seeing each other, we would not have known otherwise. Guess she figured when we came back to Oro Valley, it would be more difficult to hide. It is news to me as well."

I laughed, "Yeah, as long as I have known Linda which was well before Martina and I got married she always has some surprise up her sleeve."

Wynn added, "and no concept of time..."

Kacie giggled, "Oh god so true!"

I added, "I don't know Gary is just as bad."

Our food arrived and later on Stephanie returned, "Hope everything was good. Do give Miss Holstein my regards when you see her Miss O'Neil."

Kacie replied, "I'll do that. You take care now." We paid our check and headed over to the tree farm. Kacie asked, "How big of a tree are you getting?"

I told her, "Usually around 12-feet. Any taller and it gets too wide. When Martina and I first moved into the house she picked out a 15 footer. It fit on top of her Hummer no problem, but had a hell of a time getting it into the house."

Wynn asked, "It was too wide for the double front door?"

I explained, "No. It was just bulky as heck. Our neighbor Mister Chan and I were able to get in through the door, but trying to make that turn into the Great Room was tough. We were both covered in sap when it was all said and done."

Wynn laughed, "And where was Martina during all this?"

I told her, "Oh she had already had taken off to a club in the Jag."

We found a 13 foot tree that was a little narrower than the 12-footers that I figured would fit well in the space. I inspected the tree further, "Yeah this should work. I'll need to prune off the bottom couple rows of branches, but it will fill in

the space nicely. "

We paid for the tree. Wynn and I lugged it out to the Cruiser and we got it onto the roof. Kacie commented, "That sap is going to be a pain to clean up."

I explained, "The car has been ceramic coated, the sap won't stick. I'll just take it over to the car wash and spray it down with a little soap and it will come right off. However, be careful you don't get any on you as it is a pain to get off your skin and clothes."

Wynn explained, "Which is why I am wearing this trench coat and Ron is wearing old jeans and over-shirt."

I added, "Gloves too!"

After we had the tree secured to The Cruiser I removed my over-shirt and Wynn her trench coat and tossed them into a bin along with our gloves in the rear. We returned back to the house and I parked in the main drive. I walked over to the storage garage and commented, "Somewhere in here is a jig I built many years ago which allows me to stand the tree and cut off the low hanging branches before bringing it into the house. It is matter though of finding it along with whatever Holiday decorations we brought back with us."

Kacie asked, "What does it look like?"

I laughed, "Well it is all broken down, so it is going to be a pile of 3-inch diameter white PVC tubing covered in hardened tree sap."

The three of us started looking around. Kacie called out, "Hey Ron, found your cows!" Kacie pulled out one of the five-foot metal cows. "Geez, these things are heavier than they look."

I explained, "Yeah, the bulk of the weight is in the base. Those weight about 40-pounds each." I moved some more boxes and found a tote with the multi-colored lights, "Ah the 'Corral' lights. I wonder if there are any other totes with lights in here."

Wynn called out, "Found your Jig Ron. It is bit buried over here though."

I replied, "Okay, I'll be over there in a moment. Let me help Kacie get the cows out. That way too I can see what else is in that area." It was getting close to 3:00 PM when we finally had everything out of the garage. We still hadn't located anymore lights, but did find a couple more bins of decorations. I finally set up the tree on the Jig and fired up my Milwaukee cordless electric chainsaw getting the low hanging branches removed.

Wynn joked, "It took you longer to get the tree prepared!"

I told her, "Well, next year should be better. I'll get it into the house. Now go prepare a pot of boiling water for me."

Kacie was unfamiliar with the trick, "Boiling water?"

I explained as I brought in and set the tree, "It softens the sap so the tree will be able to absorb water quicker, plus it releases fragrance. We only need to do this with the first watering. Thereafter, we can use cold water. I need to call Sara real quick."

Lindsay answered, "Sara's phone!"

I laughed, "You're her answering service now?!"

Lindsay explained, "She's with a customer and I happened to be right by her phone and saw you calling. Can I relay a message?"

I told her, "Sure, ask her to pick up some clear/white lights at Target. Wynn, Kacie and I tore apart the garage, but couldn't find any. It is about a 13-foot tree though it is slightly narrower."

Lindsay made note, "Okay, I'll tell her."

Wynn came into The Great Room with the pot of water and poured it into the tree stand. She commented, "I'll check the water level in the mornings."

I told her, "That works. I am going to get the cows placed."

Before I even could ask Kacie volunteered, "I'll help you." Wynn came out to lend a hand as well.

We had the cows and the sign in place quickly as I laid out the lights I asked, "Did either of you happen to see green extension cord?" Neither Wynn nor Kacie recalled seeing it. "Hmm...odd. Come to think of it I haven't seen the polar bear. I know we brought him with us, I'll ask Sara tonight when she gets back."

Wynn looked at her watch and commented, "Better get started with dinner."

I looked at my phone, "Wow, okay didn't realize it was so late. Well, at least I don't have much of my design work going on right now. Spent more time on this than I thought."

We headed back to house and I checked in the other garage but still could not find the extension cord or the polar bear. I headed back upstairs just as Kayré

was coming into the house. I pulled her aside for a moment, "Hey, got a moment, wanted to ask you something about Kacie."

Kayré asked, "What did she do now?!"

I told her, "Revealed her inner most secrets and desires."

Kayré laughed, "Oh do tell!"

I replied, "So she saw Wynn earlier in her cleaning attire...."

Kayré added, "I have no idea what that is..."

I told her, "...well usually involves a catsuit, some type of stimulation while she has herself gagged and locked in a fiddle. Somehow or another the conversation turned to Chastity Devices, more specifically Peaches' armor."

Kayré replied, "Yeah, I know she has an interest in the armor. That's no big secret."

I defended my position, "Well, it is to me. I had no idea she was into the more 'intense' parts of our lifestyle."

Kayré explained, "She wasn't at first, but over the years she has opened up and explored more. You think I should get her an armor made for Christmas?"

I asked, "Are her nipples pierced?"

Kayré replied, "Yes, she did have that done. I want to say last summer...why?"

I told her, "That is part how the armor is secured as the nipple piercings are slid into the tracks at the bottom of the cup. I don't recall off the top of my head what size they need to be, would have to check with Gary about that. Well, anyway last I saw she was helping Wynn with dinner."

Kayré headed into the house. Around this time Lindsay and Sara came home. Lindsay opened the back of the Mini-Copper and handing me bags of white lights, "Since you're not doing anything...Sara bought out the entire store."

Sara replied, "DID NOT! I left at least three boxes."

I laughed and asked, "Say Sara, for some off chance would you happen to know what happened to the light-up polar bear we usually setup on the front porch?"

Sara thought for a moment, "Well, if it is not in either of the garages, may be the pool house?"

I kept forgetting about the Pool House as that was an addition/conversion of the Bath House made by The Acmes, "You know, Wynn and I never thought about that. Anyway, let's set these light in the Great Room. We'll work on getting the tree strung after dinner."

Lindsay, Sara and I came into the kitchen with bags of lights. Wynn commented, "Well, I suppose you won't have to worry about not having enough!"

Sara commented, "There's still more down in the car."

Three trips later we had brought in the last of the lights and I joked, "Going to need to take out a loan to cover my electric bill for the next month."

Sara replied, "Well, they're LED so it shouldn't be so bad."

We sat down for dinner and I asked Andy, "So everything still good at Fountain Hills?"

Andy laughed, "Surprisingly, yes. They managed not to burn the down the store while we were gone and all our staff was still there!"

Lindsay added, "It's a Christmas Miracle!"

After dinner Wynn, Sara and I headed over to the pool house. As we approached I saw the disassembled swing still sitting on the Cabana from last night. I commented, "Forgot about that, spent most of the afternoon looking for my tree jig and everything else." We entered into the pool house and Sara went towards a room off to the side. She opened the door and I saw not only the Polar Bear but several more bins, "Wonder what we have in here?"

Wynn pulled one of the bins down from the pile and opened the top, "Looks like several extension cords."

She handed me the bin and I looked through the contents, "Ah, the timer box with photocell sensor. Yeah the lights for the cows 'corral' plug into this."

Wynn laughed, "Hey Ron, take a look at this..."

She handed me another bin, this one was filled with White Christmas outdoor lights, "Well, we've got plenty of lights. Kacie and Kayré will have plenty of lights to work with. Um...let's grab the bin with the extension cords and leave the rest of this. I'll finish up with the cows and get the polar bear setup." Wynn headed to the house to assist Kayré and Kacie with stringing the tree. Meanwhile Sara assisted me getting the power boxes and the polar bear setup. Sara found a place for the polar bear to 'stand guard' on the porch while I got the 'corral' lights setup

around the cows.

Sara walked to front of the house and looked back the front porch, "The Polar Bear is neat. Where did you find it?"

I told her, "Target, several years ago. The Cows, Laura had those made for me the first Christmas we were here in 2004."

### **Chapter 3: Santa Looks a Lot Like Gary and That's News to Me!**

Later that week several boxes arrived from Kacie's friend at Green Valley Creations. Thursday afternoon Kacie, Kayré, Sara and Lindsay started unboxing and setting up the décor. I was working on a couple projects when Wynn knocked on my office door, "Gary is here to see you."

I wasn't expecting him but always had time for him, "Hmm...but he doesn't have an appointment."

Gary walked in, "But, I am a special client. Anyway, um both Kacie and Kayré we wanting to see me. Oh and before I forget, um....Bunny, Bambi and I are staying in town this year. Cristina should be coming out though."

I asked, "Um, okay. So my Mother and Blanche are coming up. As are my sister and Madam Cat...I mean Miss Kitty and Sophie. My mother and Blanche usually stay at your place while y'all are out with the in-laws. Are they going to be stay with y'all during this time?"

Gary replied, "Yeah, that is fine we have the room. We may not be able to get the four of them out of the room for meals, but no issues. So are Linda's girls around?"

I checked the time and replied, "Not sure they may have gone out to get more decorations. They should be here shortly as dinner is going to be soon. I think they want to ask 'Santa' for some kinky gifts for their partner." I called out to Wynn, "Hey Wynn, have Kayré and Kacie come back yet?"

Wynn came in to inform us, "Kacie is here, but not Kayré she is out with Sara."

I told her, "Well, send Kacie on in. If Kayré shows up keep her occupied until Kacie is done."

Kacie came in and saw Gary, "Oh Gary, been wanting to talk to you. So, Kayré is dropping hints she would like a Chastity Bra."

Gary replied, "Certainly can make her one. I am guessing you don't want her to know before Christmas?"

Kacie told Gary, "Yeah, since it would be a Christmas present."

Gary explained, "Not a problem, I can get her measurements from her mother. Have you looked at the different styles?"

Before Kacie had a chance to reply I asked, "Wouldn't you already have her measurements seeing as she already has a belt?"

Kacie replied, "I believe she is wearing Sara's old belt. As far as the bra goes, I was not aware there were different styles."

Gary instructed her, "Check out my website and find a style you like. Either email or call me with the product number and any add-ons. I'll let you know the final cost and we can take care of payment at that time."

Kacie bowed and exited my office. A short time later Wynn sent Kayré in, "Hey Gary, how's it going?"

Gary replied, "Not too bad. How's thing with you and Kacie being back here in Scottsdale now and living with Ron and the McGrawl's."

Kayré laughed, "We are doing well. It has been an interesting couple weeks, but I do think this arrangement is going to work well for all of us. So, believe it or not Kacie is hinting she wants one of those fancy chastity corset armor devices like Wynn and Sara wear. I think it is over kill myself and at least if I *did have* a chastity bra it wouldn't be so confining."

I laughed, "You know, I wouldn't have believed you a couple weeks ago. But, seems I have misjudged Kacie. The fact she was not freaked out by Wynn in her 'cleaning mode' and if anything took interest...especially when she found out one could lock themselves into a fiddle without assistance."

Kayré blushed, "Oh my! Her kinky twin sister is trying to escape. In all seriousness though, she is really interested. She does have nipple piercings already 12-gauge I believe."

Gary informed her, "Well then, we will need to get her worked up to 10-gauge, which isn't really that big of a stretch..." Kayré laughed at his unintentional pun, "...if she starts wearing the larger size a few hours each day she should be totally fine by Christmas. Now, have you looked at my site and know what options you want?"

Kayré was confused, "Options?"

Gary explained, "So yeah. There are different types of vaginal plugs, silicon,

smooth, ribbed, metal, tiered balls, etc. Take a look at the site and either email me or call me with whatever options you would like. We can work out payment at that time. I can get her measurements from your mother so she doesn't know what is going on."

Kayré told Gary, "Okay, will do. I'll take a look Monday when I am work."

Kayré left my office and my office line rang. I answered, "AZ Outback Consulting, Ron."

The caller informed me, "Yes, you did an install for me several years back and we are looking to be moving to a new location this summer and hoping you can help us out again?"

The number didn't bring up anything and I had no idea who this person was, "Well, I'll see what we can do. However, we have done many installs over the past few years so..."

The caller replied, "Oh sorry. This is Mel. We run a Southwestern Gifts store in Scottsdale." I still hadn't a clue, "Um...we are in the same plaza as a computer store and The Budget Holstein. You did our store, right around the time they opened."

I had to think back and then it dawned on me, "Oh okay yes. I remember you now. You caught Wynn and I while we were working the Grand Opening for PC's and Things. So, where are you moving to and when?"

Mel explained, "Thirsty Cactus, Miss Holstein has informed me one of her tenants wasn't going to need as much space as she will lease part of that building to our shop."

I was rather confused as Linda had made no mention of this, "Hmm, okay she will be having three buildings in Thirsty Cactus. So, she leasing part of her Budget Holstein or the restaurant building?"

Mel told me, "No. I believed she said it was the building with the computer store....PC's and Things?"

Now I was even more confused as the McGrawl's had said nothing to me either, "Okay....hmm...interesting. So, Linda has made no mention of this to me, which is not unusual given how she forgets to tell me important details such as those until the last minute. However, The McGrawl's have not mentioned anything to me in regards to this. Um, tell you what since Linda is in Tucson for a couple more weeks training new staff at her flagship store down in Oro Valley...when she is back up here again...we can discuss this in more detail at my place. I'll let you know when I see her again."

Mel also informed me, "So we'd also would like to redo the website. Hoping we can get some type of setup where may be you build it and we can update it. Our developer has gotten 'too busy' for us. Also, I hoping you might be able to get us a better price as I got our renewal bill..."

I asked, "Who was the bill from?"

She told me, "GoDaddy."

I explained, "Oh yeah....I'll transfer the domain and the site to new providers. GoDaddy has gotten very expensive over the last couple years since the new ownership took over. I been moving most of my clients away not only because of the price, but due to their limited support options. As far as the site goes, I can set you up on a WordPress site which once finished will be very easy for you to make changes. We'll discuss this more when we meet in a couple weeks."

Mel told me she would look forward to hearing back from me soon. I had just gotten off the phone with her when Wynn announced, "Dinner in 10 minutes and Ron, Martina is holding on the house line for you."

Gary was still sitting in my office and laughed, "Geez, I thought my life was crazy!"

I ignored his comment and picked up the house line, "Evening Martina. What can I do for you?"

Martina explained, "I hoping I can stay with y'all over the next few days. Marc needs to go back to Idaho for 'resort business' starting tomorrow."

I was trying to think where I could have her stay, "Um well, let's see Linda is still gone for the next couple weeks. Kacie and Kayré moved in downstairs. I suppose you can stay in the Presentation Room."

Martina apologized, "Sorry for the short notice, he just found out earlier today they want him out there tomorrow afternoon."

I told her, "That is fine. I'll let Wynn and everyone else know. See you tomorrow."

After I got off the phone I asked Gary, "So Santa, are you staying for dinner?"

Gary laughed, "Actually, no I need to get going before Bunny sends her sister The Bounty Hunter after me."

I saw Gary out and then sat down at the table. Once everyone was seated I announced, "So Lady Frosch will be joining us for a few days starting tomorrow."

Apparently Marc is being called back to Idaho for something to do with the resort."

Sara laughed, "or he is on a secret project again for my sister!"

I told her, "I don't think so. He has been talking about this for a while. While on the subject of secret projects though...Andy, Lindsay...did you two make arrangements with Linda to sublet part of your building?"

Andy was confused, "Not really. I mean we told Linda we were not going to need all that space. Why, what has she told you?"

I explained the call from Mel earlier, "She hasn't told me anything. However, earlier this evening I got a call from Mel..."

Lindsay was confused now, "Mel? Why does that name sound familiar?"

Andy reminded her, "She has the Southwestern Gift store across the wash from us. So Linda told her she was going to share our building?"

I told them, "Your guess is as good as mine. Like I said, Linda hasn't told me anything."

Andy advised, "We are fine with that, like I said since there won't be a residence there is not a garage on the bottom level so there will be more usable square footage for us. Any idea how she is going to do this?"

I replied, "Nope. Next time I talk to Linda, I'll see if I can pry out more information from her. I told Mel once Linda is back in town we can all meet her to discuss this in further detail. She also wants me to redo her website and change providers."

#### **Chapter 4: Linda's 'Problem Child' and Martha Stewart Was Here!**

The next day after everyone had left for work with the exception of Kacie who was working up in The McGraw's office reviewing inventory for the Budget Holstein stores. I was getting closer to clearing out my job queue with the completion of a couple more smaller jobs. I was looking at the details of the remaining job when Wynn informed me, "Linda is holding on your office line." I thought perhaps she was going to get around to telling me about the change in plans with The McGraw's Thirsty Cactus store. I answered and she informed me, "My problem child is giving me troubles again."

I had no clue what she was talking about, but joked, "How is Kayré giving you troubles all the way up here?"

Linda laughed, "No, not Kayré. That computer you and Andy rebuilt for me several years ago."

It took me a moment to figure out she was talking about her personal server which we used for their ancient design software, not the store operations or inventory, "Oh the sever? Hmm...what it is doing?"

Linda explained, "Keeps turning itself off."

I wanted to clarify, "Is it rebooting or actually turning off?"

Linda told me, "Came in this morning and it was not running. Thought may be someone shut it off, so I turned it back on. Around lunch time it shut off again. I went to lunch and when I came back I turned it on again, couple hours later it turned off again."

Based on her description of the issue I could eliminate a Blue Screen of Death as the sever would simply reboot after, "Okay, so since it is turning off that narrows things down a little. Could be overheating or the power supply is failing. Let me get into ILO and see what is going on...oh wait this isn't an HP Proliant sever. Okay let me remote desktop in and look at the Windows Server Event Logs. Is it running at the moment?"

Linda replied, "Yes, turning it back on as we speak."

I advised, "That works. Give me chance to find your information so I can remote in."

Linda asked, "Is this going to be difficult to repair?"

I found her information and I as was establishing a Remote Desktop session I told her, "Not really. Just a matter of myself and Andy getting out there to do it. Okay, I am in let me find the event logs. Hmm....yep here we are 'Unexpected Shut Down' looks like one from over-night, then this morning and about half hour ago. Really doesn't tell me much other than it was a hardware shut down not something through Windows Server. Let me check with Andy real quick and I'll get back to you soon."

Linda told me, "Okay, I'll be in the office for about another hour. Then I am taking my staff out for dinner."

I called up Andy, "So doing anything tomorrow afternoon?"

Andy laughed nervously, "Why?" I explained the situation with Linda's sever. "You know, Lindsay and I were just talking about heading down there. An old friend of ours contacted Lindsay the other day. Her and husband told us the next time we

are town we could stay with them and 'catch up'. Let me get a hold of Lindsay and see. I am assuming you would stay with your sister?"

I told him, "Yeah, if she is available, otherwise I likely would just stay at The Holstein Ranch. Let me call Laura whilst you are consulting with Lindsay." Andy agreed and would let me know tonight when they returned home. Meanwhile, I called my sister, "Hey, looks like Andy and I are going to be making a trip out to Linda's Oro Valley store tomorrow. She be having issues with her personal sever."

Laura laughed, "I know. Miss Kitty told me already. She was the reason Linda finally called you. We should be around tomorrow afternoon, you wanting to spend the night?"

I explained, "Yes. Sounds like Andy is going to bring Lindsay and they are going to meet up with some old friends of their."

Laura suggested, "Why don't you bring Sara with you. I'll have mother and Blanche come on over for dinner."

I thought for a moment and realized it would be a nice change, "You know, that ain't a bad idea. I am sure her and Sophie can have some fun while I get tortured by your partner."

Laura laughed, "Yes, that could work." I informed her I would confirm the arrangements later that evening after I had spoken to Andy as well as Sara.

I called Linda back, "Okay, I think Andy and I can make it out there tomorrow after lunch. I am going to bring Sara and we will stay with my sister. Andy is going to bring Lindsay and they are talking about meeting up and staying the night with some friend of theirs. I'll give you call on your cell later this evening once I know for sure."

Later that afternoon Andy returned and came into my office, "So, Lindsay and I are going to have dinner and stay the night with our friends Amanda and Steven. Amanda was the manager at our Tanqua Verde store. Actually, she still is with the new owners. She gave me her address and it looks like it is about midway between Linda's store and your sister's place."

I replied, "Yeah that can work. Talked to Laura and she suggested I bring Sara and she would have our mother and Blanche over for dinner. So I suppose once we are done with Linda's sever we can drop you two off. I still need to run this by Sara, but I think she would welcome the opportunity to get away from the house for a bit and have time to play with Sophie while Miss Kitty dominates me!"

Wynn announced, "Dinner is ready!"

Andy and I walked into the dining room and that was when I recalled Martina would be with us, "Ah Martina you've made it in time for dinner!"

Martina laughed, "Yeah. Marc already left for Idaho earlier. He should be back midweek."

I turned my attention to Sara, "Hey Sara, want to get away tomorrow?"

Sara seemed interested, "What do you mean?"

I told her, 'Well, Andy and I need to pay a visit to Linda at the Oro Valley store to take care of as she calls it 'her problem child'....which is NOT Kayré...'

Kayré objected, "Hey, I'll have you know I was a perfect child unlike my partner over here."

Kacie laughed, "Just because I got kicked out military school..."

I continued, "She is having some issues with her personal server. It shouldn't take very long for Andy and I to fix. Andy and Lindsay will be staying with some friends out that way. Meanwhile, you and I can stay at my sister's. She is going to have our mother and Blanche come out for dinner. You get to spend sometime with Sophie while Madam Kat does whatever she wants to me."

Sara laughed, "That should be fun. When would be going?"

I told her, "Likely late morning. I told Linda after lunch."

Kacie asked, "If you all are going to be gone could we have Maya and Peaches over?"

I laughed, "Sure. Martina would like that!"

Martina laughed, "Oh fucking shit! Glad I brought my chastity bra with me!"

I advised, "After I call Linda and Laura, I'll give them ring and see if they can come by tomorrow."

After dinner I headed back to my office and called Laura to confirm the plans she advised she would let mother and Blanche know. I called Linda and informed her we would be out after lunch and would give her a call when we got into town. Finally Maya and Peaches. Peaches answered, "She not home!"

I replied, "Okay. Well, would you two like to come out tomorrow. Kayré and Kacie were asking about you. Sara and I are going to be in Tucson along with the McGrawl's."

Peaches told me, "Me need to see if Martina could watch Cream."

I informed her, "Actually, Martina is staying with us a few days while Marc is gone. You can bring Cream, just make sure she doesn't have any accidents in the house."

Peaches laughed, "Don't send my dog to live on a farm! I talk to Maya when she comes home."

After I got off the phone with Peaches I found most everyone in the playroom. I told them, "Talked to Peaches, guess Maya is out right now. I told her if they wanted to come she could bring Cream with her since Martina is with us."

Kacie was confused, "What does Martina being with us have do with anything?"

Martina explained, "Normally, whenever they spend the night away from home Marc and I watch Cream for them. Since, I am here and Marc is in Idaho that wouldn't work."

Kacie understood, "Ah, makes sense now."

I told them, "She will have Maya give me a call later to let me know."

If anyone needs me I'll be in my office for the next couple hours. As I was leaving Kacie commented, "Lindsay is going to show me how to get myself into a fiddle."

I joked as I headed out the door, "Someone else be sure to show her how to get herself *out*."

Lindsay laughed, "Hey, I heard that!"

Later that evening Maya called, "So Peaches said something about coming out tomorrow afternoon?" I filled her in on what was going on. She told us, "Oh, okay so Martina is with you that is why she wants to bring Cream. Yeah, that can work. Kacie and I seem to get along and play well. When are y'all coming back?"

I told her, "Likely sometime Sunday afternoon."

The next morning after breakfast I headed down to my shop to grab a power supply and some case and heat sink fans along with a tube of thermal compound. Found a small Road Runner box I could fit everything in and place it along with my toolkit in The Cruiser. I had already placed Sara and my bags in The Cruiser as well and noticed The McGrawl's had already deposited theirs too. I checked in with Wynn, "Looks like we will be heading out shortly. Anything comes up give me a call."

Wynn assured us, "Don't worry, everything will be fine. I can keep them all in line! Enjoy your time with Sara and away from here."

We departed and stopped for a quick and light lunch in Florence. I called Linda to warn her we were on our way. Around 1:30 we arrived at Linda's store. Linda greeted us, "Ah you four made good timing. Sara and Lindsay, Aubrey here can show you some of our newest arrivals. Andy and Ron follow me."

While Lindsay and Sara were being assisted and occupied by Aubrey, Andy and I followed Linda to her office. Andy noticed the sever, "Oh, I remember this now. This was the PC you were working on when we first met you and Sara. You know, I came across that case and hard drive when I was unpacking my collection at the house. Okay, so let's take a look and see what we have here."

While Andy was disconnecting the PC I looked around and asked, "Got somewhere flat we can set and work on this?" Linda's desk was covered in papers and a piles of varying size of clothing and toys.

Linda pointed to the office next to hers, "Kayré's old office. Haven't done anything with that yet so the desk should be clear."

We walked into the office and desk was clean. Andy opened up the case and observed, "Internal temperature doesn't seem that bad." He check with a wireless thermometer, "That is within expected parameters. So very likely it is the power supply."

I looked inside the case, "A bit dusty. Let's take it out back and blow it out real good." Andy took the PC outside and with a can of compressed air gave the inside of the case a good cleaning out.

He returned and asked, "Should we clean up the heat sink and processor as well?"

I told him, "Yeah, while we are here. Going to go ahead and replace the heat sink fan assembly fan anyway. Brought some thermal compound. You can start disconnecting and removing the power supply." I removed the heat sink fan assembly and noticed the thermal compound had dried out, "Good thing we are doing this, the compound is nearly dried out."

Andy looked at the power supply, "This thing is made in New York City!?"

I laughed, "New York City! Seems rather odd, I would have thought China. Wow, it is over 10-years old, surprise it has lasted this long." Half hour later Andy and I had finished with the repairs. We returned it to Linda's office and got it reconnected. Andy powered it on and made sure everything was working as

expected.

Linda had returned to her office and I asked her, "Go ahead and make sure you can get on to this sever."

She asked, "Don't you need to turn it on first?"

Andy replied confused, "It is on."

Linda was surprised, "Oh so it is! Not use to this being so quiet!"

I laughed, "Yeah, in the past couple years they've made great improvements to the power supply fans. No longer do you have a jet engine sitting in the room with you."

Linda confirmed she was able to access the sever and told us, "Send the bill for the parts to Kacie. Let's go check on Aubrey and your wives."

We returned to the main store and found both Sara and Lindsay wearing black mesh full body catsuits. Lindsay commented, "I remember seeing these when we did the Gold Canyon store. Kacie was trying to figure out where they came from."

Linda told her, "Yeah I had the vendor send the samples there as were not yet permitted her to carry these items. Once Madam Kat get us a permit for this store we could start selling them here."

Andy sighed, "Wow, so Pima County is still being difficult to work with."

Linda laughed, "Yeah, I don't get it. Miss Kitty said the paperwork was a pain to complete and I don't even recall how much the application fee was. Good news at least is the permit is valid for 5-years, so that helps. Anyway, if Sara and Lindsay want these I can consider these the barter for labor." Sara and Lindsay agreed. Linda told them, "Well go ahead and change then I'll have Aubrey box them up for y'all."

The girls had brought in their bags as they wanted to dress up for dinner. Sara came out in her Turquoise corset with a short black skirt, black stockings and 5-inch heels. Lindsay was wearing her Ivory corset along with a longer skirt, white fishnets and 5-inch heels as well. I looked at them, "Gee, now you make Andy and I look under-dressed." We were wearing Khaki's along with our business polo shirts.

Lindsay laughed and Sara replied with her Valley Girl 'Whatever!' Andy packed up everything and had returned from placing the toolkit and parts in The Cruiser. He looked at the time and commented, "Still a little early, but Amanda did say they we could come at any time."

I told him, "Okay. Let me call Laura and warn her." I called Laura and Sophie answered informing me Laura was busy in the kitchen cooking and my mother and Blanche had already arrived. I advised her, "Let them know Sara and I should be by in the next hour. Just need to drop off the McGrawl's." After I was done with Sophie I reminded Linda, "If anything else comes up let me know." We were heading out the door when I remembered, "Oh...one more thing...I got a call from Mel the other night. She said something about you were going to have her occupy part of The McGrawl's new store at Thirsty Cactus?"

Linda replied, "Oh yeah...I am still working out the details with my architect."

I advised her, "Well, I told her we would all meet at my office when you are back in Scottsdale again."

Linda confirmed, "Yes, I should have those plans ready by that time. I'll let you know."

After dropping off the McGrawl's we headed over to The Meyer's. Sophie answered the door wearing a long sleeve t-shirt with shorts and black fishnets, "Greetings! Laura is in the kitchen getting dinner prepped. Go ahead and set your bags in the guest room then come out to the back." I noticed both sides of her head were shaved and what hair she did have was purple now.

We placed our bags in the guest room and then passed by the kitchen. Laura was indeed cooking and upon seeing us, "Dinner will be about half hour. Mother and Blanche are out back with Miss Kitty. Sophie will come get you when it be ready."

We made our way out to the back and Blanche saw us step out, "Nice to see you again Ron and Sara." Over the next half hour we talked until Sophie called us in for dinner. I think this was the first time that I had a meal in their dining room. Sophie came out with a couple bowls containing pinto beans and Spanish rice.

Laura brought out a platter of Chicken Enchiladas, "This is mom's recipe, hopefully I do it justice."

It had been a long, long time since I had our mother's Chicken Enchiladas, "Oh wow it has been way too long."

During dinner Laura asked, "So how did it go with Linda's sever?"

I told her, "Just needed to replace the power supply and did some routine maintenance. Nothing dramatic like when I had to rebuild it several years ago."

Sara asked, "That was when we first met Andy and Lindsay?"

I laughed, "Yep and Lindsay got you out of your shell! That was also the same computer that smoked the hard drive while we were in Parker. We decommissioned it as the store's sever a few year ago when she expanded the store. She just uses it for her design software as that doesn't work well on newer versions of Windows. At some point I am going to have to get creative and likely set her up with a Virtual Machine which can run an isolated install of Windows 7 since Microsoft is ending support for Windows 7 in the next couple years."

Sara asked, "When are you going to be doing that?"

I told her, "Not sure yet. Since I almost have the job queue cleared and won't be starting any new jobs until after January 8<sup>th</sup>, I'll build a sandbox using one of those HP Mini's with Windows 10 I have in the shop. That will give me a chance to install VM Ware and Linda's design software and see if I can get it to work. Actually deploying, I really have no idea."

## **Chapter 5: Saturday Night's Alright For Playing**

After lunch Maya and Peaches arrived at The Mansion. Maya walked in and saw the decorations, "Looks like Martha Stewart was here! Don't recall seeing these when I lived here."

Kacie explained, "One of our vendors also makes holiday decorations. It does kind look like something Martha Stewart would create, I thinking Martha was her inspiration."

Maya asked, "So, where are we staying?"

Wynn explained, "Well seems Kayré and Kacie asked to be with their same partners as last time. So Maya you and Kacie will be downstairs in the Quail Suite. However, since Sara is not here Kayré will partner with Peaches in the Presentation Room."

Maya joked, "Watch out she is a handful!"

Kayré laughed and pointed to Kacie, "As if this one isn't!"

Kacie objected, "Hey!"

Peaches asked, "Where should I put Cream in her kennel?"

Wynn told her, "You can put her in my suite, follow me." Peaches followed Wynn and set the kennel in Wynn seating area. Wynn told her, "You can let her out for a bit after dinner." They returned to the Great Room.

Martina walked in and asked, "Who I am paired with then?"

Wynn let out an evil laugh and smiled, "You're with me dear!"

Maya joked, "Tonight on WWE: The Pincher versus The Kisser!"

Wynn laughed, "Good names. So, I'll be making some burgers later. I need a couple volunteers to help with the fixing and the sweet potato fries." Both Martina and Maya offered. Wynn was a little surprised, "This should prove interesting."

Maya assured everyone, "Don't worry I am not going to hurt her, though I do have an uncontrollable and sudden urge to spank her..."

Martina laughed, "I've heard rumors of that fine spanking bench Gary got for Ron. I suppose I could sacrifice myself, if we have time."

Wynn informed them, "We still have around three hours before needing to start dinner. Anything else anyone wants to do?" Kacie raised her hand, "Yes. Kacie?"

Kacie requested, "I want to try out that stand Peaches was in the night the Pizza Lady was here."

Wynn told her, "Okay, we can do that. How about Kayré and Peaches?"

Peaches replied, "I want to do fuck machine!"

Kayré told Wynn, "Hmm...well I kind of wanted to do the table, but if no else can service me."

Wynn explained, "Once we get everyone setup, I can service you on the table. Let's head down to the playroom."

Everyone headed downstairs and this was the first time Martina seeing the remodeled downstairs, "Wow, they really changed this area." She walked into the playroom, "Holly fuck, this room is huge now!"

Maya had gone over to a changing room to change into the red Dominatrix Dress Linda had dropped off a couple months ago. Upon returning she grabbed Martina by the arm, "Come with me, time to get you setup on the spanking bench!" Maya took her over to bench and ordered Martina, "Strip!"

Martina joked, "I usually prefer to have a dinner first or at the very least a drink...nice dress...going for the La Diabla look!" She unzipped her dress revealing she was wearing not only her chastity belt, but as well the chastity bra.

Maya asked, "That's Mistress Diabla!" She noticed Martina's metal underwear, "Did Marc give you the keys for those before he left?"

Martina laughed and told Maya, "Mistress Diabla, I am wearing these on my own accord because of your partner. Anyway, the keys are in the dress pocket."

Maya laughed, "Yeah, she does tend to get a bit 'handsy' at times. I'll remove the belt, no need to remove the bra at this point."

Wynn told Kayré, "If you can get Kacie into the stand, I'll get Peaches attached to the cross and setup on the fuck machine."

Peaches informed Wynn, "Need to remove armor first. I be back!"

Before anyone asked Maya clarified, "Her choice, not punishing her! Funny thing is I never thought she would wear it for so long."

Kacie asked, "How long does she wear it?"

Maya told her, "Pretty much daily. She takes it off when she goes to bed and puts it back on after she showers in the morning." Martina had removed her belt and Maya directed her, "Okay, get on the bench and I will get you secured. Will need to go find a paddle."

—

Meanwhile, back in Marana...After dinner we headed outside to chat for a little while. Lorena commented, "Again, so nice having you all so close now...even if Ron and Sara are up in Scottsdale."

I joked, "I am not relocating to Tucson, we just moved back to the old house. Besides we have Andy and Lindsay with us and Linda's girls. Of course I could sell the house to the four of them. Sara and I could relocate out here, but then there is the matter she can not bear to be separated from Lindsay for so long..."

Sara added, "Not to mention my job at The Budget Holstein..."

I reminded her, "There is always the Oro Valley location."

Sara trumped me, "Don't think Linda would approve of that given I am Miss Bordeaux personal shopper."

I conceded, "Well, you have me there..."

Blanche asked, "You going to have room for us at Christmas?"

I reminded them, "Y'all usually stay at the Zinfandel's. Though, for some reason they are staying in town this year. His in-laws are coming out. Nonetheless, you

two can still stay over there. Linda is supposed to be back at that time as she is bringing Dundee so I can have Abby and Madam Kat in the Presentation Room."

I wasn't even aware I called her that until Blanche asked, "Madam Kat? Sounds like a British Dominatrix!"

Miss Kitty laughed, "Miss Holstein is always calling me that name! Funny thing is I did play a British Dominatrix on a low-budget film before my MGM days."

A little while later Mother and Blanche announced, "Well, we best be heading back home. Guess we will see Ron and Sara around Christmas then?"

I told them, "Unless Linda has further issues out here, more than likely. She should be coming back up to Scottsdale next weekend anyway."

Laura showed our mother and Blanche out. Miss Kitty came over to me and asked, "You ready to have some time on the cross?"

Sara laughed, "Have fun with my husband!" She turned her attention to Sophie, "You ready for some fun."

I told Sophie, "Have fun with my wife, just remember what happens when she gets overstimulated!"

Laura returned and told us, "I'll be getting the kitchen cleaned up then I am going to take a long soak. Have fun y'all!"

Miss Kitty have me remove my pants and briefs then secured me to the cross. I didn't bother wearing my device as I knew I would be playing with Miss Kitty and may be if both us were not worn out, Sara too. Sophie and Sara disappeared to Sophie's suite. Half hour later Laura came up to the loft on the way to her room. She asked me about Miss Kitty, "She treating you all right?"

I joked, "That depends. She has managed to keep me on edge this whole time!"

Laura laughed, "That's My Lady! I am going to take a soak and then head to bed. In the morning if you have time, can the five of us do brunch?"

I told her, "Yeah that is fine, The McGrawl's said they'd be having brunch with their friends. We'll pick them up in the afternoon."

Laura smiled, "Prefect. It will be nice to just the five of us. Have a good night."

Another forty minutes later Miss Kitty finally let me cummed and I almost passed out for the intense orgasm. She saw me somewhat slumped over, "You okay Ron?"

After I caught my breath, "Yeah, it has been a while since I have cummed. Wow that was intense."

Miss Kitty released then informed me, "You can clean up in the hall bath. Sara came up earlier and headed to your room to clean up."

I picked up my clothes and headed into the hall bath to get cleaned up. Afterwards I went to the guest room Sara and I were staying. The door to the hall was open, but the bathroom door was closed. I entered and closed the door to the hall. I looked through my bag and found a pair of shorts and a muscle tank. The bathroom door opened and Sara walked in wearing nothing except a pair of black stockings and her armor. She saw me and asked, "So did Miss Kitty milk you dry?"

I laughed, "Yeah and then some. What's with the armor?"

Sara told me, "Figured I should give you some attention while we have this time together, if you are not too wiped out."

I told her, "I'm okay."

Sara laughed, "Okay then, let me see if I can make you cum again..." Sara removed my shorts and briefs and started sucking my cock while massaging my prostate.

—

Back at the Mansion everyone was setup on their desired devices in the play room. Maya was spanking Martina, but not very well. Martina told Maya, "Quit being so gentle!"

Maya paused, "Sorry. I don't want a repeat of what happened with me and Bambi a few years back. I got very carried away with her."

Martina assured her, "If you start getting too rough, I'll let you know. Now spank me like you mean it!" Maya started spanking Martina harder, "Ah that is more like it!" She laughed, "Yes, I'm a masochists!" A little while later Martina had enough, "Okay, this is getting to be a bit much now!"

Maya teased her, "But you said you were a masochists. Oh well, my arm is getting tired anyway. Let me get you released from here and you can go freshen up. I should see how Peaches is holding up on the fucking machine." She undid the restraints and Martina hopped off the table, picked up her belt and headed to one of the powder rooms. Maya walked over to the fuck machine to see Wynn had placed a trainer gag with blindfold on her. She looked over at the controls and

saw the machine was set on a gentle pattern, "Hmm, well you should be primed enough now. Time for you to experience the full power of this beauty!" She fiddle with the controls and set that machine to torment for 10-minutes. Peaches let out a muffled scream. Maya walked over to Kacie and removed her gag, "You doing alright?"

Kacie laughed, "Yeah, not sure what is worse being held so tightly or having this vibrator edge me!"

Maya giggled, "Well, I can fix that." She placed the gag back in Kacie's mouth and turned the vibrator on high! She walked to the other side of the room and saw Wynn was helping Kayré off the table. As she walked over she asked, "Need help?"

Wynn turned around surprised, "Oh...sure. You can get her out the straitjacket while I get the table cleaned up. You done with Martina?"

Maya was undoing the straps on Kayré's straitjacket and told her, "Yeah. She is in the powder room getting cleaned..." Peaches distinct Banshee scream though muffled resonated through the room. Maya explained, "I put the machine on torment." After getting the jacket off of Kayré she commented, "Speaking of 'torment' best you go check on your partner. She was complaining the vibrator wasn't doing enough for her."

Kayré giggled, "Oh my! That'll teach her. Thanks." She made her way over to the bondage stand to tend to her partner.

Martina came back out of the dressing room and was asking, "What the fuck was..." She saw Peaches on the fuck machine being tormented, "Oh...okay..." The machine started beeping and stopped a short time later with the dildo still fully impaled in Peaches' pussy.

Wynn walked over and asked, "Can you two go ahead and get her off the machine? She needs to take Cream for a walk and I still need a little time before I am ready for you two."

Maya replied, "Sure." She tossed the hex key to Martina, "I'll disengage the dildo and get the gag off, start getting her ankles and wrists released." She pulled the release lever and dildo popped out her soaked pussy. Maya removed the trainer gag and asked, "So, how'd you like that?"

Peaches was still breathing heavily, "That...was so intense...when can I do it again!?"

Maya laughed, "May be tomorrow before we leave. Wynn wants you to take Cream for a walk. Martina and I are going to be helping Wynn with dinner."

Kayré and Kacie came over and asked, "Anything we can do?"

Maya told them, "I think Martina and I are good for Wynn."

Kacie suggested, "May be we can go out for a walk with Peaches and Cream."

Kayré agreed, "Not a bad idea."

The three of them went out for a walk with Cream. Martina and Maya headed to the kitchen. Wynn asked, "Who wants to peel the potatoes? Or who wants to slice the tomatoes and onions?" Martina offered to peel the potatoes while Maya worked on the tomatoes, onions and lettuce. Once Martina was done with peeling the potatoes, Wynn added seasoning and placed them in the oven. She told Martina, "In the pantry on the right side, third shelf you will find the bun warmer. Go ahead and get it out, place it on the rack in the dining room and plug it in." Martina headed to the pantry and looked where Wynn had directed her and found the bun warmer in question. She took the warmer into the dining room and saw the baker's rack in the corner. She placed the warmer and the corner and found a nearby outlet.

Martina returned to the kitchen, "Okay I've done that now what?"

Wynn was placing six burger patties on the griddle and instructed her, "Find a bag of hamburger buns in the pantry and put six sets into the warmer. After that you and Maya can start setting the table and pickup some wine." A short time later Kayré and Kacie returned with Peaches and Cream. Peaches put Cream back in her kennel and after visiting the loo came into the dining room." Wynn told Maya, "When you are done with the toppings place those on the rack in the dining room next to the bun warmer. Also, the condiments are in the fridge, might as well set those out too. The fries should be done shortly and the burgers are nearly done too."

After dinner Kacie and Kayré helped Wynn get the kitchen and dining rooms cleaned. Maya and Kacie headed down to the Quail Suite. Kacie asked, "So what 'accessories' do you have in your belt this week?"

Maya laughed, "None. I am not wearing my belt and I feel so naked!"

Kacie giggled, "Funny how that happens. Let me get out of mine and we can have some fun."

Over in the Presentation Room Kayré and Martina sat on the bed. Martina commented, "I don't think we have ever been together."

Kayré replied, "Nope this is a first..." Martina and Kayré just sat across and

stared at each other, "...and rather awkward."

Martina giggled, "Doesn't need to be. Let me get out my chastity belt and bra."

Martina removed her dress leaving her just wearing her belt and bra. Kayré saw and pointed to the Chastity Bra, "Wow, I so want one of those!"

Martina explained, "The only reason I am wearing it and the belt is because Peaches is here. So what do you want to do?"

Kayré replied, "Not sure, you are more 'experienced' in this department than I am."

Martina laughed, "What the fuck is that suppose to mean?! Oh nevermind. Let's have some fun." Martina grabbed Kayré and pulling her towards her.

Peaches took Cream out back to let her take care of her business before her and Wynn settled down for the night. Upon returning and placing Cream in her kennel Wynn asked, "What do you want do tonight?"

Peaches yawned, "Sorry....tired...fucking machine and chasing Cream wore me out."

Wynn suggested, "Why don't you lay down and I'll give you a relaxing and erotic massage."

Peaches commented, "Need to get out of super hero armor." She removed her armor. Wynn had gone into the bathroom and returned with massage oil and some towels. After removing the quilt from the top of the bed she placed a towel on the bed and instructed Peaches to lay down. Wynn started massaging Peaches' feet and legs, slowly moving her way up. Peaches was relaxed and falling asleep. Wynn made her way up to Peaches' pussy and started massaging her labia. Peaches let out a low moan as she was still half asleep. Wynn added more massage oil to her hand and started fingering Peaches' pussy, first with one finger, then two, then three. At the same time she slowly started rubbing Peaches' clit. Peaches was moaning louder and Wynn upped the tempo. A few moments later the orgasm hit Peaches and she let out her banshee scream! "Wholly fuck mistress!"

Wynn laughed, "Geez, you are loud!" After she wiped her hand clean Wynn looked over and saw Peaches was out, "Well, that was easier than I expected." She wiped down Peaches and then after getting into bed next to her pulled the quilt back on to the bed and over them.

## **Chapter 6: I Need A Favor and Kacie's First Time**

The next morning Sara gave me a wake up call by sucking my cock. After I cummed in her mouth she commented, "Good morning. Nice for us to have some quiet time together."

I yawn and stretched, "Yes, nice change." I looked over at the bedside clock and commented, "Well, we best get dressed and see what Laura has planned."

After we dressed we headed downstairs to find Sophie was in the living room reading the Sunday paper, "Morning you two, sleep okay?"

Sara replied, "Yes we did."

Sophie smiled, "Good. Laura and Miss Kitty should be down shortly."

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Meanwhile back at The Merlot Mansion everyone gathered in the kitchen. Martina noticed everyone was dressed nearly the same as her in long sleeve t-shirts, shorts along with black opaque tights and heels, "Hmm...the mental telepathy worked!" Of course Martina was wearing a pink t-shirt, while Maya was wearing red, Wynn wearing a crushed velvet purple, Kayré and Kacie both were wearing grey while Peaches was wearing black. Martina asked, "So where are we going for brunch?"

Wynn thought for a moment, "Think we went to the place in Carefree last time. So either DC Ranch or Old Town."

Maya commented, "Peaches and I went to that place in DC Ranch recently. It is 'under new ownership' and frankly we were not impressed."

Peaches added, "Service sucked, but the food was good."

Wynn laughed, "Well, one out of two isn't bad. We have plenty of time before they get back, I pretty sure Ron said afternoon. We can head down to Old Town Scottsdale."

Maya confirmed, "Yeah when we talked the other night he said afternoon. So, let's do this Martina can come with Peaches and I. Then Kayré, Kacie and Wynn can follow us down there."

Wynn told them, "Okay that works since all of us wouldn't be able to fit in The Cruiser anyway. Let me grab the keys and..." Wynn noticed the keys for The Cruiser were not there, "...oh they took The Cruiser, well then we will take our Jeep and follow your Jeep."

Half hour later they arrived and were first told there would be 10-15 minute wait,

but then suddenly they were seated immediately. No one said anything, but something was strange about this. Perhaps the others were not ready as they were waiting for the rest of their party to arrive. After everyone was seated they started reviewing the menu. A red head taller than Maya approached the table, "Ah it is true! The Majestic Martina has honored us with her presence."

Martina mumbled, "The Majestic Martina?...what the fu..!" she looked up and saw a familiar face, "Jana! Gosh, I haven't seen you in years. You haven't changed."

Jana laughed, "Neither have you apparently. Always out with an entourage and rocking the Pink!"

Martina laughed, "Well, technically they are family....well my ex-husband's family." Martina really wanted to change the subject, she noticed Jana seemed more dressed up than most of the staff, she figured Jana could be the manager. "You running this place?"

Jana told her, "Suppose you can say that. I actually own this place with my husband. Got out of the Club Scene a few years back. You still doing that scene?"

Martina explained, "Actually no, I too moved on. Working with my current husband up at The Boulders."

Someone approached Jana and spoke to her briefly. Jana announced, "Well it was good to see you again Martina. If you need anything let my staff know, I need to attend to something else."

After Jana walked away Martina replied, "Well that was unexpected. I haven't seen her in like 10-years. We used to connoisseur clubs together way back when in my wild days."

Wynn laughed, "I've heard you have reputation, but not what I expected."

Martina laughed, "Oh there are lot of things you don't know about me...and I would prefer it would stay that way too!"

—

Back in Marana, the five of us headed over to the resort for brunch. Shortly after we had ordered my cell started ringing, "Hmm...wonder if this is Andy." I looked at the caller id, "Oh crap...Linda. Let me step out and take this." I headed out to the lobby, "AZ Outback Ron."

Linda replied, "Oh, wasn't expecting you to answer. Anyways I need a favor. How long are you in town for?"

I had to wonder what this 'favor' was going to involve, "We were going to head back this afternoon. Why?"

Linda explained her scheme, "So, I have a vendor coming out tomorrow with a new product line I am going to carry. Wondering if I could have Sara and Lindsay model. Oh you wouldn't happened to have your camera with you as well?"

Luckily all of us 'over-packed' in case such an event should happen plus we never know where we would be dining. Both of which when Linda is involved is not unlikely to be an occurrence. I explained, "Well...I know Sara would not have an issue, however I need to talk to Andy first. Sara and I are currently having brunch with my sister. Let me get back to you on that."

Linda told me, "Sounds good. Call me later."

I returned to the cafe looking confused. Laura asked, "What did she want?"

I laughed, "Sara and Lindsay to model a new product line. She said a vendor is going to be out tomorrow. She was asking if I had my camera with me, so I get the impression she wants me to take pictures as well."

Miss Kitty commented, "Oh yeah. Wasp Corsets."

Sara asked, "So what did you tell her?"

I explained, "That I need to talk to Andy."

Sara realized where we were, "Oh yeah, they did ride down with us."

I told her, "I call them after we are done with our meal." After we finished our meal Sara and Sophie went to the restroom. The rest of us headed to the lobby. I called Andy, "Hey, um...Linda called earlier.."

Andy panicked, "Oh shit! What broke!"

I laughed, "For once, nothing. No, she asking a favor. Guess she has a corset vendor coming out tomorrow with a new product line. She wants Sara and Lindsay to model and for me to take pictures."

Andy consulted with Lindsay then told me, "Works for us. Steve and Amanda asked me if could help them out tomorrow at their Tanqua Verde store."

I joked, "Wouldn't that void the settlement agreement y'all have with Pima County?"

Andy laughed, "As long as we are not *operating* a store we're fine. I can have

them drop off Lindsay on our way out tomorrow. We can stay here tonight, but don't know about tomorrow."

I was thinking about that as well, "Yeah, the same here. Sara and I can spend another night at my sister's. Suppose tomorrow we can stay at The Holstein Ranch. Let me call Linda and let her know." After I wrapped up with Andy I found Laura and asked, "Is it okay if Sara and I spend another night with you three? Tomorrow we'll likely stay at The Holstein Ranch." Laura assured me this would be fine. "Okay then, let me try to get a hold of Linda again." Linda answered and I explained, "Okay, we can do this. However, the four of us will need to stay at your Ranch tomorrow night. Andy will have his friends drop off Lindsay on their way out to his old Tanqua Verde store."

Linda informed me, "Okay, vendor is suppose to be coming around 10:00. You able to take photos?"

I told her, "Yes, for legal reasons, I always have my camera equipment with me."

Linda was confused by that statement, "Oh....okay...so I'll see you in the morning."

After I finished with Linda I asked Laura, "Well, we didn't expect to be out here all day today. Any ideas?"

Sophie replied, "How about we all go to that bowling, billiards and dining theatre?"

Miss Kitty added, "Haven't been there in a while."

Laura laughed, "Yeah not since, Sophie hustled both us at pool. Does that work for you two?"

Sara replied, "Yeah! Been a while since I've been bowling."

Now in all the years I knew Sara, I don't recall her bowling, "Since when do you bowl?"

Sara laughed, "Quite a while. Nothing formal, just us a group of us models would go after our gig was done. Did it a lot more when I was still in college."

I told Laura, "Yeah, that sounds good. Let me call Wynn real quick and let her know we won't be back until Tuesday." I tried Wynn's cell but got no answer, figured she might be occupied so I tried the house phone.

Martina answered, "Oh hey Ron, what's going on?"

I explained, "Was calling to let Wynn know we won't be back until Tuesday."

Martina explained, "She is in 'cleaning mode' at the moment. Why Tuesday?"

I explained, "Well, Linda has a modeling project for Sara and Lindsay tomorrow. Andy is going to help out and his friend's store tomorrow too. So, since we won't be done until the afternoon, decided it would be best for us to come back on Tuesday."

Martina told me, "Okay, I'll let her know when she is done. I may or may not still be here when you get back on Tuesday. Marc is supposed to be coming back in sometime Tuesday. He mentioned something about wanting to talk to you about me staying here longer. Guess they are going forward with opening the resort in Idaho and they want him to oversee the creation of their concierge's program. Oh and because of this we won't be going to Vail this year during Christmas. We'd like to join you for Christmas dinner if that is alright."

I warned her, "That is fine. Just beware there is going to be a lot of us this year. The Zinfandel's are staying in town this year..."

Martina commented, "That's odd...really, really odd."

I was a little surprised by Martina's statement, "How so?"

Martina explained, "Bunny always makes it a point to spend the Holidays with her family in Wickenburg each year."

I explained, "Gary said that her parents would be coming out instead."

Martina added, "Weird something's up if they are not traveling to Wickenburg. Anyway need to go."

I rejoined everyone in the kitchen, "Well, Wynn is in 'cleaning mode' and so I ended talking to Martina."

Miss Kitty asked, "Cleaning Mode?"

I laughed as I explained, "Yeah, on Sundays she cleans the main level of the house and usually involves 'motivating' herself. By motivating I mean, being gagged while locked in a fiddle and wearing dildo pants...then there was that one Sunday she was trying out the portable fucking machine Gary loaned her..."

Sara laughed, "Where was I, that I missed that!?"

I told her, "Likely up in the McGrawl's office with Linda's girls and Lindsay. Also, Martina and Marc will be joining us for Christmas Dinner."

Sara asked, "They are aware we are having a lot of people over?"

I explained, "Yeah...and when I mentioned about Gary, Bunny and Bambi staying in town she was rather...how do I put this...'suspicious'?"

Laura asked, "Suspicious? Why?"

I told her, "Not sure, just is really weird for them not to go to Wickenburg for Christmas. Anyway Marc is supposed to be back sometime Tuesday, so Martina may or may not still be at the house when we return. She mentioned Marc is going back and forth to Idaho quite a bit next year as they get the new resort online. Her and Linda are becoming long term house guests. Surprise she doesn't stay with Maya and Peaches."

Laura wondered, "What does he do?"

I explained, "He is Senior Resort Concierge Director and Martina is Assistant Concierge Manager."

We headed over to the theatre and spent most of the remaining day there. I was shocked to find out later Sara out hustled Sophie at billiards. We caught the first evening movie and had dinner during the movie. It was after 9 in the evening when we arrive back at Laura's house. Sophie after visiting the loo headed to the kitchen to make everyone night caps and ice cream. Laura told us, "I am going to start up the propane fire pit so we can sit out under the stars"

We headed outside to the grassy knoll and looked up at the night sky, "Wow, people would pay good money for this view!"

Laura laughed, "True, sure didn't get this in Vegas."

I added, "Same with the Ashler Hills Estate house, they had street lights in that development. At least in Desert Oasis they preserved the night sky." I was impressed by the amount of heat the fire pit was putting out, "Wow, this fire pit really works well."

Miss Kitty explained, "Yeah, we almost just bought one of those stand style propane heaters. The sales person brought up a good point that a fire pit is much less likely to be damaged in a Monsoon Storm."

Sara understood, "Know what you mean. There were a couple of those heaters at The Baja Cantina place Lindsay and I went to couple months back that look like they went through a storm or two."

Sophie arrived with our drinks and ice cream.

—

Earlier in the afternoon at The Merlot Mansion, Wynn had wrapped up her usual Sunday cleaning and had taken herself out of 'Cleaning Mode'. She put on her regular uniform inducing her chastity corset armor and bodysuit Kayré and Kacie were up in The McGrawl's office along with Martina, Maya and Peaches. Wynn headed over to find out what everyone's plans were for the rest of the day. Wynn knocked on the door, "Hey, I'm done cleaning, what y'all's plans before Ron comes back this afternoon with Sara and The McGrawl's?"

Martina informed her, "They won't be back until Tuesday. Ron called while you were in 'Cleaning Mode'. Something about Sara and Lindsay are doing a photo shoot with Linda. Ron also said something about Andy was going to be at their friend's store."

Wynn commented, "Well, that changes thing somewhat. Anyway what are your plans for the rest of the day?"

Peaches explained, "I close tonight. Working 6 to 11 tonight."

Maya told her, "You can just take our Jeep to work then come back here when you are done. We can stay the night here, not like we have far to go. I suppose we could have Drew bring us some food."

Martina was getting giddy as an idea popped into her head, "Oh...oh...can we 'relax' tonight?"

Wynn laughed, "That we can do. Let's see since Peaches won't be around we would have an odd number. However, since y'all would need someone to release you in the morning..."

Kacie was confused, "What do you mean by 'relax'."

Wynn was surprised and Kayré confirmed, "Yeah, she has never 'relaxed' before. I know it is odd."

Wynn explained, "Well, it was something Sara and Lindsay came up with a while back. You will be secured to a bed with a vibrator strapped to your pussy edging or stimulating you for around 4 or so hours."

Martina added, "Don't forget the dress code and accessories!"

Wynn laughed, "Yes, you will be wearing tights/pantyhose/bodystocking underneath some type of unitard, leotard or even catsuit. As far as accessories, if you so choose you can add a blindfold and/or gag."

Martina volunteered, "I can pair up with her if Maya doesn't mind being with Kayré. We're both about the same size so it will make setting up the bed easier."

Kacie added, "Don't think the two of us have ever been together, this could be interesting. Only thing is I don't have any leotards."

Martina told her, "Not a problem. Ron has a bunch from vendor samples, mostly from Gary I think. Though I am not sure where they are in this house."

Wynn told her, "The clothing is in the back half of the toy closet downstairs. You two will be down there anyway. Kayré and Maya will be in The Presentation Room. I am going to call Drew, so the four of you should head down there and choose what you are going to wear and your accessories. Since we have sometime to kill why don't we catch a movie over at Scottsdale 101? We should be back in time for Peaches to leave for work." Wynn called Drew and placed an order for delivery around six that evening. Wynn figured by eight she would have everyone secured and setup, giving her some quite time before Peaches returned.

After the movie was over everyone arrived back around 5:30. Peaches went up to The Presentation Room to change into her work uniform. She came downstairs wearing a long sleeve Vinnie's Polo, grey skirt and black stockings with high heels. She went into Wynn's retreat and retrieved Cream taking her out back, "Hurry up I need to go." May be it was Peaches' tone, but somehow Cream understood what she needed to do and quickly took care of her business before coming back to Peaches. Peaches picked up Cream and praised her, "That's a good girl!"

As she walked back in with Cream, Wynn told her, "Once I have everyone setup tonight, I'll take her out again for final time and then let her roam free in my suite until you get back."

Peaches placed Cream back in her kennel and then headed to work. Not very long thereafter Drew arrived. He was expecting Sara or Lindsay to answer the door, but was surprised to see Wynn, "Oh it's you....hmm...all these years I've been delivering here I still don't know your name."

Wynn introduced herself, "Wynn-Song Lee, but I usually go by Wynn. I am the Merlot's housekeeper/chef and Ron's Project Manager."

Drew replied, "Well, as always Wynn...it is a pleasure delivering here."

Wynn announced over the intercom, "Pizzas here!" Soon after everyone had converged upon the dining room. During dinner Wynn told them, "I still going need about 30-minutes to get the beds setup in the room. Make sure you use the bathroom before you start as you will be secured until morning."

After dinner was done, not wanting a repeat of last month, Maya took the pizza boxes and soda bottles out to the trash and recycle. Wynn headed over to The Presentation Room and setup a two person asylum restraint system on the bed. She placed the wands and harnesses on the glider and went about connecting the timer. Next was the Quail Suite with the Alaskan King bed which was too big for the Asylum Restraint System. Wynn thought about Martina's comment about her and Kacie being the same size, that would make things easier to setup. She found a couple sets of hand cuffs and leg irons with long chains. Those would be connected to the corners of the bed. She found a normal set of leg irons and handcuffs they could use to connect to each other. Wynn headed back to the Great Room and found everyone was watching Sunday Night Football. Wynn told them, "The beds are ready whenever you are. The wands are already in the harnesses and plugged into the timer. So you will need to put the harness on while your on the bed. Before you do, someone will need to press the green button on the timer box. There is a 15-minute run down before the wands will go live and both may or may not go live at the same time or for the same duration. The downstairs suite bed is setup with handcuffs and leg irons so Martina and Kacie can easily secure themselves to the bed. Maya and Kayré though, your room has a two person Asylum System so I will need to get you two secured."

Maya laughed, "Oh, I know that system you are talking about. Sara and I have used it many times, as she has with Lindsay. If I recall, the product picture on the ACME site is Sara and Lindsay." She turned to Kayré, "I am going to head upstairs, use the bathroom then change." Kayré had just used the powder room so she was good and advised Maya she would change in the room.

Martina and Kacie headed downstairs. Martina had not seen the Quail suite before. She walked in from the Great Hall and was impressed, "Wow, this is really nice. Looks like an upscale hotel room..." She rounded the corner and saw the bed, "Holly fuck! That is a giant bed."

Kacie laughed, "Yeah. It used to be Maya and Peaches. They had it at Ron's other house."

Martina replied, "Okay, was going to say there is no way that would have fit in their condo since Marc and I have nearly the same floor plan. So do you want to change first or should I?"

Kacie told her, "Well, may be you should first, that way when I am done you can instruct me on how to set ourselves up." Martina headed in the bathroom and returned a short time later in her pink Hello Kitty Leotard and pink fishnet tights. Upon returning to the room Kacie saw Martina and laughed, "...sorry...how did you get an adult sized Hello Kitty Leotard?"

Martina laughed, "Okay, kinda my reaction the first time I saw it. Actually, it is

Ron's, thinking he got as a vendor sample from Gary. Go ahead and change now, I'll get things laid out here while I am waiting." Kacie headed into the bathroom and came out in Camo pattern leotard and tights. Martina giggled, "Oh...those. Bunny was telling me about that product line which Gary declined to carry."

Kacie replied, "Yeah, does seem a bit odd. I just grabbed what was in my size. Okay, so now what?"

Martina had already started the timer was on the bed she instructed Kacie, "First get on the bed. Second, put on a wand harness from whichever side you want to be on." Kacie took the left side while Martina took the right. Both girls had their harnesses on. Martina continued, "Okay so connect the ankle cuff attached to the bed to your left ankle. I will do the same with the one on my right. Then connect one end of the ankle shackles laying on the foot of the bed to your right ankle and the other to my left." Kacie did as she was instructed and Martina had attached her right ankle to the cuff connected to the bed. "Okay, then now would be the time to put on your gag and/or blindfold."

Kacie replied, "Don't want to do a gag now, may be next time."

Martina understood and opted not to wear hers, "Yeah I get it. I won't wear mine either, that way we can talk to each other. I do recommend the blindfold though as will really kick the experience up a notch. Go ahead and cuff your left wrist then with your right hand pull down your blindfold and lay down. Since I've done this before, I can handcuff the two of us together." Martina watched Kacie put on the blindfold then cuff her wrist then laid down. She then placed the blindfold cuffed her right hand. She reached over and turned off the fan light then pulled the blindfold over her eyes as well as attached the handcuffs to her left wrist. After laying down she felt around and found Kacie's wrist and closed the cuff around her wrist."

Kacie giggled, "Oh that is cold!" She tried to move around, but found she was tightly secured to the bed as well as Martina, "Can't move much."

Martina laughed, "That is the point. You doing okay?"

Kacie took a deep breath, "Yeah...this is new for me, but interesting. Now what?"

Martina told her, "Now we wait for the fun to begin. Shouldn't be much longer." Both wands kicked on at the medium setting as Martina had setup. "Hang on and enjoy the ride!"

As the wand worked its magic on Kacie's pussy she commented to Martina, "This doesn't seem so bad."

Martina laughed, "Famous last words...your opinion may change in a couple

hours!"

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Kayré went up to The Presentation Room and changed out of her dress. She left her black tights on and had found a grey long sleeve unitard that would fit her for the most part. While in the fetish closet she had also picked out a trainer gag with blindfold which she had set on the bed. Maya came in a short time later wearing red fishnets and a red long-sleeve leotard paired with a black waist nipper. She too had trainer ball gag blindfold combo, in red. Wynn came into the room and handed them the wands attached to harnesses. She instructed them, "Go ahead and put these on then choose the side of the bed you want to be on. I'll get the wands connected to the timer box." Maya and Kayré attached the wands and climbed up on the bed. Wynn told them, "Go ahead and put on your gags/blindfolds then lay down. I work on getting your lower body secured." While the girls were putting on their trainer gags Wynn attached the ankle restraints. Once Maya and Kayré laid down Wynn secured their wrists to their sides and to the bed. She turned off the lights and before leaving told them, "The wands should kick on in about 10-minutes have fun!"

Wynn headed down to her suite and removed Cream from her kennel then took her into the kitchen and set her down. Wynn opened the backdoor expecting Cream to go outside. The cold air hit both of them and Cream let out a whine and gave Wynn a 'I am not going out there!' look. Wynn laughed, "Yeah, I don't blame you. You went earlier so you should be good. Okay then, lets go back to my room." Wynn walked back to her room and Cream followed. Wynn had setup an over-sized pillow in her retreat, though she was unsure if Cream would want to sleep on the pillow or on the bed with her. Cream gave the pillow a quick sniff then followed Wynn to her bed. Wynn's bed was rather high off the floor and Cream was trying to jump up, but couldn't quite get to the top. Wynn picked her up, "Here let me help you. Now, you stay here I need to change." Wynn went into her bathroom and removed her bodysuit leaving the pantyhose under her chastity armor. She returned to find Cream curled up at the foot of the bed. Wynn glanced at the clock and told her, "Your mom will be back a little later. Now, to keep myself out of trouble while I enjoy these magazines!" She pulled out a key timer box from her nightstand and placed the key to her armor inside the box and set the timer for 8-hours. She started reading a Lesbian magazine that Maya had given her a gift subscription to several years ago. A couple hours later she glanced over and saw Cream was sound asleep. Wynn had dozed off and was woken by Cream barking as Peaches walked into the room.

Peaches was whispering, "Quiet you will wake her." Cream however, just kept barking.

Wynn looked over at the clock and saw it was after midnight, "That's okay. You're home late."

Peaches laughed, "Yeah we got a big order in right before closing so, I needed to wait for Drew to come back and cash out." Pointing to Cream, "Has she been out recently?"

Wynn told her, "I tired to take her out a few hours ago, but she decided it was too cold. Last she had gone right before you left for work."

Peaches replied, "Well, she let us know if she needs to go. Let me change out of super hero armor then I go bed with you." She went into Wynn's bathroom and removed her armor returning wearing nothing but her stockings. She got into the bed, she nudged Cream closer to Wynn, "You're on my side of bed!" Peaches thought she could have some fun with Wynn, but then noticed she was still in her armor. "You remove armor we can have some fun."

Wynn laughed and pointed to the key safe, "Can't do that until morning. Wanted to keep myself out of trouble while I was reading those magazines your partner got for me."

Peaches whine, "No fair!"

Wynn told her, "Just because I am still in my armor, does not mean I can't do anything with you. Although, I am a bit tired..." She rolled over and gave Peaches a deep kiss and rubbed her clit. The Hungarian girl's body shuddered as she orgasmed. She let out her Banshee scream and fell asleep. Cream looked up and gave a confused whine then went back to sleep. Wynn laughed and turned off the light.

## **Chapter 7: It's Cold Out and The Wasp 'Punishment'**

Early in the morning both Wynn and Peaches were awakened by Cream whining and dancing on top of the bed. Peaches told Wynn, "I'd take her out, but need to dress."

Wynn told Peaches, "Let me grab a robe and my heels, I'll let her out. Hopefully she will do what she needs to do and come right back in." Wynn turned on the light and put on her heels while heading to her retreat she called out to Cream, "Come on, let's get this done so all of us can go back to sleep." She headed into her retreat and put on a robe then walked to the kitchen with Cream following behind her. Wynn opened the door from the kitchen and was blasted by cold air. Cream hesitated at first, she really didn't want to go out in the cold, but her bladder decided for her. She quickly found a grassy spot in the yard and emptied her bladder then very quickly ran back into the house. Wynn told her, "Thank you. Let's head back get some sleep." They returned to Wynn's retreat to find Peaches was already asleep. Wynn picked up Cream and set her between Peaches and herself. Cream quickly found her 'spot' from earlier in the evening, curled up and

went to sleep. Wynn feel asleep and as usual her internal alarm clock kicked in.

The motion of her getting out of bed woke Peaches who complained, "Not fair! Too early."

Wynn laughed and told her, "You can sleep for another hour, need to release your partner, Kayré and Kacie along with Martina. Then I will start breakfast." After using the bathroom, Wynn put on her uniform and headed out towards the Great Room. She stopped short and turned on both the main level and upstairs heaters. She made her way to the kitchen, turning on the lights in the dining room and great room. She went downstairs to the playroom then out to The Great Hall. She went into the Quail suite and turned on the light in the hall by the closet and bathroom as well as turning on the heater for the suite. She announced her presence, "Morning you two! I'll have you out shorty."

Since they were both blindfolded they had no idea what time it was. Martina asked, "What time is it?"

Wynn looked over at the clock on the bedside table, "Little after 6:00."

Martina yawned, "Damn early. Suppose since I am up anyway, can help with breakfast."

Wynn had not even given thought about breakfast as Maya and Peaches' extended stay threw things off, "I have no idea what we are doing for breakfast. I still need to go upstairs and release Maya and Kayré."

Martina told her, "While you are doing that I'll take a look in the kitchen and see if we can find enough to feed everyone."

Wynn laughed, "I know there is enough food for everyone, just don't know what. So, how did you enjoy that Kacie?"

Kacie replied, "That was intense! Gotta do it again sometime. I want to take a shower before breakfast."

Martina told her, "You can go ahead, I'll use the shower in Ron and Sara's bathroom then see about breakfast."

Wynn released Martina's wrist and placed the key in Martina's hand, "You can get the rest from here. Just throw everything on the love seat when you are done. If you could though, drop off your clothes and used towels in the laundry room on your way to breakfast."

Martina removed her blindfold and by the time her eyes had adjusted Wynn was gone, "Dang she's like a ninja! Okay, let me detach the wrist cuffs between us."

Once I get the ankle shackles undone, I'll come over and get you released." Martina removed the handcuffs connecting her Kacie together then sat up and removed the ankle cuffs as well. Once Martina was freed she got off the bed and removed the wand harness, tossing it along with the cuffs and blindfold on the love seat. Martina found her dress and after putting it on she walked over and removed the wand harness from Kacie and then detached the remaining cuffs from Kacie putting those and the remaining toys on the love seat. Kacie headed into the shower and Martina took her change of clothes and made her way upstairs to the bathroom in the main suite. After a quick shower Martina headed into the kitchen.

Wynn headed up to the second level and noticed it was warmer up there. She knocked on the Presentation Room door. She opened the door and after turning on the light she walked over to Maya and start removing the restraints from her. She then went to the other side of the bed and removed Kayré's restraints. Maya asked, "Was Peaches with you?"

Wynn told her, "Yeah her and Cream are still asleep down in my room. Breakfast will be in half hour or so."

Kayré asked, "Need help with breakfast?"

Wynn told her, "No. Martina has already offered. So, when are done just put all the toys on top of the bed, I'll get those later. The clothing please deposit those in the laundry room." Wynn came into the kitchen and found Martina in a blue long sleeve dress and navy tights looking through the refrigerator. Wynn joked, "Hey! Who are you and what have you done with our Lady in Pink?!"

Martina giggled, "Sadly, I don't have any Pink 'winter dresses'. Anyway, looks like we have plenty of eggs, scallions, onions and peppers."

Wynn thought for a moment, "Check the meat drawer, there should be some Chorizo as well." Martina looked and confirmed. Wynn told her, "There should be some home fries in the freezer. Once we get those going start on the Chorizo. Most of the vegetables are already diced so won't take me long to get those and the eggs prepped." Over the next twenty minutes Martina and Wynn worked on getting the Spanish Omelet prepared.

Kayré came into the kitchen wearing a short skirt along with a long sleeve Budget Holstein t-shirt paired with flannel tights and beige ankle boots. She asked, "Anything I can do?"

Wynn told her, "You can set the table, we have six. Just put out water glasses and forks on the table. You can put out a couple stacks of plates on the peninsula. Then butter up some English muffins and put them in the toaster oven."

Kacie came up and was dressed very similar to Kayré. She commented, "Looks like you three have things under control."

Kayré replied, "Sure.." She noticed Kacie was 'dressed up', "Hey, why are you so dressed up today?"

Kacie replied, "I will be working in-store today since both Sara and Lindsay are still down with your mother in Tucson."

Kayré laughed, "Oh yeah. Forgot about that."

Wynn told everyone, "Home fries will be done in about 5-minutes. Who are we missing?"

Kayré replied, "Maya for sure, she should be down shortly."

Martina added, "Peaches too..."

Peaches came into the kitchen from Wynn's suite, "I'm here."

Maya came down the stairs wearing a red dresses with flannel tights and heels, "I am here too. Is breakfast ready?"

Wynn told her, "Yes, the home fries are nearly done. So grab a plate and serve yourself some omelet and grab an English muffin." The oven dinged, "Home fries are done!"

Everyone grabbed a plate and served themselves then sat down at the table. During breakfast Maya commented, "Well this was a fun weekend. Thanks for inviting us."

Peaches added, "Thank you Madam Lee for allowing Cream to stay with you."

Wynn laughed, "My pleasure, I miss having her around when you two were still at The Ashler Hills house."

Maya joked, "Well next time we take a vacation you can doggy sit her....provided we ever take a vacation that is."

Kayré and Kacie finished their breakfast then headed back downstairs to freshen up before heading to work. On their way out Kacie told Wynn, "Not really sure when we will be home tonight...given Sara and Lindsay are not here."

Wynn told them, "Well may be it would be best if you two grabbed some dinner on the way home. Martina and I can go out somewhere tonight."

Kacie replied, "Okay, that works." The two of them left for The Budget Holstein.

A short time later Maya and Peaches came down the stairs with their bags. Peaches told Wynn, "Once I put bags in Jeep, will come back for Cream." After placing her bags in The Jeep she headed into Wynn's retreat and brought out Cream in her kennel. Maya and Peaches left making the extraordinarily short trip down to their condo.

Martina was helping Wynn get the kitchen cleaned up. She told Wynn, "As much as I hate to leave you, do need to get to work. Especially since Marc is not here. I'll see you later this evening."

Wynn finished getting the kitchen cleaned and then headed into the laundry room to get the first load going. She went ahead and changed the sheets in both The Presentation Room and The Queen Suite, while also restocking the linens in the Queen Suite, Main Suite and Hall Baths. Martina would be in The Presentation room that evening.

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Down in Marana, Sara and I were awoken by Sophie knocking on our door, "Breakfast in 15-minutes!" I glanced at the bedside clock and it was around 7:30.

Sara and I got out of bed and I reminded her, "Don't forget we are not staying here tonight."

Sara yawned, "Yeah...any idea what I should wear?"

I told her, "Well, since it sound like you are going to be modeling corsets you probably don't want to be wearing your armor."

Sara concurred, "Hmm...yeah....good thing I brought some 'normal' underwear!" She found a little *long sleeve* black dress she paired with super opaque blackout tights.

We came down the stairs and Miss Kitty saw Sara, "Wow, that's some dress!"

Sara twirled, "Thanks. So what's for breakfast?"

Sophie came out the kitchen carrying a platter and announced, "Waffles!"

After breakfast Sara helped Sophie clean up the kitchen. Laura and I chatted for a bit. I told her, "Well, I don't think we'll see you before Christmas. Might be doing a conference call this Sunday afternoon or next when Linda has the design meeting with Mel and The McGrawl's for their shared building."

Laura replied, "Yeah, I should be free either day *try* to give me some advance notice if you can."

I joked, "With Linda there is no such thing, just look at today!"

Laura laughed, "Yeah, she lives in her own world."

I added, "Which of course revolves around her. Thanks for the great weekend, hopefully we will be able to get Sara away from Sophie."

Miss Kitty added, "Think it is more the other way around, they will see each other during Christmas. I will see you two a little later when I come in this afternoon."

Sophie came out with Sara and loaded our bags into The Cruiser. They hugged and kissed each other. Sara got into the car and commented, "Well that was nice to spend some time with her. So whats next?"

I told her, "Have no clue, other than you and Lindsay are going to modeling the Wasp corsets for Linda. I don't expect it to be an all-day thing, but then again one never knows with Linda."

We arrived at the Budget Holstein a bit after nine. We walked and Aubrey greeted us, "Morning Mister and Misses Merlot. Miss Holstein should be here shortly. Lindsay is in the break room, you can go ahead and join her while you are waiting."

Sara and I headed into the break room. Lindsay saw Sara and nearly knocked her down. Sara laughed, "Geez, it has been what two days, you acting like you have seen me in months!"

A few moments later Linda walked in, "Ah good, y'all here. Ron come with me and I'll show you where we are going to setup. Vendor will be here shortly." Linda led me to the other half of the building, the new section she had acquired a few years back. I had forgotten there was an area that was never finished. The original plan was for a conference room, but since Linda usually just a pow-wow style meeting on the sales floor it was never really used.

I commented, "Oh I remember this room, that we never really did anything in other than install a TV."

Linda laughed, "Yeah, just never really needed a conference room, but it works for when I have vendors out."

I told her, "Okay then, let me grab my camera equipment." I headed out to the Cruiser and retrieved my camera equipment. As I came back towards the front entrance a lady pulling a large rolling trunk was coming into the building. As I

opened the door, "Here let me get the door for you."

Before she had a chance to thank me Linda already greeted her, "Robbin! Glad you could finally make it. I see you met Ron, my IT guy. His wife Sara and her friend Lindsay will be modeling for us. Come with me."

Robbin turned to me, "Robbin Wasp, pleasure to meet you." We walked towards the conference room. Robbin told us, "Still need a few minutes to setup."

I added, "I do too as well."

Linda replied, "That is fine, I'll have Aubrey bring Sara and Lindsay over."

Once Robbin and I were setup she explained, "So we do custom corsets from casual to formal to fetish and even punishment."

Lindsay asked, "What is 'punishment'?"

Robbin let out a laugh, "You'll find out later."

Over the course of the next couple hours Lindsay and Sara had modeled the more casual corsets were moving into the more formal line when Linda announced, "Why don't we take a break for an hour or so and go next door to my restaurant." This was the first time I had ever heard Linda call Corona de las Estrellas, 'her restaurant' though her and Olivia were co-owners. She directed everyone to follow her, "This way, it is a quick walk."

We walked into Corona de las Estrellas and Olivia led us to a private booth in the rear, "Here you go Miss Holstein."

Linda thanked her, "Thanks Olivia." Turning her attention to Robbin, "Order whatever you would like to drink." She then turned her attention to Sara and I, "By the way Ron, Lindsay and Sara, I appreciate you being able to do this on such short notice."

I told her, "Well, at least we were already out here for you computer. Actually it was nice, got to spend some time with my mother. Even got to spend some time with Laura that didn't involve us being on a job."

Linda remembered, "Oh yeah, my architect dropped off the renderings for the interior of The McGraw's store they will share with Mel. I will be wrapping up here Thursday, heading to Gold Canyon on Friday then will be back in Scottsdale that evening. I'll need to confirm with Mel, but I thinking Sunday afternoon we meet at your office to go over the details."

I commented, "Yes, I did mention that to Laura. I can conference her in like we

did with the meeting for Vinnie's last month. That should work fine, as I am close to wrapping up on my web jobs."

Lindsay told Linda, "Since we live there anyway, should work for Andy and I as well."

Linda told us, "Good, as I need to get the interior layout finalized fairly quickly as the building should be done sometime in late February. They should be breaking ground next week I believe. The Vinnie's building is still a couple weeks out as is my store. They already broke ground last week for the Sprouts and Starbucks."

Sara commented, "You may need do another moratorium on your jobs for the coming spring."

I was thinking about that as well, "Hmm, so I am resuming jobs on January 8<sup>th</sup>, so when we open up bidding again on January 1<sup>st</sup> we may need to state we will only accept jobs with a completion no later than early March. Really have no idea how long these installs are going to take. At least they are just on the other side of the highway from us. Oh Linda, you still plan on bringing Dundee for Christmas dinner?"

Linda replied nervously, "Yes...why?"

I told her, "Just needed to know so I can get head count for Wynn so she knows how much food to make. The Zinfandel's are staying in town as are Marc and Martina since Marc needs to go back to Idaho after the 1<sup>st</sup> to get things setup at the new resort."

Linda commented confused, "Wait, the Zinfandel's are staying in town this year, why?"

I was really beginning to wonder myself what was up as everyone was acting like this was major news, "No idea. Didn't know it was going to be such a major thing. I knew Martina was surprised when I told her. Oh, on the subject of Dundee can you have him call me? I want to commission him to design/build/find me a new desk. Since your girls along with Sara and Lindsay have kicked Andy out of the office he shared with Lindsay..."

Lindsay objected, "We didn't kick him out, he just chooses not to use it while we all are in there."

Robbin laughed, "Wise man!"

I continued, "So, I'll give Andy my old desk so he can have a spot down in my office."

Olivia brought over our drinks along with chips and salsa, "Sampler platters should be out in about 10-minutes. Let me know if you need anything."

Robbin took this point in time to explain, "Since Miss Holstein, really didn't give me much of a chance to explain, we are looking at having The Budget Holstein to be an exclusive vendor for our corset line."

Linda added, "We may not be able to do the punishment corsets, at least not at the Oro Valley location. Pesky Pima County and their regulations on adult oriented products in a retail setting."

Robbin commented, "Hadn't realized that was going to be an issue. I'd rather we sell the same products at all your locations."

Linda advised her, "However, Madam Kat..." Sara, Lindsay and I all corrected her, "Miss Kitty..." Linda laughed, "Okay...Miss Kitty...whatever her name is working on getting my permit for that store. We should have it by the first of the year."

After lunch we headed back to The Budget Holstein to pickup where we left off. Sara and Lindsay moved on to modeling the formal corsets. A couple hours later my phone started ringing and the caller ID showed Andy's cell. I advised, "Let's take a break for a few minutes need to answer this." I stepped outside and answered, "Hey Andy, what's going on?"

Andy joked, "I hadn't realized how much I missed the Tanqua Verde area. Anyway, what time are y'all going to be done?"

I told him, "No clue. Why?"

Andy told me, "Just trying to figure out if they should drop me off at The Holstein Ranch or back at The Budget Holstein."

I asked, "When were you planning on coming back?"

Andy replied, "Couple hours."

I glanced at the rack of corsets Robbin had left for us to model, "Think we will still be here by that time. Just have them bring you over here, worse case we have to wait a bit longer."

Andy confirmed, "Okay, Budget Holstein it is then. See you then."

I returned and informed everyone, "Andy should be coming in a couple hours."

Linda told me, "While you were out Miss Kitty..." she paused as she was not sure she had the name correct, but since no one had corrected her she continued,

"...came in and when I asked about the permit she said she was notified of approval effective on January 1<sup>st</sup> for 5-years. Anyway, we should be able to wrap-up by the time Andy gets here."

The girls moved on to the Fetish corset, which more role-playing and were made of Latex or Pleather. There were not that many to model. Finally Robbin announced, "Now we move on to our exclusive line, The Wasp Punishment." She pulled out a very heavy looking, rigid and long corset. She motioned for Lindsay to step forward, "Since you seem to be the more submissive of the two...let me help you into this as you are going to have a hard time getting into it yourself...and once we add all the accessories, you won't be getting out of this on your own!"

I looked at the corset and commented, "Looks like a mini-hobble dress, but with wings?"

Robbin laughed, "Yeah, I suppose it does. We do have a model which goes below the knees as well. In this base configuration, this is very restrictive as the boning goes all the way from the thighs to the shoulders. The front is still your standard hook and eye closure, but also has a zipper from the bottom to the top. The wearer puts it on much like a button up shirt." Lindsay put her arms through the corset as Robbin pulled it up over her shoulders. She fastened to front busk and pulled the zipper up. The zipper pull looped onto a semi-hollow post at top. Robbin began tightening the laces in the rear. Once she had the laces tightened Robbin place the left over lacing inside the corset. She folded over the 'wings' and explained, "With these wings or flaps folded over the lacing is completely cover. Provides a nice clean look at the rear and also prevents unauthorized removal as the straps attach to a locking post, preventing the wings from being opened." She directed Lindsay to turn towards her, "Now, you will notice there are locking posts about center on both the front and rear. These are for attachment of a wrist restrain system." She pulled out a long strip of leather with holes the entire length with two smaller leather strips also with holes attached, "This 'belt' will fit nearly any size." She wrapped the leather strip along Lindsay's waist adjusting so that the wrist loops were in the same position on both sides. She placed a small padlock through the post on the front and rear of the corset securing the 'belt' to the corset. She also placed another padlock into the post which the zipper pull was attached into. She handed two padlocks to Sara, "Sara, since you seem to be the dominate one, why don't you have the honors of securing her wrists? Since I wasn't sure the size of my models, I brought the large system with me. You may need to loop the straps around her wrist a couple times."

Sara smiled and let out a crackle, "Oh it would be my pleasure!" She took the locks from Robbin and started with Lindsay's left wrist. She wrapped the strap twice and then placed the lock through the post. She repeated the process with Lindsay's right wrist.

I has been snapping pictures during the various 'stages' and as I snapped the latest photos Robbin explained, "The subject is now tightly secured in the corset. They are forced to stand straight and are unable to bend at the waist...the longer model will not allow the wear to even bend their knees. The laces and front busk are covered in thick leather, preventing any unauthorized removal. Now, one final accessory..." She pulled out metal collar and attached it to Lindsay's neck. The collar secured with magnetic locking pin. She then attached a leash to the front of the collar handing it to Sara, "Here you can lead her around..."

I joked, "Gee, Sara you have your own pet now!"

Andy walked in and while Aubrey did not recognize him, Miss Kitty did. She told him, "I believe they are close to wrapping up. Follow me." She lead Andy to the back conference room. She saw Lindsay in the corset, "Wow, that is a mean looking corset!"

Andy observed Lindsay in the corset as well as her wrists bound to her sides against the corset, "Yes it is. She seems to be enjoying herself though."

Sara added, "I'd be disappointed if she wasn't!"

Andy laughed, "So true."

Linda introduced Andy to Robbin, "Robbin Wasp meet Andy McGrawl. Lindsay's husband and the other half of the dynamic AZOutback duo..."

I informed Linda, "Technically it is trio as you mustn't forget Laura."

Linda replied, "Okay then...one third of the terrific trio?"

Andy laughed, "Kind of like Dynamic Duo better..."

Robbin informed us, "Since this one fits Lindsay perfectly, I'll give it to her with all the accessories along with her commission. Sara, did you have a corset you liked?"

Sara replied, "Yes there was an ivory one, think in the formal collection."

While Robbin looked through the collection Sara was interested in having Andy commented, "Nice! Next time she misbehaves..."

Lindsay replied, "As-if!"

Robbin found the corset Sara was talking about, "Was this the corset you liked?"

Sara was working on getting Lindsay out the Wasp Punishment Corset so they

could get ready to leave. She looked up and replied, "Yes, that is the one." She removed Lindsay's wrists from the bounds and removed the belt from the corset.

Robbin handed her a bag, "You can put the belt and all the locks in here. The collar has velvet lined fitted jewel box it goes in." Sara deposited the items into the bag while Robbin removed the collar.

Finally Lindsay was out of the corset and stretched, "Oh boy, that was tight!"

Linda called for Aubrey handing her the corsets, "Here can you please box these corsets up for Sara and Lindsay?"

Robbin came over and handed Sara, Lindsay and I each an envelope, "Here is your commissions. Thank you for your time. Ron, when would you be able to get those photos to me?"

I explained, "We are in town for tonight then head home tomorrow, though not sure when. I *should* be able to sit down on Wednesday and go through all the photos. I'll set you up a folder on either The AZOutback or Budget Holstein Google Drive and send you an invite."

Robbin handed me her card, "That works. My email is on my card."

Aubrey returned with the boxed corsets, "Here you are Andy and Ron."

I had finished packing up my equipment and Linda asked, "Just to confirm, you four are staying at my Ranch House tonight?"

I told her, "Yes, that is the plan..."

Linda explained, "Good. I'll let Lizzie know so she can get your rooms prepped. She is also grilling some burgers for us all. Would you like to join us Robbin? My ranch is not far from your hotel."

Robbin accepted Linda's invitation. As we all headed out the door. Linda called to Miss Kitty, "Madam Kat, I am leaving for they day. We will resume the managers' training tomorrow."

Miss Kitty told her, "Sounds good. Have a good night Linda."

I loaded up all the equipment along with the corset boxes into The Cruiser. Another 20-minutes later we all arrived at The Holstein Ranch. Andy joked, "Weren't we just here a couple weeks ago!?"

I replied, "Yep and knowing Linda we could be back here in another couple weeks, though I hope not as we have Gary and Cristina's project right after Christmas."

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Back in Scottsdale, Kacie and Kayré wrapped up for the evening. Kayré asked as they were closing shop, "Any idea where you want to have dinner?"

Kacie joked, "Well, Rubio's is just across the way."

Kayré commented, "Oh real romantic...kidding...works for me!" They headed over to Rubio's for a party light lit dinner out on the patio.

Martina came back in late afternoon and ran into Wynn in the laundry room as she was coming into the house, "Oh hello there, I'm back."

Wynn laughed, "So you are. Almost done here, then we can go out."

Martina replied, "Sure, give me chance to freshen up. Where we going?"

Wynn thought for a moment, "How about Sacred Ground?"

Martina commented, "Haven't been there in a long while. Sounds good."

## **Chapter 8: Linda's Other Problem Child and Time for a Change**

As we walked in Lizzie greeted us and took our bags. She asked, "Ron and Andy, would you prefer for your wives to be with you tonight or together in their own room?"

Andy commented, "Seeing as they've been away from each other most of the weekend..."

I added, "Plus, they both have been so busy with work lately they haven't spent time with each other. Let them have their own space for the night."

Linda commented, "We can put them in Olivia's building. Now that my daughters are not living here she stays in the main house."

After a late dinner we all retired to our rooms for the night. The next morning Olivia and Lizzie had breakfast ready for us. Linda came into the kitchen and saw us, "Good, you still here. I talked to Mel and she can meet Sunday afternoon around 3:00."

Andy and Lindsay confirmed, "Works for us, we are there anyway."

I told Linda, "Okay that is fine. I'll let Laura know as we will do a conference call like we did with Diane. I'll have Wynn make lasagna again."

Linda was heading out the door, "Sounds good then. Will see you on Friday sometime that evening..." She just about left and then paused and turned back and asked, "Oh just one more thing...could y'all stop at my Gold Canyon store on the way back? Sadie or Jojo said they were having some issues."

Before Andy or I had a chance to ask her for more details she was gone. Andy asked, "Any ideas what that was all about?"

I told him, "Nope. She never mentioned anything to me this weekend. At least the store is on the way home."

Sara commented, "Never seen that store."

Lindsay added, "Oh you can see my handy work in designing the interior layout."

After breakfast I called Wynn to inform her of Sunday's meeting as well as us having to stop at the Gold Canyon store to triage an unknown issue. She informed me Martina would be staying one more night since Marc's flight was not due in until later that evening. I also called Laura and informed her of Mel, The McGrawl's and Linda's meeting this coming Sunday afternoon. I had a chance to talk to Lizzie and asked, "So Linda mentioned something about you staying out here six-months then coming up to Scottsdale for six-months staying with Maya and Peaches?"

Lizzie explained, "Yeah so, while I am in Tucson I play with a mariachi band at various places. On the weekends we usually play at Corona de las Estrellas. They head down to Mexico for half the year so during that time I'll be up in Scottsdale playing along side Maya at the new Vinnie's. Much like we did at the wedding last month."

Lindsay joked, "Somehow I can't picture Maya doing Mariachi music at Vinnie's!"

Lizzie laughed, "Nope, just traditional piano and violin. Of course that will just be on Friday thru Sunday. I'll see if I can find other gigs for the other nights. I am hearing they may allow 'street musicians' in the restaurant row section of Thirsty Cactus, so might be able to do something solo or find others."

I wondered, "What about The Moon Goddess and Debbie?"

Lizzie informed me, "Debbie is retiring in March, so I decided I need to lay down some roots even if it is seasonal. Speaking of Debbie, I need to head out soon. Good to see y'all and I likely will be seeing you up in Scottsdale during Christmas time. I am going to come up and stay with Maya and Peaches for a couple weeks."

The four of us put our bags in the Cruiser and headed up towards Florence then Gold Canyon. A couple hours later we arrived at Budget Holstein at Superstition Mountain or Linda's other 'problem child'. We walked in and found Jojo at the front counter. She saw us and commented, "Ron and Andy what are you doing here?" Sara and Lindsay walked in, "...plus Lindsay and...?"

I introduced Sara, "Sara Rae-Merlot, my wife."

Jojo knew the name, "Oh, Sara. Okay, we've talked on the phone many times. Still, what brings y'all out here?"

I told her, "Linda informed me this morning that you or Sadie had told her you were having issues here and she asked for us to stop here on our way home from Oro Valley."

Jojo was confused, "Odd. Sadie has not said anything to me. Of course, she has been on vacation this past week. Perhaps Miss Holstein meant Claudia? She does tend to confuse the three of us." She walked towards the rear and called out, "Claudia could you come out here for a moment please?"

Claudia came out and asked before seeing us, "What do you need Jojo..." She saw the four of us, "Oh, Miss Holstein did not mention you were coming."

I explained, "Well, we didn't either. We were at the Oro Valley location over the weekend fixing an issue there. Then yesterday she had Lindsay and Sara modeling the new Wasp Corsets product line. She mentioned y'all were having issues here as she walked out the door this morning."

Claudia told us, "I don't think it is anything serious, but since you are here...follow me."

Before Andy and I went with her I asked Jojo pointing to Sara and Lindsay, "Find something to keep them occupied that doesn't involve them buying more clothes..."

Jojo laughed and put Sara and Lindsay to work so Andy and I could find out what was going on. We followed Claudia to the server room and she told us, "The beeping started Friday, but it didn't seem like it was anything major as everything is still working."

We walked in and could hear the rack mounted UPS unit beeping. Andy found the unit, "Odd, the battery is nearly discharged yet it is connected. Well, let me make a phone call to my stores and see if we can get one via Road Runner over here...unless you have a replacement APC-1500 cartridge with you Ron."

I told him, "No, can't say I do."

Andy laughed, "Yeah didn't think so. Okay, give me a few minutes. In the meantime let me silence this alarm." We walked back into the main store and saw Sara and Lindsay assisting customers. Andy returned and told us, "Max is going to have one sent over via Road Runner Express from the Fountain Hills store. Should be here in the next couple hours. While we are waiting on that how about we have lunch over at that Greasy Spoon?"

I told him, "Yeah we can do that. Just need to wait on Sara and Lindsay to wrap up with their customers."

Once Lindsay and Sara wrapped, Claudia informed us, "I will take care of lunch for the inconvenience of Linda having you come out here."

I reminded her, "Well, this store is on our way home...nonetheless we appreciate the gesture."

We spent more time at the diner than I had expected, which worked out as when we returned to the store Jojo handed Andy a box, "Your bowling balls came while y'all were all at lunch. Geez, this thing is heavy for a battery cartridge!"

Andy explained, "Well, technically it is four cartridges and they are seated in a metal tray, hence the weight. Nice thing is the cartridge is hot swappable so just need to unscrew the old tray, pull it out and insert the replacement. Shouldn't take more than a couple minutes, assuming Ron has his cordless drill with him."

I went out to The Cruiser and retrieved my DeWalt cordless drill and a Phillips bit. I came back in and handed him the drill, "Here you go, should be enough charge left on the battery."

We had the cartridge swapped out within a few minutes and the new cartridge tested good. Andy advised them, "Should be up to 100% charge in the next few hours. So, there is a three-year warranty on both the unit itself as well as the cartridge. Obviously, we are still within that time frame and our labor is covered by the maintenance agreement Linda has for this store. There is nothing to bill you for and we will deal with Schneider Electric in regards to the failed cartridge." He handed me back my drill.

I asked, "While we are out here, was there anything else going on?"

Claudia looked at Jodi and Sadie, neither of whom said anything, "Don't believe so. Thank you for taking care of this and again sorry for Linda having you come out this way."

I reminded them, "This was on our way home. though we had planned on being home on Sunday." We loaded The Cruiser and before we left I called the house to

inform Wynn or Martina that we were finally on our way home and expect us in a couple hours. Once we arrived Andy helped me unload the equipment and place most everything in my shop. I retrieved my camera bag, "Well, I know what I will be working on tomorrow. Need to upload and sort through a couple hundred photos and narrow those down for Robbin."

Andy laughed, "Have fun with that. Anyway, Lindsay and I are going to go out tonight...if that is okay with you."

I replied, "Doesn't matter to me...just let Wynn know so she has an accurate account of who will be here for dinner."

Lindsay had already gone into the house. Andy went in to freshen up and I passed both of them on my way to my office. Once in my office I noticed a pile of snail mail on my desk. Most of it was junk mails from local auto insurance companies and some credit card offers. There were however, a couple checks. It amazed me this day in age that some of my clients still sent me a paper check in the mail to pay for their annual maintenance agreements. I went ahead and deposited them using the AzMu mobile app and was quite surprised to see how high the balance on the checking account had risen. It was that wonderful time of year when both my semi-annual and annual agreement clients paid us. I also noticed I still hadn't gotten around to investing the proceeds from the sale of The Ashler Hills Estate house. However, I decided it would be best to wait until after the first year when I could have my CPA give me an estimate as to what I was going to owe for taxes. Wynn announced dinner and I headed into the dining room to find everyone except Andy and Lindsay.

Kacie commented, "I am so glad Sara and Lindsay are back. I don't know if I could handle another full day working the sales floor. Though I do have to admit it was a nice change, but two days were enough."

Sara assured her, "Well, we appreciate it. Had not planned on being gone so long."

Kayré laughed, "Leave it to mother to turn your weekend trip into a four-day affair."

After dinner I returned to my office and checked my job queue. Much to my surprise there were only a couple projects left and none appeared to be overly complicated nor did they need to be completed this week. I set my camera on my desk to remind me of the project I needed to work on tomorrow before shutting down for the night. I headed to our room and found Sara was already asleep.

Wednesday morning after breakfast I informed Wynn, "Going to be rather busy this morning. Need to go through the couple hundred photos I took on Monday of Lindsay and Sara for Robbin Wasp." By lunch time I had narrow down to a few

dozen and uploaded them to the AZOutback Google Drive. I found Robbin's card and sent her an email with an invitation link to the shared folder. The rest of the week was quiet. On Thursday I knocked out one project by the end of the day. Friday morning I was reviewing the project notes for the final project and was getting things setup with my domain and hosting providers. I took a break for lunch to allow for some time for the accounts to be fully active. I had just returned to my office and had an email from my hosting provider advising the account was now active. The client was moving their existing site from a different provider which was not providing them with the full functionality they needed for their site. They were also switching from a .net to a .com version of their business name. I was about to start transferring the files when there was a knock at my office door. I looked up and saw Linda coming in, "Hey. You're a lot earlier than I expected."

Linda explained, "Well, I didn't go to Gold Canyon store today. I'll stop there on my way back on Monday. No, I wanted to talk to Kayré and Kacie as to my decision to remain in Tucson. Plus I am suppose to be over at Thirsty Cactus in a little bit."

I was surprised, "Okay. Did you and Dundee...um..."

Linda laughed, "No, no. Actually he is going to live with me at The Ranch. He was a buddy he used to work with from back in Scottsdale who started his own company out here in Tucson. From what I understand, he has more work than he can handle. Dundee came out on Tuesday to meet with him and really liked how the Tucson area is not as sprawled out as Phoenix area is. So anyway, I had always said Scottsdale was going to be Kayré's store and that was ever apparent when she and Kacie decided to stay out this way. Since I'll be staying at The Ranch now, they will live in the residence above the new Budget Holstein. Speaking of which, Dundee will be joining us on Sunday as Mel contracted him for her store. I did mention to him you wanted him to commission you a new desk. They will move into the residence as soon as it is completed, which will be a month before the store is." She looked at her watch, "I need to get going. I already told Wynn I plan on being back before dinner."

As quickly as she came into to my office she left. I turned my attention back to my final project of the year. While I was waiting for the files to transfer, I went to work getting the databases setup. I had completed the setup of both databases when Andy and Lindsay came into my office. Andy asked, "You busy?"

I told him, "Not really. I can take a break for a bit. What's up?"

Andy replied, "We really enjoyed this past weekend. Been a long time since it has been Lindsay and I together. Also, gave us some time to think about what we want to do with our lives."

I joked, "What are you two going to move back to Tucson?"

Lindsay laughed, "God no. Besides we've kind of been banished from doing business out there."

I replied, "Yeah I know. That is the reason you've been living with us for the past ten or so years."

Andy laughed nervously, "Yeah, about that. So, we are going to...well actually...we already did...get a condo."

This was surprising news, "Okay...where?"

Lindsay told me, "Down in the Foothills. We are going to be in one of the new buildings across from Marc and Martina."

I breathed a sigh of relief, "That's good. Y'all still be close as I am not sure how Lindsay and Sara are going to handle being apart from each other after all these years."

Lindsay reminded me, "We'd still work together at The Budget Holstein, so not like we don't see each other."

Andy continued, "So, we will be closing and moving out about a week before Christmas. I know we have the ACME Project in Vegas after Christmas. Also, I'll be working different hours. We are changing the store hours after the first of the year. We still operate 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday thru Friday. However, Saturdays we will only be open from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and we will be closed on Sundays as well. Zina, won't be working the closing shift on Fridays nor on Saturdays. So, I will close on Friday night and then work the entire seven-hours on Saturday at Fountain Hills. So, I was thinking when Lindsay wraps up on Fridays, she can back with Sara and stay the night. Then on Saturday when I am done, we can all go out somewhere or have dinner here together then she would come back with me."

I joked, "I think Sara and I can work with that 'visitation agreement'. Speaking of Sara, have y'all talked to her yet?"

Lindsay replied, "No. I will after dinner."

Andy asked, "Since Kayré and Kacie are still going to be here you still plan on keeping Wynn?"

I thought back to the conversation on Saturday evening when Sara and I were at my Sister's, "Funny thing about that..." I explained the events from that evening, "...anyway she is my Project Manager and I know we will still be entertaining

here. Maya and Peaches, Marc and Martina. However, Linda has informed me she is going to stay in Oro Valley and Dundee is going to join her. So, Kayré and Kacie are going to move into the residence above the Budget Holstein as soon as it is completed, which will be *before* the store is. Oh and Dundee is going to be joining us on Sunday as Mel is contracting him for her store."

Lindsay asked, "You okay with us moving out?"

I laughed, "It doesn't bother me. I am glad you two are finally able to get to a point where you can return to some type of normality. Let me know if you need anything. I want to get this last project completed." After they left I paged Wynn to my office. It took her a while to come which was fine as I was working on getting the databases uploaded and imported.

Wynn came in and apologized, "Sorry for the delay needed to get to a stopping point on dinner."

It was good she mentioned 'dinner', "Oh yeah, that reminds me Dundee will be joining us on Sunday for Mel's consult and likely dinner. So, I don't know if you were aware Linda came by earlier."

Wynn replied, "Yeah, I saw her briefly She didn't say much other than she would be back for dinner."

I informed her, "She broke some news. So basically Dundee is going to live with Linda in Oro Valley as he was a buddy he is going to be partnering with out there. This means that Kayré and Kacie will occupy the residence above the Budget Holstein as soon as it is completed. Based on the previous timelines Linda has given me for the project, I am guessing mid-February. However, Andy and Lindsay plan on being in their new condo about a week before Christmas as after Christmas we have the big project in Henderson for ACME."

Wynn was shocked, "Wait, the McGrawl's are moving out! How long have they been here?"

I replied, "About as long as you have been working for us. So, yeah they decided they are at a point they can get back on their feet."

Wynn laughed, "How are Sara and Lindsay going to handle being apart?!"

I explained, "They are not going to be that far, they already bought a condo down in the Foothills over my Marc and Martina. Besides as Lindsay put it, they see each other at The Budget Holstein. Also, I guess Andy is going to be working the closing shift on Fridays and the Saturday shift at Fountain Hills. So on Fridays, Lindsay will come back with Sara and spend the night and most of Saturday with us. When Andy gets off we can go out somewhere or have dinner here together.

Lindsay was going to talk to Sara after dinner, so don't say anything."

## **Chapter 9: The Effects of Linda's Decision and Just When I Thought I Was Done**

Wynn agreed and thought for a moment, "So with Kayré and Kacie leaving, that opens up the Quail Suite. Then the McGrawl's been in the old King Suite and Maya's old room..."

I reminded her, "Which was my old office until Dundee built out the library. Yikes, I am going to have a lot of open space. Especially once Linda is finally done with Thirsty Cactus. Well, Martina is going to be here off and on until Marc is done in Idaho. Just so you know, even though there is going to be a lot less for you to do around the house, you are my Project Manager and I want you to stay here..." I was coming to the realization of how empty was going to be with most everyone gone. Much like when it was just Sara, Martina and I. "...funny I thought The Ashler Hills house was huge and empty after Maya and Peaches left with Cream, now here we go again."

Wynn commented, "Yeah. Shame you can't really find anything smaller around here. So like this area, guess a condo would be too small."

I concurred, "Yeah, slightly. Besides will still entertain with Marc and Martina and Maya and Peaches..." It was that moment I recalled the email I had gotten from Zillow about the property on Sage Brush, Lot 8, "...hmm I wonder...haven't seen any other status emails...let me look." I opened a new tab and went to Zillow; the property was still showing active, "...hmm...still active. Interesting, they just did a price drop by 50K?"

Wynn was wondering, "What are you looking at?"

I told her, "A house over on Sage Brush, it is Lot 8."

Wynn thought for a moment, "Sage Brush? That is the street 'behind' us?"

I laughed since it was about quarter-mile away, "Yeah, technically it is even if it is about quarter-mile from here. Across from the models. You might be able to slightly make it out from here, though difficult with all the natural vegetation around here, plus I believe it sits a lot higher than we are here. Wonder who the listing agent is? Oh wow, Desert Diamond, Christina Gutierrez-Mayer. Well this is her 'territory', say how long until dinner?"

Wynn replied, "Still waiting on Sara, Kayré and Kacie to get back. I'd say about twenty minutes or so."

I told her, "Okay. I'm going to give Christina a ring, this place may work out well

for our soon to be smaller family. As Wynn left my office I called Christina's cell and again I was surprised she answered, "Oh hey Christina, Ron Merlot here. So, I see you are the listing agent for the property here in Desert Oasis on Sage Brush, Lot 8."

Christina confirmed then joked, "That I am. Know someone is interested?"

I replied, "Yes. I am."

She laughed, "Okay, seems to me it would be a bit small for your needs..."

I told her, "Well, I have four people moving out in the next couple months. Two whom are in the next couple weeks. All said and done it would just be Sara and myself plus Wynn. We'll still have occasional guest such as my sister and mother with their partners when they come up from Tucson. So, I really think this will work well as this current house is just going to be way too big."

Christina asked, "So do you want to buy this one sight unseen as well?!"

I laughed, "Well, since I am not living with my lesbian sister and her cheerleader roommates in Vegas this time...at least I am in the same state, heck same city and development. When can you show it to me and has there been any other interest...though judging by the recent large price reduction I'd wouldn't think there was."

Christina confirmed, "Correct, the owner really wants to get it sold soon. She has moved to Colorado. I should disclose to you this property does not have a pool."

I replied, "Fine by me! I never planned on having a pool here, those things are bloody money pit. But Martina wanted one and she paid for it so..."

Christina continued, "Also, the upstairs 'Super Loft' is unfinished other than a full a bathroom. There is also a 'finished room' above the secondary garage that is otherwise unfinished."

I asked, "Define 'unfinished'"

Christina explained, "No floor, other than plywood sub-floor and no lights other than a can light at the top of the stairs. Now, the bathroom is fully finished. The FROG is a giant open and unfinished space as well. She had plans to finish the loft for her business but, never really got around to it...other than the bathroom. I think that is what scaring off the buyers. They are expecting a pool at that price range and location. So, if you are still interested I can do a showing tomorrow morning around nine?"

I confirmed, "Yeah, that works and so far is not scaring me off."

That evening as I headed to our bedroom and found Sara already in bed, but awake. She commented, "Wow, never thought we'd see Andy and Lindsay leaving. Going to be so strange once Kayré and Kacie move out as well. Kind like old times."

I joked, "Except without Martina and my sister trying to take advantage of you. So you okay with them leaving?"

Sara reiterated what Lindsay had pointed out, "I will still see Lindsay at The Budget Holstein. Plus it sounds as if you and Andy have come up with some sort of 'visitation agreement' for the weekends. Well, this should make our lives simpler.." She drifted off to asleep.

The next morning I met Christina at the property. I was impressed with the architecture, "Love the Spanish style and this covered porch."

She told me, "So, the porch wraps around from the street side along the entire drive to the secondary garage."

We walked in and I noticed the floors, "Oh wow, Spanish style Saltillo tiles. Geez, the listing photos don't do this justice. So remind me about this place."

Christina told me, "Four Bedrooms, Four and half baths, three full baths and half on the main level and full size in the loft. Also, a studio and office."

I asked, "Studio?"

Christina explained, "Yeah so, that portion was added on the east side. It was permitted and she did get approval from the Desert Oasis Association. She had a Yoga studio in there with a bio-fold doors on the entire eastern wall opening out to the grassy area. Let's head that direction first." We walked over to the studio and Christina added, "She also had the powder room over here added."

I looked at the 'studio' and it was about the same size as my library now. We walked into the office, which was a little smaller, but still good size. I noticed a door on the interior wall, "Where do this door lead to?"

Christina walked over and opened the door into a small empty room, "I believe this was a storage room. She used it to store mats and other gear. Not sure what you can do with it, besides storage."

I looked inside and noticed there were electrical outlets on a couple of the walls, "Since it has electrical, I could use it for my shop..." As I walked back into the office I glanced out the eastern windows and was amazed by the views, "Wow, and here I thought the views from my old office were great."

Christina in attempt to sell the views, "Yeah no neighbors to the east as is all State Trust land. Lets go out from the studio and you can really see the views." We walked outside into the grassy area and she pointed to the a concrete pad surrounded by pavers, "Forgot to mention and for some reason never got added to the listing, there is pre-wired hot tub pad. Also a couple propane fire pits."

I laughed, "Hot tub in Arizona...well...though it is really only hot three months out of the year. Guess, I'll need to buy a hot tub....oh my sister has one of these fire pits down at her place in Marana." I walked around the corner and found a covered patio with another fire pit nearby. I looked to the southwest, "Oh, I can *almost* see the balcony of the king suite, way out and *down* there."

Christina looked out across the open area near the wash and commented, "Yeah, you are lot higher over here. Why don't we take a look at the bedrooms?" We walked back into the house and she showed a bedroom off the kitchen which had its own bathroom with a soaking tub. That would be a prefect for Wynn. We headed into a hallway and came to double door leading into the primary suite. A little smaller than the other house, but we really didn't need a large room. It did have a French door to a Juliet patio and also appeared the room next this one did as well. The primary bath did have a soaking tub and shower. We entered the first of two 'guest' or 'kids' rooms.

The room was quite spacious for a guest room. I told Christina, "Well, this is good size would be able to fit that Alaskan King my sister in-law left us." I noticed another door and knew it was not the closet as that was on the other wall, "Does this room also have an attached bathroom?"

Christina explained, "Yes and no. It is a Jack and Jill bathroom, though not directly accessed from within the guest rooms. The guest rooms are however, connected to each other via that hallway which does provide access to the bathroom. The bathroom can also be accessed from the other side as the other hallway loops around." We walked into the hall and noticed there were window facing the street and another door straight ahead which lead into the other guest room. That room was a little smaller and did not have outside access, but was shaded on both sides by the covered porch. We exited into the 'loop' hallway and then went into the 'hall' bath which was reasonable size with a full size shower. Christina told me, "Okay after we go out this room hang a right and take the stairs up to the loft." We exited the bathroom and ascended the stairs to the loft. I looked around and it was indeed 'unfinished', plywood sub floor and no lights other than directly by the stairs. Christina directed me to go right where the was a fully completed full bathroom. "I believe when she had the house built the bathroom was completed by the builder. She was going to do more with the loft, possibly do her Yoga classed up there but did the bottom floor addition instead. "

I walked around the loft and commented, "Kind of an odd shape. But, you know it

works and it would be a blank slate for Dundee...." I realized that Dundee was going to be heading to Tucson at some point, "...um let me make a quick phone call, need to find out when my contractor is leaving the area. Nonetheless, if you can represent me as buyer's agent, I want you to submit a full price cash offer. I do want an inspection contingency and I should be able to have her out here either Monday or Tuesday. Assuming she doesn't find anything major let's go for a 14-day Escrow effective this coming Monday."

Christina told me, "Yes, I can do that. I have most of all your information already from when I sold you Ashler Hills house. I am going to need you to provide me proof of assets before I can submit an offer. I'll get started opening a new file for you while you make your phone call."

I rang Linda's cell and surprisingly she answered, "Hey Linda, how long before Dundee goes to Tucson?" She told me he would be going with her on Monday for a couple weeks to scout things out, but he would not be moving out there until mid-January. I asked, "What time is he coming out tomorrow?"

Linda replied, "Mel's consult is at 3:00 PM why?"

I explained, "Well, since your daughter and her partner are moving out as are The McGrawl's..."

Linda was not aware, "Wait The McGrawl's are leaving? When, why, where?"

I laughed, "They told me yesterday they bought a condo down by Marc and Martina. Guess they've been thinking about it for a while and last weekend since they were away and together. So, they plan on being out before Christmas because of our upcoming ACME job outside Vegas. Right now, I am looking at a house on Sage Brush and just submitted an offer which should be accepted. So, I would need Dundee do a little work on this place, nothing like the current house. Just some shelving in the studio and office and then building a couple dressing rooms, a closet up in the loft. Plus the loft needs flooring, lights and fans."

Linda told me, "He could always come earlier."

I replied, "Okay..let me find my Realtor and see if she can meet us tomorrow." I headed down the stairs and looked around, but didn't see Christina. I walked out towards the main part of the house and saw the front door was open. I stepped out and found Christina with her Surface sitting on the porch. I asked, "Any chance you can meet us out here tomorrow? My contractor is suppose to be heading to Tucson for a couple weeks starting Monday."

Christina told me, "I don't see that being a problem since as soon as the seller accepts your offer you have access for 'inspections'. So yes I could meet you tomorrow. When?"

I put Linda on speaker, "Hey Linda, can he meet us over here around 2:00 PM tomorrow? Should give us enough time before our conference with Mel."

Linda replied, "Yes. I can tell him to meet at 2:00 PM."

Christina nodded 'yes' in confirmation, "Okay, I'll give you the address when I see you tonight."

Linda informed me, "I am out at Vistancia with Dundee, won't see you until tomorrow and yes I told Wynn. Oh, by the way Olivia wants to talk to you about upgrading Corona de las Estrellas early next year. I know you have the project out in Vegas after Christmas and you will be busy with my projects starting around February."

Well, this was unexpected...yet it was given for Linda. I told her, "Sure, I'll look at my schedule, thinking sometime in late January. So, I'll text you the address a little later." After I got off the phone with her I told Christina, "Every time I think I finally have a handle on my schedule, Miss Holstein throws something else at me. At least, I am almost wrapped up with my other projects. Suppose tomorrow would be a good time to bring rest of the family over to see the house."

Christina told me, "Yes, it would. I will get everything setup, you should have all the paperwork to e-sign this evening. We will have to wait until Monday to do the earnest deposit since the title company is not open on weekends. I'll give you the details tomorrow for the title company. So, I'll be here around 2:00 PM tomorrow."

Before I headed back to the house, I texted Linda the address for the house on Lot 8. Upon returning I found Wynn in the kitchen with Kacie getting lunch prepped. She saw me walked in and asked, "So, how did it go?"

I informed her, "Good. Once Christina gets everything setup she will submit my full cash offer. If nothing major comes up in inspection I'll close in two weeks from Monday. Who all is here? I know Linda is not as she told me she with Dundee."

Wynn told me, "Just Kayré, Sara and us two. The McGrawl's are out furniture shopping, but would be back for dinner. Speaking of dinner what do you want to do?"

I reminded her, "Well tomorrow we have the meeting at 3:00 PM and I know Mel will be saying and likely Dundee as well for dinner. Not really grilling weather today, anything you can make?"

Wynn laughed, "I can make a lot, just need to see what we have and what we

need. I can go over to the market if need be. How about the Spicy Meatloaf?"

I told her that works. Sara came down the stairs and was surprised to see me, "Thought you were out with Gary."

I was confused, "Um...no. Whatever gave you that idea?"

Sara was confused herself, "Not sure." She opted to change the subject before this conversation became any more awkward, "So, when's lunch?"

Wynn told her, "Whenever you want, we are for the most part done. Someone needs to get Kayré."

Kacie replied, "I'll get her I believe Ron and Sara need to talk."

As Kacie left Sara asked, "What did she mean by that?"

I explained, "Well, I was going to wait until tonight when everyone was back, but since Kacie let the cat out of the bag. With Kayré and Kacie leaving along with The McGrawl's this house is too large for the three of us. So, I am purchasing the house on Lot 8. If everything goes well, I should be closing in about two weeks. We likely won't move until we are done with The Acme Henderson project, so after Christmas. Gives Dundee time to do some updates, though nothing like he did here."

Sara asked, "Where's Lot 8?"

I told her, "It is on Sagebrush, the street 'behind' us. The house is more behind The Acme's and you really can't see it from here. Though Christina and I could barley see the balcony of The King suite when we were in the yard. So anyway, Dundee is supposed to meet us over there around 2:00 PM tomorrow, before the consult with Mel and Linda."

Kacie returned with Kayré and we had lunch. After lunch I headed back to my office to finish the final project of the year. I checked my email and had some documents from Christina and a couple more payment emails from PayPal. I spent an hour getting all the paperwork completed, plus providing a proof of assets from AzMu. Shortly before dinner I completed the final project and for the first time in a long time my job queue was empty. I had texted my inspector earlier and she replied back with Tuesday morning. I headed over to the kitchen to check on the progress of dinner. Kayré and Kacie were helping Wynn. Sara saw me and informed me, "Lindsay texted me, they are their way back should be here in the next 10-minutes."

I told her, "Okay. I just wrapped up on the final project of the year and figured it was getting close to dinner."

Wynn commented, "So no new projects until January 8<sup>th</sup>?"

I replied, "I am likely going to end up pushing that date back into March or April. Part of it because of our move, but also Linda informed me earlier Olivia wants us to upgrade Corona de las Estrellas. I *think* can we squeeze that in after our move and before we need to start on the three buildings at Thirsty Cactus."

Kacie asked, "I hate to be a pest, but we are going to be able to continue to stay with you until our new place is done?"

I explained, "Yes. There are a couple guest rooms. One is large enough for the Alaskan King to occupy. I'll be at the property tomorrow afternoon at 2:00 so you if want to see it you can."

Andy and Lindsay came into the kitchen. Lindsay saw us all gathered and told Andy, "I think we're late."

Wynn assured them, "You're fine. The meatloaf is almost done. Ron has been sharing his news."

Andy asked, "What news is that?"

I told him, "My job queue is empty! Oh and I have entered into contract to purchase Lot 8 on Sagebrush."

Lindsay commented, "Isn't Sagebrush where the models were?"

I replied, "Yeah, it is on the south side of the circle across from the models. Christina and I will be doing a 'showing' tomorrow afternoon at 2:00 PM. Dundee is supposed to meet me there. So if you two want to come you may. Might as well, so Lindsay can see where her and Sara will spend their Friday night's starting next year."

## **Chapter 10: 'The Showing' and Mel's Consult**

The next afternoon as we were about to leave to go over to Lot 8 and meet with Christina; Linda called, "We should be there in about 15-minutes."

We met up with Christina I advised her, "My contractor is about 15-minutes out."

She told me, "That's fine, the door is open and I'll wait out here from him to show up. When is your inspector coming again?"

I reminded Christina, "She said sometime Tuesday morning. She'll give me a call

about 30-minutes prior. All right everyone let's head in." We made our way to the kitchen, "Nice large kitchen with over-sized pantry and a wine fridge. We have a nook and gathering room overlooking the wash."

Wynn asked, "Where's the laundry?"

I pointed to the door to the east, "Over there. Mechanical for the HVAC, the air handler is in its own closet within there along with a tankless water heater, sink and washer/dryer." Pointing to the west, "Now, this hall off the kitchen over here splits off. Right leads to the stairs to the loft as well as Wynn's suite. Left leads to all the other bedrooms. Come along to the left; These double doors to the left here leads to the primary bed/bath." Sara went in to take a closer look. As we moved on, "So the hall splits off to the two guest rooms and a hall bath. Now, this hall bath is a little different as it shared between the two guest rooms with another private hallway between the two rooms. So this room to the left will be where Kayré and Kacie will stay until their new residence is done. Then it will be general purpose guest room such as when my sister or mother come to visit or even for Linda to use when she is out here. This other room will be where Sara and Lindsay can spend Friday night's together."

Christina was calling my phone, "Your contractor and his partner are here."

I told her, "Okay. Send them on in and I'll meet them in a moment." I headed back to the front door and met Dundee and Linda. I informed Dundee, "This is not really going to be as big of a project as the other house. Three rooms or areas. Let's start in The Studio then my office." Most everyone had already returned and ended up following me into the studio. I told them, "Let me open this door and y'all can take a look around the back. So, this area here including the powder room we passed, the previous owner added on. This particular area was the yoga studio. I want to add bookcases on this large empty wall here. I'll be bringing the storage armoire and the tables/chairs from the other house."

Dundee told me, "Okay, this seems fairly simple so far..."

I told him, "Moving into the office, more shelving on this side wall."

Dundee saw the door and asked, "What's this door?"

I explained, "Leads into a storage area which I will use as my shop. I have tech benches at the other house which I'll bring over as well."

Dundee proposed, "What if, we remove this door and put in a swing out shelf like you have now. I think it would look a lot better and this way too the shelves would be flush with the odd jut-out over here. It sounds like it is not going to be a door you would normally have clients coming through. What about this back wall?"

I laughed, "Yeah, that is because there is door from the storage into the attached garage. You know, this is why I pay you the big bucks. I am thinking shelving about from the floor to half way up. I'll likely have my modem/router, printer/fax/scanner and bookshelf stereo over there, plus I want to mount a TV on that wall. Now, I would like horse-shoe desk that we can put in this corner by the window. My vision is in the corner a wide file-cabinet which is the same height as the desk then the desk starts there. I can have my monitors facing the windows, then clients sitting in the front so I am facing them and the doors. Plus have an area on my right side where Wynn would be able to sit and make notes. I plan on giving the existing desk I have as condo-warming present for Andy."

Dundee made more notes, "Okay. That would work. What else?"

I told him, "The Super Loft, which is unfinished except for a full-size bathroom."

Dundee laughed, "Wait, there is a finished bathroom up there, but nothing else?"

I explained, "Yes, from my understanding when she had the house built she choose to have the builder finish out the bathroom and was going to do something with the loft later on. My Realtor thinks perhaps she had planned on doing the Yoga classes up there. Anyway, follow me." We made our way up the stairs to the loft. "To the right is the bathroom. Really nothing needs to be done in that area. The main open area again not much, may be fans/lights and possibly a split-system HVAC. Now, if we go all the way to the end there is a 'peninsula' and that section I think would fit a closet and couple dressing rooms."

Dundee walked over into the area and commented, "This all is very odd shape."

I reminded him, "It follows the original foot print of the house on the south and east sides. Again the powder room then the studio and office were added on. Thinking the secondary garage was added as well."

Dundee looked out the window and saw the roof of the additions below, "Ah, okay that makes some sense then. Let's see....this is fairly wide and you have a good window here on the south. I can fit three dressing rooms over on this right wall and then still have a decent space for a closet. You want like the other house part of it shelving and the other for hanging clothes?"

I told him, "Yeah. I'd like drawers too in the main part, not very deep may be enough to fit shoe bins and in the clothes closet we would need ample storage for shoes."

Dundee added more notes and asked, "Anything else?"

I replied, "That is it. I don't plan on doing anything with that room above the

secondary garage other than storage. May be you can give the house a quick once over and let me know of anything you see that needs attention. My inspector is supposed to be out on Tuesday, but never hurts to have another set of eyes look everything over."

Dundee replied, "Okay, that can I do. Let me take some pictures and get some measurements. How much time do we have until we met the client?"

I looked at my phone at was 2:30, "About a half hour, but Wynn already went back to the house with Kayré and Kacie so we have time."

Dundee told me, "Yeah, shouldn't take me more than 10-minutes. What is your time line on this project?"

I explained, "If everything goes as to plan, I should close a couple weeks from Monday. We won't move in until after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. We have a big project in Vegas after Christmas."

Dundee looked at his schedule, "Yeah, okay. I am going to be in Tucson with Miss Holstein until the Friday before you close. Likely you will close that Friday as title companies don't like Monday closings. If that is the case, we could start that Monday. Should take about a week, if I pre-order everything, plus getting an Electrician out here for the lighting, HVAC and fans. If you can, go to *Big Ass Fans* and find a fan you like and get two or three depending on their size. I will give you the size of the area when I am done. It is like an extra \$20 for expedited shipping and they would come in about a week. What did you want to do about flooring?"

I told him, "Well, I suppose like we did in the Ashler Hills house or would LVP be better?"

Dundee explained, "Porcelain tile is durable, but lot more expensive then LVP. I would not recommend Saltillo up here for obvious reasons. The only other issue I see if getting our Sheetrock installer out here then getting the area painted."

I suggested, "How about we do the dressing rooms and closet walls in Cedar?"

Dundee thought for a moment, "You, know that would look and smell really nice. Even though cedar would cost a little bit more, there won't be the labor involved in mudding and painting drywall. Yeah that work. So, do you want a formal estimate with renderings like I did for the original house and Ashler Hills or are you good with a cost estimate like I did for the bottom level of your current house? I am not really going to have time to getting a full formal with renderings done."

I assured him, "I've worked with you so much now I am fine with a basic

estimate. How about the desk and file cabinet?"

He told me, "I'll measure down there and order something that will fit the area. What finish would you like?"

I told him, "I believe there are exposed beams in that room and they did a matching wood trim on the bi-fold door and windows."

Dundee laughed, "I didn't even look up when I was down there. Let's head back down there." We ended up in the studio, "Oh yes, so there are beams. Okay, will match the stain to that finish." He noticed there was not a fan in the office, "Did you want a ceiling fan in the office?"

I replied, "Yes..." My cell phone chirped with a text message from Wynn; "Mel delayed. 3:30 PM." I replied back confirming and asked her to let Laura know. "Sorry about that. Wynn just texted me, Mel is coming in about 3:30 now so gives you a little more time."

Dundee replied, "That good. Let me get my wheel and camera. I'll give you the dimensions for this room as well so you can order a Big Ass Fan for here too. You have a pre-wire, just don't get why they didn't install one in here when they did the 'studio'. May be they never really used the office."

I walked out and found Andy and Lindsay along with Sara looking at the view. Andy saw me, "So, when are we supposed to be meeting with Linda and Mel?"

I advised him, "She contacted Linda and told her she was delayed until about 3:30. Linda relayed that info to Wynn who relayed it to me. I am just waiting on Dundee to get measurements, photos and do a quick once-over of the house then we can get going."

Dundee came back in with his camera and measuring wheel. He started in the studio then went in to my office. He opened the door to the storage room I was going to use as my shop and asked, "We're you going to have anything else in here such as a key safe or camera box?"

I told him, "Can we do a drawer safe in the file cabinet? I suppose we should do a wall safe as well, perhaps in the shop."

Dundee made notes and then headed up into the loft. He came down a few minutes later and walked through the rest of the house. He reported back to me, "Everything looks good for the most part. The loft appears to be on a single circuit, which is not that big of a deal to fix since we need to have an electrician out anyway to install the boxes for the fans and the lights in the dressing room/closet. I'll submit a quote and area dimensions to you hopefully by tomorrow evening and starting ordering the materials, plus schedule the subs.

So, I am done here, lead the way and Miss Holstein will follow you over to your other house."

We returned to the house just as Mel was arriving. Andy and Lindsay went inside to get freshened up. I greeted Mel, "Howdy Mel, been quite a while since we've seen each other." I introduced Dundee, "This is Mic Dundee, our general contractor. Linda and the McGrawl's are waiting inside."

We came in through the front door and Wynn offered to take Mel's coat. Wynn told me, "Kayré and Kacie are taking care of dinner so I don't have to leave in the middle of the meeting."

We headed into my Library and I rang Laura, "Laura, you there?"

Laura confirmed, "Yes."

I announced, "Okay, we have Wynn, The McGrawl's, Linda and Dundee along with Mel. So, Linda why don't you go ahead and start."

Linda explained, "Yes. So this is in regards to The Shops at Thirsty Cactus Pad #5. Some background: This dual level building is primarily going to be used for the retail operation of The McGrawl's retail store PC's and Things. However, due to height restrictions in the overlay for this PAD we are unable to have the third level residence. Therefore any residence would need to be on the second level. However, The McGrawl's have opted to delete the attached garage and residence which would have occupied about 2/3 of the second level instead opting to use the entire space for retail instead. Finally, The McGrawl's have indicated they do not need this much retail space are willing to either sublet the extra space or decrease their total square footage. At this time, this decision has not been made and does not have any bearing on the outcome of this meeting. I have had my engineer draw up three different renderings in how the extra space which will be used for Mel's retail space will be allocated. Before I present all three let me ask you this Mel, do you have a preference if you would like your retail space on the top floor, bottom floor or mix of both? Oh, I do need to add since both floors will be used for retail operations, per ADA requirements we need an elevator. The space for the elevator is not very much, but has been deducted from the total square footage of the building."

Mel asked, "So let's say I do choose to occupy only the second level, how would that work?"

Linda explained, "Okay, rendering #3 Laura and Wynn." Wynn pulled up rendering #3 on the TV in the library and Laura had been emailed all three renderings prior, "So, we will have a lobby which has restrooms and an elevator. Then on the north side of the lobby is stairway which will lead to the second floor lobby which is a duplicate of the first floor. However, at the top of the stairs and to the right of the

elevator will be the main entrance to Mel's retail space. On the bottom level pass the restrooms and elevator will be main entrance to The McGrawl's suite. However, within their suite they will have a stairway which I am assuming will be private to the upper level. My understanding is they plan on using the upper level for inventory and their service area, which would not be accessible to customers. There will be a dumbwaiter to allow the transport of equipment between the floors. Also there will be a private entrance to PC's and Things on the second floor so those working up there can use the restrooms on that floor."

Andy looked at the rendering and asked, "Okay, so what about the space on the main level behind the elevator and restrooms?"

Linda explained, "That is space for your suite as well, including under the stairs."

I commented, "That might make a good area for simple upgrades such as memory or minor repairs...say failed optical drive or even bad SATA cable. I am sure Dundee could build you a parts cabinet for under the stairs."

Andy looked at the rendering again and thought about my comments, "Wish Doyle was here, that is more his area of expertise..but you know what that would work."

Lindsay asked, "What about the other two renderings?"

Linda explained, "Rendering #1: Mel's retail space is all downstairs occupying about 2/3 of the space. PC's and Things would have the entire top level."

Andy objected, "No, we rather have more retail space on the ground floor. What's the second rendering?"

Linda pulled up Rendering #2, "Okay, Rendering #2: Both Mel's retail space and PC's and Things would occupy about half of the usable retail space on both levels. Mel would be on the northern half and PC's and Things would be on the southern half."

Mel objected, "I'd rather just be on one level. If the first one...um...Rendering #3 works for The McGrawl's that would be fine with me."

Andy was hesitant, "Yeah, I suppose that could work."

Lindsay told him, "It has to be better than the setup we have now. At least it would all be the same. Unlike now where we have our original store then the watch shop."

I asked, "What is bothering you about this?"

Andy told me, "That space behind the elevator and restrooms. I like Ron's idea, however I'd prefer the minor repair/upgrade area be below the main repair area. That way if it turns out it is not a simple repair then the customer or one of us wouldn't have to carry the unit to the other counter to be loaded into the dumbwaiter. We could use it as an office space, but then we don't have offices at the current Scottsdale location. The only reason we do at Fountain Hills is because that store is so huge. I just don't know what we would do with that space."

Linda told him, "Well, you don't have to do anything with it now..."

Laura asked, "How about using it for inventory of high turn-over items. Accessories such as mice, keyboards, cables, speakers, flash drives, mouse pads."

Lindsay commented, "That's a good idea Abby, it would make it easier for us to quickly restock those items. As Ron said, sure Dundee can build us a closet."

Andy concurred, "You know what Abby, that is a good idea and I think would work. Okay, I'm on board."

Linda was about to say something with Kacie announced over the intercom, "Dinner in 10-minutes."

Linda advised us, "Well, this is a good stopping point anyway. After dinner the McGrawl's and Mel will go over the administrative details. So Ron, Wynn and Abigail we won't be needing you."

Laura reminded Linda, "That's Abby..."

Linda told her, "Okay." She turned her attention to Mel, "There is a powder room down the hall by the front door, if you want to freshen up before dinner."

Mel replied, "Yes, that would work." The rest of us headed to the dining room. Kayré and Kacie had already set the table and as we did before had plates on the bar so people could dish out as little or as much of the lasagna they wanted and get some salad. Mel returned and noticed Kayré and Kacie and asked Linda, "So these are your daughters?"

Linda replied, "Yes...sort of. The dark haired one, Kayré is my daughter. The one with the auburn hair is her partner, Kacie. I guess you could consider her my adopted daughter. Kayré runs my Scottsdale store, while Kacie over-sees operations for all three stores."

Mel was not aware Linda had added a store, "I've seen Kayré a few times when I've stopped in. Three? I knew about Scottsdale and your main down by Tucson, you have another now?"

Linda told her, "Yes, we opened a third store...what about a couple months ago...out in Gold Canyon...tried to get The McGrawl's to join in the fun and open a store out there as well, but they weren't interested."

Andy reminded her, "That would be as bad as when we were living in Tucson and had the Fountain Hills store. I don't know how you can manage three stores so far apart. I have hard enough time just with Fountain Hills and Scottsdale."

Linda laughed, "That's why I have my 'adopted daughter' Kacie to over-see everything."

After dinner the McGrawl's, Mel and Linda returned to the Library to discuss some of the administrative details of their arrangement. I had returned to my office to catch up on my emails. There was an email from Christina with the seller 'officially' accepting my offer. A little while later Mel knocked on my office door, "Ron? Since I am here already, could we discuss my site?"

I told her, "Sure, let my have Wynn come in." I paged Wynn, "Wynn to my office for a consult."

Wynn came in a couple minute later with her tablet, "I am here, what are we consulting?"

I replied, "Mel's site. For sure we need to move the domain and hosting away from their current providers. Thinking of setting her up with Word Press with some type of eCommerce plugin. We'll have to look into what works with her existing merchant account."

Mel explained, "I am using PayPal currently and that works for me if it would make things easier."

Wynn told her, "It really does as almost every eCommerce plugin/app supports PayPal. Ron, so we are going to do a provider change...how are we timing this?"

I explained, "We can initiate the domain transfer and I will select to leave the DNS as is. I can setup the new hosting with one my 'sandbox' domains so it won't affect the existing site. When everything is done, updated the DNS and change the assigned domain in WordPress. As far as when I get around to actually doing the site conversion..."

Wynn had forgotten I had cleared out my job queue, "Well currently you have...oh...yeah...you did mention you had cleared out the queue."

I reminded her, "Yeah, yesterday. Not much going on in the next couple weeks. Can't really do anything until escrow closes and even then Dundee's crew will be

working on the new house. We are not going to move until we get back from Vegas on the ACME job which hopefully will be before the end of the year. Since, I don't have any other projects at the moment, I can start working on getting the site converted. I'll take care of the domain transfer and setting up new hosting tomorrow. Depending on how in-depth this is going to be, might have it done before Christmas, but let's aim for mid-January."

Mel replied, "Sounds good to me. Let me know, if there is anything you need."

I told her, "I should still have access to your existing domain/hosting provider's account. If not, I'll let you know. Any other questions or concerns while we are here?"

Mel thought for a moment, "Nope. This has been a very productive day. Thanks for hosting us and dinner."

Wynn advised, "I will show you out when you are ready." Mel followed Wynn to the foyer where she retrieved her coat then left. I looked at the time at it was nearly 10:00 PM. Wynn returned to my office and advised, "Looks like most everyone has gone to bed. See you in the morning."

Monday was fairly quiet. I started the administrative process of getting Mel's domain transferred to AZOutback's preferred registrar. Wynn paged me, "Your inspector called and said she will be out around 9:00 AM tomorrow. Shall I let Christina know?" I told her to go ahead and inform Christina and add the event to my calendar.

Tuesday morning I met Christina at the house on Sage Brush a little before 9:00 AM. A few moments later an REO Speedwagon pulled into the main drive. Christina saw the truck, "Is that her?"

I replied, "Yep, her name is Shanna and that is 1949 REO Speedwagon truck she restored herself."

Shanna came over, "Ron, nice to see you again. Seems like it was only a few months ago though!"

I laughed, "Yeah, well things kind of took an unexpected turn in the past week. So once again I am ending up with more house than I need." I introduced her to Christina, "This my Realtor, Christina Gutierrez-Mayer."

Shanna came over and shook Christina's hand, "Shanna Duski, pleasure to meet you. My termite guy is on his way, think he is stuck out in Rio Verde right now. Anyway, I usually start outside and work my way in. Is this house all single level other than this garage?"

I replied, "No, there is a loft area. However, there is not a pool."

Shanna commented, "Okay. Then we don't need the pool inspector. Is the fireplace gas, electric or wood?"

Christina replied, "Electric."

Shanna replied, "Good. That makes things easier. So, I'll be about 3-hours are you all going to stick around?"

Christina told Shanna to text her when she was nearly done. I replied, "I'll be here."

Shanna noted Christina's number, "I'll message you about 30-minutes before I am done. Should give you enough time to get back I can go over my findings with you."

Over the next couple hours I followed Shanna around as she performed her inspection. She pointed out mostly minor things. Her termite guy came and did his inspection finding no evidence of past or current termites. Towards the end of the inspection, Shanna asked, "Did you have plans on finishing the loft?"

I replied, "Yes I am working with my contractor on that. We will be adding a new HVAC system, fans and lights."

Christina commented, "Well, you are going to need at least two more circuits if that is the case. Looks like the entire loft is on one circuit."

I told her, "I am aware of that, my contractor pointed that out to me on Sunday. We will be hiring a licensed electrician to add new circuits to accommodate everything."

Shanna told me, "Good, glad you are doing that. Let me text your Realtor real quick and I'll start getting everything packed up."

About 10-minutes later Christina came back, "I'm back, am I early?"

Shanna walked back in and told her, "Actually your timing is good. So nothing major. Termite inspection came back clean. Areas of concern, Smoke Alarms are almost 10-years old so they should be replaced very soon. HVAC system looks really good, appears it was replaced about 3-years ago. Roof is in good shape and even the area where the add-on was done is in great shape. That was done by a licensed roofer and I did find the permits for the add-on with the City of Scottsdale. Let me see...oh...dishwasher is running very loud, the motor may be going, so I'd recommend replacement. The loft is on a single circuit, but Ron has mentioned his contractor and himself are already aware of that and will be

addressed when they do the renovations in the loft area. Otherwise, the house is well taken care of. I'll email both of you a detailed report by the close of business today."

Christina asked, "So, once we get the formal report how do you want to handle 'the areas of concern'?"

I told her, "I am thinking it would be easier for the seller and myself just to credit the cost of those repairs against my closing costs. Dishwasher is not a big deal as need to get washer, dryer and fridge anyway. Smoke alarms, I have a retired fireman who now does smoke alarm install and maintenance for a living."

Christina replied, "She should be accepting to that, especially if it speeds up closing. Ball park how much do you want me to ask for?"

I checked the current market price on dishwashers on my phone and I knew what my smoke detector guy charged having him recently do the current house, "\$1200 should be a good number. The bulk of that is for the dishwasher including delivery and install. If she wants a formal estimate I can have him provide her one, but it would take a few days."

Christina told me, "At this point, my client really wants to close as quickly as possible and since you have accepted her full asking price, I don't see this as unreasonable. Once I get the report from Shanna, I'll send you the paperwork to e-Sign. So we done here?"

I replied, "I believe so."

I returned to the house and heard the vacuum upstairs. I headed to my office to continue working on Mel's job. An hour later I headed into the kitchen for a snack and ran into Wynn, "Oh hey Ron, didn't know you had returned. How did the inspection go?"

I explained, "Yeah, been back for about an hour now, you were vacuuming the upstairs when I came back. Inspections went well the only 'areas of concern' were the smoke alarms and dishwasher. I am going to ask the seller to pay \$1200 of my closing cost in lieu of repairs. Christina was waiting on the final report from Shanna before she submitted my request."

Wynn wonder, "What else are we getting appliance wise?"

I told her, "Fridge, washer and dryer. Once we close, you can go over to Spenser's and pick out what you like. The range and ovens were recently replaced when she remodeled the kitchen couple years ago"

**Chapter 11: The McGrawl's Leave the Nest and A New Holiday 'Challenge'**

Later that evening Christina called and told me she had discussed with her client the inspection report and my terms. She did tell me the seller wouldn't go over \$1000 towards closing. I informed her that was fine. In all likelihood, we'd likely be getting the dishwasher for less than the actual retail price given we were going to be buying three other appliances at the same time. Christina advised she would be sending the documents my way shortly. Half hour later I received, reviewed and e-signed the documents. The rest of the week was fairly quiet. On Thursday, The McGrawl's closed on their condo. Andy and Lindsay came into my office that evening and told me, "Well, it's ours. Say, do you still have any wardrobe boxes? We really don't have much else other than all of Lindsay's clothes."

Lindsay objected, "As if Andrew! You have just as much if not more than I do!"

I laughed, "Yeah, I think those boxes are in the pool house. What else are you all taking?"

Andy replied, "Other than our belongings not much else. We are getting all new furniture delivered tomorrow. You mentioned you will be giving me your old desk once you move to the new house. Though, I really don't see me using the office that much. Lindsay likely will for The Budget Holstein."

I asked, "How about the chaise lounges and the swing on your balcony?"

Lindsay replied, "Didn't know we could take those."

I informed her, "I am not going to need those. Remember, we are downsizing too."

Andy reminder her, "We haven't done anything with the office other than buy those shelves for the one wall. I don't think we would have room for both chaise lounges though. How are we going to do this, hadn't planned on hiring movers."

I thought for a moment, "Well, as far as the chaise lounge I can put one in 'The Studio' aka my new library or may be give it to Kayré and Kacie as a parting gift. Gary and/or Bambi should be able to help you out with the ACME Truck."

Andy told me, "That can work. Can you give him a call and see if they can do it this weekend?"

I called Gary, "Hey Gary. Say The McGrawl's need a favor of you and/or Bambi involving The ACME Truck?"

Gary joked, "What, you finally kicked them out house?"

Andy replied, "No, we are leaving on our own freewill."

Gary was caught off-guard, but knew Andy was serious, "Oh wow. Okay. Well, when and where?"

Andy told him, "This weekend if possible. We bought over in The Foothills Condos."

Gary consulted with Bambi, "Yeah, how's Saturday afternoon?"

Andy replied, "Work for us."

I decided this would be a good time as any to break the news, "By the way Gary, after we are done with your job in Henderson, Sara, Wynn and I along with Linda's girls' will be moving up to a house on Sagebrush. Kayré and Kacie will be moving into the residence above The Budget Holstein I think in March, but will stay with us in the mean time."

Gary laughed, "Wow, you just came back!"

I told him, "I know, it was all kind of unexpected. I should be closing on the house next week, but going to have Dundee do some work before we move in."

Bambi commented, "Well, at least you are still in the neighborhood. Okay, we'll be over at your place Saturday afternoon."

I informed them, "By the way, since the McGrawl's will already be out, I will be able to accommodate my mother and Blanche here."

Gary seemed relieved, "Ah...good....one less thing to worry about....would've been a little crowded with them here with Randy and Claudette...less stress for Bunny...well got go."

Both Andy and Lindsay found Gary's comments rather odd as did I, "Weird. There's something he is not telling us. Linda and Martina both found it very strange that they are not going to Wickenburg for the Holidays. Oh well, anyway I'll have Wynn take a look tomorrow for those wardrobe boxes. I need to call my mother and let her know."

Andy and Lindsay left my office and I got on the phone with my mother, "Say, The McGrawl's are leaving the nest this weekend, so I am going to have an open room now, so you stay at the house for this year. Next year, well we will be at a different house, same area though. I'll explain thing when y'all come up. Which reminds me, when are y'all coming up?"

Lorena replied, "Either the 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup>. Abigail has mentioned y'all have a job in

Vegas for Gary right after Christmas.”

I told her, “Yeah, his step-daughter shuts down the operations there every year between Christmas and New Years, so that was our best opportunity to get these upgrades done. However, we'll be back down in Tucson likely around the end of January. Linda just informed me yesterday Olivia wants to do a tech upgrade for Corona de las Estrellas. I haven't had a chance to tell Laura yet, still waiting on the details.”

Saturday afternoon Bambi arrived by herself with The Acme Truck, “Gary had work to do this weekend as had to take off earlier this week for an appointment. Anyway, what do y'all need help with.”

I told her, “The McGrawl's are still packing up their clothes so let me take you upstairs.” We arrived in their suite, “Besides the wardrobe boxes, the swing on this balcony. Then across the hall in their office one of the chaise lounges. Everything else I think they are taking in the Mini.”

Bambi asked, 'So the bedroom furniture stays?’

I told her, “Yes, they are getting their own. Besides still need to use this room as a bedroom, at least until after the holidays. Might end up putting the extra sets in storage and give them to Kayré and Kacie. There are only four bedrooms in the house of Sage Brush versus six here.”

Bambi understood, “That works. Let me grab the chaise lounge since they are not in that room currently.”

I told her, “Let me get Wynn to help you with that.”

Bambi laughed, “What you don't think I could handle it myself?”

I asked, “I don't know can you?”

Bambi picked it up and then quickly set it down, “On second thought, may be it would be wise to have Wynn help.”

I went over the intercom, “Wynn can you come up and assist Bambi please?”

Wynn was already upstairs and walked into the room, “Figured she would need help so I was already on my way up.” Wynn and Bambi took the chaise lounge, then the swing and had those loaded on The ACME Truck. They came back upstairs and started taking the Wardrobe boxes.

Lindsay advised, “Think we have two more boxes.”

Bambi and Wynn had already taken six boxes down. Bambi joked, "Geez, Lindsay how much clothes do you have?"

Lindsay told Bambi, "As if! The bulk of it is Andy's, I had like two boxes. If you want to do something while you are waiting for Andy to finish, can you help me load these smaller boxes in The Mini?" Wynn, Bambi, Lindsay and I each grabbed a box and headed downstairs to load into Lindsay's Mini Cooper. By the time we got back upstairs Andy had finished packing the last of his clothes and was coming down the stairs with a small box. Lindsay asked, "How many more of those boxes are left?" Andy indicated there were still a couple. Wynn and Bambi brought down the remaining two wardrobe boxes while Lindsay and I took the remainder of the small boxes.

Bambi asked me, "Okay if I borrow Wynn for a while?"

I told her, "That's fine. You can bring back the wardrobe boxes with her. We will need those in a few weeks." Andy and Lindsay loaded the last of their stuff in the Mini Cooper and after Bambi and Wynn finished getting everything secured on The Acme Truck she followed them down to the Foothills Condos. I headed back inside to find Sara in the kitchen, "How you doing?"

Sara told me, "I'm fine. I'll see her again on Monday at The Budget Holstein. So what's next couple weeks look like?"

I informed her, "I believe we will be closing on The Sagebrush house Friday as the Title Company don't like closings on Mondays. I talked to my mother the other night her and Blanche should be up either that Friday or Saturday. Not sure when Laura, Sophie and Miss Kitty are coming up. Same with Linda, though I think she might be staying with Dundee. Need to confirm with her so I know where I can put Laura and Miss Kitty. I am sure I will be hearing from her soon. Oh, I don't think I told you, she informed me Olivia wants to do a tech upgrade for Corona de las Estrellas."

Sara laughed, "When the heck are going to squeeze that in?"

I told her, "Likely right after we move and before we start on Thirsty Cactus." A couple hours later Bambi came back with Wynn and the wardrobe boxes. While I was helping them put the wardrobe boxes in the pool house I noticed the swing sitting out on the Cabana and asked, "Hey, if you guys want a swing, you can take this one. I only need three at the Sagebrush House."

Bambi asked pointing to the swing, "So is this my payment?"

I replied nervously, "I suppose so."

Bambi smiled, "Works for me. Since these breakdown I can handle it myself when

I get back to our house." She loaded the swing into the Acme Truck and left.

Sunday morning Sara and I came into the kitchen to find Kayré and Kacie eating breakfast. Wynn told us, "Grab a plate, there is plenty of food. Forgot I don't need to accommodate for Andy and his tapeworm. Oh Ron, Linda called earlier and said she would be staying with Dundee, but would they would be here for Christmas dinner."

Well that made things easier, "Good. So, Laura and Miss Kitty can stay in the Queen Suite and my mother and Blanche in the King Suite. Sophie I assume would be staying with you then?"

Wynn made notes of the arrangements, "Yes she would. Do we know when Miss Kitty and Laura are coming in?"

I told her, "No, actually I do not. I'll give them call after breakfast."

After breakfast I headed to my office to call Laura, but got Sophie, "Hey Sophie, Ron here. Since Laura likely ain't free at the moment, when are y'all coming up?"

Sophie checked Laura's schedule, "I think the Friday before Christmas as she is the working the weekend before, which means she would end her week on Thursday. Let me look here....yes she is off from December 22<sup>nd</sup> through January 5<sup>th</sup>."

I told her, "Okay, that works. Laura and Miss Kitty will be in The Queen Suite and you'll be with Wynn. Oh and are you coming along with us to Henderson?"

Sophie told me, "I believe yes and Laura wants me there. Is that an issue?"

I replied, "No. I just need to make sure Gary is aware. I'll talk to him shortly." After I wrapped up with Sophie I called Gary.

Bunny answered, "Oh hey Ron. Gary is finishing his morning coffee on the patio let me go grab him."

A couple minutes later Gary came on the line, "What's up Ron?"

I informed him, "So Laura and company are coming on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. So we are leaving the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> and coming back early on the 31<sup>st</sup>?"

Gary told me, "Yeah that is the plan. Geoffrey and Nora will charter us to and from."

I reminded him, "Okay, so besides myself, Wynn and Andy we have Laura and Sophie."

Gary was not aware of Sophie, "Oh, so Sophie is coming as well."

I replied, "Yes, Laura wants her there. Problem?"

Gary informed me, "Sort of. Let me contact Cristina and see what she can do for a bigger suite or two suites. Don't worry about it. Hey, I know we said we'd be there for Christmas dinner, but I think Bunny wants to have Christmas Dinner here since Randy and Claudette are coming here. How about we do something on the 23<sup>rd</sup> say at The Unlikely Cowboy?"

I told him, "That could work, though could we reserve on such short notice."

Gary told me, "Well, I sort of already have. Was going to do the Acme Christmas party there, but Lulu is leaving for Portland that day. So we are doing something else on the 22<sup>nd</sup> instead over at Sacred Ground."

I replied, "Should work. Okay if the rest of the family comes...Maya and Peaches with Lizzie; Lorena and Blanche; Andy and Lindsay; Marc and Martina; Kayré & Kacie; Linda and Dundee?"

Gary reminded me, "Well, I would hope Marc would be there, but we do have the entire patio to ourselves."

After I was done with Gary I headed back to the kitchen to find everyone was still there, "Hey guys. So talked to Sophie, they are coming up 22<sup>nd</sup>. So The Zinfandel's won't be joining us for Christmas Dinner after all. However, we all will be getting together on the 23<sup>rd</sup> over at The Unlikely Cowboy. Apparently Gary had reserved it months ago for the Acme Christmas Party, but Lulu is leaving that day so they are doing something the day before. We can bring the entire family, so Sara if you can talk to Lindsay and Maya; I'll try to get a hold of Marc. As far as The Acme Job goes, Wynn, Laura, Andy and Sophie will be coming. He has the helicopter chartered for that morning and we should be returning early on the 31<sup>st</sup>."

Sara seemed more antsy than usual, "Okay, I'll give them a call shortly." She left the room to call Maya and then Lindsay.

Wynn told me, "Oh that reminds me, I did get a confirmation email from Road Runner Freight the equipment has been shipped and scheduled to arrive on the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>. I already informed Cristina."

I called Marc, "Morning Marc. So Gary has invited us to a before Christmas dinner at The Unlikely Cowboy on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Yes, you need to bring Martina, do let her know her 'friend' will be there and I don't mean Lulu. In fact Lulu won't be able to attend."

Marc asked, "Friend?"

I replied, "Peaches."

Marc laughed, "Oh...okay. Yeah, she'll want to be wearing her chastity belt and bra for sure."

Sara came into my office later and confirmed that Maya and Peaches along with Andy and Lindsay would be attending. I decided I should call Linda and find out if her and Dundee could make it. Linda answered her cell, "Oh Ron, been meaning to call you."

Words I really don't want to hear from Linda, "Okay, why was that?"

Linda told me, "Olivia wants to know when you can meet her for a consult."

I really didn't want to make two trips down to Tucson, "Any chance we can do virtually or have her come up here? I am going to be rather busy and don't think I can make two trips down there."

Linda told me, "Well, I could bring her up when I come in next weekend. In fact, I need a ride back since Dundee is leaving on Friday to come back to Phoenix. Yeah, that would work...oh why did you call anyway?"

I forgot I had called *her*, "Oh yeah. Part of it was to find out when you and Dundee were coming out. The Zinfandel's have invited us to a Holiday Shindig at The Unlikely Cowboy the Saturday before Christmas. You staying at my house or with Dundee when you are in town that weekend?"

Linda told me, "I would be Dundee, can Olivia stay with you until we leave that Tuesday?"

I thought for a moment that I would be out of rooms, but I could put her in The Presentation Room since Linda would not be using The Queen Suite, "Yeah I can put her in The Presentation Room. We can do that Sunday morning, I hope. The Crew is heading to Henderson that Tuesday."

Linda told me, "Should be fine. I will let her know."

I paged Wynn to my office. She arrived in nearly full 'cleaning mode', not really paying attention to her attire I informed her, "Linda will be up next weekend and is bringing Olivia. We will do a consult on the 24<sup>th</sup> for the Corona de las Estrellas upgrades. Linda is going to be staying with Dundee. So Olivia can stay in The Presentation Room."

Later in the evening Sara came to my office and asked, "Any chance you can retire early tonight. I want to give you a milking as I am horny as hell!"

I laughed, "Lindsay has only been gone a couple days."

Sara confessed, "We made a challenge we'd hold each other belt keys until we see each other again after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year when Andy starts his new schedule."

I reminded her, "Well, you'll see her on the 23<sup>rd</sup> when we do The Unlikely Cowboy and for Christmas Dinner."

Sara clarified, "But she won't be staying with us then."

I told her, "Well, she will be starting the Tuesday after Christmas. As Andy is going with me and Wynn to Henderson."

Sara had forgotten about that, "Oh yeah, that makes sense. Well, then we only need to wait until the Tuesday after Christmas. So, how about that milking?"

## **Chapter 12: It's All Yours and an Unlikely Announcement from The Zinfandel's**

I took a quick shower and after removing my device, laid down on the bed. Sara lubed her fingers and started working my asshole. Once I was loose enough for her to get a finger to my prostate she started slowly sucking my cock. She was taking her time and I joked, "Is this an edging or a milking?" Sara sped up the tempo while increasing the pressure on my prostate and a short time later I cummed hard in her mouth. I thought she was done, but she continued the massage and sucking. Much to my surprise I felt another orgasm building, but wasn't sure if I would be able to sustain it. Sara knew what she was doing and managed to get a second load out me. I really was in no condition for a second encore so I headed back to the bathroom to pee and put my device back on. When I returned Sara was cleaning up the bed.

Dundee had been so busy in Tucson he was finally able to send me a written estimate Monday evening which also included the dimensions for the loft area as well as my office. He included pictures of the file cabinet and desk, plus the shelving. He asked that I let him know when I closed so he could get his crew out to start the prep work. I emailed him back confirming everything look good and would order The Big Ass Fans. The following Thursday Christina called, "Okay, so everything looks good for a closing tomorrow. Just need you to do a wire transfer for the agreed upon closing funds." I had been out to the title company earlier in the week to sign the documents and they had provided me with wire instructions. I told her I'd be over at my bank in the next half hour. After I got off the phone with her I went over my bank and met with Weston my personal banker. I gave him the information from the title company and after a couple signatures and

verification he performed the wire transfer. Late Friday morning Christina called, "Title company has received the funds and has sent the deed to be recorded with the county. Soon as that is done, 'it is all yours'!. I'll call you when it is done and have you meet me over there. A couple hours later Christina called back, "The deed has been recorded, can you meet me at the property?" I told her I'd be there in a few minutes. I met Christina at the Sagebrush house and she handed me the keys, "Well, here you go. Do let me know when you are ready to list the Fairy Duster house."

I took the keys, "Thanks. Yeah, thinking towards the end of next month. I am hoping I can get everything out of there before my crew has to go down to Tucson." I called Dundee, "Hey Mick, so I have closed on the house. I'll leave a key in a lock box and text you the code." Dundee messaged me about an hour later saying he was on his way back from Tucson and would have his crew start first thing Monday. On Saturday a FedEx truck arrived at the Fairy Duster house with three boxes from Big Ass Fans. I set those in the garage for now and would take them over to the house when I met Dundee on Monday. The weekend was quiet and it was starting to feel 'normal' now not having the McGrawl's around. They seemed to be adjusting well too. It helped both Lindsay and Sara seeing each other during the week at work. Monday morning I put the fans in the Jeep and headed over the Sagebrush house. Much to my surprise there were three trucks including Dundee's in the driveway.

I headed into the house and called out for Dundee. Mick yelled down from the loft he'd be down shortly. He came down the stairs, "Well, as you can see we've started. Your desk and file cabinet should be in next week after Christmas. Hope that works."

I reminded him, "Don't plan on moving in until after the first of the year. I have the fans in The Jeep. Where should I put them?"

Dundee looked at this schedule, "Hmm...ah here we go electrician will be here on Wednesday. Suppose you can put them in the garage for now. I can get those installed on Thursday before the flooring guy comes. While you are here, come on up we've started framing for the closet and dressing rooms." I followed Dundee up the stairs and could see the framing for the three dressing rooms and on the other side of the hall, our giant closet. Dundee informed me, "We'll install the closet system later this week. The main focus for the next couple days after today is going to the studio and your office. That will take most of the week as all the shelving is built on site." By the end of the week, the shelving was installed in the studio/library and my office. Dundee had laid out a blue tape outline of the layout and placement of the file cabinet and desk. Upstairs the cedar dressing rooms and closet were done; the big ass fans had been installed along with a split HVAC system for the closet and dressing rooms. It was during the inspection Shana had found a second HVAC system behind the garage which serves the loft and the FROG.

Thursday night Sophie called to inform me should would be bringing Laura and Miss Kitty up the next day and to expect them in the afternoon. My mother and Blanche would not be up until Saturday. Linda had called me earlier in the day to tell me they'd be shutting down the Tucson Budget Holstein at Noon on Friday. Her and Olivia would be coming up there after. Olivia would stay with us, but Linda was going to stay with Dundee who would pick her up at the Fairy Duster House. Friday morning Wynn headed over to the market to start stocking up to accommodate all the guests as well as for Christmas Dinner. I decided since I had time before Laura and Miss Kitty or even Olivia and Linda were to arrive I'd check on the progress of the Sagebrush house. There were several trucks in the driveway and I headed into the house. Dundee was coming out the garage and saw me, "Ron, good of you to drop in. I can show you what we have gotten done." He took me into the studio which looked more like a library now. The shelving along the west wall was completed and matched perfectly to the exposed beams. The shelving was continued into the my office and he showed me the 'secret door' to my shop. They also had installed the half shelves along the back wall. Dundee pointed to the ceiling, "We got your fan installed in here too. Desk and file cabinet looking at next Wednesday. Let's head up the loft." We entered the second floor and I noticed the LVP had been laid and both Big Ass Fans along with new lighting had been installed. He took me over to the corner, "This area turned out really nice, I'd really glad you suggested doing cedar. So we have three dressing rooms and an oversize clothes/storage closet. So again the only thing we are waiting on is the furniture for your office."

I reminded him, "Well, my crew leaves Tuesday morning for Vegas and we should be back hopefully no later than Friday. Going to need to have Gary and his sister in-law move all our toys over, but of course can't do that until we get back as the project in Vegas is his step daughter's. So we likely won't move in until closer to the second week of January." I wanted to confirm Linda's arrangements for Christmas, "So to confirm, you are picking up Linda tonight and she is staying with you?"

Dundee confirmed, "Yeah. She mentioned something about a Holiday party tomorrow night and then Christmas dinner at your current house? She is going back to Tucson on Tuesday."

I told him, "Yeah, Gary is hosting a big get together at The Unlikely Cowboy. Guess his in-laws are coming in on Sunday and they won't be joining us on Christmas. Okay, so she will be going back with Olivia on Tuesday then. So, when are you going to fully relocate to Tucson?"

Dundee told me, "Once Linda is done with Thirsty Cactus this summer or fall. I'll be doing a lot of the interior work on McGrawl's building as well as the residence above The Budget Holstein for her daughters. I won't be going back to Tucson until after the first of the year so, when you get back next week we can do a walk

through."

I headed back to the house shortly before lunch. Wynn was in the kitchen trying to find room for everything in the pantry and refrigerator she had just bought. She asked, "Who's staying with Sara and Lindsay while we are gone?"

I told her, "Besides Kayré and Kacie, I am not sure."

Wynn realized, "Oh yeah, forgot they are still here. Okay nevermind. So when is everyone coming?"

I explained, "Laura and Miss Kitty sometime this afternoon. Linda and Olivia were supposed to be leaving from Oro Valley around noon. Dundee is going to pickup Linda on his way home this afternoon. My mother and Blanche sometime tomorrow."

Later that afternoon Laura, Miss Kitty and Sophie arrived. Wynn showed Laura and Miss Kitty to the Queen Suite while Sophie would be staying in Wynn's retreat. Linda and Olivia came in a little later. Linda had a couple boxes. While Wynn was showing Olivia to the Presentation Room Linda explained, "These are for Sara and Lindsay. Christmas gift for their hard work. These are very exclusive and super high quality genuine leather corsets. I'd like them to wear them tomorrow night at the party."

I told her, "Well, I am not sure about Lindsay as she not here anymore. However, she normally drops Sara off on her way home. So, I can call her or Sara and let them know you want to see them." I called Sara, "Hey, when Lindsay drops you off today after work, have her come in Linda has a request for the two of you in regards to tomorrow night." Sara advised me they would be closing down soon and should be back here in about an hour. I relayed to Linda, "They should be here in an hour."

An hour later Sara and Lindsay came into the kitchen and Linda handed them the boxes explaining the contents and her request. Shortly later Dundee came by and Linda told us we would see them tomorrow at The Unlikely Cowboy. Wynn made burgers and steak fries for dinner. The next day, Mother and Blanche arrived in the later morning. I greeted them, "Welcome, the first and last Christmas you will be spending since we moved back here. You will be in the King Suite."

Lorena asked, "So where is this 'new' house you all are moving to?"

I told her, "It is 'behind' us, but it is also about quarter mile away. Anyway, you have a few hours until we depart for Gary's celebration."

Most everyone hung out in the Great Room and chatted. Sara came down the stairs wearing Linda's new corset which was an over-bust style made from real

black leather and all the 'hardware' was gold. She was wearing a short skirt with blackout tights and black ankle ballet boots. Kacie saw her, "Wow!"

Kayré commented, "So that is the new corset mother has been so secretive about."

Kacie replied, "Yes she has been. I know they are vendor sample that she got a big discount, but she won't even tell me how much they were discounted."

Kayré took a closer look, "The quality of the build is impressive."

Sara added, "Yeah, it feels very solid, even when Wynn was lacing me into it. The corset is very firm, but yet comfortable"

We headed over to The Unlikely Cowboy. I looked around the parking lot to get an idea who had arrived. Saw the Chick Magnet, Maya and Peaches' Jeep, The McGrawl's Lexus but didn't see Gay or the girls' bikes. Did notice The Eldorado though. We walked in and saw most everyone was there. Gary and Bambi were greeting everyone as they walked in. Sara saw Lindsay in a similar outfit to hers and went to join her. I asked Bambi, "Bunny here?"

Gary pointed to a corner and saw Martina and Bunny talking. Lorena and I walked over to join them. She looked at Bunny and commented, "When are you due?"

I was rather confused by mother's question and then Bunny yelled out, "Gary! I told you we'd wait."

Gary walked over confused and confirmed, "I haven't said anything."

Lorena apologized, "Sorry, I didn't realize it was a big secret."

Bunny laughed, "That's okay. I am due in July and it is a girl. How'd you know?"

Lorena commented, "Just one of those things. You're glowing and look a lot like I did when I had Abigail. Now, Ron on the other hand, I needed a tent maker..."

Bunny giggled, "Oh god, I hope I don't get that big. Well, I suppose we should tell everyone else."

Gary announced, "Everyone, please gather around. Bunny and I have something to announce."

Once everyone was gathered Bunny announced, "Gary and I are expecting our first child, a girl in mid-July."

A while later I had a chance to talk to Gary, "Well this certainly explains a lot.

Including why you were not going to Kingman this year and they are coming to your place. Either way I am sure Claudette is happy."

Gary laughed, "Yeah, she's been on us for years to have her grandchild! We've been trying for a long time and found out right after Thanksgiving. So, there will be some changes as a result. I will be working from home more often and less likely to have client's over. However, y'all moving kind of put a wrinkle in plans I had for product demos. I was hoping to do demo's at your place and have Wynn, Sara or Lindsay model. But, then too the McGrawl's moved out as well."

I reminded him, "We are still in the same neighborhood. Plus, the studio is huge so plenty of room to client demos."

Gary wasn't sure what I was talking about, 'Studio?'"

I told him, "Yeah. Technically it will be...actually kind of already is now; The Library. The lady who had the house prior had used the space for a Yoga Studio. Dundee has installed all the shelving and then I'll bring my tables and the Armour over. You still going to have a play loft?"

Gary advised me, "For now. But, as she gets older...no we won't. In fact, we may end up selling the house and getting something a little smaller which will fit the four of us better. Still a couple years down the road."

I told him, "Been an interesting past few months hasn't it? Seems all our needs have been changing, which I suppose is a good thing. So when we get back from your step daughter's job, going to need you and Bambi's help getting all the toys moved over to the new house."

Bambi happened to be near and heard the last part, "Didn't we just move your stuff a couple months ago when you moved back next to us!?"

I replied, "I believe you did. We'll just blame Andy and Lindsay with them moving out, forcing me to buy a smaller house...again."

As the night went on Martina got hornier and was humping and grinding on everybody who couldn't avoid her. She had tried to have her way with me earlier, but found out I was wearing my CB-6000. She moved on to Andy to discover he too was in his device. Lindsay somewhat annoyed suggested to Martina, "Why don't you try your own husband..."

Martina laughed, "I am saving him for later...you look so hot! Come dance with me!" Martina grabbed Lindsay and dragged her out to the dance floor. Truth be told though, Lindsay was looking for a 'release' and was enjoying dancing with Martina.

Lindsay went from being annoyed to quickly becoming impressed by how well Martina was dancing. It was not just because Martina was wearing stiletto sandals (though Lindsay herself was wearing stiletto ankle boots), "Wow, you're a good dancer."

Martina confessed, "Years and years of working clubs. Course my mama had me in ballet classes as soon as I could stand on my own two feet. She continued my 'training' as I went through school. Moved into other types of dance once I was in high school. She wanted me to do dance professionally, but I couldn't stand the grind. I just want to dance for fun. She never really approved and that was what tore our relationship apart. Towards the end she got over it and admitted she was trying to give me an opportunity she never had. She finally told me just to do what make me happy...so here I am." Martina wiped tears from her eyes and apologized, "Sorry, didn't mean to get..."

Lindsay knew what Martina had been through, having had a similar experience with her parents, "...that's okay. I know what you mean and been through. My parents have never approved of Andy."

Martina was surprised, "Why?! He seems like a very responsible and wholesome guy. He has stood by you when y'all have fallen on tough times."

Lindsay smiled, "Yes he is very much so...but he's not a doctor or lawyer!"

Martina laughed, "Oh fuck that nonsense! Sorry girl, but you got a way better deal with him than you would've with a fucking doctor or lawyer. I should know, I dated many of them and most of them were so into themselves or their careers."

Lindsay whole preconception of Martina had suddenly changed, "Wow! I had you judged all wrong..."

Martina laughed, "It happens. As I said before, there's a lot about that many people don't know and it is not all bad."

Lindsay recalled back when we were still at The Acme House the day Maya had her meltdown, "True. We saw that with the way you were able to calm Peaches when Maya had her 'incident' few years ago. I'm getting hungry, want to grab some food."

Martina bowed, "Thank you. Yeah, I could go for some food too."

Andy and I were at a nearby table and noticed Lindsay and Martina together. Andy commented, "Wow, that is an odd sight! Never thought Lindsay would socialize with Martina."

I reminded him, "Martina *is* a nice person....even if she did sleep with my sister

when we were still married." Though I didn't admit it to Andy; I was surprised too, given what I knew about Lindsay.

After Lindsay ordered her and Martina some food she explained, "My older sister married...though I think it was more along the lines of it being arranged...a lawyer. She has never been happy and resents our parents for what they did to her."

Martina was surprised, "I didn't know you had a sister. I know what you mean I was so mad at mama for forcing me into dance, though now it is part of my life and I enjoy it..kind of ironic."

Lindsay explained, "Yeah, she's about 10-years older and lives somewhere back east. I haven't talked to her in a couple years."

Martina told her, "Good at least you can still talk to her. Mama died right before Ron and I married; we were not on the greatest of speaking terms."

The next morning Olivia, Andy, Wynn, Laura and I all met in my office. Olivia went over her plans to switch over to Square. We discussed with her the options for updating and upgrading her network. We already knew she was going to need a switch with a larger throughput and she decided it would be a good time to replace all the wireless access points as she had three or four different generations and models scattered throughout.

Christmas morning was fairly quiet. After breakfast we all exchanged gifts. Earlier in the week Gary had dropped off the 'gifts' Kayré and Kacie had custom ordered for each other. As I walked over to the tree I announced, "Kayré and Kacie, Gar...I mean Santa dropped these off for you." Both girls were surprised as they knew they had ordered toys for the other, but didn't realize the other had ordered for them. I picked up a box and was tagged for Kayré, "Kayré, this is for you from Kacie."

Kayré was wondering what Kacie had gotten her, "Oh wow. Okay." She opened the box to find a chastity bra that matched the belt she had made for herself after they had returned from the Moon Goddess. "Oh my a Chastity Bra how nice!" She joked, "This will come in handy whenever Peaches is around!" She then noticed another smaller box on the bottom, "Oh there is more." She took out the second box and discovered a set of thigh bands specifically for her model of belt. She turned to Kacie asking, "You trying to punish me?"

Kacie giggled, "May be...call it 'motivation'" Kayré looked at her confused, "Motivation to wear all those dresses you bought, but never wear...instead of jeans..."

Kayré laughed, "You know me too well..."

I picked up the other box tagged for Kacie and handed it to her. Kacie wasn't expecting the weight and nearly dropped the box, "Yoikes, this is heavy." She opened the box, "Oh wow! I've been wanting one of these."

As she pulled out the armor Sara exclaimed, "Holly fuck, no idea you would ever want to wear one of those! You are lot kinkier than you lead on..."

I laughed and reminded her, "The quiet ones are the kinkiest!" I turned to Wynn, "You certainly started something here. First Sara, then Peaches now we have Kacie wearing a chastity corset armor."

Sara offered to assist Kacie, "If you like I can help you get into this and offer some helpful tips."

Kacie told her, "That would be great. Kayré, why don't go you change into your new metal underwear!"

Kayré, Kacie and Sara headed down to the Quail Suite. Sara looked at the armor and noticed it was pretty much identical to hers as well as Wynn and Peaches. She noticed there was a plug already installed she advised Kacie, "You can remove the vaginal plug if you like to get used to this first." Kacie told her she rather get used to it 'fully equipped'. Sara grabbed a nearby bottle of lube and lubed up the plug then instructed her, "First after you have unlocked and opened the device, you will step into like a leotard. As you pull it up, you will need to line up the plug and start working it into you. Once you are high enough up, you will to insert your tit piercings into the grove. For this is going to be easier if you have chair you can stand behind and lean forward. Once both tits are in stand strait and give it a tug to see if you can pull it up any further. Now, this part takes practice; reach behind you with whichever hand is easier and start turning the lock clockwise. If you are turning the lock the correct direction, you will feel the device 'swallowing' you, if not you are turning it the wrong way." Kacie was turning the lock with her left hand and felt the device closing up around her. She got to a point where she was having trouble. Sara told her, "It is a tight and exact fit so it if it not closing all the way, use your freehand, push up on the bottom to push it up deeper." With her right hand she pushed on the crotch of the device and felt the plug push into her deeper. She tried the lock again with her left hand was able to get another half turn until she heard a click and the lock would not turn anymore. She also felt the plug shift deeper inside her. Sara told her, "That click means the device is fully closed and now to fully lock the device push the lock into the back of the device. It will pop in flush." Kacie pushed the lock in. Kacie walked over to the full length mirror and admired herself. She was a little taken a back by the plug moving inside her as she walked. Sara giggled, "Yeah, the plug is going to take a little getting used to, especially since Kayré selected a ribbed versus smooth plug."

Kacie told her, "Well, I think it is she is trying to torture me. Payback for what I am about to put her through."

Kayré laughed, "True, but I am used to wearing ribbed plugs so not so much of an issue for me. While you are here Sara, can you help me?"

As Kayré removed her jeans she noticed Kayré's belt, "Didn't realize you had gotten a new belt." Kayré explained she had ordered a new as she had lost so much weight after her stay at the Moon Goddess, the original belt Sara had given her didn't fit so well. Sara removed the Chasity Bra from the box and examined it, "Hmm, this looks very similar to Lindsay's except the locking posts are on the side instead of between the cups. Looks like you are going to need help to get into this the first time around. Interesting there is screw type lock through the post on the right side, but the left will be secured with a padlock." She realized Kayré, like Kacie and Lindsay was left handed, "Oh, keep forgetting you two are left handed. Okay, put this over your head then get you boobs into the cups. Like Kacie's armor this looks to be an exact and tight fit, but is slightly adjustable. Usually in these cases you will want to use the center hole. So try to get the ends aligned and slide the post into the center hole." It took Kayré a couple minutes of trying before she finally got everything to line up. Sara handed her a padlock, "Here you go." Kayré locked the bra into place. They moved on to the thigh bands. As Sara handed her the first band she explained, "They are both the same, but the lead chain needs to be on the outside as it will attach to your belt."

Kayré took the thigh band and examined the locking sleeve which slid over the post on her belt, "Oh so that's what these posts are for!"

Sara told her, "I believe Gary also sells wrist cuffs that will fix your wrists to each side of the waist band utilizing those same posts." Kayré put the first band on her left side and attached the lead chain to her belt. She repeated for the right side. Sara handed her a small chain and padlock, "You will put this chain through the rings on the inner side of the thigh bands. The less slack you give yourself, the smaller the steps you can take. It seems Kacie's intentions are more to prevent you from wearing jeans than to limit your moment." Kayré put the chain through the rings and locked the padlock through the ends. She admired herself in the mirror before putting on a dress she had selected earlier. Kayré put the dress on and determined it was loose enough it would not show the sides of the chastity bra or her belt. Again, she looked at herself in the mirror.

Later on Kayré and Kacie slowly made their way up the stairs and to the kitchen to assist Wynn getting the Christmas dinner ready. Early in the afternoon Maya and Peaches arrived along with Marc and Martina. The girls headed down to the playroom while Marc and I talked. He reminded me he would be going back and forth to Idaho over the next couple months and wanted to make sure it was okay for Martina to stay with us. Later in the afternoon Linda and Dundee arrived. It was about that time Wynn served the first 'shift' of Christmas dinner. An hour

later was the second shift. Since Gary and his family were not attending we were able to get away with doing two shifts. None of us really minded though as we knew next year things would be a lot different. We wouldn't have Kayré and Kacie with us anymore and likely they would join Linda and Olivia down in Oro Valley next year. Also Marc and Martina would be returning to their usual Christmas Vacation in Vail.

### **Chapter 13: The Acme Job and On The Move Again**

The next morning during breakfast I reminded Sara, "Gary, Wynn, Andy and I are going to be in Henderson with Laura and Sophie until the end of the week..I hope. Miss Kitty will still be here with you and Lindsay until we get back."

My mother commented, "Blanche and I are going to stay up here a couple more days before we head back."

We had just wrapped up breakfast when Gary came into the kitchen, "Y'all about ready? I don't want to keep Geoffrey waiting too long as he is doing us a huge favor here."

Kacie told Wynn, "Kayré and I can take care of the dishes."

Gary told us, "I can take four in the Caddy."

I told him, "Andy, Wynn and I are going to be in the Jeep, you take Laura and Sophie."

We departed shortly thereafter and arrived at the air park in less than half hour. During the flight I gave a run down, "So, Laura is going to spend most of today getting the new network equipment configured. Andy and I will be working in the sever room. So Wynn and Sophie y'all will be removing the old computers. Though at some point Wynn is going to need to assist Andy in running cables to the new section." Gary advised both he and Cristina were available for labor as they knew this project needed to be done by the end of the week. "Okay, that will help. For now, you two will assist Wynn and Sophie with removing the old computers. By the way, what is Cristina plan on doing with those computers and all the old equipment?"

Gary told me, "Nothing. She was hoping you would all take it with you."

I laughed, "Gary this is a commuter helicopter not a Chinook! Well...that was an element I wasn't expecting."

Wynn suggested, "You could always Road Runner Freight it back to yourself."

I cringed, "Yeah, where the heck I am going to put multiple pallets of equipment."

Much less have the time to go through and see what is worth keeping."

Wynn reminded me, "You didn't plan on taking any more projects until mid January."

I reminded her, "Yeah, but there is the matter of the move and yet another project for Linda."

Laura was confused, "Linda? Thought Thirsty Cactus wasn't going to be until March or April."

I clarified, "Technically, Olivia; Corona de las Estrellas. Of course Linda has been hinting that Thirsty Cactus might be sooner. So I may end up not taking on any other projects until this summer when we are done with Thirsty Cactus. So I suppose, I am going to end up having plenty of time."

Andy told me, "I can help you out on Mondays since I am off. Might even buy some parts or systems from you too."

I asked Gary, "Would Cristina be willing to store the old equipment for a couple weeks until I get moved over to the new house?"

Gary replied, "Yeah, think so. We should be able to find a corner in the warehouse we can store the stuff until Road Runner picks it up."

I told him, "Probably the same corner all her new equipment is currently. Which I just realize means Andy, Wynn and I will need to go through everything and make sure what we ordered as arrived. So, Laura if you don't mind can you help out Sophie, Gary and Cristina with removing the old equipment?"

Laura joked, "I don't do manual labor, that's why I brought Sophie!"

Gary played along, "I see where Martina gets it from..."

Laura replied, "No, I can help them out. Not much else I can do until y'all are done."

After we landed Gary told Geoffrey, "We plan on leaving Saturday, not sure when yet." Geoffrey advised Gary to let him know when we were ready. Gary informed us, "Got a text from Cristina, she should be here shortly. She borrowed her friend's Town & Country for the week. Nora retrieved our bags and I tipped her and Geoffrey. A short time later Cristina drove up in a blue 2010 Chrysler Town & Country. As we drove to the site she informed us, she had reserved a large suite at one of the resorts for the week, tough Gary would be staying with her.

We arrived at the site and she took Andy, Wynn and I over to the pallets of new

equipment. I explained to Cristina, "I can have Road Runner Freight pickup the old equipment, however it will be a couple weeks due to us moving." Cristina advised us this would be fine and we could put all the old equipment in this area. Over the next couple hours Andy, Wynn and I confirmed everything we ordered had arrived. We took a break for lunch and upon returning we started unboxing the new equipment. That process took a lot longer than expected as we had to sort it out for each section. Cristina came over later and asked when we planned on wrapping up for the day. I had lost track of time and looked at my phone to see it was already after six in the evening. I told her, "I suppose we should. Get a fresh start in the morning. Wynn, go start rounding up everyone."

Day 2, we continued with the sorting and by lunch time we had everything sorted. Upon returning from lunch Laura and Sophie started getting the network equipment configured. Andy and I moved on to the sever room and went to work clearing off the old rack. Wynn and Sophie had started on running the new cables into the new section. Andy and I were about to start building the new rack when Cristina asked if we should break for dinner or stop for the day. I checked my timeline and discovered we were running behind as I had expected to be getting the new server setup by now. I told her, "I think we should take a break then couple more hours after that. Running a little behind from where I'd like to be." Upon returning from dinner we had the new rack built and UPS connected. At that point I decided we were done for the night. As we wrapped up Laura advised me they expected to be done with configuring the network equipment by mid-day tomorrow. I told her, "Okay, yeah that will work Andy and I should have the severs installed, but would take most of the day and likely overnight to get all the software installed and updated. So by Thursday we should be able to start doing the mass imaging, provided we get all the computers setup by the end of day tomorrow and the network is up and running. That is going to take all-day as we have to babysit the systems for restarts and making sure all the drivers get installed. Friday we will get the WiFi setup." Laura informed me they had not yet done the access points. I told her, "That's fine, you two can start working on that once you are done with the rack equipment and throughout the day on Thursday."

Day 3, was not as long of a day as once we had the rack fully built including the network equipment we were at a stopping point until the severs were fully imaged. Around four that afternoon I advised Wynn to round everyone up. I explained, "We are at a stopping point now. The severs are being imaged, and at least they will automatically restart as needed, unlike the PC's. I have confirmed I can RDC into them, so I will check on the progress remotely this evening. Are all the the PC's connected?" Wynn confirmed they were all connected, but had not been powered on yet. I explained, "Okay, first thing tomorrow morning we need to power on each PC. What we will want to see is 'Operating System Not Found.' if we get any other messages or issues note it on a Post-It. Andy and I will address those as needed. Laura and Sophie will be working on the access points. Gary and Cristina will help Wynn run the cabling for the access points. So, go ahead and wrap up whatever you are working on and we be departing in about

20-30 minutes.”

Day 4 started out rough. We discovered several of the PC's did not have hard drives, others were beeping at power up. The majority of the PC's though were fine and we rebooted them so they could network or PXE boot to begin the imaging. Andy and I spent most of the day addressing the problem children. Laura and Sophie were about two-thirds of the way through getting the Access Points configured when we came to dinner time. We decided we needed to continue working and it was nearly ten in the evening before we left. However, we had all the PCs either already imaged or nearly completed. Gary, Cristina and Wynn had most of the new cabling done for the access points and expected to wrap up by lunch time on Day 5.

Day 5, after breakfast everyone resumed what they had been working on from the previous day. I checked on the remaining PCs and still had a couple refusing to image. Since Cristina had ordered extra PCs I went ahead and grabbed a couple from her surplus. I found some Neon Green Post-Its and tagged the troublemaker PC's and I'd take a look at them once we arrived back in Scottsdale. These may have been 'one-offs' and might just need to manually image them; then send them back to Cristina to keep in her reserves. However, I did want to dive into them deeper so if need be I could create a secondary image in case we ran across any of these in the future. I checked in on Sophie and Laura. Sophie saw me and advised me, “We are almost done, just another few access points to go.”

I let her know, “Good, hopefully after lunch we can start getting them installed. I don't think that process should take to long as we have all the infrastructure in place now. Especially since these are PoE, makes things a lot easier.” I moved on to see how Andy and Wynn were coming along. I was surprised to see Andy in the server room and joked, “What the?! You are making Wynn run all the cabling!” Andy told me it was *her* idea as she could move around in the attic lot easier than he could. He told me they should be done by lunch. Lunch time arrived and as we headed out I advised, “Next we need to install the access points; Laura and Sophie will make sure they are working as expected. We will end at dinner time. If we get done early with the access points, start focusing on getting everything cleaned up.” Upon returning Wynn, Andy and Gary started installing the access points while I checked on the last couple PCs I had installed that morning. Just before dinner the last PC successfully imaged. I checked in on Laura and Sophie. Sophie reported all the access points which have been brought online so far have been working. I told them, “Well nice that something is actually going smoothly. I finally have all the PCs imaged, I am bringing back four which refused to image for further investigation. Anyway, once you are done with this set we will be wrapping up for the night.”

Day 6, our final day. During breakfast I informed everyone, “So, my understanding there are still a few more access points needing to be installed.

Wynn and Andy should be able to handle getting those installed. Sophie, Gary, Cristina and I will focus on getting everything cleaned up. I want to be done by lunch time, so we can get back to Scottsdale by mid-afternoon. The last remaining access points were installed and tested with no issues. Laura started packing up her gear. Andy and I did one more once through just to make sure everything was working as expected. Wynn took Andy's, Laura's and my gear bags and loaded them into the Town and Country. We had already put our luggage in that morning. I found Cristina, "Well, we said we'd get this install done while you took your Winter Break and we have done it. Once I get back to Scottsdale, I'll have Wynn get in touch with you once we know when Road Runner Freight will pickup those pallets. I did have to 'borrow' four PC's out of your reserves to replace the ones which refused to image. I am taking those back with us and will take a closer look at them to see what is causing the issues. Once I get them imaged, I'll Road Runner them back to you."

Cristina told me, "Y'all did an awesome job, can't believe how much we got done this week. Do y'all have time for lunch before you depart?"

I told her, "I am suppose to meet my contractor at the new house this afternoon, but I haven't set a time with him yet. I just told him, I'd give him a call once we landed. So, yes we can do lunch then head to the heliport."

Gary came over and explained, "Geoffrey and Nora are only about 15-minutes out, so I'll call them when are done with lunch."

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After we landed back in Phoenix, I called Dundee and informed him I could meet him in about an hour. We returned to the Fairy Duster house and with the help of Wynn, I unloaded the leftover equipment into my shop. We walked into the house to find no one was home. Kacie and Miss Kitty were out picking up orders from vendors while Kayré, Lindsay and Sara were at The Budget Holstein. I went into my office and saw a large stack of mail on my desk. I was just about to sort through said mail when Dundee was calling on my cell. A few minutes later Andy and I met with Dundee at the Sagebrush house, "Hey Ron good to see you. How was Vegas?"

I told him, "Tiring...very, very tiring. Long days and nights, but we got it done and were out before things got crazy over there. So, I am guessing my desk and file cabinet came in?"

Dundee confirmed, "Yesterday actually. Come take a look and let me know if anything needs to be adjusted."

We walked into the library then my office. Andy saw the desk, "That's one big desk!"

Dundee told him, "The file cabinet ain't small either!"

I walked over and saw the file cabinet sitting in the corner, "Oh, this is a lot bigger than I was expecting. But it works, doesn't over power the room." I told Andy, "When we move next week you'll get my old desk. I'll have Gary and Bambi deliver it to you along with a bedroom set that we won't be needing anymore. Kayré and Kacie will take the other set once they move into their residence and I likely will give them the other chaise lounge up in your old office."

Once I had closed escrow on the Sagebrush house I had reserved the Wednesday after New Year's Day with Anozira Movers. They would be out on that Tuesday to start getting everything packed. Over the weekend Gary and Bambi moved all the 'toys' out of the playroom at the old house and into the play loft in the new house. They also delivered what was now Andy's desk. While Gary and Bambi were doing their thing I walked out to the covered patio and noticed it was a lot larger than what we had now. This would be a good time to upgrade our outdoor dining set and the seating area outside the studio. When Gary and Bambi had wrapped up they dropped me back off at Fairy Duster house. I found Wynn and told her, "I am going to be gone a few hours and I'll pickup Vinnie's on the way back."

The furniture store I had been dealing with for the past several years was based out of Colorado, but had locations throughout the US. In Arizona they had locations in Glendale and Gilbert. Both were about the same distance from us, but I preferred dealing with the Gilbert location as I had a sales associate there I regularly worked with. I had texted him earlier in the day with the dimensions and photos of the areas and had described what I had in mind. An hour and half later I arrived at the store and asked the concierge to page my sales associate. It was a few minutes before he finally made his way to the front of the store, "Ron! Good to see you again. So, you bought yet another house?"

I told him, "Yeah, this will hopefully be the last for a while. Downsizing again. So I figured this would a good time to get some new outdoor furniture." My associated showed me several pieces and ended up with plenty of seating for the patio and around the fire pit on the side yard off the Library. For the covered patio he showed me a dining set that could seat twelve. I choose the color and styles I liked then handed him my Plutonium Card. He checked and told me delivery would be this coning Thursday, which would be the day after we moved in. Before I left I called into Vinnie's and talked to Peaches, placing a pickup order for the five of us and told her I'd be up there in about two hours. I needed to stop for gas and use the restroom before I made the trek back up to Scottsdale.

First thing Tuesday morning The Anozira Movers packing crew arrived and go to work getting the house packed. While they were working in the library I packed up my main computer from my office. I had done my shop server over the

weekend since Gary and Bambi also moved my tech benches. I loaded everything up into The Cruiser and headed over to the Sagebrush house. I found a work order on the front porch for the local Internet provider informing me my self install was done on their end. I just needed to plugin the new router/modem they had shipped me last week and would be ready to go. By lunch time I had the computer in the my office setup and connected to the Internet. I would work on my shop sever when I returned from lunch. I headed over to the Market Place and grabbed some lunch at Subway. I returned back to the Sagebrush house and went to work on my shop sever. I didn't have any new machines to be able to test if the imaging portion was working, but I was able to access my inventory, which still needed to be updated as I had not done a reverse inventory after the Acme Job.

Wednesday morning The Anozira Movers crew returned and started loading everything. They had the truck loaded by mid-morning and shortly after lunch everything was unloaded. Sara was at work as was Kayré. I told Kacie, "I'll have Wynn get y'all's bed setup once she is done washing all the linens, same goes with the bathroom. Remember, it is a shared bathroom though most of the time you two will be the only ones using it. Friday night's you will be sharing with Sara and Lindsay. Not sure if we will have anymore guests before you two move out...well other than Martina. Given what Marc has told me sounds like his project will be done right around the time yours is done as well."

Wynn had learned her lesson from the last couple moves and knew to pack a few boxes with kitchen essentials which I had brought with me yesterday. When I had returned from lunch I brought Wynn over with me so she could get the kitchen setup and be fairly ready to go for dinner the evening after we moved in. I walked into the kitchen and saw Wynn was still unpacking. Upon seeing me she commented, "Going to need to get used to the washer and dryer being in their own separate room and not off the kitchen. Sheets are in the dryer, so should be able to start making the beds in the next hour." Before Sara and Kayré arrived home Wynn had all the beds made, except for the one in the Northern suite since it wouldn't be used until Friday night when Lindsay stayed with us.

Thursday afternoon the outdoor furniture was delivered. I had planned on putting a swing on the small patio off the main bedroom and southern suites, but found those patios were not deep enough. Plus the swings were starting to show their age, though they could be refurbished. So I had also ordered a couple Bistro sets for the patios. After all the furniture was unloaded, unwrapped and placed Wynn came out and looked around. She saw the dining table, "Wow, that big table. Will we even have that many people?" She walked over to the area off the studio and saw the new seating area around the fire pit. She sat in one of the chairs, "Oh this is nice."

I told her, "Laura has a similar setup at her place down in Marana. There are also several rocking chairs spread out on the wrap-around porch. Went a little crazy,

but I expect us to be here a long while now and have lots of people visiting.”

A couple days later I asked Wynn to setup a Road Runner Freight bid for the leftover equipment from The Acme Job. Wynn checked and informed me it would be about two weeks before they'd have a truck in that region and would be delivered within 2-3 days thereafter. I told her that time frame should be fine as it would be right before we would leave for The Corona de las Estrellas project. She went ahead and booked the bid and then contacted Cristina to let her know when to expect the pick-up.

### **Chapter 14: A Blast for Lindsay's Past and Corona de las Estrellas 3.0**

It was our third full week in the Sagebrush house and the fourth weekend Andy worked the back-to-back Friday/Saturday shift. Lindsay staying over on Friday nights and spending most of Saturday with Sara was working out fine for all involved. I was checking my email Thursday morning when I saw an email from The Association:

*Dear Desert Oasis Residents,*

*As many of you are aware ANOZIRA Commercial is developing the land to the west of the community, across The Pima Highway for mixed use Residential/Commercial development: The Village at Thirsty Cactus. Part of this new development involves re-configuring the interchange of Pima Highway and Desert Oasis Parkway. The existing interchange is going to be removed and a new traffic circle will be constructed providing access to the existing Desert Oasis Parkway and the future Thirsty Cactus Parkway from the Pima Highway. The existing connector roads to/from northbound Pima Highway will remain, however the southbound connectors will be permanently closed and demolished. Furthermore, a raised pedestrian bridge will be constructed spanning diagonally from the north side of Desert Oasis Parkway across the circle to the south side of the future Thirsty Cactus Parkway.*

*Construction is expected to start in the next week and expected to last for a about a month and half to two months. During that time there will not be access to/from southbound Pima Highway to/from Desert Oasis Parkway. Drivers will need to use the Lone Mountain access to enter/exit the community from/to southbound Pima Highway. There will also be a couple weekend complete closures of Pima Highway from Lone Mountain to the Carefree Highway to allow for safe demolition of the existing bridges as well as the final traffic pattern shift onto the new circle. We will send out notices of these closures when we are notified by the contractor.*

*We appreciate your patience and understanding for the next couple months. If you have any questions or concerns please contact to Desert*

*Oasis Community Association Office or for more information on the projects, ANOZIRA Commercial.*

There was also an email from Road Runner Freight informing me I had the shipment from The Acme Job arriving later that day. I warned Wynn, "Road Runner is suppose to deliver all that equipment from The Acme Job later today. Just have them stick it in the far garage next to Sara's Road Runner. At some point I'll get a chance to sort it all out. Andy says he would help me, but I know he is fairly busy."

Thursday evening Lindsay got an unlikely call from her sister, "Hey Lindsay, Leslie here. Say I am going to be in Arizona this weekend. Can we get together, been a very long time since we've seen each other."

Lindsay told her, "I suppose...um...you do know we're not in Tucson anymore. So, Andy works a double weekend shift; Friday afternoon/evening and all day Saturday. So I stay with Ron and Sara on Friday nights and most of Saturdays...I believe I've told you about them."

Leslie recalled, "Yes, you have. You're outside of Phoenix now correct?"

Lindsay replied, "Yes, we are in Scottsdale."

Leslie asked, "So, if I were to fly into Phoenix on Saturday morning could you come get me? Not sure where I would stay though and I would be flying back on Monday."

Lindsay explained, "Yes, that can be arranged. You can hang out with Ron, Sara and I until Andy gets back. He is usually done by 5:00 on Saturdays and takes him about half hour or so to get back here. I am sure you can join us for dinner too. As for where you can stay, we have a guest room in our condo which has yet to be used. You can stay with us Saturday and Sunday."

Leslie told her, "Okay, I suppose that works. I'll give you a call later once I know when the flight is due in."

I was in my shop working on finding out why those PC's from The Acme Job had refused to image when Lindsay called my cell, "Hey Ron, I need a favor. My sister is going to fly in on Saturday to Phoenix and leaving on Monday. She will stay with Andy and I on Saturday and Sunday. Though, was wondering if you could take me to get her and if it is okay she hangs out at your place with me until Andy gets back."

This was the first I have heard of Lindsay having any other family, "I had no idea you had a sister. That is fine...though I do I have some things to take care of with Gary most of Saturday. However, I am sure Wynn can take you. Will your sister

be joining us for dinner on Saturday night then?"

Lindsay told me, "Yes. She will call me later and let me know when Saturday her flight is due in. Thank you."

After I got off the phone with her I went back into the main house to find Sara. She was in the kitchen along with Kayré, Kacie and Wynn. Wynn saw me come in, "Oh, was about to have someone fetch you for dinner."

I told her, "Well here I am. Think I figured out what is going on with those PCs. Say, did any of y'all know Lindsay has a sister?"

Sara looked at me blankly and joked, "She does? Besides me!"

Wynn commented, "I had heard something about that from Martina, but never too sure with her."

I asked Wynn about her last statement, "What is that supposed to mean?"

Wynn laughed nervously, "Oh never mind."

I explained, "Okay then. Well, we get to meet her on Saturday when she is flies into Phoenix to see Lindsay. Since I have some work to do with Gary most of the day, Wynn can you take Lindsay out to the Phoenix Airport to pickup her sister? She will be staying with The McGrawl's over the weekend, but will hang out here until Andy gets off and we have dinner."

Wynn replied, "Yeah, I can do that. Have Lindsay let me know when."

Lindsay was telling Andy about Leslie when she called back, "Say, I have some choices here as to when I can come in; Looks like 10:30, 11:20, 12:10 or 1:00?"

Lindsay was checking her tablet looking at her schedule, "As far as I know, I don't have any client appointments....oh wait I do...Miss Womack at 10:00. I'd expect to be done with her by 11:00..so the 12:10 time slot should work. I'll have Wynn pick me up at The Budget Holstein then we can come get you...yeah that works."

Leslie confirmed, "Budget Holstein? Okay, then 12:10 it is."

Lindsay called Kayré, "Hey when are you are going in on Saturday? I have Miss Womack at 10:00, so perhaps I can hitch a ride with you since I'll be at Ron's Friday night. Wynn can get me when I am done." Kayré told her she'd be there at opening which was when Lindsay was suppose to meet with Miss Womack. Lindsay then called Wynn, "Okay, so Saturday morning I have a client appointment at 10:00, so I am going to ride out to The Budget Holstein with Kayré. Can you get me around 11:00, Leslie's fight comes in around 12:10?"

Wynn confirmed that would work.

Friday morning Andy dropped Lindsay off at The Budget Holstein on his way to Fountain Hills. That afternoon, Lindsay came back to the Sagebrush house with Sara. After dinner the two of them headed up to the play loft along with Kayré and Kacie. After a nightcap and everyone retiring for the evening, Lindsay and Sara spent the night in the Northern Suite. The next morning after breakfast Lindsay left with Kayré for the Budget Holstein. Lindsay was wearing a grey long sleeve Budget Holstein Polo shirt with a short grey skirt paired with black opaque tights and the same stiletto ankle boots she had worn at the Acme Party. Kayré and her arrived at The Budget Holstein about a half-hour before opening. This gave Lindsay an opportunity to get her selections ready for Miss Womack. Right at opening Miss Womack was waiting and was very pleased with Lindsay's recommendations and even picked out some other items as well. As planned, Lindsay wrapped up with her right before 11:00. This gave her a few minutes to run to the restroom before Wynn came. Lindsay had just stepped out on the restroom when she saw Wynn waiting in the Jeep out front. She told Kayré, "I'll see you tonight, got to go get my sister." Lindsay hopped in the Jeep and told Wynn, "Good timing!"

Wynn was in a purple long sleeve t-shirt with tan booty shorts, fishnets with ankle boots, she laughed, "But of course. Say, do you know what airline she is coming in on?"

Lindsay pulled out her phone, "Yeah...she sent me her flight info...ah here we go United."

Wynn made note, "Okay. That will determine which terminal we need to go to. I'll drop you off at the Arrivals and then head over to the cell phone lot. Give me a call when you are ready and I'll come by and get you two." Wynn dropped Lindsay off at the terminal. As Wynn drove away Lindsay began to wonder if she would recognize her sister being had been about 15+ years since she last saw her. Lindsay made her way to outside the arrivals area of the United gates and waited. 10-minutes later a lady slightly taller than her but older approached Lindsay.

Leslie saw the Budget Holstein shirt and figured this had to be her kid sister, "Lindsay?"

Lindsay wasn't really paying attention and looked up in surprise as she was not expecting a Boston accent and red hair, "Leslie?"

Leslie replied, "Yep! Wow, good to see you. Been way too long. Boy this place is huge, how the hell do we get out of here? I don't have any other luggage other than this backpack so we can go now."

Lindsay told her, "Let me call Wynn to come get us. Not sure how long it will take

her to get here from the cell phone lot, or for that matter us to get to the curb." Lindsay called Wynn and told her they were on their way out. As she walked out with Leslie, Lindsay commented, "I don't recall that accent when we were talking on the phone."

Leslie laughed, "Well, habit. When I am on the phone I try to tame down the accent. 5-years in Boston and I seemed to have lost my Tennessee accent. So what the heck is 'Budget Holstein'?"

As they walked Lindsay explained, "Upscale boutique clothing store. The owner's name is Holstein; she is based out of Tucson and then opened another store in Scottsdale many, many years ago. I am operations manager, but I am also the personal shopper for several clients, including Miss Womack who came in this morning. There is a third location in the retirement/golf community of Gold Canyon."

Leslie joked, "You were always the fashionable one of the family. Hell, I am just wearing a flannel shirt over a tank top with these jeans and western boots."

They made it out the terminal curb just in time to see Wynn pass by, "Ah just missed her by that much! We'll have to wait for her to make another pass." A couple minutes later Wynn came back around, this time seeing the two ladies she pulled over to the curb. Lindsay opened the rear door and told Leslie, "Go in first and I'll go in after you." Leslie got into the backseat of the Jeep followed by Lindsay. Once they were in Lindsay introduced Leslie to Wynn, "Leslie this is Wynn, Ron's assistant and house keeper."

Wynn waived, "Pleasure to meet you, now let's see if I can get out of here on the first attempt. Given traffic right now, I'd say we'd be back at the house in about an hour."

On the way back Lindsay and Leslie chatted. Upon arriving back at the house Lindsay walked in with Leslie and called for Sara, but got no response. She wondered if Kacie was around, "Kacie?"

Kacie yelled out, "On the patio with Martina."

Lindsay and Leslie headed out to the patio and found Kacie and Martina sipping Mojitos, "Oh Martina, wasn't expecting you here. Anyway this is my sister Leslie." Pointing to Martina, "Martina, Ron's first wife and next to her is Kacie who oversees operations of all three stores."

Martina stood up and shook Leslie's hand, "Pleasure." She turned to Lindsay, "Yeah, Marc is heading back to Idaho tomorrow. Looks like he is going to be out there Sundays through Tuesdays for next few weeks you will be seeing a lot of me. Still got plenty of Mojitos left if y'all want some."

Lindsay laughed, "Nothing wrong with that. Want a drink Leslie?"

Leslie replied, "Sounds good, I could use one after dealing with that airport!"

Wynn told them, "I'll bring out a pitcher and more glasses." She returned shortly and everyone poured themselves a drink.

Lindsay asked, "So, where's Sara?"

Kacie told her, "Budget Holstein. Right after you and Kayré left this morning she got a call from Miss Bordeaux asking if she was free this afternoon. She told me, she should be done around 4:00."

Martina told Lindsay, "Speaking of calling, Andy called the house earlier. He tried your cell, but said kept going to voicemail. Something about it being really slow today out at Fountain Hills and they likely closing early."

Lindsay laughed, "Oh...forgot to bring my charger so the battery likely went dead. Oh boy, Miss Bordeaux will get Sara to drop everything for her."

Kacie laughed, "Yeah and that is why she never cared for me, I wouldn't do that. Sounds like Miss Womack has you wrapped around her finger..."

Lindsay just shrugged off Kacie's comment and turned her attention to her sister, "So, what brings you out here? For that matter, you haven't said anything about Harvey since we picked you up. Plus, I noticed you are not wearing a ring..."

Leslie explained, "Wow...nothing gets past you...well, we're divorced as of earlier this week."

Lindsay asked, "How long were you two married, like 15-years...which was about the last time I saw you."

Leslie told her, "So yeah, about 15-16 years from when our parents how should I put this...'pushed me' into marrying him. About 5-years ago we relocated to Boston when he made Junior partner at The Firm. That was when things really started going down hill. Even before then though, as his whole focus was on making Junior Partner, didn't give care about me our or daughter..."

Martina commented, "Told you!"

Lindsay laughed, "Yes, you did." Lindsay was still processing everything, "Wait you have a daughter?"

Leslie told her, "Yes, Charlotte. We adopted her right after we married. She was 7

or 8 at the time. She didn't want to come to Boston with us and moved in with her boyfriend; now husband. They have a couple kids of their own which I haven't seen in person because we had moved to Boston. He owns a restaurant out where they live in Tennessee. Not sure of the town, they are about 30-miles outside of Nashville. Anyway, she handles all the marketing and I guess they have a little gift shop too. They're doing quite well and are quite happy. Anyway, once we moved to Boston there wasn't much to it anymore. About six-months ago I was talking with my daughter and she point blank asked me why I was still married to him. That was right after he became Senior Partner at that firm and was never around. So I finally told him I wanted a divorce and that didn't seem to phase him at all. Surprisingly, the divorce went very smoothly. Not really sure what I am going to do now. My daughter suggested I move in with her and her husband and the kids. Guess they have this huge farmhouse with a finished barn they use as a guest house. Anyway, I just wanted to get away from Boston to clear my head and decided I'd pay you a visit."

A little while later I returned home from working on Gary's new home office. Since he wasn't going to have clients over anymore he decided that he'd move his office to one the upstairs bedroom. I called out, "Anyone here?"

Martina yelled out, "We're all out on the patio Ron."

I walked out and Lindsay introduced me to her sister, "Leslie, this is Ron Merlot, a very good friend of ours."

Leslie walked over and gave me a hug, "Pleasure to finally meet you. Heard nothing but wonderful things about you and Sara."

I replied nervously, "Thanks." I turned my attention to Wynn, "Wynn. Sara called me and said her Kayré will be leaving at 4:00. Andy called me and said thing are dead right now at the Fountain Hills store so him and Max are closing at 4:00 as well. So, sounds like everyone should be back in the next hour."

Wynn announced, "Well, then I better head over to the market to get the fish and some veggies. Does anyone know how we are doing on potatoes?"

Kacie told her, "There is still an unopened bag in the pantry."

Wynn replied, "Okay then. Shouldn't be more than 20-minutes."

I told her, "I'll get the grill warmed up."

Kacie asked, "How many people are we having?"

Wynn did a quick count, "Not including Andy's tapeworm, nine. So go ahead and get 10 potatoes prepped." Wynn left to head over to the market while I got the

grill going. Kacie and Martina headed into the kitchen. Just leaving Leslie and Lindsay on the patio.

Leslie commented, "Good group of friends you have. I left most of mine behind when I moved to Boston. There are a couple people I am casual friends, but nobody I spend a lot of time with. Frankly, don't really care for Boston that much and the more I think about it wouldn't mind returning to Tennessee." She looked around and continued, "As beautiful as it is out here, I don't think I could stand the summers!"

Lindsay laughed, "Yeah, I know what you mean. Andy and I have been out here 20+ years now, so we've gotten used to it. Can't say we could stand the Boston winters."

Leslie commented, "Likely not, a bit brutal. Say, is there a washroom nearby I can use?"

Lindsay told her, "Yeah, when you got back inside to the right, then before the entrance to the library is a powder room on your left. I am going to head inside anyway see if Martina and Kacie need any help."

Leslie had returned from the powder room and found Lindsay sitting at the kitchen bar. She took a seat and commented, "Wow, nice kitchen. Hey my daughter has a stove just like that, except hers is blue."

Sara came into the house, "Hey all, I'm back!" She saw Leslie sitting next to Lindsay at the bar and commented, "So this is your sister you never told me about!" She walked over and introduced herself, "Hi, I'm Sara."

Leslie laughed, "Nice to finally meet you."

Lindsay declared, "Well, in my defense, I never really told anyone about her. Just kind of never really wanted to talk about that part of my life after the way my parents treated me because of Andy."

Leslie added, "Then they 'arranged' my marriage to my ex, Harvey. 'Mary a lawyer' they said... 'he'll treat you well' they said. Well after 15-years I had enough and when he finally made Senior Partner I told him we're through! Divorce was finalized this week and decided I need to get out of Boston for a bit and figured be a good time to connect with my kid sister."

Kacie introduced Kayré, "This is Kayré Holstein, my partner."

Leslie hugged Kayré and commented, "Oh so you're The 'Holstein'."

Kayré told her, "Well, it was my mother who started the store in Oro Valley a long,

long time ago.”

Wynn returned from the market and handed a bag of vegetables to Martina, “Here, work your magic with these!”

Martina looked into the bag and joked, “Might need to say a prayer first! Kacie can you help me?”

Kacie was wrapping the last of the potatoes, “Yeah, let me wrap these last couple potatoes.”

Wynn worked on getting the fish prepped for me to grill. Once she was done with the prep she took the fish and the potatoes out to me. Andy walked in and saw everyone in the kitchen, “Man, did you start dinner without me!”

Martina told him, “Yes, but we're only prepping.”

Lindsay called out to Andy, “Andy! Come meet my sister.”

Andy walked over and Lindsay introduced, “Andy this is Leslie my older sister I mentioned to you a couple times.”

Leslie and Andy hugged and she commented, “So nice to finally meet you. Thank you for being a great support to my sister. More than I could say my husband...well ex-husband as of Monday. 15+ years and an adoptive daughter and he put more focus on getting his precious partnerships with the firm. What a waste.”

Martina advised Leslie, “Sweetheart, let me tell you something...you are being too hard on yourself. You didn't do anything wrong, you were forced into something by your parents which was beyond your control. I know, I been there, done that! I was forced into ballet and dance from age 3 through my entire childhood. My mama had this grand plan for me to do dance professionally to have a legacy she didn't have. When I graduated high school, I found out she had plans to enroll me in a dance college. I finally told her dancing was not what I wanted to do with my life. So, I never had a 'normal' childhood, but I made it a point going forward to focus on what I could still change. You can't change the past, believe me I'd tried and it doesn't work. But you have Lindsay, your daughter and her children; focus on spending time and being there for them.”

We all looked at Martina in shock, but Leslie understood, “Thank you dear! Now, that was the swift kick in the rear I needed to stop feeling sorry for myself. And...yes I have already started to focus on what I can change, by coming out here to see my sister and try to make amends.”

Lindsay reminded her sister, “There is nothing to make amends about, our lives

got complicated is the reason why we haven't seen each other in so long. Plus we live on opposite ends of the country."

Leslie laughed, "Well, once I get settled down you and Andy should come out to visit."

Andy commented, "Would be nice to get away from here and not be related to our consulting gig."

I walked in and informed everyone, "The fish and potatoes are almost done."

Wynn asked, "We eating in here or on the patio?"

I told her, "Fairly nice out right now, not sure how it will be once the sun goes down. I suppose I can get the fire pits going. Give us a chance to break in this new outdoor dining set we bought upon moving here." I headed back outside to turn on both fire pits. Wynn came out and started setting the table. Everyone made there way out to the patio, grabbed a plate and waited in line to get their food.

During dinner Leslie commented, "Wow, this is really nice Ron. Thank you for looking after my sister."

I pointed to Sara, "Well, it was more of Sara looking out for her. Those two have been inseparable since they met some 12+ years ago down in Tucson."

Andy laughed, "Strange circumstances too, being we all happened to be staying at the same hotel. Only because we were having our condo flea bombed."

I added, "I was on my home with Sara from Vegas, this was before Gary moved to Arizona. Linda Holstein calls me to inform me her server blew-up. So we ended up heading down to Tucson and Linda put us up in that hotel for the night. These two meet the next morning during brunch and the rest as they say is history."

Martina asked, "We were still married then right?"

I laughed, "Yep, but you were also quite 'involved' with my sister during that time too."

Leslie commented, "They say everything happens for a reason and we may never really know why."

After dinner Andy, Lindsay and Leslie left. Sara told me, "Well that was a nice change from our usual routine."

I laughed, "Usual?" Martina and Kayré were helping Wynn get the patio cleaned

up while Kacie did the dishes. I asked Kacie, "Say, how goes getting Square setup for Corona de las Estrellas? We are scheduled to do the install next weekend."

Kacie told me, "Still working on it, but I will have it done before the weekend. What do you need to do on your end?"

I replied, "Mostly, it will just be getting the app on their iPads. I can have Wynn send you a CSV file with all the info, just need to know the layout. I do believe Olivia ordered some Square POS terminals. We will also be updating the network equipment which includes replacing all of the Wireless Access Points, which I think is going to be the most time consuming part of this project. I really, really hope we will be able to get this project done without Linda throwing something else at us. What was supposed to be a short weekend in Tucson last month turned into a 4-day affair. Oh well, I can dream!"

The remainder of the weekend was quiet, especially not having The McGrawl's with us anymore. I spent some more time on Sunday at The Zinfandel's helping Gary get his new office setup, specially setting up his video conference system. Tuesday morning Wynn paged me, "Ron there is a Road Runner delivery for you." I head outside to see the driver unloading several Cisco boxes. I had him set those in the side garage for now. I ran through my project manifest and confirmed everything I ordered had arrived. For the most part we were set to go, other than Kacie still needed to get their site/image done.

After lunch I called Laura to confirm for this weekend, "Afternoon Laura. So, all the network equipment for The Corona de las Estrellas project came in this morning. What time did you want to start on Saturday?"

Laura told me, "Don't much matter to me, I am only 30-minutes out, y'all are coming down from Scottsdale. Since it is weekend, are you bringing Sara?"

I hadn't thought about that, "Don't know, might just do that. I just really hope we can get out and back on Sunday."

Laura told me, "Well, you need to stand up to Linda and if she asks for a special favor tell her 'no'. I get she is a premier client and all, but things are getting fucking out-of-hand with her special requests."

I reminded her, "Yeah, but the last time it wasn't related to the 'business' as it was for The Budget Holstein, well except for us having to stop at Gold Canyon on the way home. However, I agree she needs to be put in line and I will tell her point blank when I call to confirm that we are only doing Corona de las Estrellas this weekend. No side or special projects. So, yes to answer your question I think will bring Sara and Andy can bring Lindsay. Them and Wynn can stay at The Holstein Ranch while Sara and I stay with you and Madam...Miss Kitty."

Laura laughed, "Well let me know how that goes!"

I told her, "Yeah I'll let you know if I manage to shoot myself in the foot. Hmm...if we have Sara and Lindsay with us, we can put them to work. The Wi-Fi is what going to be the most time consuming."

Laura advised me, "I have already done up new topology map based on the new access points we are using. It will reduce the number of units by about a third. So we can have them start removing the old access point while Wynn and Sophie start unboxing the new units. Once I get new access points configured you and Andy can start installing. Suppose though we should get the switch installed and configured first...we'll figure that out once we get there. You think 10:00 AM would be good?"

I replied, "I don't have a problem, but not sure how keen Sara and Lindsay would be getting up that early. Or Andy for that matter and he will still be closing at Fountain Hills the night before. May be we don't need to start so early if we do have Sara and Lindsay with us."

Laura suggested, "We can also work later in to Saturday evening if we have to. Again, the biggest part of this job aside from configuration is the physical layer."

I warned her, "I really want to be done by early Sunday afternoon, so we can get back at a decent time. But, you're right with two more people and may be a late night on Saturday, we could start around Noon. We'll stop for lunch in Florence so that should work. Well, I'm going to call Linda after I talk to Andy."

I called Andy, "Oh hey Ron, what going on?" I filled him on Laura and I's discussion, "Yes, we really do need to reel in Linda. If we can get done by Sunday afternoon then I am okay with bringing Lindsay. Putting her and Sara to work would speed things up, so I thinking we leave around 9:00 we should be good. I will let her know."

After I wrapped up with Andy I paged Wynn, "Wynn to my office please." Wynn walked in and I let her know, "Okay, so this weekend is the Corona de las Estrellas upgrade. Talking to Laura, she suggested we bring Sara and Lindsay, put them to work. This way we can start later on Saturday and still meet our Sunday afternoon deadline. We might need to stay a little later on Saturday, but both her and Andy agree having them would speed things up. Now, I am going to call Linda to inform her we will be starting around Noon AND we are not going to be accommodate any special requests or favors this time around."

Wynn laughed, "Well she was a good client while we still had her! No, I think she'll understand...I hope."

Wynn left my office and I called Linda, "Afternoon Linda. So my crew will be out

around Noon on Saturday to do the upgrades for Corona de las Estrellas. We plan on being done early Sunday afternoon."

Linda told me, "Um...best you talk to Olivia about that. Dundee and I are taking a long weekend we're leaving Friday afternoon and will be back Monday morning. Do you have her number?" I told her I did. "Great and she will make sure to have rooms for y'all at The Ranch. Oh one more thing...I'll be back up in Scottsdale on February 21<sup>st</sup> to do a final walk through on all three buildings at Thirsty Cactus. If everything checks out okay, it will be about another 7-10 days until I can occupy. I will let you know more once we get closer."

That evening when everyone I returned I informed them of the plans for the weekend, "We are doing the Corona de las Estrellas Job this weekend. Sara and Lindsay will be joining us since we need to get this done by Sunday afternoon. Kayré and Kacie, if you two rather not be here by yourselves you could invite Maya and Peaches or Martina to stay with you. Though this is the first weekend in a while Marc doesn't need to go to Idaho."

Kacie informed me, "Actually Ron, I need to be there in order to show Olivia how to use Square and Kayré would be coming with me."

Well that changed things, "Okay...make sense had forgotten about that. Well then we plan on leaving by 9:00 Saturday morning and stopping for lunch in Florence on the way down. Since there will be eight of us, we should be able to get this knocked out pretty quickly then. The good news is Linda is going to be gone with Dundee all weekend so we don't need to worry about her throwing anything else at us. Unless anyone has questions that is all I have."

Friday afternoon Kayré, Kacie, Sara and Lindsay all came home together. Wynn was grilling burgers for dinner. Kayré and Kacie were assisting Wynn while Sara and Lindsay were sitting out on the patio. Lindsay commented, "You know, it's been quite some time since we have 'relaxed'"

Sara thought for a moment and realized they had yet to 'relax' at this house, "You know dear you are right. I will let Wynn know after dinner. You wouldn't have happened to have brought your leotard and tights with you?"

Lindsay confirmed, "I always have them in my 'to-go' bag just in case."

Sara laughed, "Always prepared!"

During dinner I asked Lindsay, "So Lindsay, how is Andy handling the double Friday/Saturday shift?"

Lindsay told me, "He is doing okay with it. It really isn't that bad as he still gets home at a reasonable time on Fridays and starts late enough on Saturday. He has

Mondays off with this arrangement. Worked well too as he was able to take Leslie back to the airport while I was at work."

Wynn asked, "Have you heard from her since she got back to Boston."

Lindsay explained, "Actually, yes. She called last night to tell me she is leaving Boston this weekend and going to move in with her daughter outside of Nashville. She really wants Andy and I to come and see her. I told her may be in a couple months once we wrap up with Thirsty Cactus. Would be nice change to actually go somewhere different and not be part of our consulting job."

After dinner Kayré and Kacie cleaned up the outdoor dining table. Wynn commented, "Going to miss all this help when you two leave. Of course, when you two do leave it will just be Ron and Sara beside myself. That is going to take some adjusting too." She walked back into the house to clean up the kitchen.

Sara came over and helped her then asked, "When you get a chance, Lindsay and I would like to relax tonight."

Wynn smiled, "Okay. You two haven't done that yet here. I am trying to recall what bed is in that room."

I was getting some tea out of the fridge and caught the last part of the conversation and told her, "The bed is a queen, it was the set we had in the Queen Suite. The McGrawl's took their king after Christmas. The set we had in the Presentation Room is being stored above the garage until Kayré and Kacie's residence is done."

Wynn remembered now, "Okay, yeah that makes sense. Wasn't that bed which was in the Hi Infidelity Suite at the Acme House?"

I thought for a moment as to where that bed had been between the last couple house, "Um...okay yes it was."

Wynn commented, "Then, I know which Sequfix System works on that bed. I'll take care of the timer, the wands and the harnesses. You two should go pickup your accessories. I'll get it setup after I finish in here."

I told everyone, "I am going to call Olivia and remind her about tomorrow." I headed to my office and called Olivia, "Hey, just wanted to remind you we should be up by Noon. We should be able to get a lot knocked out the first day with eight of us there."

Olivia asked, "Eight? Who else besides you, Andy, Wynn, Abigail, Kacie and Kayré?"

I informed her, "Sara and Lindsay are coming too."

Olivia did the math in her head, "Oh okay. So you and Sara are staying with Abigail?" I told her yes, "Hmm...okay Andy and Lindsay then Kayré and Kacie, plus Wynn. Okay, I can make this work. See you around noon tomorrow then."

Sara asked Lindsay, "Have you ever tried the Sensory Deprivation Hood that Bambi gave us a while back?"

Lindsay seemed intrigued, "No. What is it exactly?"

Sara told her, "Be easier to show you. Let's head up to the loft real quick." An hour later both Sara and Lindsay were strapped to the bed via Sequfix and 'relaxing' while wearing the sensory deprivation hoods. Over the next couple hours both girls were forced to countless orgasms, but reached a point they fell asleep. The next morning Wynn went over to the Northern Suite and released Sara and Lindsay. She informed them it would be another hour before breakfast so they would have time to freshen up. Andy came over and joined us for breakfast and then helped me load up The Cruiser. Wynn, Kayré, Kacie and I were in The Jeep with Andy, Sara and Lindsay following in The Cruiser.

As planned we stopped for lunch in Florence. I called Olivia, "So, we are about an hour out. Laura will likely arrive before we do." A little before noon we arrived and quickly got to work removing all the old network equipment. Wynn and Andy unboxed and staged the Square Terminals.

Kacie found Laura and asked, "Madam Abby, do you have that Square Terminal I sent you last week?"

Laura told her, "Yes, still in the truck as I didn't want it to get mixed in with the 'virgin' systems. Let me finish what I am doing here and I'll get it for you." Earlier in the week once Kacie had finished the image for Corona de las Estrellas she had asked me it would be possible to have a terminal already setup so she could show Olivia how to use the new software. Since we didn't have much equipment and Olivia really had no where to store 'pre-staged' equipment I had everything sent to me. Laura then got in contact with me and asked if I could Road Runner one of the terminals over to her to get imaged and to use as a demo unit. Laura went out to her truck and retrieved the unit for Kacie. She returned and as she handed the unit to Kacie she asked, "Did you make changes to the image since last week?"

Kacie told her, "Yes, updated a couple things. Is that going to be an issue?"

Laura explained, "Not really. You may need to wait a few minutes for the unit to get the updated image. I'll make sure the terminal is done updating before we disconnect the network. Where would you like me to set this up?"

Kacie replied, "If we can temporarily place it in Olivia's office would be good. That way it is more quiet environment for me to show her."

Laura explained, "Sure we can do that. We'll likely put it at the take-out counter when you are done."

Olivia did have a couple of her chefs come in that afternoon to make us all dinner. During dinner, I asked for a status update from everyone. Wynn and I had spent most of the afternoon unboxing all the new equipment. Andy, Lindsay, Sara and Kayré had been working in various areas removing the old equipment. Laura and Sophie had been configuring the network equipment, which given how small of a job we had, was a router, firewall, switch and about a dozen access points. Andy informed us Sara, Lindsay and himself have removed most of the old access points. Kayré informed us the old POS terminals had been removed. Laura and Sophie said they had removed the old router, switch and firewall while waiting for the new access points to configure. After dinner we spent a couple more hours on the project getting the last of the old equipment uninstalled. Laura and Sophie finished the last of the access points.

When we wrapped up for the night Olivia confirmed, "So Ron and Sara, y'all are staying with Abby?" I told her 'yes'. She explained, "Okay then so Kayré and Kacie along with Andy and Lindsay, plus Wynn will be at The Ranch House."

Sara and I left in The Jeep following Laura and Sophie back to their place. Miss Kitty greeted us when we walked in, "Nice to see you again Sara and Ron. How did it go?"

I told her, "Not too bad. Having lots of people made the tear-down for fairly quick. So we will be ready tomorrow to start installing everything."

Laura explained, "Yeah, I was surprised how much we got done. I have all the access points ready to go, just need to get the core network equipment up and running."

We headed out to the patio for ice cream and drinks. I joked, "Amazing how much we can get done when Linda isn't around."

Laura laughed, "Oh so true! Where is she anyway?"

I replied, "No clue. She told me when I talked to her earlier in the week her and Dundee were going to take a long weekend."

Sara joked, "May be they ran off to Mexico to get married!"

Miss Kitty laughed, "You make them sound like they're teenagers!"

I thought about Sara's statement, "Linda, still acts like she is a teenager, not that there is anything wrong with that. On the subject of running off to Mexico, I am surprised Laura and Martina didn't end up doing that."

Laura objected, "We wouldn't have done that, beside you and Martina were married."

I laughed, "So? That didn't stop you two from sneaking around while I was in Vegas or at least on my way to Vegas. I did spoil your fun that dusty night with me coming home earlier than expected."

Sara added, "As if were so innocent!"

I reminded her, "Hey, Martina did give me permission to fuck you, which is more than I can say in regards to her and Laura. Anyway, it all worked out in the end. She settled down with Marc."

Laura commented, "Didn't really see that coming...yet not surprised."

Sara replied, "Hell, every time he was at the house she was all over him."

I recalled, "Yeah, back before I had the library redone. Wow, seems like such a short time ago, yet it has been 12+ years now. Yeah..."

Sara thought for a moment, "I know what you mean. I moved to Arizona with you then my sister moves in with us. Short time later Andy and Lindsay end up with us as well."

I added, "Don't forget Kayré and Kacie too. They will be leaving in a couple months when their residence at Thirsty Cactus is done."

Laura was surprised, "Hadn't realized they were leaving too. So that would mean it would just be you and Sara?"

I informed her, "Wynn too. Yeah, so it will just be the three of us. Sort of like it was when I first came to Arizona. Except Wynn wasn't with us yet when Martina and I were married. Once we divorced then Sara and I got married, then we brought on Wynn. That is the reason, I bought a much smaller house."

Miss Kitty asked, "The place you had bought from Acme was much larger?"

I explained, "Oh The Ashler Hills Estates house, that place was giant. That says a lot compared to the first house in Desert Oasis. The Great Room in that place is about the size of the entire first floor, not counting my office and the studio of the current house. Remember Maya had that grand piano in there."

Miss Kitty recalled, "Yeah, I remember that now from one of the Holidays we're out there. What happened to that piano after they moved out?"

Sara wondered as well, "Yeah, took a lot of hunting and work for me to find that piano for her and get it shipped back to Arizona."

I replied, "Far as I know she has had it in storage. They are going to set it up at the new Vinnie's."

Sara didn't know about the new plans, "Didn't know she was going to do that. Make's sense as the condo is too small."

The next day we all met at small cafe nearby for breakfast. After breakfast we resumed working on the project. A couple hours later Laura and Sophie had the core network equipment installed and running. Since they were using Square for nearly everything there was not a need for a sever as everything is stored on Square's severs. Olivia did have a PC in her office with some accounting software, but even that she was going to be phasing out using in favor of that offered by Square. Kayré was still giving Olivia a crash course and asked Laura, "How soon can we get this back connected to the Internet?"

Laura replied, "Shortly. I can have Wynn and Andy install the access point in her office. Sophie, go fetch Wynn or Andy for me please." Sophie returned with Andy and Laura explained, "So we are ready to get the first access point installed. Let's do the one in Olivia's office so we can get the Square Terminal Kacie been using connected." She handed him a configured access point.

Andy found Wynn and handed her the access point, "First one, Laura wants us to install in Olivia's office." Wynn took the access point while Andy brought a small ladder into Olivia's office.

Laura came into the office, which was getting a bit crowed especially with Wynn in there. Once Wynn installed the access point she took the ladder and stepped out of the office. Laura told Kacie, "It will take a couple minutes for the access point to fully boot. You should see a new secured network 'CDLE Admin' show up on your network selection screen on square." She handed Olivia a piece of paper, "Here is you WiFi password, you should only need this whenever install a new Square Terminal. The iPads we have already setup so we can push the new image out later this afternoon. You will have another network for guests, 'CDLE Guest; which will not require a password, but has connection time-out of 1-hour and a cool-down of 18-hours. So after being connected for an hour the device can no longer connect to the WiFi network until after 18-hours. This prevents people from leeching of your WiFi network, and also setup that the guest network is disabled after business hours."

Kacie was checking and saw the new network pop-up, "You said 'CDLE Admin'?" Laura confirmed. Kacie selected the network and entered the password. The terminal successfully connected to the network and downloaded a couple updates.

Laura was pleased, "Great! Okay, one down and dozen more to go. We should be done with these in less than 30-minutes." Andy and Wynn along with Sara and Lindsay plus Sophie and I installed the remaining access points. Laura asked, "Sophie, can you check to see if you can connect and access the Internet on 'CDLE Guest'."

Sophie went into her iPad settings and choose the 'CDLE Guest' network, "It is prompting for a password."

Laura was confused, "Odd, it is suppose to be an open network. Fuck...let me check the settings, wonder if I copied the Admin Network's settings." She went back to the server closet and consoled into the router and looked through the config files. She returned a couple minutes later, "Okay, let's try that again. It seems I did copy the admin info into the settings for the Guest Network." Sophie tried again and instead of being prompted for a password was taken to a boilerplate 'TOS' page with a box to check for agreement in order to continue. Laura told her, "Much better, that is what we should be seeing." We took a break for lunch and upon returning we pushed out the updates for the iPads. This also served as a test of the network capacity and speed, plus coverage as we spread out the iPads throughout the restaurant and patio. This process took only around 30-minutes while Laura monitored the network remotely, the rest of us had an assigned area where we checked on the iPads. Laura came over to where I was and commented, "Everything is looking good on the network side. Lindsay and Sara had a couple iPads that didn't connect to the admin network the first time around, but seem to be fine now."

Around three that afternoon we had almost wrapped up. I found Olivia in her office, still playing with the Square terminal. I told her, "We are about done here. Do need to take that terminal and install it at the carry-out counter."

Kacie told her, "You can access most everything on your iPad as well. Let me show you."

While Kacie was showing Olivia how to access via her iPad, I shut down the terminal and moved it out of her office over to the carry out counter and got it connected. After I made sure it had booted correctly, I made my way back to Olivia's office. I asked Kacie, "Are you about done? We likely will be going in the next half hour."

Kacie replied, "Yes, think so." She turned her attention to Olivia, "You have my number, so if you run into any issues with Square let me know."

It was a little before four and we were heading back. I commented to Wynn, "Amazing, we got done with a job for Linda in less than 36-hours."

Wynn reminded me, "Technically it was not Linda, but Olivia. Nonetheless it is a victory."

Kacie commented, "Well, that was a good 'trial by fire' for me in teaching how to use Square. Get to do it again in a couple months when we do Mel's install."

## **Chapter 15: The Calm Before the Storm and Retiring The Cruiser**

The following Monday I called Christina to meet me at the Fairy Duster house. We met around nine that morning and she looked over the house and then asked, "Are there any deed restrictions such as 'right of first refusal' on this property? I know The AMCE house did."

I explained, "There was a 'right of first refusal', but that was when Zac sold it back to me. So, the deed has no restrictions."

Christina told me, "Okay then. I'll give you a quote in a few hours. If you want to move forward I can get it cleaned and staged tomorrow and Wednesday with us listing on Thursday."

I reminded her, "Do what ever you need. Time is not so much of an issue here as I don't have hard money loan as I did when I repurchased the house."

Later that morning Andy came by to help me start sorting through the equipment. He asked, "Is there really anything worth salvaging?"

I told him, "Some of this should be. Might keep some RAM and cables from a couple. Some of the newer systems you might should be able to offer as refurbished. The older systems and all this network equipment I'll likely sell to the organization on Fort McDowell Indian Community. Just enough to cover the shipping costs, unless they want to come out and get them. I am sure the schools will be thrilled to get some of this equipment, be great for their Students Recycling Used Technology or STRUT program. The network equipment would be great for them as it is not often Juniper and Palo Alto stuff comes their way. After we have gone through everything I'll get in contact with Bonnie Walker."

Andy came across one of the 'Act of Congress' systems, "Oh, wow remember these? You know how much trouble we had getting these processors from AMD? I might want to buy a couple of these from you to use in my lab."

I looked over the systems and commented, "Sure. I might do the same thing to, can always use one for a sandbox and custom imaging."

My mentioning imaging reminded Andy, "Say, did you ever figure out why those four boxes refused to image?"

I had forgotten about those, "Oh yeah. There was different Build ID/model number set in the BIOS. As far as I could tell the hardware was the exact same. The only thing I can think of is may be a different manufacturer or batch for the system boards, hence the slightly different Build ID or model numbers. I was going to change that information manually in the BIOS to force the machines to image. However, I decided to leave it alone and simply update the image ini file. That way, if we ever run into one of those in Cristina's reserves in the future it will image without issues."

Andy laughed, "Yeah, that sounds like HP alright. They have to make things very complicated, such as entering the feature byte after you have replaced a system board. Okay, so I'll take these few PCs, what do you want for them?"

I told him, "How about you buy Wynn and I lunch up at The Chuck Wagon Burger place in Carefree?"

Andy thought for the moment, looked at his pile of 'loot' and replied, "That works! I'll need to come back tonight with Lindsay's Cooper to take this stuff back."

I told him, "Or we can put it in The Cruiser and take it down to your place before we go to lunch." Andy agreed. We loaded the Cruiser and took the equipment to his condo's garage. After we unloaded we returned back to the house and I found Wynn in the laundry room and told her, "If you are at a stopping point, Andy is treating us to lunch up at the Chuck Wagon Burger place in Carefree."

Wynn replied, "Sure, what's the occasion?"

I explained, "He 'bought' a bunch of those old PCs from The ACME Job. The network equipment and the older systems I am going to donate to that organization we worked with a few years back in Fort McDowell. While we really have no use for it, should be great for their vocational and STRUT programs."

Wynn advised us, "Give me a few minutes and Ill be ready." Wynn finished folding the towels and after placing them in the hall bath she joined us. As we approached Desert Oasis Parkway there was an advisory sign ahead 'Detour Southbound Pima Highway use Lone Mountain Exit.' Wynn asked, "What is that all about?"

I told her, "Part of the new traffic pattern for Thirsty Cactus. They are going to remove the old interchange and put in a traffic circle instead. They are going to keep the existing northbound Pima Highway entrance/exit ramps at Desert Oasis Parkway."

Andy recalled, "Yeah saw that email. Didn't really pay much attention to it since we always use the Lone Mountain access."

While we're eating lunch Andy commented, "So is this 'the calm before the storm'?"

I laughed, "If by 'storm' you mean the Thirsty Cactus projects, then I guess so. Still not entirely sure what to expect with that. All I do know is Linda said she was going to be back up this way the last week of February to do the final walk through on the buildings and close 7-10 days later. However, that is only the basic shell. All the interior work would still be another 2-4 weeks."

Wynn did the math in her head, "So, we're looking at around end of March or April before we can start?"

I told her, "I am not sure, I am thinking we will be doing like we have done with the Oro Valley Budget Holstein, whereas we do our wiring before they wrap up on the interior. I don't even have a site plan yet from her."

Andy commented, "She sent Lindsay and I plus Mel a draft plan to finalize our building. I can forward it over to you when I get back to my place this afternoon."

Wynn suggested, "Perhaps she did the same with Vinnie's..."

I replied, "I'll get in contact with Maya and see if her, Diane or Peaches has that info. Worse case scenario, I just pester Linda to death for it...of course I would still need to do that for the Budget Holstein. We still have about a month, but at least I would like to get an idea of what we are up against. I'll see if Wynn and I can attend the walk through."

After lunch we headed back and as we passed the Ashler Hills Estate entrance we saw another advisory sign on the Pima Highway: 'Detour Desert Oasis Parkway, U-Turn at Lone Mountain.' We went in through the Ashler Hills Estate entrance and then headed down into the Desert Oasis section. Andy headed back without going into the house. I noticed Kayré's truck off to the side and walked in to find Kacie sitting at the bar with her Surface and eating Subway. She saw us walk in and joked, "Sorry didn't get you anything."

I was about to go to my office but decided I ask her if she had the site plan, "Say do you have the site plans for the Thirsty Cactus Budget Holstein?"

Kacie wasn't sure what I was asking at first, "Site plans...oh okay...yes. Why did Miss Holstein not send it to you?"

I explained, "She has not sent me any of them: Budget Holstein, Vinnie's or PC's and Things/Mel's. Andy is going to send me his plans and I was going to talk to

Maya about getting the plans for Vinnie's."

Kacie told me, "Yeah. I have them...somewhere. Have to figure out where I filed them. How soon do you need them?"

I told her, "No hurry, thinking we still have about a month before we start. Grant you I am basing that off the information Linda gave me last week."

I headed back to my office and found Bonnie's contact information and gave her call, "Howdy Bonnie, Ron Merlot here. You may not remember, my partner and I did some computer work for your organization a few years back."

Bonnie recalled, "Oh yes, I had stopped at the store out in Rio Verde. Didn't realize y'all were still around as seems like that store closed after not very long thereafter."

I explained, "Yeah, The McGrawl's had decided to re-open their original location in the heart of Fountain Hills since the location in Rio Verde just wasn't getting business. Anyway, the reason I am calling is our crew just wrapped up a couple projects in Vegas another out in Tucson. We ended up doing a complete upgrades on those projects. After sorting through all the left over equipment, Andy and I took what would be usable for us; either to refurbish for resale or for use in our own projects. However, we still have two pallets PC's which while don't suit our needs, would still be great for your STRUT program as well as quite bit of Palo Alto, Juniper and little bit of Cisco networking equipment which we'd like to contribute to your vocational programs."

Bonnie was excited, "That's awesome. Especially being able to get our hands on Palo Alto and Juniper as we don't come across those much. We know there is a lot out there still so to have our students being able to become familiar with those brands is great. What do you need from us to make this contribution?"

I told her, "Well it depends. As I have said it is two full size pallets so I can either have those sent over via Road Runner Freight at your expense or if y'all happen to have a truck with a lift and pallet jack then you are welcome to come out and pickup this equipment."

Bonnie advised me, "We have a truck with a trailer. Through some community fund raising a couple years ago we bought a new truck and trailer. We also have pallet jacks too. I am not certain when we will be able to come and get the equipment, will need to get back to you on that one."

I told her, "That is fine. No hurry, those pallets are sitting in an extra garage so they are not in the way. Let me give you my assistant, Wynn's number and you can contact her to make arrangements for the pickup." I gave her Wynn's number and I happened to glance out to the doors to the studio to see Martina standing

there. I wrapped up with Bonnie and motioned for Martina to come in and asked her, "Everything alright?"

Martina assured me everything was fine, "Yeah...well...um....Marc got called out to Idaho on short notice."

I inquired, "When he is due back?"

Martina seemed to be more distracted than normal pointing towards the studio, "Say how difficult would it be to move those tables?"

I was bit puzzle by that question, "Not difficult. You and Wynn or Kacie could easily move them...though I don't understand what that has to do with Marc?"

Martina still distracted replied, "Oh it doesn't. The girls' and I have been talking about doing Yoga on Saturday mornings. I am a certified Yoga Instructor and this space looks perfect. As far as Marc goes, not entirely sure. He wasn't even sure what was happening other than management asked him to come back to Idaho. Something about the concierge manager they'd hired. I really don't know."

Once again Martina surprised me, "Since when were you a certified Yoga Instructor? Ironically, the library used to be a yoga studio and that was why she installed that giant accordion glass doors."

Martina explained, "Couple years now, the resort had me go through the certification process as they had lots of demand for Yoga classes."

I assured her, "Well you are always welcomed here. In fact, let me give you a key in case we are not here. I'll try to give Marc a call this evening and find out what's up. If you want to do a 'family' yoga session on Saturday mornings in there that is okay with me. Gets some use of that otherwise unused space." I opened the drawer in my file cabinet and then opened the safe retrieving a house key for Martina.

Martina took the key and looked at the giant clock behind me commenting, "Oh need to get going. Have a ballet class I need to get ready for in another hour." She left my office and the house.

That evening after dinner I called Marc on his cell, "Oh hey Ron. Sorry, I been meaning to give you a call...when I had a free moment. Seems there we some legal issues with the person they first hired as the concierge manager. So now, they are going to have me train the back up candidate...who they have assured me has passed their background check. So I have no idea when I am going to be back. I am thinking the end of next week."

I commented, "Hmm...interesting. So Martina is a certified Yoga Instructor?"

Marc added, "and Ballet. She does a children's ballet class too."

Now that was a shocked, "Seriously, I just can't see Martina having patience with children."

Marc laughed, "I am surprised you would think that, she is great with children. Anyway, when I know more I will let you know. Hope, she isn't going to a pest." I reassured Marc having Martina staying with us would not be an issue.

A couple days later Christina called to inform me she would be listing the Fairy Duster house the next day now that the cleaning and staging were done. I was looking through my email and saw Kacie had forwarded me all three site plans for Linda's buildings at Thirsty Cactus. I forwarded those over to Wynn, Andy and Laura. Laura called me that evening, "How the fuck did you get Linda to send you these? I've been bugging her for the last month."

I explained, "I didn't. I asked Kacie to get them for me."

Laura laughed, "Well, whatever works. This is great, gives me an idea of how to lay out the network equipment for each of the three buildings. So, which one will be the most challenging?"

I didn't even hesitate, "The Budget Holstein. We will have a weekend to make the transition, of uninstalling the equipment from the old site and moving it to the new site. However, from what Kacie has told me we will be allowed access to the buildings once they pass final inspections. So, while they are the building out the interiors, Wynn, Andy and I can run our wiring so when the time comes to do the transition is just installing the equipment."

Laura commented, "Well, that makes things a lot easier, even if we are having to move from one location to another. Do we know yet when we can start or for that matter when she expects to move?"

I told her, "She told me last week when I talked to her she was coming back out to Scottsdale for the walk-thru of all three buildings in a couple weeks and 'occupancy' or interior work would be within 7-10 days there after. Based off of this information, we would do the wiring in the first week or two of March. She hasn't told me the time line of the interior construction or when she plans on moving over. Now as far as PC's and Things goes I believe we are going all new equipment there."

Laura asked, "Speaking of which I need to talk to Andy in regards to how he wants to handle the network. Not sure if he wants to have Mel piggyback off the PC's & Things network or for her to have her own. Either way will work, but given how little Mel needs, it may be easier for them to share being they are in the

same building. What about Vinnie's when do they need to be out of their current location?"

I was a bit fuzzy, "I want to say May or June. Best you talk to Peaches or Dianne about that one. Again, they are going to be all new install as well. In fact from what I recall from Dianne, everything is going to be new so it will be one those once the new site is ready they close the old site and open in the new one the next day. PC's and Things would likely would be a weekend transaction as they are closed on Sundays. Mel would also be able simple flip-over, but I think she is going to be the most flexible as from what I recall her lease is not up until late summer."

Laura advised me, "Well, at least I can start working on the topology and then forward you an equipment list."

I asked her, "Please, forward that to Wynn as she is our Project Manger. I will still take care of procuring the equipment and whatever else we are going to need. Also, be sure and include for each client your estimated billable hours so Wynn can include that in the quote."

Laura commented, "Glad you are able to keep Wynn on now that it is only going to be you and Sara."

I reminder her, "Well, she is my Sophie, keeps track of everything related to the business on my end."

Laura laughed, "So true, I'd be a mess without her; she knows it and could use that against me too!"

Friday morning Sara told me, "Lindsay will be coming home with us tonight."

I realized Martina was still in the Northern suite, "Hmm...have to put Martina with Wynn."

Sara advised me, "No need. The three us will 'relax' tonight together."

I laughed, "Yeah sure....I can just see you and Lindsay taking advantage of Martina."

Sara just brushed me off, "Whatever. Oh, tomorrow morning she is going to do a Yoga class in the studio. I believe Maya and Peaches will be coming by as well. Anyway need to go to work now."

Wynn came into my office after finishing up with the breakfast dishes, "So Bonnie contacted me and said she can drop by to pick-up the equipment this afternoon, is it all ready to go?"

I told her, "Far as I know. I do believe Andy already took everything he wanted on Monday. The equipment just needs to be tied down." Wynn said she would go take care of that.

Later that day Bonnie and a couple helpers arrived in a truck with trailer and pallet jack. Bonnie looked over the equipment and commented, "This is great, we can really use this for our programs. We'll get these loaded and be out of here shortly."

A couple weeks later Linda called me on Thursday afternoon, "Dundee did the walk through on the Budget Holstein building earlier this week and we were issued an occupancy permit today. So Kayré and Kacie will be moving out shortly. There are some issues with the McGrawl's building, not sure what other than it failed one of the City inspections. My GC is working with the City of Scottsdale in attempting to get whatever the issues are resolved. Vinnie's had issues as well, but they've been corrected already...yet still waiting on re-inspection which might happen next week. Once we can get an occupancy permit for that building then we will start interior construction. My GC says y'all can start running your cabling about mid-way through week 2; they plan on doing Sheetrock by the third week. We need to get Vinnie's done first as Dianne needs to be out by mid-May. McGrawl's still have a few more months on their lease so we have some breathing room for them. Mel's lease is up around the same time as well. The lease on the current Budget Holstein is not up until August, so I am going to wait on that building for a while. Oh and Sprouts is opening next weekend along with The Starbucks."

I was surprised, "Thought you were coming up for the walk-through."

Linda explained, "I had planned on it, but Madam Kat and I are so busy down here with training all the new staff we have added. Besides, Dundee has the skill set to deal with the bureaucracy of City Government. Anyway, just wanted to give you a heads up."

Later that afternoon Kacie and Kayré returned to the house and came to my office. "We are guessing Miss Holstein already told you we are moving out this weekend?"

I replied, "That she did and gave me a progress report on the other two buildings. So, I suppose I should have Wynn dig out the wardrobe boxes."

Kayré replied, "Yes, that would be helpful. Could you get a hold of Bambi and see if she can help us this weekend?"

I called Bambi, "Hey, Kayré and Kacie are ready to move out this weekend. Will you be able to assist them with the Acme Truck?" Bambi told me she could and to

have them contact her to arrange a time.

Saturday morning Kayré and Kacie with the help of Bambi moved out. Sara came into my office later, "Wow, they have left too. So, just you and I plus Wynn now. So strange having the house so empty."

I told her, "Yeah it is. Plus now that Marc is done in Idaho now, we won't be having Martina staying with us."

Lindsay walked in and commented, "But, she will still be doing the Saturday morning Yoga here with everyone else. Plus, I'll still be here on Friday nights and most of Saturdays."

Monday morning after breakfast Sara had left for work. I found Wynn in the kitchen making quick work of the breakfast dishes and told her, "I am going to be gone for most of the morning. The time has to come for me to retire The Cruiser."

Wynn was surprised, "Always thought it would be The Jeep you would retire first."

I reminded her, "The Cruiser is far older and The Jeep still has plenty of life left. Might need to replace the tires soon, but otherwise runs as great as the day I drove it off the showroom floor." I had a dealer I been working with for years who was very interested in acquiring my Cruiser, given the condition and that they are no longer made. A few hours later I had traded in the Cruiser for a new Nissan Murano.

## **Chapter 16: Field Trip Friday and The Thirsty Cactus Plan**

While I had stopped working on major projects due to all the recent builds, the move and of course the upcoming Thirsty Cactus projects, I was bidding and doing small triage web jobs. Thursday afternoon Wynn paged me, "Ron, Lindsay is holding for you on the house line."

That seemed odd that she'd be calling me, "Hey Lindsay, what's going on?"

Lindsay asked, "Say, could we go down to Oro Valley tomorrow?"

I was really confused, "We whom and why?"

Lindsay realized she was getting ahead of herself and explained, "So Leslie and I had been talking and I told her about what we have done with Corona de las Estrellas from that Easter to recently. She told Charlotte about this and she is rather intrigued. Anyway, they are flying in tomorrow and would like to learn more about what we did. Sara and I are going to take tomorrow off. So I'd hope we could down there tomorrow."

I told her, "Yeah, I suppose we can. Did you plan on staying down there then?"

Lindsay told me, "Yes, if it is not too much trouble."

I assured her, "Should be fine, I'll call Olivia and confirm. Will let you know." Wynn had come into my office and I explained, "So apparently, Lindsay's sister and niece are coming in tomorrow and want to go to Corona de las Estrellas to find out more about what we did on the technology side. Guess we would be spending the night down there. Andy works so Lindsay would be here anyway. Did you want to join us?"

Wynn thought for a moment, "You know, my girl friends up in Pine have been asking when I'd could come back up and see them again. Last time I was there was when we did Boots Chugwater."

A chill ran down my spine when Wynn mentioned that name, "Oh god...yeah and you ended up saving the day on that disaster of a project...okay that works. I need to call Olivia and warn...I mean tell her what's going on." I phoned Olivia, "Sorry for the short notice, but Lindsay wants to take her sister and niece on a 'field trip' tomorrow to Corona de las Estrellas. Her niece has a family restaurant outside of Nashville and guess Lindsay had been talking to her sister about all the technology upgrades we have done, so she like to find out more. Also, we'd be staying at The Ranch."

Olivia was fine, "Sure, be neat to show off what your crew has done. How many at The Ranch?"

I explained, "Well, Lindsay, her sister and niece then Sara and I, so five. Wynn is heading up north to see some friends. I think we'll be there for dinner and since I will be in that part of town I should have my mother and Blanche join us along with Laura, Miss Kitty and Sophie."

Olivia told me, "We can put you in the smaller banquet room. I will let Linda know as I am sure she would find it a perfect excuse to join us."

I laughed, "Or an excuse to drop another project/issue on my crew. Do let Miss Kitty know as she can have Laura contact our mother. Anyway, I'll call you tomorrow when we leave." I called back Lindsay, "Hey Lindsay. So Olivia is fine with us all coming out tomorrow. Your sister will get to meet the rest of the family too as I going to have my Mother and Blanche, plus Laura, Miss Kitty and Sophie join us."

Lindsay was thrilled, "Great. I'll let her know. I think they are coming in mid-morning tomorrow. Would you be able to take me?"

I checked my job queue and informed her, "Um...no. I need to wrap up on these

small jobs before we go. Wynn will be able to assist you though. Oh and she is not going to join us down there as she is going to spend the weekend with her friends up in Pine."

After I had wrapped up with Lindsay, I went back to work on my current job. This was a rather simple troubleshooting job involving correcting some PHP errors. Wynn came into my office, "So I talked to my girl friends in Pine and they are looking forward to me coming up this weekend."

I told her, "Great, nice you are able to get away for a while. I think this will be nice for Sara and I as well. Hmm, will be the first trip in the new Murano. Anyway, Lindsay is suppose to call you and let you know when she needs to go to the airport."

Wynn told me, "Actually, she already did. She said too, they want to go to her store so after I pick them up we are going to stop at The Budget Holstein. I want to get a couple dress for this weekend anyway, so it works out."

The next morning Andy dropped Lindsay off at the house. Kacie came by and picked up Sara as she had a client appointment in the morning. She would ride back later with Wynn and Lindsay. I was working on a couple triage jobs when Wynn informed me her and Lindsay were on their way out. They made it out to the airport and Wynn dropped Lindsay off at the terminal then headed to the cell phone lot. Lindsay had dressed down this time around as she was not working. Black t-shirt, denim shorts, stockings and ankle boots. However, before we left for Oro Valley her and Sara would be wearing their black widow corsets and the long skirts. She had been waiting almost half an hour when she finally saw Leslie followed by a tall slender lady with very short blonde hair. Leslie walked over to Lindsay and joked, "Hey, going for the Goth look?"

Lindsay laughed, "Or Misses Johnny Cash. So, this is your daughter?"

Charlotte introduced herself, "I'm Charlotte, so great to finally meet you."

Lindsay hugged her and asked, "You two ready?" Leslie told her yes, "Okay, let's head out and I'll call Wynn. If we time this right, we can catch her on the first pass." They made it outside to the terminal curb and didn't see Wynn so either she was still on her way or they already missed her first pass. A couple minutes later Lindsay saw the Jeep and told them, "You two ride in the back, I'll be up front with Wynn." Once everyone was seated Lindsay introduced Wynn to Charlotte.

Wynn asked Lindsay, "So if we are going to the Budget Holstein, then I suppose I should take the 51 up to Loop 101 then exit at Scottsdale?"

Lindsay thought for a moment, "Yeah, otherwise we'd have to double back." An

hour or so later they arrived at the Budget Holstein. "Well, here it is. We are going to be relocating in a couple months. There is a new area across the highway from where we live. Linda Holstein bought three buildings in the development, one for The Budget Holstein, another for Andy and I's computer store and the other for a Pizza restaurant where Sara's sister used to work."

They walked in and was greeted by Kacie, "Welcome all. Kayré and I can assist your sister and niece. You can assist Wynn and Sara is wrapping up with a client."

Charlotte looked around, "Wow nice selection."

Leslie asked, "Can we have some of our purchases shipped back to Tennessee?"

Kacie assured her, "Yes, we can do that."

After a couple hours Charlotte and Leslie had found several items they wanted and had most shipped back to their farm, with the exception of what they would wear tonight and tomorrow. Wynn had found a couple dresses she could wear this weekend when she visited her girlfriends. Lindsay boxed those up for her. Sara saw them and came over, "Wow, Miss Bordeaux went a lot longer than I expected, but looks like it worked out timing wise."

Lindsay introduced her to Charlotte, "Sara, this is my niece Charlotte."

Charlotte hugged Sara, "So nice to finally meet you. Heard you've been a great support for my aunt."

They headed back to the house and Wynn told them as she was leaving, "Well, I am heading up to Pine for the weekend. I'll be back Sunday evening. Try not to get into too much trouble."

The four of them walked into the house. Charlotte and Leslie used the restrooms to change while Sara and Lindsay went to their rooms to change and then grabbed their bags. Leslie came into the great room and upon seeing Sara and Lindsay in their Black Widow corsets, "Wow, nice look. I see what you mean about being twins."

Lindsay laughed, "It worked better when I had dark hair, but nonetheless..." I had wrapped up on the current project which was a database restoration. I met everyone in the Great Rom and after Lindsay introduced me to Charlotte she asked, "So I suppose since Wynn left in The Jeep, we are taking The Cruiser?"

I explained, "I don't have The Cruiser anymore. I retired it a couple weeks ago and got a new Nissan Murano. This trip to Oro Valley will be the 'maiden voyage'."

We walked into the garage and Lindsay saw the Murano, "Wow, that is nice. Much

better than the Cruiser.”

We stopped of for lunch at the usual Greasy Spoon in Gold Canyon before heading to Oro Valley. So far I was really impressed with the smoothness and performance of the Murano with the trip from Scottsdale to Gold Canyon. Most of all that was on well maintained metro freeways, but the portion from Gold Canyon to Oro Valley would be on state highways which were not as well maintained as the major freeways in the Phoenix area. Before we left the diner I called Olivia. On the way down Charlotte asked, “So what did y'all do for Olivia?”

I explained, “So, she actually took it upon herself when Linda expanded and remodeled the restaurant to give all the servers tablets. It was designed so as soon the order was taken it would be sent to the kitchen. The kitchen then would send the server a notification when the order was completed. They were still running an older POS system and leasing a card machine. About a month ago we fully upgraded them to Square, replacing the leased machine and old POS terminals. They have a couple terminals up front for customers who pay with cash. Otherwise, the server can swipe their card right at the table with their iPad and email the guest their receipt. I think the big reason Olivia went fully with Square was the ease of reporting, she can discuss that with you in more detail. Kacie really sold her on that feature.”

Lindsay added, “We use the same system in our stores, just designed for our business. As Ron mentioned, Kacie really likes the reports feature.”

Sara commented, “I believe Maya said Dianne would be going that route too when Vinnie's moves over to Thirsty Cactus this summer.”

I told her, “Yes, that is the plan. Also, they would likely be moving over next month, once Dundee and the GC straighten out whatever issues are causing them to fail final inspection. Linda has told me Vinnie's will be the priority given Dianne needs to out of The Market by Memorial Day. Followed by the McGrawl's building with Mel and finally the Scottsdale Budget Holstein.”

We arrived at Corona de las Estrellas and Charlotte looked around, “Wow this place is huge. We just have small little dinner sort like the place we had lunch earlier.”

Leslie added, “Plus a gift shop, which is about the size of this lobby.”

Sara was looking at the tributes to Hal and Olivia's mother and commented, “Strange, as much as we come here it seems like there is always something I have not noticed before. Maya did an incredible job putting this all together.”

I commented, “I think Maya keeps adding to it. She had told me a couple months ago she found someone who had a picture of Hal and Maria when they first

opened The Oro Valley Cantina." I explained to Leslie and Charlotte, "So the name was changed many years ago from Oro Valley Cantina to the current Corona de las Estrellas, to honor Linda Holstein's late husband Hal Holstein and Olivia's mother Maria Esmeraldes. They both passed away in a freak accident about twenty years ago. My sister in law took it upon herself to learn as much as she could about the two of them and put together this tribute wall which was unveiled after the first expansion about 7-years ago. Olivia and Kayré took over running the restaurant after the accident. Linda had just started the Budget Holstein and Kayré would help her out with running the store as well. It was with the settlement money from this accident they did the first expansion and upgrades on both Corona de las Estrellas and The Budget Holstein."

Olivia greeted us and Lindsay introduced her sister and niece, "Olivia, this is my sister Leslie and her daughter Charlotte."

Olivia replied, "Nice to meet you two. So, I see Ron has given you a brief history lesson. So, if you two come with me I'll give you a tour. Ron, Sara and Lindsay you can all go to the smaller banquet room. Miss Holstein and Miss Kitty are already there."

Leslie and Charlotte went with Olivia while the remaining three of us headed to the banquet room. Miss Kitty saw us and commented, "Laura will be here in about an hour. Your mother and Blanche were going to meet at our house then her and Sophie would bring them over."

I replied, "Okay, works for me."

Linda told me, "I have some news."

I joked, "You and Dundee ran off last month to Cancun and got married?"

Linda laughed, "Um...no...at least not yet...hmm...now there's an idea...Anyway, Dundee and the GC worked out the issues with the city inspectors with the McGrawl's building."

I asked, "So what were the issues?"

Linda responded, "Have no clue...for all I know they could have paid off the inspectors. So interior work will start Monday and in about a week from there y'all can start running wiring."

I reminded her, "Isn't Vinnie's the priority?"

Linda explained, "Yes, but that building is not quite ready yet. They should wrap up next week and if we pass final inspection and get occupancy certificate then they can start interior work at that point. That one we are looking at about two

weeks before you can do your wiring given the complexity of the design being a restaurant."

I was doing the math in my head and told her, "So, assuming we are coming in towards the end of the interior work, plus everything else they need to do that would put us in early to mid May. A little tighter than she'd prefer, but suppose it would still work."

Linda reminded me, "Remember though, she is not bring anything over from the old location, other than staff and left over consumables."

I had forgotten about that, "Oh...yeah...so fresh install and everything new. Then not a big deal as she closes the old location and opens at the new location the next day. They'll likely need a couple days to get restocked and organized, but that's minor compared to trying to move all the equipment over. Let me know as soon as you get occupancy certifications for each building so Andy, Wynn and I can walk them. We want to do this as quickly as we can before interior starts, just so we have an idea of the layout. Kacie has sent me the master plans for all three buildings so we have those. However, as we learned with Boots Chugwater, how it appears on paper can be much different than in person."

Sara joked, "But it looked so much smaller on paper!"

I laughed, "Yeah and it was. Wynn saved our hide on that project. The irony is she is visiting the same friends this weekend as she was when we were working on that project. That was a lesson: don't do out-of-state projects."

Sara asked, "But what about Gary?"

I told her, "Well, Gary is an exception as he is a 'special' client as Bunny called him."

Laura, Sophie and Miss Kitty along with mother and Blanche came in. Mother sat across from Sara and I, "Nice to see you two again...and Lindsay too. So, Miss Kitty didn't really explain why you are out here. Job for Linda?"

I laughed, "For once, no. Actually, this is not even business related, doing a favor for Lindsay."

Lindsay explained, "So my sister and her daughter have a small restaurant outside of Nashville. We got to talking and I told her about the technology improvements we had done for this place many years ago and last month. So, they wanted to find out more, plus gives my sister and excuse to come see me. She has a lot time on her hands after her divorce. They are with Olivia right now, but will be joining us for dinner."

Laura asked, "So who's still at the house?"

I told her, "Just Sara, Wynn and I know. Wynn is up north this weekend visiting the friends she last saw when we did the Boots Chugwater project 12-years ago. Kayré and Kacie moved out last weekend. So, Linda has informed me we will be starting on The McGrawl's building first as that one will be ready first. Vinnie's we are looking at about 3-weeks...may be less before we can start wiring. I don't really know yet about the Budget Holstein..."

Linda replied, "I have already been given a occupancy certification for that building."

I was surprised, "Oh, I thought it was just for the residence."

Linda apologized, "Sorry, no it is for the entire building."

Laura asked, "So then when are you starting interior work on The Budget Holstein?"

Linda answered her question with a question, "When do y'all want me to start?"

I thought for a moment and pulled out my phone to look at the calendar, "Okay...so The McGrawl's building we can start the week after next. Vinnie's which is the priority though, we can't do anything with that one for may be another 3-weeks."

Laura advised me, "I really don't want to keep coming back and forth..."

I came up with a plan, "Okay, so Vinnie's is the priority and unfortunately is the one we won't be able to do until the latest time. As far as Andy, Wynn and I are concerned we can do our wiring for The McGrawl's building first, then move over to the Budget Holstein and by the time we are done with both of those we should be able to do Vinnie's. Remember, Vinnie's is a clean install, so everything is new."

Laura again pointed out, "But like I said I really can't keep coming up for each building..."

I explained, "You won't have to. We will do the equipment installs all at once. Might take good part of the week. We do Vinnie's first, then we can do the McGrawl's building or The Budget Holstein thereafter. From what I understand The McGrawl's lease is not up until this summer, Mel's is a couple months later and Linda you said end of the year?"

Linda confirmed, "Yeah either October or November."

Laura finally understood, "Okay, I see what you are saying. But, weren't we going to reuse the equipment from The Budget Holstein?"

Well that put a kink in my plans, "Oh crap...yeah...well..."

Linda asked, "Do we need to reuse my existing equipment?"

Laura told her, "You don't have to, but if we go new it will increase your costs."

I mentioned, "If you go new, it will make the transition smoother as the new store will be ready to go right away instead of us having to remove the equipment from your old store and reinstall...." Laura added, "...and likely reconfigure..."  
"For your new store."

Linda for once sided with us, "The time factor, especially for Vinnie's is more important here than extra cost for new equipment for my store. What will you do with my old equipment?"

I told her, "If you have no further use for it...such as in another location..." Linda replied she had no plans or thoughts of opening a fourth location, "Then it can be donated to the Fort McDowell Indian Community programs. That is what we did with Olivia's old equipment and all the stuff from The Acme Las Vegas jobs. You can get a tax write-off since they are a 501(c)3 organization."

Linda informed us, "Okay, that works. If it makes this process easier then let's go that route."

Laura told Sophie, "Tomorrow morning we need to figure out what The Budget Holstein is going to need based on their site plan."

Sophie replied, "Shall do."

I joked to Sara and Lindsay, "Hope one of you two were taking notes, so I can relay this info to Wynn and Andy when we get back." Both Sara and Lindsay replied with 'whatever' at the same time.

Miss Kitty laughed, "I think you're screwed Ron!"

I replied, "Yeah, it seems that way now doesn't it."

Sophie commented, "I've made notes of our tentative build schedule, I'll get them transcribed and sent to Wynn and Andy for you."

I declared, "Well at least *someone* was paying attention! Thank you Sophie."

Olivia walked in with Leslie and Charlotte, "Food should be up shortly. Lindsay and

Sara can you help out?"

Lindsay and Sara left with Olivia. After Leslie and Charlotte sat down I introduced her to Linda and the rest of the family. I asked, "So what are your thoughts about Olivia's operations?"

Charlotte replied, "Very impressive. I will want to look into it more when we return Tennessee and discuss it some with the rest of our staff."

Lindsay and Sara brought out the food while Olivia refreshed everyone's beverages. After we finished the main course we talked for some more then Olivia brought us out desert. Much later in the evening Olivia brought out the check and asked, "Who's taking care of this."

I was about to say something when Linda announced, "I will. I can write this off as a business dinner." As Linda went to pay for dinner Laura, Miss Kitty, Sophie, Blanche and my mother headed out. The five of us walked outside to my Murano. Linda came out and saw us and The Murano, "Did you trade in The Jeep?"

I replied, "No, The Cruiser."

Linda complimented me, "Nice upgrade! Okay, Olivia and I are heading back to The Ranch. So we will see you there."

We arrived back at The Holstein Ranch and Olivia asked, "So, who is getting separate rooms?"

Leslie told her, "The three of us can stay together unless you have the room to accommodate Lindsay and I separately."

Olivia turned to Sara and I, "Would you mind staying in my old building?"

Sara and I looked at each other and Sara replied, "Not at all. Give us some quiet time and privacy."

Olivia told Leslie and company, "Okay, yes we can put your daughter in her own room and you two in another. Come with me."

Linda reminded everyone, "Home cooked breakfast will be at 7:30!"

Sara and I took our bags into Olivia's old building. I commented, "Wow, I remember when Andy and I dropped the Ethernet line into this building. Olivia was using it has her own residence and office. Kayré and Kacie were staying in the main house at that time."

Sara commented, "Sort like the building the McGrawl's had at The Ashler Hills

house. Sorry, if you wanted to do more tonight, but I am exhausted. Was not expecting to have a marathon appointment with Miss Bordeaux this morning."

Truth be told I was already falling sleep, "That's fine it is a lot later than I had expected us to get back here. Wasn't expecting the meeting with Linda, but at least now we have a general idea of how Thirsty Cactus is going to play out."

## **Chapter 17: Thirsty Cactus and She Went Where?**

The following morning we were up by seven and after freshening up and getting dressed met everyone in the kitchen. Olivia was wrapping up on a cowboy breakfast. Surprisingly Linda had already left, so we would be able to leave without her springing another project or problem child on us. Around nine we headed back to Scottsdale. While it was almost lunch time when we reached Gold Canyon we were all still very filled from Olivia's Cowboy breakfast from earlier that morning. As we made our way on the Pima Highway just past DC Ranch was an advisory sign 'Pima Highway Closed at Lone Mountain. Detour Scottsdale Road.' I commented, "Another weekend closure that neither the association or the contractor notified us residents about as they had originally promised. From what I saw this week, I think this is the final closure and they are going to shift traffic onto the new circle and install the pedestrian bridge across the Pima Highway. "

Sara asked, "When were some of the other stores opening?"

I told her, "From what Linda told me the Sprouts and Starbucks were suppose to open this week, but I am guessing because of the delay in getting the circle completed they are waiting until next week." We made it back to the Sage Brush house a little after 2:00. Was a bit surprised to see Martina's Jag and Maya's Jeep still in the driveway. I had given Martina a key a while back so she could still do her Saturday Yoga even if I was not there. We walked in and saw Martina along with Maya and Peaches out on the patio. I walked out, "What y'all still doing here?"

Martina laughed, "Nothing! Since it was just the three of us this Saturday we decided we start later."

I told them, "Well come on in, you can meet Lindsay's niece, Charlotte."

Lindsay introduce everyone else to Charlotte and then told me, "I am going to call Andy and find out when he plans on being back today. What are we doing for dinner?"

I replied, "Well since Wynn not here, may be Vinnie's."

Peaches joked, "Good choice! Drew can deliver."

I laughed, "I am sure it is. Poor Drew, I am confusing the poor guy."

Maya asked, "What do you mean?"

I reminded her, "We had only been back on Lot 13 a few months from the Ashler Hills house and now we are in yet a different location."

Lindsay returned and told me, "Andy plans on being back here by 4:30."

I told Peaches, "So we have six, which includes Andy and his tapeworm..."

Peaches told us, "So one Pizza for Andy and three for the remaining, plus wings and drinks?"

I replied, "That should work."

Peaches said, "I'll put the order in when I get in at 3:30. Drew will have it here by 4:30." Her and Maya left with Martina.

Lindsay, Leslie and Charlotte sat in the great room and conversed while I headed to my office to see what was going on. Leslie asked Lindsay, "So when can you and Andy come out?"

Lindsay thought for a moment, "Well, we both have businesses we run. I do the Budget Holstein and Andy has PC's and Things. But, we both could use a break and getting away for a few days would be nice. From what Linda was telling us last night, Andy and Ron won't be beginning work on Thirsty Cactus for at least another two weeks. I'll discuss with him tonight."

Andy returned to the house a little before 4:30 as he walked in he commented, "Just saw Big Foot coming into the main entry."

Leslie asked, "Big Foot?"

Lindsay laughed, "Yeah, Drew the guy who delivers for Vinnie's has a raised truck which we all call Big Foot." Sure enough the door bell rang and I headed out my office to answer the door and tip Drew.

I opened the door and Drew commented, "Ron, you really need to stop moving!"

I told him, "I can't help it, people keep moving out on me. I think Sara, Wynn and I will be here a while."

Lindsay came to the door to help Drew and defended me, "Yeah, it is kind of our fault. Andy and I decided to get a condo and that other house was just too big for Ron and Sara. Let me help you out with this."

Drew laughed, "Okay, I'll buy that. Well, enjoy your Pizzas."

After dinner I briefed Andy on the new time line for Thirsty Cactus. He made notes and commented, "Okay sounds like we have a couple weeks before we need to start running cabling. Your plan of installing all three building equipment during a one week period should work okay. I realize we do need to accommodate Laura as she is traveling to do this. At least we are just across the highway, so not that big of a deal. Well, best we be heading back. Give you and Sara some time together." Andy and Lindsay left with Leslie and Charlotte.

That evening before bed Sara offered to give me a milking. After a quick shower I returned to the bedroom to see Sara had placed a towel on the bed and added a set of cuffs connected to the headboard. I noticed on her nightstand a key safe which appeared to have a remote for a vibrator and belt key. I looked at Sara and saw she was in one of her belts and could hear a vibrator buzzing underneath. I joked, "Hope you didn't set that thing for all night...of course the batteries will likely be drained in a couple hours."

Sara laughed, "Nope set it for an hour." She handed me a penis gag and blindfold, "Put these on then get on the bed and cuff yourself."

I did as I was directed and Sara slowly started milking me though she was having a hard time concentrating with the vibrator locked into her pussy. An hour and three orgasms later Sara removed the blindfold and gag when handed me the keys to the cuffs. After I released myself, I headed into the bathroom to clean up then changed in my bed shorts and muscle tank.

The next morning we woke up to silence. We headed into the Great Room and it was just odd. Sara commented, "Well this is creepy!"

I laughed, "What? Just because the house is empty. Yeah, it is weird. No Kayré and Kacie, no Martina..."

Sara added, "and no Wynn."

I joked, "Well that ain't right! Okay, so what do you want to do for breakfast?"

Sara told me, "Suppose we could go out, since it is just the two of us. Either the place in Old Towne Scottsdale or the one in Carefree up by that Chuck Wagon Burger place."

While it didn't matter to me I wondered about the place in DC Ranch, "What about that place in DC Ranch?"

Sara informed me, "Maya said they changed management a while back and the

service was horrible.”

I sighed, “Well, that's a sure fire way to kill a restaurant. Well, the Carefree one would be the lesser of two evils.”

We walked into the garage and Sara was surprised, “Still not use to us having the Murano instead of the Cruiser. I do have to say it rides a lot better than the Cruiser and more upgraded.”

I explained, “Well if I wanted to spend more money than the Cruiser was worth, I could've had the suspension rebuilt. But, I figured at the age and mileage it was time for a replacement.”

Sara and I chatted during breakfast. She asked, “So what do you think about Thirsty Cactus: Simple or a pain?”

I told her, “I'd hope simple, but then as we have learned over the years, nothing is ever simple. I am more concerned about the tight timeline on Vinnie's...but the majority of that is beyond my control. I just hope when we are ready to do the equipment install phase Laura can get the time off to come up here. I'll know more in a couple weeks.” I changed the subject, “So, you've been doing a lot with Miss Bordeaux lately?”

Sara explained, “Yeah, her daughter's wedding is this fall and she has some social events coming up as well, so she is been wanting to get some new outfits. Should be getting a nice hefty commission check in a couple weeks. Speaking of money, how are we doing as we wait for the Fairy Duster house to sell?”

I told her, “We are doing fine. I didn't need to do a hard money loan this time, plus I still had a good chunk of liquid assets from all the service contracts which renewed at the end of the year.”

We finished breakfast and then headed back to the house. Sara wanted to spend some time on the fucking machine so I got her secured to the cross and set a reminder to check on her in an hour. I was looking to see if there were any quick jobs I could do when Wynn came into my office, “Hey, I'm back! How did it go Friday?”

I told her, “Everything went fine. Had quite a chat with Linda that evening and have a better idea of the timeline for Thirsty Cactus.” I explained the new timeline, including doing all the equipment installs at the same time.

Wynn replied, “I suppose that would be easier on Laura, just hope we won't be burning the midnight oil trying to get those all done while she is still here.”

I laughed, “It is not like we have far to go. You know, it was very weird this

morning for Sara and I when we got up with no one else here."

Wynn told me, "Yeah, I know what you mean. It is going to be an adjustment for me as well. Been so used to having Kacie and Kayré here, even Martina at times too..." my timer went off "...what the heck?"

I told her, "Sara is bound to the fucking machine, it is time for me to release her."

I was about to get up when my office line rang, "Oh hey Andy!"

Wynn told me, "I'll go take care of her."

Andy asked, "So to confirm we are starting any work on Thirsty Cactus for at least another two weeks?"

I replied, "Far as I know, unless Linda changes things again. Why?"

Andy explained, "So we are going to take next week off and fly out with Leslie and Charlotte. Spend a few days at their farm in Tennessee. We both need a break, so it would be a nice change. Kacie will cover for Lindsay and Doyle and Dunn will cover for me."

I joked, "Well, I'd be expecting a postcard in the mail."

Andy laughed, "Sure thing!"

Monday morning Christina called to tell me she had several offers on the Fairy Duster house and would bring them by tonight. That evening Christina came after dinner and Wynn showed her into the Studio then summoned Sara to join us. Christina went over all the offers and we choose one which seemed to work well. Thursday afternoon Wynn came in with the mail, "You got a postcard for The McGrawl's!" I wasn't expecting Andy to actually send me a post card. I looked at it and discovered it was for the little cafe Lindsay's niece ran. The McGrawl's returned on Saturday. Linda called me on Sunday and informed us the McGrawl's building was at a stage we could start running our cabling. She also told about another week and half on Vinnie's. I advised her I'd would let her know when Andy, Wynn and I could get started.

I called Andy, "Hey Linda called, your building is at stage where we can start running the cabling. When do you want to start?"

Andy told me, "I really can't be taking much time off right now having been gone a week. I might be able to join you two in mid-mornings until around closing time. Hopefully when we do Vinnie's and The Budget Holstein I can be there more."

I informed him, "Well Wynn and I are going to start tomorrow. We can hold off until mid-morning when you get in and then discuss how we want to handle this."

Andy agreed, "Okay, yeah that works." The next morning the three of us met at The McGraw's building. Most of the interior walls were framed, but no Sheetrock or electrical had been installed. I noticed the area under the stairs had been framed in with a door. Andy pointing to that area informed us, "So, I figured out this space would be perfect for a sever/network closet. I have rack at the Fountain Hills store I can bring in later. This really isn't going to be that difficult as far as cabling goes. The majority of our Access Points are going to be on the lower level, so based on Laura's calculations we would only need one access point up there. Mel's are all on one level and a couple Ethernet ports for her PC and Printer. For our tech area Laura suggested running trunk lines between the two floors. We will have a few Ethernet ports on the lower level for printer and the front counter. Upstairs we are looking at about a couple dozen. Majority are going to be for the tech bench, then our offices and printers. Both manager's offices will have their own printer and access point. They will be installing a bulkhead and chase in the next couple days for us to run the trunk lines through to the upstairs switch. Laura should have emailed you a revised site plan on where we need to run the cabling."

Wynn checked her tablet, "Ah yes, I do see that. Okay, so what do you think Ron?"

She handed me her tablet and I looked over what Laura had sent us, "Lot of cabling upstairs, but at least it will terminate into a switch on to the same level. So let me confirm, you and Mel are going to share the same network infrastructure?"

Andy confirmed, "Correct. However, she will have her own server which will be housed in the same closet and Laura is going to allocate her a VLAN with up to 12-ports on the lower level switch. It is a 24-port so we will have 12 on our own VLAN. CenturyLink is handling the phones, so we do not need to worry about that. They will likely install their own equipment in the closet when they do the Broadband Modem."

I looked over the plans some more and decided, "Okay, I think we should do this in two parts. Part One we can start now which will be cabling and installing the Ethernet ports. Part Two we will do at the end which will be the trunk lines and the runs for the access points. I think we can be done with Part One in a couple days. Part Two should only take a day and we will do that right before they install the Sheetrock."

Andy told us, "Okay, sounds good. I really need to get back to Scottsdale store. I should have more time tomorrow as Doyle will be in." Wynn and I went to work

on getting the lower level pre-wired. By the end of the day we had all the Ethernet Ports done for the lower level. We would still need to run a couple runs for access points as well as work on the upper level. The next morning Andy was already at the store when we arrived, "See you two got a lot done yesterday. Doyle can cover for me most of the day. I likely will take off by mid-afternoon. What do we need to do today?"

I informed him, "We still need to run cabling for the lower level access points. I talked to the GC and decided we would just install regular four port Ethernet 'biscuits' in the ceiling for the access points. We will need to run 1-foot PoE patch cables to connect the access points. Doing it this way the Sheetrock installers can cut-out the outlets when they hang the drywall. We will just need to go back afterwards and wire up the biscuits. When we run the PoE cables for the access points, leave about half foot extra. We can shorten and strip when we go to install the biscuit. The chase and bulkhead will be done by the end of the week. Once those are done then we can fish a couple trunk lines through and however many cabling runs are needed for Mel's office."

Andy advised us, "Ideally three. PC, Access Point and Printer. I will work on running the cabling for the Ethernet ports for upstairs tech area. I have instructed the GC to decrease the spacing between the studs on the wall where the tech benches would be so the Ethernet Ports will be closer together." While Andy did his part Wynn and I worked on finishing the downstairs. Around three that afternoon Andy advised us, "I need to get going. I've got all the ports wired and cabled out to where the upstairs switch will be for the tech area. So all that is left up here besides two access points for the tech area is an access point and two Ethernet ports for each office."

Wynn decided this would be a good stopping point. The GC had informed us they would have the chase and bulk head completed tomorrow morning and dry wall on Thursday. The next day the three of us met back at The McGrawl's building to wrap up the last of the cabling. I had Wynn try to contact Dundee as I wanted to see if we could start cabling on The Budget Holstein, but she was unable to reach him, "His phone is going straight to voice mail."

I was a bit surprised as Dundee almost always answered his phone, "Odd. Let me see if I can get a hold of Linda." I tried calling her number and her phone went directly to voice mail as well. "Well, that's weird. Direct to Voice Mail." I thought out loud for a moment, "Well in theory her and Miss Kitty are doing employee training at the Oro Valley Budget Holstein. Let me try Miss Kitty and see if she can get me in touch with Linda."

I called Miss Kitty's cell she answered, "Oh hey Ron. You looking for Linda?"

I replied, "Um..yeah is she there can't reach her on her phone."

Miss Kitty laughed, "You ain't going to be able to reach her for a while. Her and Dundee left a few hours ago....to Cancun."

I was kicking myself for making that suggestion, "Oh crap...shouldn't have given her that idea. This puritans to the Thirsty Cactus Budget Holstein, you know what I'll try Kacie."

Miss Kitty warned me, "I don't believe her and Kayré know...in fact you are not even supposed to now...so tread carefully."

I thanked her, "That I will, thanks for the warning." I wrapped up with Miss Kitty and advised Andy and Wynn, "Well...you didn't hear this from me as I didn't hear about it from Miss Kitty...so it seems Linda and Dundee took off a few hours ago to Cancun. But, it dawned on me that Kacie and Kayré are living in the building already. So, let me call them."

I called Kacie, "Hey Ron, miss us?"

I replied, "Not really. No, it is still a bit odd not having you two around as much as it is not having the McGrawl's around. Anyway, Wynn, Andy and I are wrapping up on the cabling for The McGrawl's building. Since Vinnie's is not yet ready, we'd like to see if we can get started with The Budget Holstein. What is the status of the building?"

Kacie told me, "It is done."

I was a bit taken aback by that statement, "Um done? Define *done*?"

Kacie was confused, "Done as in ready to move-in just as soon we get our fixtures and your crew does the setup."

I still wasn't sure and asked, "Can you or Kayré meet us over there?"

Kacie advised me, "We are kind of busy...why don't you have Dundee meet you over there."

I had to think carefully on how to answer that, "Um...well...he's not around. I think he went to Tucson."

Kacie recalled, "Oh yeah, Kayré did mention he had told her he was going to be gone until Monday. Can you give us an hour?"

I replied, "Yeah, that is fine. We'll just head back to the house, not like we have far to go." I wrapped up with her and explained, "So, Kayré and Kacie know Dundee went to Tucson, but that is all. Kacie says the building is done and ready, so I am under the impression all the wall board is up. One of them well meet us

over there in an hour. In the meantime, lets get cleared up here and head back to the house.”

Andy sighed, “If it is 'done' it is going to be a bit more complicated and time consuming than we had estimated.”

Wynn was looking through the details for the Budget Holstein Building, “May be not. Nearly everything is wireless. They are not doing Square Terminals as they are all using iPads. The laptops Kayré and Kacie are using don't support Ethernet natively. They have a wired printer/fax, but that is about it for hardwired.”

Andy seemed relieved, “Okay, so we just need to drops for printers and then run cabling for the access points. That doesn't seem so bad.”

We cleaned up and headed back to the house. It was nearly lunch time and I had not heard back from Kacie. I gave her a call, “Sorry Ron. I am still up in Carefree with a vendor. Kayré had a personal appointment out in Phoenix and will be gone until afternoon. I should be leaving here shortly. Give me 30-minutes?”

I told her, “That can work, we will grab some lunch and then meet you there.” The three of us grabbed lunch at Subway and met Kacie at the new Budget Holstein. I asked, “So how do you two like living here?”

Kacie laughed, “It is taking some getting used to. We were a bit, um....well...spoiled when we were living with you all. But, we like it. Here we are.”

We walked in and indeed the interior was done. I commented, “Well, this is much further along than we were lead to believe. However, given that majority of your connectivity is going to be via WiFi, it is not going to set us back that badly.”

Kacie was unaware of the expectations we had with Linda and was visibly upset, “Sorry, I was not aware she had promised you it would not have been at this stage yet. Of course, she seems to have distanced herself from this project recently and I have ended up 'picking up the pieces' if you would.”

Wynn assured her, “It is okay Kacie, we're used to this with Linda.”

I added, “Yeah, for sure. Its always an 'adventure' with her. The three of us will take a look around and figure out how we are going to do this.”

Kacie understood, “I am not upset with y'all, just the situation. I didn't ask for this and neither did Kayré, who is cleaning up another mess Miss Holstein left. Um...okay that is fine. Let me go upstairs to our residence and I'll get you a key.”

Kacie headed up stairs and Andy asked, “What the hell was that all about?”

I had to wonder, "I am not sure. I get the impression Linda is not communicating things with Kacie and Kayré. Anyway let's take look around and get an idea of what we need to do. I still need to find out what is going on with Vinnie's as well...then again, that is not until at least mid-next week and hopefully by then things will be back to 'normal'."

Wynn laughed, "As if! Okay, yeah let's take look." We looked around and soon discovered the second level did not match the plans Kacie had supplied us, "Is it me or does this layout not match?"

Andy commented, "Okay, glad it is not just me."

Kacie found us on the second level and handed me a key, "Anything else you need while you are here?"

I told her, "Yes. How come the layout up here does not match the plans you had sent us?"

Kacie became extremely annoyed, "Because Miss Holstein made changes for ADA compliance, and never told you; even after she told me she would..." She was trying to control her anger and calm down, "...sorry may be it just me, but when someone tells me they are going to do something, I'd expect they actually do it. That was ingrained into me while I was in military school, still is even after I got kicked out for grand larceny. I'll have a word with her..."

Since she didn't know about Linda and Dundee, I told her, "I'll take care of this. Can you get us an updated plan?"

Wynn was more curious about what lead up to Kacie being kicked out military school, "Grand Larceny?"

Kacie giggled, "It was all a big misunderstanding. Someday when I have more time, I'll share the story. Need to get back to the store. Again, really sorry about Miss Holstein."

Andy reminded her, "We're used to it. Just try and find us the updated plans."

Kacie left and Wynn suggested, "How about I get some pictures with my iPad, give us something to work with until Kacie can get us the revised plans."

I replied, "Yeah, fine idea. I think we are done for the day. Let's meet back tomorrow morning."

We returned back to the house and Wynn informed me she would have the photos uploaded shortly. I called Laura, "Hey sis, So, The McGrawl's building is

done for wiring. We were going to start on The Budget Holstein, but then the middle level does not match what's on the plans. Kacie mentioned something about Linda needing to make changes for ADA compliance and Linda had promised to send us an updated plan. Wynn has uploaded photos and a video to the shared folder so you can take a look. Kacie is going to try to get us an updated plan."

Laura sighed, "Great...so what exactly did she do?"

Wynn came into my office and I put Laura on speaker, "Evening Laura. So, not too sure what changes were for ADA compliance as it appears she has moved the offices to the other end of the building as well as the conference room. I can try to piece together a new plan based on the photos and videos."

Laura joked, "You know, I'd be disappointed if anything we did with Linda went smoothly."

I told her, "Well Kacie was not pleased and expected better from Linda. Anyway, I just wanted to give you a heads up. We will start working on that building tomorrow. Won't really know more about Vinnie's until next week. Once we know more about that, then we should know when we can have you out for equipment install."

Laura assured me, "I've already been *warned* I have getting close to having too much vacation time. So I told them I'd plan on taking a week off in next month, just not sure when. They told when I am ready give the 72-hours notice."

The next morning we started on the ground level of The Budget Holstein. This was taking longer than we had planned as we were having to cut out dry wall in the ceiling for the access points. We finally wrapped up mid-afternoon. Since it was Friday anyway and we were still waiting on Kacie to get us the updated plans for the middle floor we called it a week. Wynn had managed to draw up a rough sketch of the middle level based on the photos and video she took. That evening Sara and Lindsay came home and the four of us had dinner. Sara and Lindsay disappeared to the play loft for the rest of the evening. I am assuming at some point they retired for the evening in the northern suite. Saturday morning the rest of the girls showed up for Martina's Yoga class. I headed out for a while to take care of some errands. When I had returned I noticed Maya's Jeep and Martina's Jag were no longer in the driveway, but Kayré's truck still was. When I returned I found Kayré and Kacie in the kitchen with Lindsay, Sara and Wynn. Saturday afternoon Andy returned. The five of us ended up going to the Mexican Cantina place out in DC Ranch. Sunday was quiet and Wynn spent most of the morning cleaning the house, in her purple catsuit with double dildo pants underneath while locked in a fiddle. That afternoon Kacie called, "Sorry Ron this took so long, but was finally able to track down the correct plans for the middle floor. I've emailed them to all of you. Let me know if you need anything else."

I looked over the plans and compared them to Wynn's. I called Wynn into my office, "So, Kacie finally found the updated plans for the middle floor. Your rough diagram was not that far off."

Laura called me, "Hey Ron, got the new plans. I'll work on those tonight after Miss Kitty and I get back. Should have them before the end of the night."

Monday morning after breakfast I checked my email and had new layout plans for the middle floor of The Budget Holstein. I uploaded those to the shared drive before Wynn and I headed over to meet Andy. When we arrived we found Andy on the middle floor already marking the locations for the new access points. It would take the three of us a couple days to get the middle floor completely done. We were now at a stopping point and I was hoping to be hearing from Linda or Dundee soon on the status of Vinnie's. Wednesday morning Wynn informed me Linda was holding on the business line. I answered, "Linda, nice of you to call me. What's going on?"

Linda told me, "Well Dundee and I got married last week which was why y'all were not able to reach us. So Kacie informed me I never sent her the revised layout for the second level of the Budget Holstein."

I replied, "Yes, we discovered that. She did manage to get us the revised plans and we are done with the wiring in your building."

Linda was surprised, "Oh, okay. How about the McGrawl's building?"

I informed her, "Done as well. Right, now we are waiting on the green light to start Vinnie's. Once we are done or nearly done there then I get Laura and Sophie out to start getting the equipment installed and connected for all three buildings. Any idea when that can happen as we are on a holding pattern now?"

Linda could tell I was not happy about what had been going on the past week, "Yes so...let me check with Dundee, I call you back right away." She hung up with me and I really wasn't expecting to hear back from her for at least another couple days. About an hour later Wynn informed me Linda was holding on the office line. She told me, "Okay, so Dundee says y'all can start tomorrow if you want. Sorry Ron, I didn't think all this through very well, got an earful from Kacie yesterday. I'll say this about her, she speaks her mind and doesn't give a shit about sugar coating it! She reminds me a lot of Hal, he was that way. Pissed off a lot of people, but at the same time they were appreciative that he told them how it was and not what they wanted to hear. I need to get back to the shop."

Vinnie's turned out to be the easiest of the three buildings to get wired and we had it done by the end of the day Thursday. I checked with the GC to find out how much longer until the interior was done and they informed me about another

week. The interior of the McGrawl's building was nearing completion and The Budget Holstein was already done before we started our cabling. I called Laura, "Hey, so we have wrapped up wiring on all three buildings now. The interior work of Vinnie's should be done in another week. McGrawl's end of this week and of course The Budget Holstein is already done. I have all the equipment already for all three buildings taking of space in the spare garage. So whenever you are able to come up, we are ready to start."

Laura looked at her schedule, "Well see today is Thursday...hmm this is my long weekend; Saturday through Tuesday. Okay, I tell my manager I am taking Wednesday through Saturday off. Yeah that would work which means I'll be off until a week from Monday. Lynn is busy with Miss Holstein at work so she won't be joining us. Sophie and I can come up say mid-day Sunday. How long do you think it will take us to get everything done?"

I told her, "Guessing here but; Budget Holstein two days; McGrawl's one or two days because of Mel's suite; Vinnie's one day. If everything goes as planned..." Laura made a snide remark about my last statement, "...yeah, but at least Linda is staying put in Tucson and she also knows better now than to piss us off. Let's just say we have an ally on our side with Kacie. Anyway, the plan is we can get all the installs done next week and finally be done with this horrendous project."

Laura could not agree more, "I know what you mean. Okay, so let's plan on having Sophie and I arrive sometime Sunday afternoon. Can you text her your new address, she might have it already..but just to be sure."

Once I wrapped up with Laura, I texted Sophie our new address and called Wynn into my office, "There is light at the end of the tunnel! Laura and Sophie are coming up Sunday afternoon. We will start installing the equipment next Monday and hopefully we finish by Friday. So tomorrow you and I need to sort everything in the garage for each of three buildings/four projects."

Wynn was confused, "Four projects?"

I reminder her, "Mel is a separate project, within the McGrawl's building."

## **Chapter 18: Thirsty Cactus Conclusion and A Working Vacation**

Friday morning Wynn and I along with Andy sorted through all the equipment and discovered we were missing a couple switches for The Budget Holstein. After looking through the order confirmations discovered they were on back order. After some negotiating with our local supplier we had substitutions on the way via Road Runner Express arriving before the end of the day. Sunday morning Sophie called the house informing us her and Laura were on the way up. They arrived a few hours later. Laura was surprised by the size of the house, "Wow this is a lot smaller than the last two places you've had out here."

I reminded her, "Since it is just Sara, Wynn and I; we don't really need anything overly large. Wynn will show you to our room. Sophie can have her own room or stay with Wynn whichever she prefers."

Wynn took Laura to the southern suite and upon entering she saw the Alaskan King Bed, "You had this bed down in that new suite at the other house. Nice you were able to have a room big enough here to accommodate it." After she got settled in Laura headed to my office, "Wow! The views here are great." She then noticed, "You don't have a pool here...I don't think one would have fit well on this lot anyway."

I told her, "May be before the previous owner added this section; the studio/library, my office and the powder room off the great room were added on." That evening Wynn made her Spicy Meatloaf for the five of us. Laura, Sara and Sophie headed up the play loft for some fun. I worked on a couple small projects to pass the time. I had nearly wrapped up for the night and was looking at my ledger. I was a bit surprised to see I was making more from these smaller projects combined than I had from some of the larger projects last year. Either way, the extra money coming in was good. While I did not have to pay taxes on the sale of the Acme House, I was going to next year for the sale of the Fairy Duster house. However, some of that would be offset as I paid an (over) estimated income tax each month.

Wynn came in to my office, "We're going to have ice cream and nightcap on the patio, care to join us." I told her I'd be right out just as soon as I shut down everything.

I joined everyone on the patio. Laura commented, "Can't get over how quiet it is out here..." off in the distance a coyote howled, "...other than the wildlife. No traffic noise, very peaceful. So, what do we start with tomorrow?"

I told her, "Well since the Budget Holstein is completely done and likely is going to be the most time consuming, I think that is a good place to start. Then either Vinnie's or The McGrawl's building thereafter, depending on how far along they are in completing Vinnie's." We wrapped up and headed to do bed.

The next morning after breakfast Andy called to let us know he needed to open at Fountain Hills as Max was coming in a little later. He'd would join us once Max had arrived. We headed into the garage and Laura was surprised to see the Murano, "Did you finally sell The Jeep?"

I told her, "No, The Cruiser. Sara took The Jeep to work since Andy dropped Lindsay off at The Budget Holstein on his way out to Fountain Hills store."

Monday and Tuesday we spent working on the Budget Holstein. While we had not

finished with that building yet, we were informed Tuesday afternoon there would be only a couple trades working at Vinnie's the next two days and would be a good time for us to get our installs done without tripping over everyone else. Again, Vinnie's turned out to be a lot simpler than we had estimated with us getting the installs completed by mid-afternoon. Since we were done early, the five of us met up with Sara and Lindsay for dinner at Rubio's that evening. Thursday morning we wrapped up on The Budget Holstein. After lunch we did Mel's portion of The McGrawl's building. Friday we did the rest of the McGrawl's building and ended up putting in a late night in order to get it all done. That Saturday Andy was back at Fountain Hills while Sara and Lindsay had gone out. As Laura and Sophie were getting ready to leave Laura commented, "You know, I am not sure if I can keep doing this. These last few months have been nuts and a bit much for me. I suppose if were not working my regular job it would not be so bad...I don't know, may be I am getting too old for this shit."

I thought about her comments, when we started this gig almost 20-years ago it was our main job, "Yeah I know. Funny thing is I am making so much money off these triage web jobs it is crazy. So far this year, I've made more than I did all of last year from major projects. I really, don't plan on taking anything else on. Between Acme and Thirsty Cactus with Corona de las Estrellas in between, it has been a lot. Gary doesn't plan on doing anything, in fact his attention going to be focusing on being a father later this summer. Linda is still a wild card though...."

That weekend Andy told us, "So we closed our old Scottsdale location for good tonight. We will start moving over next week and I think by Thursday we will be ready to reopen in the new location. Mel said she will be moving over in a couple weeks and wants to close her old location on a Friday and open the new the following Monday. She is getting inventory to have on hand for the new location to tied her over until she moves the rest of the stuff out of the old location."

I had heard from Dianne earlier in the day, "Okay. Dianne called and said they are almost ready to move. Just waiting on the new pizza ovens and Maya's piano. Linda hasn't said anything to me about The Budget Holstein."

Sara informed us, "She is waiting on things to quiet down at Tucson location so she can come up and supervise the move. Why she doesn't just delegate that to Kacie and Kayré I do not know."

I suggested, "Likely because she still wants to have some control over her stores, though she has always said Scottsdale was going to be Kayré's store."

Over the course of the next couple weeks everyone except the Budget Holstein had moved into their new locations at Thirsty Cactus. There were a couple hiccups along the way; equipment malfunctions or incorrect configuration on one of the network devices, but nothing that we couldn't get fixed in a short time. The end of that week the three of us went to Vinnie's that Friday for dinner. The place

was packed. We saw Maya on her piano and Lizzie on fiddle performing most of the evening. I had a chance to talk to Peaches, "Looks like you guys are doing well here."

Peaches smiled, "Yes. Good location! Sorry need to go."

A few weeks later Linda called, "Seeing as I just cain't get away from the Oro Valley store anytime soon...I am going to delegate the Budget Holstein move to Kayré and Lindsay. So we are hoping may be mid next week to get fully moved over and re-open the following Monday." Surprisingly as much troubles I was expecting with the complexity of the Budget Holstein and the troubles we had at Gold Canyon, the move went without issues.

Fourth of July weekend Sara and I headed down the Marana and stayed with my sister. Wynn went up north again to stay with her friends in Pine. Sara and I headed down to Tubac to spend sometime with my mother and Blanche for the day. We came back that Sunday and I was going to inform Wynn when she returned we could reopen our job bidding board. However, Lindsay called, "Hey, um...was wondering if y'all would like to take a vacation to Tennessee? My sister and niece have job for y'all. Come out with Andy and I for a few days and see what you think."

I joked, "Well, that's an oxymoron...nonetheless, we could use a break for everything for a bit. Let me know when y'all want to go."

Lindsay told me, "We could be ready in a couple days. Andy just needs to take care of stuff with PC's and Things while I do the same for The Budget Holstein."

Wynn returned later that evening, "So how was the long weekend?"

I told her, "Not too bad. Got a chance to spend time with my sister and mother without Linda interfering. So, Lindsay called earlier and asked if Sara and I can head out to Tennessee with her and Andy for a few days. I think we may be doing a job for her niece. Just going to scout it out and see if it is worth our while. Not sure how handle Laura's part...it is simple enough she may be able just remote access into the equipment and upload the configs. Cross that bridge if we get there. Anyway, sounds like Lindsay wants us to go later this week. So, enjoy your time off."

Wynn laughed, "I suppose I will. Perhaps, I'll head down to Tucson for a few days. I'll have to do a group text and find out who all is free and when."

A couple days later Gary took us to the airport, "You know it is about time you took a vacation. Let me know when you are due back and I'll come get you...provide Bunny hasn't gone into labor." I had forgotten when her due date was. Gary clarified, "Though she is not due until closer to the end of the month."

A few hour later we landed in Tennessee and Leslie was there to meet us, "So nice to see y'all again. Y'all will be staying at my daughter's farm outside of Franklin. Should be there in about an hour." This was the first time I had been in the eastern US as Chugwater had been as far east as I had been. We arrived at large farm with large farm house and couple outbuildings. Leslie explained, "The barn over yonder is completely finished. You have four bedrooms, four baths, kitchen and giant loft. Charlotte and Dave, her husband should be back within the next hour, so you have sometime to freshen up. One of us will come get you for dinner." Upon walking into the barn we were amazed as the interior looked nothing like a barn other than the soaring ceilings.

An hour later Charlotte came over and got us for dinner. We went into the main farmhouse and sat around a giant table. Charlotte introduced everyone, "This is my husband Dave and our two children Dolly and Timmy. Hope you brought your appetite." After dinner we chatted for a bit and Charlotte explained, "So tomorrow we can go over to our Cafe and store, see what you think." The next day after breakfast Charlotte took us over to her Cafe. The place was a much smaller than I was expecting, but then this wasn't a very large town. Charlotte told us, "So we are somewhat in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century here. Not as advanced as that place out in Tucson we went to a while back."

I looked around and asked, "How many order stations do you have?"

Charlotte replied, "One...well two. There is one all three severs share and then we have one by the front counter for a carry out orders."

Andy asked, "Do you do online orders?"

Charlotte told us, "No and we prefer not to. They'll just call us ahead of time. We have a register at the front as well as in the store."

I commented, "This is a lot simpler than I thought it would be. What about WiFi?"

Dave told us, "We'd don't want to do that, we want our patrons to interact with each other not their devices."

I laughed, "I totally agree. We can setup an employee only WiFi for the iPads."

Charlotte commented, "Now Lindsay mentioned you do websites?"

I replied, "Yes I do, need one or already have one?"

Charlotte replied, "We already have one, hasn't been updated in ages. Nothing real fancy, just our menu and hours. Just used on of them there point-and-click template sites."

I told her, "I should be able to help you with getting that updated. Mind if Andy and I take a look around more thoroughly." She told us to go ahead. Since the place was fairly compact, it really didn't take us long.

Andy estimated, "Thinking may be four access points; basic router and firewall and a small PoE switch. A couple Square terminals and maybe half dozen iPads?"

I advised him, "Sounds about right will need to get a site plan to Laura and let her plug in the numbers to tell us for sure. Drop ceiling so shouldn't be an issue running the wiring. Not sure about their Square image, though if Charlotte already has experience using a template builder, shouldn't be very difficult. I suppose I could take a look at their website.." We headed into Charlotte's office and asked, "Could you pull your website for us?" Charlotte did just that and was really surprised how well done the site was for a template builder, "Wow. That's is really good looking, lot of these template builders are very cookie cutter."

She told me, "I wanted one that I could highly customize. Mainly I am looking at expanding the site for the gift shop."

I explained, "Okay, yeah I can do that. I use WordPress..." Charlotte explained that was how their main site was built, "Oh okay. Then it should be too difficult to integrate the gift shop. Just do another WordPress install on a sub-domain or if you prefer a different domain." Charlotte told me their domain was their family farm's name, "Then I think we should go the sub-domain route. We can do shop dot then the domain. If you can build with WordPress you will have no issue building your Square image. So, what we need from you if possible is a detailed site plan of the cafe and gift shop. We'll need that information for my sister to determine how much and what network equipment we will need. Still need to figure out how to get her to configure everything...hopefully remotely."

Dave told us, "I can get those from the county, it will take a couple days."

Andy and I conferred with ourselves, "It doesn't seem like this would be that complicated. Just a matter of Laura. Suppose I can give her a call once we have the plans and see..." I thought about the conversation we had that last day her and Sophie were at Thirsty Cactus. The next couple days Leslie took us to various parts of Franklin and up to Nashville.

On the evening of the second night she told us, "Charlotte and Dave got a copy of the plans. They'll bring those tonight." That evening after dinner Sara and Lindsay spent some time with Leslie's grandchildren while Andy, Leslie, Charlotte, Dave and I went over the plans.

I looked at the plans, "Okay this works. Is there somewhere in town we can have these scanned?"

Dave told me, "My sister, Victoria has a large flatbed scanner at her office. She is a Realtor so, she does lot of this. I can have her do it tomorrow if you like."

I told him, "That would be fine. Suppose I should give my sister a call. Is there somewhere quiet I can go?"

Dave yelling over the kids, "What? Can't hear you!...yeah let me take you to my den."

I called Laura and explained, "So I know we had talked about you not wanting to do anymore projects..."

Laura clarified, "It is not that I don't want to, it is just not practical for me...why?"

I explained, "So we might be taking on a small project for Lindsay's niece's Cafe and store in Franklin. We are actually out here now. It seems fairly simple from what Andy and I have seen. I have site plans, but there hard copies, which they can get scanned tomorrow. I was thinking since I know how to do basic initial configuration on router and switches I can get them setup for you to be able to remote and then upload the configurations. Not too sure about Firewall though..."

Laura explained, "May not even need to do that. I can build the configs and send them as text file. All you need to do is copy them in. I can walk you through doing a Firewall, not really that much different. You might even be able to do it in your lab, just update a couple IP addresses once you go to install. This could work since I could do this during my free time. Do you have a timeline yet?"

I told her, "If we do this, I had planned on having the network equipment drop-shipped. We haven't even bid on this yet. They are doing Square so I think it takes a few days to get those terminals. Then also matter of us getting the rest of the equipment, which I would think would be a few days as well via Road Runner. I'll send you the plans and Andy's notes tomorrow morning. You can look over everything and let us know."

The next day Leslie took us over to Victoria's office, "Victoria, this is Andy McGrawl, Lindsay husband and his business partner Ron Merlot. We need to scan these plans for the Cheshire Farms Cafe and shop."

Victoria greet us, "Pleasure to meet you two. Yes, let me get those scanned for you." Half hour later she had scanned them documents and put them on a flash drive. I uploaded the files to my laptop and sent them to Laura. A couple hours later we were back at the Cheshire Farms and Laura called advising us our estimates were right on for the amount of equipment we would need. She also gave us an amount she would charge to do this remotely. With that information Andy was able to get a quote for the price and availability of the network

equipment plus supplies we would need. I went to Square's website and confirmed pricing and availability. Normally, I'd have Wynn put together a quote, but since she was not with us I used one of my older templates. That evening after dinner, Lindsay and Sara took the kids outside so we could discuss the project.

I advised them, "It would take about two weeks or so for us to get everything and allow some time for my sister to build the configurations. Install, shouldn't take more than a few hours. There is not much wiring we need to run, just need to figure out where to setup the network rack. We will figure that out later. Tonight is our last night here and you don't need to make a decision before we leave."

Charlotte, Leslie and Dave discussed it with each other. Charlotte told us, "I do believe we will want to go forward. Give us a few days to look things over and we will get back to you."

That evening Andy and Lindsay along with Sara and I were sitting out on the patio having a beer. Andy commented, "Too bad we wouldn't be able to relocate out here...you know...the four of us get a place together...sure would be nice..."

I asked, "If am not sure you are being serious, if you are..."

Andy was silent, but after some more awkward silence Lindsay reminded him, "Even if we were to sell our shares of PC's and Things to Dunn and Zina, I still have The Budget Holstein. While I am sure Linda would love to have a small boutique store out here, there is matter of my clients."

Sara wasn't sure which 'side' she should be on but did agree with Lindsay, "Same here. I am the only one Miss Bordeaux will work with now. One of the reasons I declined Linda's offer to be manager at her purposed Paradise Valley store; that and the location."

While I was already very confused as to what was happening, I was even more so with the mention of a 'purposed' store in Paradise Valley, "Whoa....wait! What 'purposed' store in Paradise Valley? Linda specifically told me when I last saw her when had our 'field trip' down to Oro Valley she had no plans on opening a fourth store."

Sara explained, "This was a while back before she decided to do Gold Canyon. Anyway, I am not sure if Ron could leave Arizona."

I told them, "I could easily leave since 95% of my work is remote and could be done anywhere. However, that other 5% is service agreements with ACME and of course Linda which if needed could be outsourced; like I do with Jason Jason in Frisco. On the flip side though and this is not something I have mentioned to any

of you; Laura and I had a chat before her and Sophie left that Saturday. She didn't want to upset y'all, but she is really wanting to get out the consulting gig. It is getting to be too much for her, especially since she has a full time job already. Y'all need to remember when Laura and I started our *Unlikely Partnership* 20+ years ago we were in college and it was our primary and for the most part only income source."

Andy understood about Laura, "I have to agree about Laura. I have PC's and Things, so not always easy on me either...just wish we...well nevermind..."

I was wondering what Andy regretted doing now and before I had a chance to ask Lindsay told him, "Just tell them Andrew...it ain't doing us any good otherwise."

Andy hesitated a bit, "Okay fine Lindsay....just wish we hadn't done the condo. Thought it would be nice, but Lindsay and I have grown so accustom to having y'all around."

I laughed and told him, "I do believe Sara and I feel the same. The house is too damn quiet...not to say you two were noisy, but still. That first morning after Kacie and Kayré had moved out and Martina was not with us...was just..."

Sara finished my sentence, "Erie?"

I thought for a moment, "Yeah and creepy. More so since Wynn was away. Okay, well I suppose you two can have the northern suite where Lindsay normally stays during her 'visitations'. But, I can't have the other suite as an office."

Andy told us, "Honestly, I really don't need a formal office. When we were still at the other house it was mostly used by Lindsay and Linda's girls."

Lindsay added, "Other than the weekly Budget Holstein status meeting with Kayré and Kacie on Sundays, we don't really use the office in the condo. It does house Andy's lab."

Sara suggested, "Why not use the studio for the status meetings? It is not like we need much space for our meetings."

Lindsay asked, "Do you still have the other chaise lounge? The one we brought with us is in our garage as we didn't have space in that room."

I thought for a moment, "You know, I thought I saw that lounge in your garage when I helped Andy with all the equipment he bought. As for the other one....oh yeah, it's up in the FROG."

Andy asked, "The Frog?"

I laughed, "Yeah: Finished Room Over Garage. Which all I am using it for is storage as not that 'finished'. You know I really don't need two tables in the study. I can put one in the shop, give Andy a workspace, a place to put his lab. One less table for Martina have to move on Saturday's when she does her Yoga class. Though she would have to deal with two lounges now. But, they don't take much space. We can make this work, the only downside is I will only have one guest suite. Which is not too big of a deal, other than Christmas when my mother and Blanche come up along with my sister and Miss Kitty. Not like I have space to add on at this house..."

Sara asked, "What about having the FROG finished?" I started at Sara for a moment and she was surprised, "What? Seems like a valid suggestion..."

I told her, "Yes...yes....yes it is. A good suggestion at that too. Wonder if Dundee can squeeze in one more job before he relocates to Tucson. So, when would you guys be looking at coming back?"

Andy replied, "We are on a month-to-month lease right now. We originally did a six-month and we were unsure if we had wanted to do another six-months. As long as we give notice before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior we can end the following month."

I told the McGrawl's, "Okay, I think we can work that out..." Turning to Andy, "You know I was starting to miss those exotic beers of yours."

The next morning Leslie took us up to the airport. Before we left she told us, "Charlotte and Dave will be in contact with you sometime next week. Regardless, y'all's are always welcome to come back out here at any time you want to get away."

Gary met us at the Phoenix airport and took us back to the Sagebrush House. The McGrawl's made no mention to Gary on their intent of moving back in with us.

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**To Be Continued in The Unlikely Vacation...**