

TROPICAL ESPIONAGE PART 2

Title: Tropical Espionage

Author: Uncle Charlie

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Setting: Somewhere in Season 3

Rating: PG

Notes: Thanks to Blue Leader for getting us off to a great start!!

Part Two

"So, you never know what kind of bodies you gonna get, bein' a mortician in New Orleans," the large man was saying to Amanda as they waited for the plane to take off. "Specially round Mardi Gras, let me tell you."

Amanda nodded at her companion, Bernie, an enormous, pasty man. He was elaborating on the strange 'visitors' he received at his family mortuary. Again, she turned to look at Lee and wondered how they'd been given two seats so far from each other.

Lee smiled at the woman next to him, a buxom redhead who was obviously thrilled that she was seated next to him. He'd tried to politely ignore her, but she was undeterred. Glancing over at Amanda once more, he shrugged as he caught her eye. An idea struck him, and he stood, excusing himself.

"Hurry back," the woman purred, grazing his calf with her stockinged toes.

Two days. They'd had two days to pack, memorize their cover story and prepare for their assignment. Amanda had told her mother that IFF was doing a documentary about resorts on the islands of the Bahamas. Amanda had been

looking forward to catching some rest on the flight, but now was wondering if she could fall asleep amidst Bernie's incessant and morbid chatter.

The plane began its ascent and soon they were flying high over Virginia. Bernie was now expounding on the apparently innumerable virtues of posthumous makeup and prosthetics.

Amanda saw Lee looking over at her again and was relieved that he appeared as disappointed as she felt, despite the lovely and flirtatious woman beside him. He stood suddenly and headed down the aisle, indicating that she follow him.

"I'm so sorry, will you excuse me?" she murmured to Bernie.

"Certainly, little darlin'," he agreed easily, shifting his legs towards the aisle so Amanda could get through.

She made her way towards Lee, and he quickly opened the restroom door and pulled her inside. Surprised, she gasped as he closed the door and turned to her. The restroom was extremely cramped, and they stood mere inches apart.

Lee placed his hands on her elbows. "I don't know what happened with the tickets, Amanda," he began.

"Well, you got a better deal than I did, from what I can see," she complained lightly.

"Not exactly," Lee argued. "She just asked me to join the ` Mile High Club.'"

"Oh!" Amanda exclaimed. "Oh!" she exclaimed again as his words sunk in.

"Yeah." He sighed. "Listen. Ask your friend if he'll switch seats with me. Tell him we're honeymooners or . . . or that you're epileptic and I need to be able to give you your medication. Just get me away from that flameheaded barracuda!"

"Oh, Lee, I don't know . . ." She shook her head.

"Come on, Amanda, please," he cajoled. "I'd much rather sit with you than Lucy Ricardo."

She laughed and looked into his eyes. "Okay, I'll see if he'll . . ."

Her words were cut short by a burst of turbulence. Lee's body lurched forward, pinning her between him and the sink. He grabbed her around the waist, and she put her arms around him reflexively, trying to steady herself.

"Oh . . ." Lee breathed. "Sorry."

It seemed to take longer than necessary for him to move away from her, and he kept his hands on her waist.

"Yeah," she said, nodding slowly. "We'd better get out there."

"Yeah, okay," he agreed.

Opening the door, they found a line of impatient passengers waiting to use the restroom. Embarrassed, they made their way back to their seats.

"Bernie," Amanda whispered, as the man appeared to have fallen asleep.

"Yeah?" he asked, opening his eyes.

"I was wondering if you would mind changing seats with my fiancé" She broke off and laughed. "I mean, with my husband?" she asked sweetly. "We're on our honeymoon, and somehow our seats got all messed up."

"Of course, of course!" he readily acquiesced. "You should have told me sooner, darlin'!"

Soon, Lee was seated next to her, a grin on his face as the redhead shot him dirty looks as she fought with burly Bernie for the armrest.

"Now, that wasn't so hard, was it?" he said to Amanda with a twinkle in his eye.

"Nope," she responded, grinning back at him.

Remembering that she'd brought some granola bars along, Amanda reached down and unzipped her carryon bag. Lying on top of everything else was a bulky manila envelope.

"Lee," she whispered. "What's this?"

Leaning forward to see what she was talking about, he shrugged. "Beats me."

She pulled it out and handed it to him, and he tore it open at one end.

TBC by . . . Debbie Ann Macabie!

Here are the things that have to be mentioned in your section, Debbie Ann!

PERSON: Phyllis, a fiftysomething waitress from Jersey

PLACE: A telephone booth

THING: A black bikini

PHRASE: "What in the world is that?"

