

## **MIKA'S TIME**

By: Lynn Case

### **Esp. 2: "The Bicycle Landing"**

Mika woke to the purring sounds of Sissy sitting atop her stomach and staring at her.

"Good morning to you to Miss Purry Kitty." Mika said to her cat. Then turned over to get out of bed making the cat move to the other side of the bed. Mika stood up and stretched her back and her arms to the ceiling. She had gotten a good night sleep for a change. Maybe it was because she saved a little boy on the last assignment. That wasn't her job, just a natural instinct. Mika knew she broke a major rule of travel.

1. Stay with the assignment and try not interact with others as much as possible.
2. Keep your eye on the assignment and leave immediately after it is completed.
3. Never ever get attached to someone from another time.

Mika got dressed and made her way into the kitchen to make coffee, Sissy trotting not far behind. She reached into the cabinet and took out Sissy box of food and filled her food bowl for her. Sissy immediately jumped up on the counter when she heard the rattle of the food box. Then Mika proceeded to make coffee. She stood there waiting for the coffee making while watching Purry Kitty devour her food.

A few minutes later Mika was sitting on her sofa in her living room drinking her morning coffee and flipping through her mail that she didn't go through the night before. She came across the paper advising of her next assignment about midway through the stack. Mika picked it up and re read it. She took a long drink of her coffee and sat back on her sofa.

Mika pulled on her necklace that held a small purple charm that she always had around her neck. She turned it over, there on the back where small little numbers. Using a small pin she pulled from the top of the charm, she set the time and date according to her instructions in her assignment. Then took a few deep breaths to relax and pushed in the charm on her necklace.

Mika found herself dressed as a man on a bicycle in the middle of a race. Her short hair combed back and under a black hat. She was suddenly wearing small tight black pants with a red trim along the bottom with a white tunic top and a fold over collar and soft leather racing shoes. As she was quick to figure out, she suddenly found herself as a man in the famous race to end all races, the famous Tour De France taking place in the early morning hours of this day in the early nineteen hundred's.

Mika's assignment was not to win the race, but to knock over one of the bicyclists before he caused a tragic accident. Killing the ancestor of a well-known scientist of the future generations.

If the ancestor died, the scientists would never be conceived after the victory party later that evening. Mika peddled with the best of them.

*"Glad I took all those spinning classes."* She told herself as she peddled faster and faster to get to the front of the pack.

Before long she was near the front of the pack she could see her target not far ahead of her now. Mika peddled faster to get closer. She was immediately cut off by an English racer with a long puffy mustache making her swerve a bit to the left to avoid crashing. Mika sped up and tried to get around him. He deliberately was blocking her from getting ahead of him.

The pack turned a corner on one of the many blocked off streets of down town Paris for the race. She tried to keep her eye on her target, but she couldn't help notice her surroundings as she peddled along trying to pass the English racer. The street they were on now was wider. Mika cut to the left then quickly cut back to the right. The English racer cut to the left to blocker her but did not anticipate her cutting quickly back to the right. Mika was able to pass him and his long mustache and get right behind her target to protect him.

The finish line was fast approaching, Mika was on guard to block the Italian racer she was there to protect. There were six racers at the head of the pack sprinting for the finish line. One was the Frenchman that she was there to protect. He was in second place and holding steady in his position. Three were young French men and of course the Englishman and herself of course. Mika stepped up her pace and made it into third place, just in time to block the English racer from kicking the Italian over as he tried to take the lead.

Mika saw the Englishman lift his foot up to kick the Italian racer over. Mika quickly swerved into the Englishman man knocking him and her over onto the ground.

They went tumbling onto the grassy area next to the road. Mika landed on top of the English racer after rolling over a few times from the momentum of the speed they were peddling.

Mika quickly lifted herself up from his chest just in time to see the Italian man take first place at the finish line as planned. Then she looked down at the unconscious English racer with the big long mustache. *"He was quite handsome"* she thought to herself as she stared at him for a moment. She could feel his chest move up and down under her hands. For a moment she was mesmerized by the peaceful look on his face. He made a slight groaning sound. Started that he might wake up and see her laying on top of him, Mika quickly reached under her racing tunic and pressed the charm on her necklace.

In a split moment she was gone from the Paris Tour De France and back in her living room sitting on her sofa in the present day. Sissy hissing and growling while staring at her from under the chair across the room.

*"It's only me Sissy, calm down."* Mika told her cat whose back was arch and in attack mode. It took her a few minutes to reconnect with the present. She never understood why she could

adjust so quickly to travel but upon the return to the present, it always took her a few minutes to get readjusted.

Mika looked up at the clock on her living room wall. It read four thirty. "It didn't feel like she had been gone that long. It only felt like she had been gone for an hour or so". She thought to herself as she reached for her coffee still sitting on the table in front of her. Her coffee was now ice cold. Then Mika remembered she hadn't eaten breakfast before she left. Now it was almost dinner time and she was starving. She could hear her stomach rumble in retaliation for not putting in it.

Mika got up and walked over to her computer and started it up. While that was coming alive she checked her message on her answering machine. There was only one, her Father. He was checking to see if she completed her assignment and to call him back as soon as she received his message. The computer was now up and ready. Mika wanted to find out about the winner of the race she was just in. Even though it was really happening in nineteen hundred and three. She typed in the year and Tour De France. A moment later she got what she was looking for. The winner was indeed an Italian racer. He was an Italian bicycle racer best known for his win at the inaugural Tour De France. He was also known for a wild party after the race where he was almost arrested with other racers for getting drunk and running around the city half naked. He only escaped being caught by a young women who pulled him into her small house and kept him safe for the night. The rest was history. The famed racer died in nineteen hundred fifty six at a ripe old age.

Mika was satisfied with the information she read. She was just feeding her curiosity. Mika closed the screen and began to browse through her many emails. Deleting SPAM mail here and there as she went. Before long she was done with her email box and her cup of coffee. Just as she was getting up from her chair her cell phone began to chime. Mika looked at the screen, it was her Father. "*Probably checking to see if I had completed the latest assignment.*" She thought to herself as she answered the call.

"Hello Father" Mika said in to the receiver.

"Good afternoon my dear." Her Father replied. "I was hoping to pull you away for an early dinner so we can discuss your future. Are you free tonight say around six o'clock?" He asked.

"*Talk about my future?*" Mika thought to herself. What does that mean? "I guess so. I didn't have any plans yet. Where do you want to meet?"

"How about that little place you like to go Les Petit Pates over on six avenue?" He said knowing she liked past and she frequented there with her friends.

"You know I love that place." Mika replied. "I will be there a little before six."

"See you then my dear." Her Father said then end the call.

“Well Sissy, that takes care of dinner and the evening.” She said to her cat. “But that doesn’t mean I can’t go out later. It is Saturday night after all.” Mika picked up her cell phone and called her friend Tara. They had been friends since high school. They went on to study at different colleges states apart, but they remained good friends. After college they both moved back to their parent’s homes before getting out on their own.

“Hello?” Tara answered.

“So what are you doing this evening around eight?” Mika asked her friend with a smile in her voice.

“Absolutely nothing.” Tara replied. “I had a date but he cancelled at the last minute. What a flake”

“Well at least he cancelled and just not show up.” Mika told her friend.

“True.” Tara replied. “So what did you have in mind?” She asked

“I have to meet my Father for dinner at Les Petit Pates at six. Why don’t you meet me there in the bar at seven thirty-ish I’m sure we will be done by then? He wants to talk to me about something important otherwise I would say join us. You know Dad loves you more than me.” Mika said with a laugh.

“Only fair.” Tara replied “My Mother likes you more than me.” She laughed. “Oh kay I will be there in the bar at seven thirty or so. If you take too long, I will be just that many more glasses ahead of you.”

“I guess I will just have to catch up then.” Mika laughed. “Oh kay, see you then. Bye.” She said ending the call. “Well Sissy, that takes care of tonight’s activities. I will leave the television on for you on the animals channel so you can pretend to be a lion in the wild tonight.” She said to her cat with a laugh.

Mika arrived at Les Petit Pates a little before six. Her Father hadn’t arrived yet so she took a seat at the long dark oak bar and ordered an old fashion. A drink she picked up on one of her assignments that she actually enjoyed. While she waited for her drink she looked around the room to see if there was anyone she knew. The restaurant was not large, but not small either. It had the long bar on one side and about twenty or so dark oak tables and matching chairs with white table cloths covering each one. There was a small white vase on each table with a single white rose in each. Alongside a short round glass candle holder with a white candle flickering in each. It was a quaint little place. There food was excellent and inexpensive.

The bartender placed her drink in front of her about the same time she saw her Father walk in the front door. He was a tall heavy set man in his late sixties with graying hair. At one time was jet black and wavy. Mika had seen pictures of her father when he was younger. I was quite the catch back in his day. Today he was impeccably dressed in a dark suit and yellow tie. Her Mothers favorite color. He often wore something yellow to honor her deceased Mother.

“Father” Mika said loudly, not yelling, but loud enough to catch his attention. He looked in her direction just as a waiter walked up to him.

“A table for one sir?” As the young man.

“No, two” He told the waiter as he looked over at Mika making her way over from the bar to him.

“Very well sir, please follow me.” The waiter said looking at Mika. He led them to a table near the back of the restaurant and held a chair out for Mika to sit down.

He was a nice looking young man that always made himself available when Mika came in. Mika though he might have a little crush on her. He was always polite, but never forward enough to even ask her out on a date. She would have gone with him, if he asked.

Mika took her seat as her Father took his seat across from her. The young waiter handed each of them menus and rattled off the day’s specials. Then asked them if they cared for a drink from the bar, then of course noticed that Mika already had one.

“I will take a blue martini with two blueberries.” Mika Father ordered.

“Very well sir, I will be right back for your order and your drink.

“Blue martini with blue berries?” Mika asked her Father raising an eyebrow.

“What?” He replied. “I can have a blue martini with blue berries?” He said with a laugh. “I had one in Hawaii last summer. It was wonderful.”

“What about you. What is that you are drinking?” He asked her.

“An old fashioned.” Mika replied as she took a sip of her drink.

“Since when do you drink an old fashioned?” He asked raising an eyebrow himself.

“I had one on one of my travels and I enjoyed it.” She smiled.

They each looked over their menus and decided just as the waiter returned with his blue martini and to take their dinner order. They placed their order and the waiter was off to the kitchen to have the cook get started.

“So” Mika began. She had been wondering all day what her father meant by “Talk about your Future” when they spoke earlier. “What exactly did you want to talk to me about?”

“Ah yes” he replied putting his drink back on the table. “I wanted to discuss your future with the company.”

By company her Father meant his business. The “travel” business. Mika Father was none other than Mr. Robert F. Burnam, a well-known theoretical physicist and notable cosmologist. He was an avid inventor as a hobby since his retirement from government service a few years ago.

When he retired he secluded himself in his laboratory for a few months to work on a pet project of his. When he finally emerge later, he had started up his own corporation. His only employee, Mika.

“What about my future?” Mika asked looking at her father trying to get a read on his facial expressions. To which he had none. He was a good poker player as well. He was able to hold his face still showing no expression at all when he wanted top.

“Well, do you enjoy your position or do you see yourself doing something else altogether?” He asked point blank.

‘Well, Father’ she began slowly. “Honestly I never really thought about it. It’s not a bad job. I have had a few close calls here and there over the years, but overall I enjoy the “travel”. Just not the returns. Can’t you do something about the adjustment time?” she asked. “There is no adjustment time when I go, but there is anywhere from a few seconds to a few minutes each time I return.”

“I will see about some adjustments to the program and let you know.” He replied seriously. “Now, answer my questions.” He said with a smile.

“What did you have in mind?” she asked him.

“I was thinking that you should probably learn a little about my end of the business. For starters.” He replied. “We are receiving more and more assignments from the Client than you can complete in a reasonable amount of time. I am thinking you need to learn my end of the business and we need to hire another traveler in the next year.”

Their dinner arrived and the subject of the business was put aside. The rest of the meal was normal Father Daughter conversation. “Are you seeing anyone special” and “Why not?” and “You know I would like to be a Grandfather one day.” The regular conversation she always had with her Father.

They enjoyed their time over dinner just father and daughter. They ordered dessert and a brandy to end their dinner. Just as the waiter was bringing their dessert, Mika saw her friend enter the litter restaurant and take a seat at the bar.

Her father noticed her arrival as well. “isn’t that your friend, Tara over at the bar?’ her father asked gesturing in her direction.

“Yes, I believe it is.” Mika said taking a bit of her decadent cheesecake in front of her.

“Why don’t you ask her to join us for dessert?” Her father asked.

“I thought this was just a father daughter night?” Mika smiled and paused for a moment. “But if you insist.” She said then got up and walked over the Tara at the bar and brought her back to their table.

“Hello Mr. Burnam.” Tara said to Mika’s father as she gave him a gentle hug then took a seat next to Mika at the table.

“Nice to see you again.” He replied. “Mika doesn’t bring you to visit me anymore.

“Dad!” Mika said in protest. “I haven’t brought her to visit you in your office since we were in high school and I ran errands for you.”

“That’s alright Mr. Burnam, she doesn’t take me anywhere anymore anyway.” Tara said as they both laughed at Mika expense.

“Would you like some dessert?” He asked as he waved the young waiter down.

“I have what Mika is have. That looks delicious.” Tara replied.

The young waiter arrived at the table. “Yes sir what can I do for you?” He asked stared at Mika as usual.

“We would like another piece of cheesecake, please.” He told the waiter.

“Yes, Marco. Please bring me a slice of this wonderful cheesecake.” Tara teased the young waiter as she knew him.

Marco just glared at Tara. “Yes sir.” He said then walked away from the table.

“Do you know that young man?” Mr. Burnam asked Tara.

“Yes, so does Mika.” Tara grinned looking directly at Mika. “He has a crush on our little girl here.” Tara laughed.

“Oh?” Mr. Burnam said looking at his daughter with a raised eyebrow. “Anything you want to tell me young lady?” He asked.

“No” Mika said as she glared back at Tara and took a deliberate bit of her cheesecake.

Mr. Burnam looked over at the young waiter then back at his daughter. Slightly blushing now. “I see. Well” He replied wiping his mouth with his cloth napkin. “I will leave you tow ladies to have some fun. While this old man heads back home and to a comfy bed.”

“Oh father, you’re not that old.” Mika replied.

“Mika use the company card and pay the bill.” He told her as he was getting up from his chair.

“Tara is was lovely to see you again. Good night you two.” He said as he made his way through the restaurant. Stopping for a quick moment to stare at the young waiter. Then walked outside to hail a cab home.

“Now why did you have to tell him that?” Mika asked her friend.

“You need a life Mika.” Tara replied. “When was the last time you went on a date?”

Mika thought for a few minutes. 'It wasn't that long ago. Maybe a month ago.' Mika replied.

"Try seven months." Tara reminder her friend. "The last person that you went out with was that blond painter from the art school. You remember the one with the long hair and the attitude. At least that's the last one you told me about."

"No, that was the last guy." Mika admitted.

"You just sit in that apartment of yours all day with your picky cat." Tara told her. "You need a social life."

"I've been extremely busy with work." Mike replied.

"Don't tell me, you don't meet any men at your work." Tara scolded her friend. I've heard you talk in your sleep when you used to stay over. I know you meet men. You just won't date them. Or Do you?" Tara asked her friend.

"You know I tell you about all the guys I go out with." Mika told her suspicious friend. Then drank the last of her brandy. "Are you done with the cheesecake? Can we get out of here now? Marco keeps staring at me. It's making me nervous."

Tara took one last bit of her cheesecake, finishing it off. "Alright I'm finished." She said getting up from her chair with her mouth full.

Mika walked over to the hostess to pay the check at the cashier on their way out the door. Tara was still trying to hew her cheesecake when she walked out the door. Mika turned to see that Marco was still staring at her. So she winked at him and smiled. Then followed Tara down the street to grab a cab.

"Now why did you do that?" Tara asked "You're just teasing that boy. Now he thinks that you're interested."

"I might be." Mika grinned as she climbed in the back seat of the cab followed by Tara. "If he ever gets up enough courage to actually ask me out, I might just go to prove you wrong."

"What do you mean prove me wrong?" Tara asked closing the cab door next to her.

"That I have a social life." Mika said. "Twelfth and main driver." She told the cabby.

"What's at twelfth and Main?" Tara asked.

"A little antique store I wanted to check out. I heard they had a piece from England, early fourteen hundreds. I hope they're still open?" Mika replied.

The cab driver pulled up in front of the little shop. It was old and looked like a place that would have antiques. It was nothing special. Not a high price or high end place at all, but a little Mom and Pop place.

“Thanks driver.’ Mika said as she handed him some cash and pushed Tara to get out the door. “This is the place.” Mika said walking up to the door and turning the handle, it was locked. “Ah they are already closed. We will have to come back tomorrow.” Mika said quickly turning to see if they could catch their cab again, but he was gone out of sight.

“What’s so special about this old desk that you want it?” Tara asked.

“Oh nothing, just want to add it to my collection.” Mika thought to herself. She didn’t want to tell her friend what she had placed in that desk in fourteen hundred and thirty two just before the Arch duke walked in on her during an assignment, but she had a chance to get it back. She hoped.

Just as another cab down the street. Tara blew a loud whistle and the cab stopped. “Your chariot my lady?” She told Mika.

“Why thank you” Mika replied. “You’re such a good servant.” She replied as they both laughed and climbed in the back seat of the cab and made their way back to Mika’s apartment.