

## No Turkey on Thanksgiving?

The following year Tony and Heather were crossing the border into Canada once again. The last two trips were traumatic. First, a gunfight with hostages in a Tim Horton's restaurant and last year Tony had a panic attack on the Capilano Suspension Bridge. But Canada also provided great fun at a hockey game and the ambiance that Vancouver exudes, perfect to set up a night of romance. Maybe this trip, their time would be uneventful. Maybe not.

It started off well. The delay at the border was only ten minutes.

"That's a good omen Heather."

"Yes dear. We've never passed through this fast. Did you make that reservation for Thanksgiving dinner on Monday?"

"No, but I'm sure we won't need one. Two Thanksgivings for the last two years. It's our new tradition."

"If only we could arrange two Valentine's Days?" Heather leaned over and kissed Tony.

"It is one of the most romantic places we've seen, a lot like San Francisco. If only it was a little warmer."

"But then we wouldn't have all the Fall colors. Red and orange leaves painting the landscape."

"Where should we go first honey? Gastown? Granville Island Market? Kitsilano Beach?"

Tony spotted his prize and pulled up to a Tim Horton's restaurant.

"Tony, don't you remember that last time we went here?"

“I remember how the night ended; just trying to portend something wonderful. Remember, we’re in Canada. There is no crime here.”

Tony came back to the car with a dozen donuts, in a box with hockey players, equipment cutouts and a rink on the bottom.

“Check this out. Our grandson will love this.”

“That’s too many donuts dear. Remember your diabetes.”

“We have to eat them so the hockey box doesn’t get stained.”

“Yes, a shrewd marketing concept. People will buy more donuts to get the prize box for their children.”

“All right. You laugh, but little things make a difference.”

Tony and Heather headed to one of the tourist sites, North Shore Mountains. There were trails and natural beauty, all free to experience. The road curved around the mountains, providing views of the water.

Rain started to come down, then it turned into hail.

“Isn’t it pretty Heather? Looks like little snowflakes.”

Heather wasn’t so sure. “Careful dear, it could be slippery.”

As Tony drove around a curve, he saw an accident in front of him. He slammed on the brakes, sending him and Heather hard into the seatbelts.

“Ouch,” said Heather.

“Are you all right dear?”

“My shoulder hurts. That was quite a stop.”

But the donuts, carefully arranged in their hockey box prize went flying into the windshield. Chocolate and cream splattered over the dashboard and on both of them.

“Ugh. Well, at least the air bags didn’t come out.”

“We needed a seat belt for the donut box.”

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The couple checked into their luxury hotel, the Fairmont Waterfront, where they had stayed for the past two years. Excellence in all ways. They unpacked and got ready for the hockey game.

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“We’ve been good luck for the Canucks. Hope they’ll win tonight.”

Although they had good seats, center third in the upper bowl, the leg room was made for people much smaller.

“Are these the kid seats? I can barely fit my knees without touching the back of the seats in front of us.”

“Try to enjoy the game dear,” said Heather.

To complicate matters, two very large men sat on each side of them spreading their legs wide until Tony and Heather were cramped together. By the second period, Tony was getting annoyed. He tapped on each of the intruders.

“Would you mind sitting more in your seat. We’re very crowded here.”

“I’m sitting straight, not on your side.”

The other man was worse. He only spoke French.

The Canucks wound up losing and Tony and Heather walked out of there with sore, tired legs.

“I just want to get into the hotel hot tub and relieve these sore muscles, and then get to bed.”

“Me too dear.”

But the hotel hot tub was closed for cleaning.

The night had taken a decidedly unromantic turn. By now, neither Tony or Heather were interested in anything but sleep. Tomorrow would certainly be a better day.

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They made their way over to Stanley Park, one of the most scenic places in British Columbia. After taking some photographs of the mountains and water, they went to the Japanese Tea House for brunch.

“Look dear, they have my favorite, crab cakes.”

The waiter, a young Vietnamese man named Nick, came over. He poured them water and asked if they had any questions about the menu. Heather spoke first.

“I’ll have the salmon and salad.”

“Very good ma’am. And you sir?”

“The crab cakes and some vegetable soup please.”

“I’m so sorry sir. We’re all out of crab cakes. How about a nice steak?”

“No Nick. I had my heart set on crab cakes. How is the chicken?”

“Oh, very good.” Nick took their menus.

“Heather, have you noticed we’re having some mishaps getting in the way of our perfect weekend?”

“That’s life sweetheart. Remember, we have our Thanksgiving dinner tonight.”

In spite of the disappointment, the Tea House was wonderful. Tony and Heather spent some time walking through the park, holding hands like when they were younger.

“Now isn’t this lovely Tony? The fall colors and the birds singing.”

“Yes, I guess so.”

“I’ll bet the hot tub is running again. Maybe we could try that and a little romance before dinner.” Tony knew exactly what Heather meant.

So, the afternoon delights really made both of them fall back in love with Vancouver again.

Tony and Heather cleaned up for dinner and went down to the restaurant.

“Remember how great their dinner was last year?”

“I do sweetheart.”

They walked up to the hostess.

“Two for Thanksgiving dinner please.”

“Do you have a reservation sir?”

“No, I didn’t make one.”

“I’m so sorry. We are all filled up. I’m afraid we won’t be able to serve you until ten o’clock. And we didn’t get as much turkey in as expected, but our café has turkey sandwiches.”

Tony and Heather looked at each other. “I can’t wait three hours, can you?”

So, the couple went over to the café and sat down at the counter.

“We’re kind of overdressed, honey.”

The waitress came over and handed them a menu.

“No need. We want two turkey sandwiches, with a side of apple pie.”

“Yes, our turkey sandwiches are famous. You won’t be disappointed.” The waitress smiled and left.

Suddenly, there was a loud commotion in the kitchen. Tony and Heather could hear noise, but couldn’t see what was going on. After a few minutes, the waitress came out to them.

“I’m so sorry sir. We were just robbed.”

“We didn’t see anyone at the register.”

“They came in through the back. All they took was turkey and apple pie. In fact, all the turkey we had.”

“Well, what do you recommend?”

“The meatloaf is very good. And we do have some Tim Horton’s Boston Cream donuts!”

“Do you have the hockey box they come in?”

“In fact, we do, but you have to buy a dozen to get it.”

“Fine, bring on the meatloaf and donuts.”

“Very good sir. Happy Thanksgiving!”