

Hurricane David Is No Match For Us

by

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What do you pack when you have four minutes to leave?

Terrie pondered this quickly and then went into full action mode.

Fifteen Minutes Ago

Kathleen makes a desperate call to Terrie.

Terrie, sorry to call you so early, but I have a last-minute opportunity for you. You know I am leaving for my trip to the Bahamas this morning.

Yeah, I thought you'd be on your way to the airport by now.

Well, there's a problem with Donna; she's refusing to go because of the news about Hurricane David in the area and I really don't want to go by myself.

Are you Serious?

Yep, she's not going.

You mean she came all the way to Chicago from New York and she's not going?

That's right. Do you want to take her place? I checked with the travel agent and they are willing to make the switch because of the circumstances. You've got a passport – right?

Yes.

We're leaving for the airport in 15 minutes, so you need to make a decision now! We'll have just enough time to swing by and pick you up on the way.

OK, I'm interested, but I need to know a few basic things like: How much is it for the airfare and hotel and how much money spending money will I need? I've got some money saved but I had planned to use it for a new car. I'm starting my new job in Evanston in a few weeks and I don't want to have to take the bus way up there.

I get it and I'd have questions too, but the bottom line is the clock is running down and now you have 10 minutes before we need to pick you up. Donna said she'd give you a discount on the cost of the tickets and she'll give you a few weeks to pay her back.

OK, I'm in, I've always wanted to go to the Bahamas, but are you sure it's going to be safe?

I'll put it this way - I'm going, so I think it's safe. I came to that conclusion because of the following: Why would an airline agree to take a plane to a place and into a situation that is not safe and that could possibly destroy the plane and get people killed? It's not so much that they care about the passengers, but they don't want to lose a very valuable asset and be liable for the deaths of hundreds of people.

And your mother is OK with all of this? Look, you literally just turned 21 yesterday.

She's not REALLY OK, but she says I am officially an adult, so the final decision is mine.

What's Donna gonna do all week while we're in the Bahamas?

She's going to do sightseeing in Chicago, call a few other classmates and hang with my mother.

I'm still amazed that she is not going especially since she is so religious. And she is always talking about her faith. I tried to appeal to her spirituality and said that God would protect her and us, but she wasn't buying it.

Look, I think we'll have a great time and she will be sorry that she didn't go. When we get back we'll be all tanned, relaxed and full of great island stories about the handsome island men we met, the tasty food we had and the adventures we experienced.

5 Minutes Warning

Look you've got five minutes. I'm hanging up so you can get to it. Thanks for stepping in – it's gonna be GREAT! The celebration of my 21st birthday continues – woo hoo!

4 minutes till pick up

Mumbling to herself -- Wow- what have I done- well, I'd better get to it. Good thing I did my laundry yesterday.

Terrie recited her impromptu packing list as she threw the following items into her duffle bag:

Three bikinis

Sunglasses

8 sets of underwear – panties and bras

5 pairs of shorts

2 pair of light weight slacks

2 long skirts

7 tank tops

A White Sweater

A light weight jacket

Gym shoes, sandals, flip flops

Suntan lotion

2 baseball caps and a floppy hat

\$500 Cash

That ought to do it. Anything else I need, I can buy there.

Back at the Carter Household

Kathleen couldn't believe her luck, but then again, she could when she really thought about it.

Terrie was her most spontaneous, devil may care, lively friend. Sometimes she could be flaky, but this situation here – this was one that she was born to be a part of. She probably will be more fun than Donna would have been anyway.

Donna and Kathleen's Mother in the Kitchen Prior to Departure for the Airport

Donna was wringing her hands and thinking about what she had just given up. Was she crazy? She had been looking forward to the trip to the Bahamas all summer. When she left New York, she'd seen the weather reports about Hurricane David moving towards the Caribbean.

At one point she'd even considered canceling the trip to Chicago altogether and missing Kathleen's 21st Birthday Party and the trip to the Bahamas. But she decided to go – worst case scenario she would be at Kathleen's birthday party and see a lot of old friends as well as meet some new ones.

If she decided not to go on the trip she would only be losing her money and not her life! She could see the headlines in her mind's eye. "Recent college grads vacationing in a Bahamian Resort are found dead in the aftermath of Hurricane David!

Mothers of the two young women are devastated. In an exclusive interview they said "Their lives were just beginning. We tried to discourage them, but they wouldn't listen. They were 21 and we couldn't stop them."

Donna and Kathleen's mother sat in the kitchen talking about

Mrs. Carter, do you think I made the right decision?

Donna, only time will tell – we'll know the answer one week from now.

You made the decision so don't fret over it.

Chicago is a vibrant city and since you've never been here before there will be plenty for you to do. Chicago in the summer is the best. Kathleen left a list with the names and phone numbers of people you met last night at the party and of all of your classmates who live in Chicago.

You're right, the die is cast.

As Kathleen and Mrs. Carter prepared to leave for the airport. Kathleen saw a misty look in Donna's eyes, which she interpreted as regret.

Kathleen. I'm really sorry I messed this up for you and bailed at the last minute but am really glad that Terrie was able to step in and go.

But, boy, there's a big part of me that wants to give it a shot.

Hurricane David

Background Information

September 1-3, 1979

After crossing the Windward Passage, David struck eastern Cuba as a minimal hurricane on September 1. It weakened to a tropical storm over land, but quickly re-strengthened as it again reached open waters. David turned to the northwest along the western periphery of the subtropical ridge, and re-intensified to a Category 2 hurricane while over the Bahamas, where it caused heavy damage. Despite initial forecasts of a projected landfall in Miami, Florida, the hurricane turned to the north-northwest just before landfall to strike near West Palm Beach, Florida, on September 3.

While passing through the Bahamas, Hurricane David brought 70–80 mph (115–130 km/h) winds to Andros Island as the eye crossed the archipelago. David, though still disorganized, produced heavy rainfall in the country peaking at 8 in (200 mm).^[1] Strong wind gusts uprooted trees, and overall damage.

Source: Wikipedia