

England, May 25th -- Kat's home

Kat drove her beloved Lotus Elise through the estate, exiting at the gate by the West Lodge. Seeing Lofty in the garden, she stopped the car and got out.

"Hello, Lofty."

"'Ello, Miss Kat. I 'eard as what you wuz coming home for a few days."

Kat smiled. "I'm off to see my parents, but I shall be spending a day with Lady Penelope. We can catch up on news then."

Getting back into the car, Kat continued her drive along the familiar roads keeping away from the busy motorways. She pulled up outside her parents' house, sitting in the car for a few moments to collect her thoughts and calm herself. However, her mother had been watching, and as soon as the car pulled up she was out of the door and down the garden path.

"Kat! Oh my darling! It's so wonderful to see you."

Kat got out of the car and gave her mother a hug. "Mum, oh Mum! It's so nice to be home."

Laughing, mother and daughter, their arms around each other, headed indoors.

"Dad!" Kat hugged her father, and then she noticed Andrew and Melanie, and hugged them, too. She gasped in amazement, for entering the room were her eldest brother and his family.

"Timothy!" Smiling, her brother embraced her, and she stepped forward to hug her sister-in-law, Suzi, her niece, Estelle, and her nephew, Jake.

"We heard that you were coming home for your birthday. I had some holiday due and we felt that we should be here as well," her brother explained.

"Oh, what a lovely surprise, my whole family here! This is so wonderful!" Kat had tears in her eyes.

Her father brought a bottle of champagne and some champagne flutes. After he had filled one for each of them, he raised his glass, "To Kat! Happy Birthday, darling."

"To Kat! Happy Birthday," everyone chorused.

While her father, helped by the others, was preparing the evening meal, Kat found time to be alone with her mother.

"You're looking well, darling, though you're still very thin. They're not working you too hard, are

they?"

Kat laughed and shook her head. "No, Mum, they are very kind, and the work is very easy, really, not much harder than when I was working for Lady Penelope."

"From what I have heard, there are five sons. Do you see much of them?"

"Mum, you're fishing," Kat replied. But she couldn't help the colour rising in her cheeks, something that her mother noticed.

"Aha? Is there someone you are interested in?"

"Mum", Kat blushed even more. "Well, one of the sons is very attentive, and he is so terribly nice."

Mrs Williamson looked delighted. "Oh, Kat, I would love to see you settled with the right man."

"MUM! I have only been there three months."

Mrs Williamson looked fondly at her daughter. "Okay, I'll not mention it again. But maybe..."

Kat breathed a sigh of relief; she didn't want her mother to ask any more awkward questions.

Kat enjoyed a very nice meal that night, and opened her presents. Her parents had given her a tiny gold watch. Tim and family had given her a set of her favourite pop group CDs, and Andrew and Melanie gave her a small gold locket on a thin chain. That night Kat went to bed in the tiny box room, and slept soundly, except for a dream about John, which sadly, she couldn't remember at all the next morning.

From: Tawnyangel22 Sent: 10/25/2005

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