
Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 14:13:03 GMT
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From: Tikatu Sent: 7/27/2006 6:34 PM

Sunday, July 22, 2068, 10:30 p.m., England (Monday, July 23, 9:30 a.m. Tracy Island)

Giles Hightower poured himself two fingers of Scotch. He paced back and forth in his quarters as he sipped it, frustrated beyond measure.

He'd gotten a report from his contacts in Paris. Hiram Hackenbacker had gone through customs and checked into his hotel without incident. He had eaten in the hotel's dining room with friends and had retired to his room where - Giles supposed - he was sleeping the sleep of the innocent and jet-lagged. No one had gotten close to him, and no one who was watching him had found any opportunity to do so.

They'd better pick up the pace when I get there, he thought. I have to bring this man back to Jacques!

He eased himself into one of his chairs, and finished his drink. Tomorrow. There should be plenty of opportunity tomorrow.

10:30 p.m., same day, Foxleyheath

"Beg pardon, milady." Parker approached his employer after having seen her dinner party to their cars.

"Yes, Parker? What is it?" Penelope was very tired. She had been playing the bright, effervescent hostess to a group of possible investors for the cancer research station that Jeff was planning on helping out. The more private donations, the better, she thought, and had gathered a group to have dinner, idle chat, and a word in each person's ear about this venture. She hoped to hear from half of them, but began to fear that she would have to hold a much more gala, formal affair as a means of raising funds. She did wish Jeff could have been at the dinner; his presence would have carried more weight than hers, but with his children coming home... A necessary thing, I suppose. But after all these months, I have yet to fully acclimate to the change.

"Ay've 'ad a word wiv our agent in Paris, milady," Parker replied. "He reports that Mr. Brains 'as arrived safely, and is checked into 'is 'otel."

"Very good, Parker," Penelope said, smiling softly. She rose, her stylish frock glittering in the light of the fireplace.

"There's more, Milady."

"More?" Penelope stopped, her face showing a brief touch of confusion, then it cleared. "What other news?"

"Well, Milady, it seems that someone other than our own bloke is watchin' Mr. Brains. 'E's seen two or three people, gents and ladies, 'angin' around an' followin' 'im."

"Hm." Penelope put her chin in her hand, forefinger up and cradling a cheek. "I wonder who is so interested in our Hiram this time?" She thought for a moment, then said, "Parker, I believe I need to make a little visit to my dear François. While we're there, I'll take a little side trip to visit with Hiram... and see if I can determine whose interest Brains has piqued this time."

"Very good, Milady. At wot tayme should Ay 'ave the Rolls ready?"

"At ten, Parker. We should be in Paris in plenty of time to have dinner with the dear boy." She hid a small yawn behind a discreet hand. "But now, I need my rest. Good night, Parker. See to the alarm system."

"Yus, Milady. Goodnight, Milady."

Penelope climbed the stair in her ancestral manor, heading for her own boudoir and bedroom. This comes relatively soon after Mrs. Matumbo's kidnapping. Perhaps the Hightowers have decided that Brains would be a more rewarding target. I shall soon see for myself.