
Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 16:05:01 GMT
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From: Tikatu Sent: 8/24/2006 11:39 PM

July 28, 2068, 1:30 p.m., Tracy Island

Jeff rose from the luncheon table, putting his napkin down by his plate. "Delicious as always, Kyrano," he said. Glancing down at his first born, he caught Scott's eye, and told him, "In my office, please, Scott."

"Yes, sir," Scott replied smartly, finishing up his iced tea.

Jeff leaned over and gave Dianne a kiss. "See you later, love." Then he called, "Miss Kennedy, if I could please see you in my office again around three?"

"Certainly, Mr. Tracy," Heather said graciously. He and Scott took their leave and suddenly, Heather saw herself in a room full of strangers. Having witnessed Jeff's exchanges with both wife and son, she excused herself to go her room. They must be used to flying back and forth across the international dateline. I don't know about Scott or Tin-Tin but I'm pooped.

Feeling wiped out, Heather accepted one more glass of iced tea and then made her way down to her room.

"What do you think, Scott? Will she fill the bill?" Jeff asked his son on their adjournment to the office.

"I think so," Scott said. "She has the kind of selfless dedication that we require and a innovative spirit, too. She seems like someone who is good at making decisions, which is something that we need at Mobile Control. Not to mention the flying skills... even if she was Navy."

Jeff chuckled and wagged his finger at his son. "No getting into squabbles over which branch of the service is better, now, son. A pilot is a pilot."

"Oh?" Scott replied with a grin. "Try telling that to Gordon when he finds out she's Navy. You know how much more superior he thinks WASP is."

"I can see I'll have to cut him off at the pass about that," Jeff said with a sigh. He looked over at Scott and added, "So, we offer her the job, and introduce her to the covert part of it. I think we can trust her to keep it quiet should she decide against taking it. But, if I've read our Miss Kennedy right, she'll take the challenge."

When she reached her room, Heather searched for an alarm clock, while she kicked off her heels. She found the clock sitting close to her bed. As soon as she was dressed in day clothes, she walked over to set it for three o'clock and then crawled upon the bed dropping fast to sleep.

At three p.m., Scott waited anxiously for Heather's return. He was excited to be showing off his

girl, even to someone who would be taking charge of her, too. I learned how to share One with Elise, and with Christopher. I can share her with Heather... should she take the job. I just hope she treats my girl right, that's all.

He glanced over at Jeff, who was reading an email, and frowning. "Something wrong, Dad?" Scott asked.

"Possibly. I'll tell you later," Jeff replied. He made a motion with his head toward the grillwork door between the study and the lounge, directing Scott's attention in that direction. Then he rose to his feet. "Come on in, Miss Kennedy."

When she walked in, she noticed the troubled look that vanished as if it had never been. "Hi Scott, Mr. Tracy."

"Please sit down, Miss Kennedy." Jeff indicated the seat she'd had before, then moved around to take his place behind his desk. Once everyone was settled, he began. "First off, let me tell you that I've been very impressed with your credentials and your experience, especially with your initiative in starting up an organ donor service on your own. As a result, I'm offering you the job of family pilot to the Tracy family." He held up his hand to forestall any reaction on her part.

Why do I feel there is a 'but' to all this? Heather wondered.

"But," he continued, "before you decide whether or not to take the job, you should know the whole picture. There's a component of this job that we've kept under wraps, and we must have your solemn promise that what we are about to show you stays a secret, whether you take the job or not."

Jeff's words caused Heather to think of all kinds of fanciful things. Good grief! What if it's something illegal? He's so overly wealthy, it could be anything? Do I really want to know what this is all about? she wondered to herself.

Jeff saw one feathered eyebrow climb up her forehead as she took in what he told her. "I'm sure this sounds strange to you, Miss Kennedy, but believe me, when you see what we are about to show you, you will understand our desire for secrecy," Jeff said. "Do I have your word you will keep our secret?"

Heather didn't know Jeff personally. He was simply her boss from a distance. She only dealt with the men Jeff put in charge at the testing grounds. Now she had met him and seen the way he acted towards his family. Very little to go on. "Yes, I'll keep your secret," Heather agreed. Let's hope I don't end up regretting this.

Jeff nodded toward his son. "Scott?"

Scott smiled and stood, indicating that Heather should do the same. "Come with me. Let me show you my favorite aircraft." He moved over to the wall to stand between a pair of light sconces. Reaching up, he fingered buttons on the struts that held them to the wall, and suddenly, the wall swung around and he was gone!

Heather's mouth dropped open slightly. What in the world have I gotten myself into? she thought to herself. Game to try anything at least once, Heather repeated Scott's movements and felt herself being whisked into a cavern. She felt someone holding onto her as her eyes adapted to the change in light. "Careful," she heard Scott say. "That first step is a whopper."

The wall swung around again, and Jeff joined the pair in the cavernous room. Scott nodded an acknowledgment to him, then turned back to Heather. "Miss Kennedy... Heather... meet my girl. Meet Thunderbird One."

"Thunderbird One?" she echoed. She read nearly every story about the secret organization. Theories abounded about where it was located; everyone knew that all anyone had to do to receive their help was simply to call on any frequency and, somewhere, someone would hear and pass the information on. Now, she was being given the opportunity to know about them.

"I don't know what to say," Heather finally said. "Now I know why you need a family pilot. To leave you free to rescue people."

Jeff chuckled. "It's more than that, Miss Kennedy. We need more personnel, more... pilots, to help us rescue people. We're not only offering you a job as family pilot. We're offering you a chance to join us. To be a part of International Rescue."

"To be a part of it?" Heather said confused. "Anyone would jump at the chance, Mr. Tracy, but exactly what did you have in mind for me to do if not to be a family pilot?"

"Heather, being a family pilot for us is more like a... a cover," Scott explained. "One that lets you work for International Rescue, and have a reason for living here on our island, our base. You'd do some flying family members around, yes, but it would seem pretty odd for you to be out here without any particular purpose that you could tell your family." He waved an arm in the direction of Thunderbird One. "I need a back up pilot for this baby." Grinning, he came close to give her a conspiratorial wink and ask, "How would you like to fly the fastest plane on the planet?"

Heather stared at him for a moment. "Hold it. You mean to tell me that I'm going to be flying Thunderbird 1?" Scott nodded at her. She thought hard about it, and then asked, "How fast does she go?"

"Mach 20," he replied promptly.

Common sense told her to carefully consider all the ramifications that joining such a prestigious organization required, while trying to imagine what flying Mach 20 had to feel like.

"And you want me," she spoke in what sounded like a little girl. "But why did you decide on me? I'm not exactly the most top notch flier there is."

"Your piloting skills are more than sufficient for the challenge, Miss Kennedy," Jeff said. "But it was the organ donor flights, and the fact that you had the initiative to set this up yourself that was the bigger recommendation to us." He smiled. "What I told you was true; I do look for ways to use my people to their fullest potential."

Scott looked at her and saw the indecision on her face. "Don't give us your answer right away, Heather. Take some time to think about it, really look it over from all sides." He sighed lightly. "This isn't an easy life to lead. There's a lot of stress involved, and a lot of lying, even to people you love, in order to keep the organization secure. So take your time before deciding."

"All right, Mr. Tracy. I'll think it through, and promise to keep your secret. When do you need my answer?"

"In a week, if possible," Jeff said. "And we appreciate your discretion."

Following them out of Thunderbird One's chambers, Heather wandered out onto the deck that encircled the home. Can I really do this? How can anyone fly at Mach 20? That's so much stress on the body, but how can I pass this up?

Scott and Jeff exchanged glances as they watched her walk out on the balcony. "Do you think she'll accept?" Scott asked.

"I don't know," Jeff replied. "But I hope she does."

--a challenge to Heather, by AmandaTracy and Tikatu