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Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is  
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 22:43:32 GMT  
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From: Tikatu Sent: 9/15/2006 3:56 PM

Saturday, August 4, 2068, Noon, local time, Murray Gill, KS (5 a.m., Tracy Island)

"Mr. Mayor?"

Tom Riverton turned to see Scoutmaster Brian Guillaume facing him, a group of Boy Scouts ranged in a group behind him. "Yes, Mr. Guillaume?"

"We were wondering if we could be of any help. I've asked my fellow Scout Master and some of the older boys to help shift the debris off of Mr. Hart, but the younger boys want to know what they can do."

Mayor Riverton surveyed the somber faces of the boys, then nodded. "We could use a head count, find out how many people made it down here. Get a list of names and see if we have anyone... missing. Make note of those who are injured, and how badly. The nurse can help you with that."

"All right. We can do that. Our Den Mother's already giving the nurse a hand, but we'll get started on the head count and the list. Anything else?"

Tom sighed. "I'm sure the emergency services are swamped right now; that twister was powerful and came on fast."

"That's the impression I've gotten from those few who have been able to reach 911," Guillaume said, nodding. "A lot of people can't get signals; some of the local cell phone relays must be down."

"Then it could be hours before we get any help." The mayor glanced over at where Michael lay, a small group of workers nearly obscuring his view as they sought to remove the debris. "Michael needs help quickly. So do our other injured people."

"Not necessarily hours, sir." Guillaume brought out a military-style radio unit, one that the Scouts had been using to coordinate their efforts during the Challenge Day. "There's someone we could call, and they'd be here far faster than our local people, and with better equipment."

Tom thought for a moment, then nodded. "Good idea, Mr. Guillaume." The mayor took the radio unit. "I just hope that they can hear us." He switched it on, took a deep breath, and lifted the radio to his face. "Calling International Rescue. This is Mayor Tom Riverton. We have an emergency situation. Please respond. Calling International Rescue..."

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The recorder started up on its own when the faint call came through. Thunderbird Five's

computers automatically amplified the call, and piped it down to the habitation level, startling John out of a sound sleep. He sat up, disoriented for only a second, then grabbed his bathrobe and pulled it on as he headed for the ladder to the control level. It was faster than the lift, especially when his long legs took the rungs two at a time. Within seconds he was in place, smoothing back his hair with a hand and clearing his throat so he could properly respond to the call.

"International Rescue here. What is the nature of your emergency?" he said.

The response, so loud and clear, brought out a cheer from those Scouts who were standing by their leader, getting instructions. Guillaume shushed them and moved them away from the mayor so that Tom could focus on the call.

"International Rescue, this is Mayor Tom Riverton of Murray Gill, Kansas. Our town is located just southwest of Wichita. We've had a strong tornado come through here, and it's trapped a group of young Special Olympic participants in the basement of the high school. We have several injured people, one severely so. Can you help?"

John jotted down some notes on his data pad, and made note of the coordinates that pinpointed the call. "Yes, we can help. Where can our representative meet you?"

Tom rubbed the back of his neck, glad that the man from International Rescue couldn't see him. "Well, actually," he hemmed, "I was part of the Challenge Day. So I'm trapped in here with the others."

John's eyebrows rose a bit, but he kept his voice steady. "Thanks for that information, Mayor. Do you have a number of people involved? Of injuries and types of injuries?"

"Not yet. We're working on that now."

"Excellent. We'll coordinate things with your emergency services personnel."

"Good enough. When can we expect you?"

John made a couple of quick mental calculations. "Our reconnaissance people will be with you in forty-five minutes or less. Our rescue equipment will take longer though."

Tom sighed. "I understand."

"We'll be there as quickly as possible, Mayor. Just sit tight."

Tom found the young man's voice to be reassuring, and said ruefully, "Don't worry. We're not going much of anywhere right now."

John smiled despite the seriousness of the situation. "Right. Keep this frequency open so I can give you updates and ask for information."

"All right."

"I'll be back with you soon. International Rescue out."

There was only static then, and Tom felt like a lifeline had been cut. He said he'd be back in touch. Then he turned to the people who were in the darkened basement and began to explain the situation.

In Thunderbird Five, John reached with one hand for the toggle that would put him in touch with the island, and reached over to pull up a weather map with the other. "A tornado in that part of the country isn't unknown at this time of year, but it is unusual," he muttered. "I'd better see if that's the only one out there."

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