

Tuesday, March 13, 2068, 10:00 p.m., Dover, England

The shapely blonde poured herself another libation. "How late is he going to be this time?" she asked the man in the room with her.

The dark-haired man stirred the fire in the grate again, then sat down on one of the comfortable sofas that dominated the high-ceilinged room. The firelight glinted on the patches of silver over each temple, and he reached out with a long, lazy arm to hold his glass out to the woman.

"Pour me another, would you, Dez?"

She did as he requested, then joined him on the couch, tucking her long legs under her. Her smooth golden hair was swept back in a bun, and she put down her glass on a small table to unfasten and shake loose her locks.

"I don't know why we rely on him at all, Jacques," Dez grouched, sipping her highball. "He very seldom comes up with the goods."

Jacques sighed. "I know, Dez. But he assures me that, this time, he has a lead on François Lemaire's fabric, Penelon. No one else has been able to get even the slightest peep at the formula for that. I hear it's manufactured in only one place and security there is tighter than tight. No one even knows who has the rights to it. This might be the only chance we have to get our hands on it."

"Hmm. I hope he's..." Dez's voice trailed off as the door opened and a thin, blond man wearing a sharp suit and small round spectacles entered. His long face had the hint of a smile on it.

"Well, Giles. I thought that perhaps you weren't coming," Jacques commented as the newcomer poured himself a stiff drink.

"I was just getting confirmation on a few details," Giles explained.

"So? What news?" Dez asked impatiently.

"Oh, it's all good. Seems that a manufacturer in Kabul was given an order for a new fabric blend. My sources say it's a merging of Penelon and... get this... Kevlar."

"Kevlar? Who in hell would want something like that?" Dez asked, creasing her beautiful features with scowl.

"The word is that some offshoot of Tracy Industries has sent the order. My sources say that the manufacturer is having trouble getting the blend to specifications, and that they've asked for the brains behind the formula to come out and troubleshoot." Giles claimed an overstuffed, leather chair and stretched his lanky frame out in it.

"The sources, I suppose, have been causing the trouble?" Jacques asked, kicking back his drink.

"Precisely. This particular informant knew that Penelon was one of the items we were interested in, and so created a little havoc to draw out the fabric's designer. She figured that whoever created this blend, has access to the Penelon formula."

"And?" Dez prompted.

"And the creator of the Penelon/Kevlar blend is due to arrive in Kabul any time now. She is one Tin-Tin Kyrano." Giles pulled a thin envelope from his jacket pocket, and handed it to Dez. She looked over the materials, giving them to Jacques as she finished with each item.

"Pretty thing," Jacques commented. "I've always liked Asian women." He glanced sharply up at Giles. "So, she will be in Kabul soon?"

"According to my sources, yes."

Jacques sighed expansively. "Well then. It looks like it might be worth our while to have a little chat with Ms. Tin-Tin Kyrano."

Post by Tikatu on 07/10/2004