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**Chapter Eighteen: 10:30pm (pps161-168)**

*Kit rendezvous with the gang*

IT 1.9 'to alert Stanley' – to what? To the phones being out of order?

Last line, again use of Daddy, but not in speech, sits oddly. Can you look at this usage throughout if you agree with me, because it comes up a lot.

# 10:30 p.m.

Kit waited in his room, impatient for everyone to settle down for the night. He had a lot to do, and he wanted to get away as soon as possible; but everything would be ruined if someone heard him leave, so he forced himself to linger.

He sat at the old desk in the study off the bedroom. He had no further use for the smartcard reader-writer and the fingerprint scanner, so he had transferred them to the <sup>trunk</sup>boot of his car. His laptop was still plugged in, to conserve the battery: he would need to use it tonight. His mobile phone was in his pocket. He had dealt with three calls to and from the Fort. Two had been harmless personal calls to guards, and he had let them through. The third had been a call from the Fort to Steepfall, presumably a guard hoping to alert Stanley, and Kit had played a recorded fault message.

While he waited, he listened to the sounds of the house. He could hear Olga and Hugo having a row in the bedroom next to his, Olga firing questions and assertions like a machine gun, Hugo by turns abject, pleading, persuading, bantering, and abject again. Downstairs, Luke and Lori clattered pots and crockery in the kitchen for half an hour, then the front door slammed as they left to go to their house a mile away. The children were in the barn, and Miranda and Ned had presumably gone to the guest cottage. For a while, Kit could hear the music from the living room, and he guessed Daddy was listening to Mahler; then the music

stopped, and he heard his father climb the stairs and close his bedroom door. Olga and Hugo both went to the bathroom, and afterwards were quiet. The dog, Nelson, would be in the kitchen, lying next to the Aga, the warmest place in the house.

He waited a little longer, giving them all a chance to go to sleep.

He felt somehow vindicated by the row. Miranda's peccadillo proved that he was not the only sinner in the family. They were all just as bad. They blamed him for revealing a secret, of course, but it was better to have these things out in the open. Why should one person's transgressions be known and another's hidden? Let them be angry. He had enjoyed seeing Olga smack Hugo. My old sister packs a punch, he thought with amusement.

He wondered if he <sup>could</sup> leave yet. He had heard no sounds for a few minutes. He was ready: he was wearing jeans and a warm black sweater; he would carry his boots put them on downstairs; his anorak was hanging in the hall.

He stood up—then he heard the back door slam. He cursed with frustration. Someone had come in—one or two of the kids, probably, raiding the fridge. He waited to hear the door again, indicating that they had left; but, instead, he heard steps on the stairs.

A moment later <sup>his</sup> the bedroom door opened, the footsteps crossed the outer room, and Miranda came into his study. She wore Wellington boots and an anorak over her nightdress, and she was carrying a small pile of bed linen.

Without speaking, she went to the sleepchair and began to unfold it.

"For god's sake, what do you want?" Kit said.

"I'm sleeping here," she replied calmly.

"You're supposed to be in the cottage."

"I've had a row with Ned, thanks to your dinner table revelations, you sneaking little

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- IT 1.7 'surreptiously' seems a curious word to use – do we need it?
- 1.17 'made haloes' rather than 'put'?

shit.”

“You can’t sleep here!”

“Don’t be silly, of course I can.”

“I don’t want you here.”

“Tough.”

Kit fought down panic. He tried to think as he watched Miranda make up a bed on the sleepchair. This was going to make it difficult for him to leave surreptitiously. She was upset, she might not go to sleep for hours. He decided to get away now. He would pretend to be even angrier than he was. “Fuck you,” he said. He unplugged his laptop and closed the lid. “I’m not staying here with you.” He went through to the next room.

“Where are you going?” she said.

Out of her sight, he picked up his boots. “Don’t worry about me.”

“All right, I won’t.” The door between the two rooms slammed shut.

Kit went out.

He tiptoed across the dark landing and down the stairs. The woodwork creaked, but this house shifted constantly, and no one took any notice of odd noises. A faint light from the porch lamp came through the small window beside the front door and put haloes around the hat stand, the newel post at the foot of the stairs, and the stack of directories on the telephone table. Nelson came out of the kitchen and stood by the door, hoping with irrepressible canine optimism to be taken for a walk.

Kit sat on the stairs and put his boots on, listening for the sound of a door opening above him. This was a dangerous moment. People were always walking around in the middle of the night. Miranda might soften and come out after him. Olga might decide to get a drink

Let's feel his fear

How the hell was he going to sneak out of here now?

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IT 1.1 'Daddy might have a brilliant scientific idea and go this study to use the computer' Do we need all these three possibilities together? Might be more effective to have something like 'People were always walking around in the middle of the night: someone getting a drink of water, his father busy at his computer' or something?

of water. Daddy might have a brilliant scientific idea and go to his study to use the computer.

He laced his boots as quickly as he could then put on his coat. He was almost out.

If someone saw him now, he would simply go. No one would stop him. The problem would arise tomorrow. Knowing he had left, they might be able to guess where he had gone, and his whole plan was that no one should understand what had happened.

He pushed Nelson away from the door and opened it. It was never locked: Daddy figured that intruders were unlikely in this lonely spot, and anyway the dog was the best burglar alarm.

He stepped outside. It was bitterly cold, and the snow was falling heavily. He closed the door behind him as softly as he could. It made a small click.

The lights around the house were left on all night, but despite them he could hardly see the garage. The snow was several inches thick on the ground. In a minute his socks and the cuffs of his jeans were soaked. He wished he had worn Wellingtons.

His car was parked on the far side of the garage, snow thick on its roof and bonnet. He hoped it would start. He got in, putting his laptop on the passenger seat beside him, and turned the key in the ignition. The car coughed and spluttered, but after a few seconds the engine turned over.

Kit hoped no one in the house had heard it.

The snow was so heavy it was blinding. He was obliged to put his headlights on, and pray that no one would look out of a window in the next couple of minutes.

He pulled away. The car slid alarmingly on the thick snow. He crept forward, careful not to turn the steering wheel suddenly. He coaxed the car on to the drive, manoeuvred cautiously along the track through the woods, and made it out on to the road.

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KF: All the cars are parked in a hangar so that they cannot be seen from outside. (In the new final scene, the police cars too will be in the hangar.)

EF – “sky-blue Bentley”. Would he be able to identify the colour?

IT 1.1 ‘tire tracks’ – American spelling deliberate here and elsewhere?

1.3 and 5: repetition of suspicion. Suggest line 5 ‘and she would be none the wiser’ instead. And Miranda knows that Kit has gone out, doesn’t she? On p163 he stalks off.

Here the snow was not quite virgin. There were tire tracks in both directions. He turned north, heading away from the Fort, and drove in the tracks.

He wondered whether Miranda would become suspicious. If she stayed in bed from now until daybreak, Kit would be back in his room by the time she woke up, and she would have no reason for suspicion. But if she got up at four o'clock and saw that he was not in his bed, would she ask embarrassing questions tomorrow? There was nothing he could do about it.

He was heading into lonely country. Harbourmouth was in the opposite direction, and there was nothing much ahead of him for a hundred miles. After twenty minutes of slow driving he turned on to a side road that wound across hills. There were no tire tracks here, and he slowed even more, wishing he had four-wheel drive.

At last he saw an old sign saying: "Two Glens Aerodrome." A broken fence ran along one side of the road. He turned into an entry. Rusted gates stood open, and he drove through. His headlights picked out a low building with broken windows. The place appeared deserted. For a moment he half-hoped the others would not show up, and he could call the whole thing off. The thought undermined his morale and he put it aside with an effort.

He drove around the building. On the far side, hidden from the road, stood two vehicles, a van and a sky-blue Bentley Continental. There was no snow on either vehicle. *How come?*

He shone his headlights at the van. On its side, in large letters, were the words: "Hibernian Telecom."

Kit parked. The engine of the Bentley was murmuring contentedly. Kit went to the driver's door, and the window slid down silently. Nigel Buchanan sat at the wheel, wearing a pink roll-neck sweater. *Turtle?* "Hello, Kit," he said in his soft London accent.

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KF: Make more of the scene at the airfield.

It belongs to Harbourmouth Flying School, which operates only in the summer months.

The gang go inside. There is an Air Traffic Control desk. Nigel/Harry phones the buyer to confirm all is well. A discussion about the weather. The buyer is arriving by helicopter, and Elton will be able to speak to him by radio as he approaches. He will be making a legitimate, logged trip, with an unscheduled and unrecorded stop here.

EF: I think the disguises need to more sophisticated to convince. The stuff Kit is supplying is all amateur and obvious. Perhaps it could be a skill of Elton's. It can't be easy to disguise a black man in Glasgow.

	Actual appearance	Disguise
Harry	Fifty. Stocky, once muscular, now paunchy. Thinning hair, watery blue eyes, crooked teeth, bad skin.	Grey wig, modern glasses, earring, false teeth, make him look younger but no less thuggish
Daisy	Shaved head, broken nose, black eyebrows, brown eyes, pierced nose.	Blonde wig, dyed eyebrows, piercings removed, blue contact lenses
Elton	Handsome, Afro-Carib, short hair.	Grey hair, artificial lines on the face, grey stuck-on moustache, much older.
Kit	Hugh Grant: Fit, slim, boyishly attractive, thick fair hair, blue eyes	Black wig, black moustache, glasses with tinted lenses

AZ: What's missing is how Kit feels about each of these people, and about actually going through with this robbery. And his money? Would he ask to see it, or to receive a part payment? And how much strength of will must he muster to stand up to Daisy?

AZ: What if Nigel, during his previous dealings with Harry, had an affair of sorts with Daisy? What if she wants to resume and he doesn't—but on the other hand he is afraid of offending Harry?

In the passenger seat next to Nigel was Daisy McGarry, wearing a leather jacket. Harry had insisted she come along, presumably to make sure Kit did not try to make off with the money he owed him. Kit ignored her.

He looked into the back seat. There sat a young black man with a brutally short haircut. Nigel said: "Meet Elton, he's taking care of transport for us."

"I've seen his photograph. Hello, Elton."

"Hi."

Kit took a bag from the boot of his car. He gave Elton a woolly hat to cover his distinctive haircut and Nigel a baseball cap, and both of them glue-on moustaches—a neat black one for Elton and a droopy Mexican style for Nigel. He gave Daisy a long fair wig. With her heavy eyebrows and Gothic eye make-up, she looked even more hideous as a

blonde. Kit himself put on a ginger wig, a false beard, and a pair of plain-glass spectacles with heavy brown frames.

*Wouldn't supplying all this stuff be more in Nigel's line?*

The disguises would ensure that the Photofit pictures the police would circulate, after the robbery was discovered, would be different from their actual faces.

The three of them got out of the Bentley, and Nigel locked it.

Kit gave each of them a set of overalls with "Hibernian Telecom" on the back. They stood in the snow and climbed into them.

Daisy was wearing tight-fitting gloves made of soft light-tan leather. They looked expensive. Kit told her: "The gloves look odd with the overalls."

"Too bad," she said.

Kit shrugged.

Finally, he handed out plastic identification cards with false names beside genuine

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IT 1.1 'doctored to show them in their new guises' rather than 'as disguised'?

JT: I didn't quite believe that Kit would walk away from Daisy like he does here and that he would sort her out so quickly. She almost killed him the day before. Here he seems stronger than I believe he is in relation to her. Overall Kit's revealed strength's and weaknesses feel uneven. Sometimes he's powerful, sometimes weak. That's right for someone who is doing what he's doing, but he doesn't feel quite right yet. I'm not sure in the end of his motivation, but more on this just now.

photographs of each of them, doctored to show them as disguised.

Elton opened the doors of the van and slid into the driving seat. Nigel got in beside him. There was room for a third person in the front: the fourth would have to sit in on the floor in the back of the van with the tools. Daisy jumped into the seat. She edged up close to Elton and put her hand on his knee. "Do you fancy blondes?" she said.

Elton looked straight ahead. "I'm married," he said.

She moved her hand up his thigh. "I bet you fancy a white girl, for a change, though, don't you?"

He took hold of her wrist and moved her hand off his leg. "I'm married to a white girl."

Kit held the door open. "Get in the back, Daisy," he said.

"Fuck you," she replied.

"I'm in charge. Get in the back of the van."

"Try and make me."

"Okay, I'll make you."

"Go ahead," she said with a grin. "I'm looking forward to this."

"The operation is off," he said. "Sorry, Nigel. Goodnight, all." He walked away from the van.

He got into his own car, started the engine, turned on the headlights, and waited.

After a minute, Daisy got out of the van, went around to the back, climbed in, and closed the doors behind her.

Kit returned to the van and got in beside Nigel. "Let's go, Elton," he said.

As they pulled away, his mobile rang. He lifted the lid of his laptop.

On the screen he read: "Toni calling Fort."

What's missing is how K feels  
about each of these people,  
and about actually going through  
with this break-in and robbery.  
And his money? Would he ask to  
see it, or to receive a part  
payment?

And how much strength it will  
must he muster to stand up to  
Daisy?