

“Excuse me ma’am, there is a gentleman in reception with a parcel addressed to you and he is saying that he won’t accept a signature from me because he is saying that it is not addressed to the organization but to you care of the organization.”

Edith reaches forward and presses the button on the intercom.

“Thank you, ... yes that is correct, it is something of my own but I knew that I was not due to be at home so I had it sent here, I am on my way.”

Edith gets up from her desk, and walks to the door, she opens it and goes out into the corridor, leaving the door ajar. She walks along the corridor and through the swing doors into the foyer.

Edith recognises the gentleman from his previous visit.

“Good morning, I am Edith Gatford, ... you have a parcel for me.”

“Good morning ma’am, yes, could you sign for it please?”

“Yes, certainly.”

Edith signs for the parcel, thanks both the gentleman and the receptionist and takes the parcel to her office.

Edith places the parcel in a cupboard.

It is now evening. Edith is at home and has had her dinner and now decides to unpack the parcel.

Edith carefully opens the parcel, then goes and washes her hands before removing the contents.

There is a long thin box.

Edith places the box on the table.

Edith carefully opens the box and places the content on the table.

‘Ah, yes,’ thinks Edith ‘very nicely done.’

It is an OO gauge model railway locomotive.

It is not of a real locomotive as such but a sort of alternative history locomotive that Edith has commissioned to be made especially for her.

The model locomotive is structurally of a London, Midland and Scottish Railway Princess locomotive yet is liveried in the livery of the Great Western Railway of the late 1930s and has a copper ring around the chimney and has the number 8000 on a Great Western Railway-style number plate and carries Great Western Railway-style nameplates with the name

The Great Bear

as if when the original The Great Bear locomotive had been rebuilt as a Castle class locomotive, keeping its original number 111 but having a new name, that the nameplates had been stored and then later used on another locomotive, of which this is a model.

Edith very carefully places the locomotive and its tender on the track of her model railway.

Edith runs the locomotive and tender around the track at a slow speed.

'Beautiful, well worth having,' thinks Edith.

'I wonder,' thinks Edith 'how speculative is this - to what extent was a Princess class locomotive as if it were a second version of The Great Bear using later technology'?