Christopher stomped back into his flat and resumed his packing. He threw his clothes angrily into the cases, then got the collapsible storage boxes from the cupboard. "What first?" he asked, looking at Asterix.

Asterix got up to sniff the open box, then jumped inside. He immediately sat down in the box to groom his nether parts.

"All right," Christopher said and smiled. "You can stay in there for a while, but then I've got to put you in your box." He stroked the little cat, then started to pack his books and films. His kitchen gear came next, and after a while his flat was looking very bare. "I'll miss it here," he said to himself. "But I don't feel part of things here. Maybe it was time to move on anyway."

The door buzzed. "Now who's that?" Christopher muttered. He answered the door to find Scott standing in the elevator.

"My father sent me over to give you a hand," Scott explained coolly.

"Really?" Christopher raised an eyebrow, not wanting to say what he really thought. "You never really liked me, did you Scott? Come in," he said as he gestured. "I'm nearly done and I'll be out of your hair forever."

"My personal feelings toward you are irrelevant. You're a talented pilot, and you and my father must really have gone at it for him to fire you like this," Scott said, almost conversationally. Christopher noticed that Scott had a PDA in his hand.

"Are you checking to see if I don't take anything I shouldn't?" Christopher exclaimed. "I don't believe it!"

"Don't worry!" He snarled as he put Asterix into his box. "I won't steal the silver!"

"It's not the silver I'm to inventory. It's your uniforms and other IR-issued materials and tech," Scott explained. "Please show me where they are?" He added, "You can understand this, can't you? When you left the RAF, there were things you had to return to them, right?"

"Yes, I understand." Christopher pointed to the items on the table. "All there, and the uniforms are ironed and hanging up." Asterix mewed from his box, "sorry mate, time for us to go"

Scott carefully examined the materials Christopher had left on the table. "You have some Tracy Industries identification to turn over as well."

"Forgot that." He got his wallet out and extracted the I.D card from it. "There you go."

Scott added that to the list, and put the ID with the other items. "I'll go get a float to help you with your things."

"Thank you, Scott."

It took about ten minutes, but Scott came back with an anti-gravity float, and Kyrano. As the older man looked into Christopher's face he said, "I will miss your presence, Mr. Jordan. I wish you well in your next endeavor. Please, take the time to make your farewells to my daughter."

"Thank you, Kyrano." Christopher bowed. "Do you know where she is?"

"I believe she is in the lab. Perhaps you should go there while we load Tracy One."

They took the elevator down to the first floor, and dragged the float out onto the wide patio and over to the freight elevator in the cliffside. Callie and Elise were on the patio, and looked over at the parade. "What's going on?" Elise asked.

"I'm leaving I'm afraid." Christopher looked at them, he walked over. "Nice to have known you both." He hugged both girls. "Good luck with whatever you do."

They watched, perplexed, as the three men disappeared. Then Elise nudged Callie. "We'd better tell the others."

"Right," Callie agreed. "You get Dom and Nikki, I'll track down Kat."

Meanwhile, the freight elevator door opened, and the three men maneuvered the float over to Tracy One, where John was finishing up his preflight checks.

"Here's the cargo," Scott said. He nodded in the direction of the passage from the hangar to the pod repair bay. "You'll be faster if you take the ramp up to the pod repair bay and access the lab from there."

Christopher walked to the ramp, and entered the pod repair bay. He walked a little further, climbing the stairs to the lab. He saw Tin-Tin there, and his breath hitched in his throat. Breathing deeply, he walked into the lab. "Hello, Tin-Tin. I've come to say goodbye."

Tin-Tin gave him a puzzled look, then glanced over at Brains, who shrugged. "Goodbye? I don't understand, Christopher. Where are you going?"

"I'm leaving the Island for good." He smiled sadly. "My fault really; I said some things I shouldn't have. I just wanted to say...." He paused, not sure of what to say. "I just wanted to say that I love you. There! I said it!" He laughed. "I was too scared to do so before."

Tin-Tin gasped at his words, putting both hands to her mouth as she stared at him. "Oh, Christopher," she cried. "I... I don't know what to say!"

Brains stopped what he was doing and turned to watch the conversation, his eyes fixed on Christopher. "Perhaps I'd better leave," he suggested.

Christopher walked up to the shocked girl and kissed her squarely on the lips. "If you are ever in

the UK, look me up. I'm sure you could find me if you looked hard enough."

She put a hand to her lips again and stared at him with her big, brown eyes. Then she swallowed and said in a soft squeak, "Goodbye." Her eyes filled with tears and she hurriedly left the room.

The two men watched her go, then Brains stepped over and held out his hand. "I don't know why you are leaving, but it has been nice working with you."

"I'm sure someone will tell you." Christopher smiled as he shook the bespectacled scientist's hand. "Goodbye, Brains, it's been nice knowing you." And with that, he walked out of the lab and back to the hangar.

He was surprised to see that there was a group waiting for him at Tracy One. Kat had Asterix out of his box and Joshua, settled in Dom's arms, was petting the cat, saying in his childish lisp, "Kitty. Kitty." They all turned to him as Nikki noticed him approach. Kat quickly put Asterix back in his crate, and the small group waited for him.

His eyes filling up with tears, he walked over. "No publicity," he tried to joke. "No photos." He leant down and got Asterix from his box, the cat noticing his mood. "It's not fair on you to keep moving you about. Dom?" He looked at him. "Would you like this terror?"

"If you feel you must leave him behind, I will take him," came a voice from the tail of the plane. Kyrano stepped up.

"He always liked you more than me." Chris smiled as he handed Asterix to Kyrano. "Besides where would he get his endless supplies of chicken?"

"Mrrroow?" Asterix didn't want to go, and tried to get back into his master's arms.

"You go with Kyrano now." Christopher sniffled. "He will love you so much." He directed Scott to which of the boxes contained the cat's things then, taking a deep breath, Christopher turned and walked over to the assembled group. "Well," he said, trying to smile, "this is it."

"I don't understand why you're leaving," Kat said. "What happened?"

John watched Christopher carefully to see what he would say.
"I'm not really cut out for life here," Christopher said. "I'm going to try some new challenges. It's been fun knowing you all though." He walked to the girls and hugged them, then shook the hands of the other men.

"It's time to go," John said quietly.

Scott held out his hand. "It was good to work with you."

"And you." Chris shook Scott's hand. "I hope whoever you get to follow me isn't as handsome and as good looking as me."

Scott snorted a laugh, as John climbed into the cockpit.

"Bye, all," Chris said as he climbed into the co-pilot's seat. "Bye, Asterix. Look after Kyrano for me."

John started the engines, and Christopher waved from the window. Slowly the jet taxied out of the hangar, the small craft door opening slowly before them. The small group turned to watch the plane leave, some waving. Scott watched them go, too, his face creased into a thoughtful frown. ~I'm going to have to ask Dad what this is all about, because I know the others will be asking me.

a final farewell by The Wrong Trousers 8/1/2005