From: lillehafrue Sent: 4/7/2007 11:55 AM

Wednesday, August 22, 8:00pm (10:00pm Tracy Island) Outside Bundaberg, Queensland, Australia...

The two men watched the fire from the edges of the field. The sugar cane was burning steadily, the darkening sky above reflecting the orange flames. Soon, the excess leaves and waxy stalks would be cleared and the cane would be ready to harvest. The threshers and harvesters stood ready at the edge of the field.

"Looks like we'll get a decent crop this year," one commented to the other.

"Yeah, considering we've had no rain, that would be a good thing!" They both chuckled.

"So, Justin, you and Kerrie set a date yet?"

"Nah, nothing official. We're thinking of end of summer. Maybe in March sometime."

"Good idea, won't be so hot."

"Yeah, we can save money on beer!" Both laughed.

They stood in silence for a few minutes before Justin looked up and frowned. "Sam, feels like the wind's shifting."

"I hope not." They hurried inside one of the buildings. Sam picked up a phone. "Hey, what's the wind out there?" His eyes widened as he looked over at Justin. "I thought things were going to be clear?...No worries, we'll ring you back if anything changes." He hung up the phone. "Weather bureau says to expect winds to pick up. A low or something moving through."

"We'd better go have the crew wet the perimeters. God help us if it jumps the field." Now it was Justin's turn to go pale. "Cripes, Sam, the rum plant!"

"Damn! If the fire jumps and hits the mill..." Justin's voice trailed off.

"We can't let that happen. The 'back's too dry. The fire could wipe out the whole area!" Sam replied as the men ran back towards the field. "Get the rest of the crew out there, double!"

Justin nodded as he climbed into a truck. He gunned the engine, picking up the radio as he drove off. Sam watched him go then got into another and hurried off in the opposite direction. Please, don't let it spread...