

]*****Friday, June 1, 2068; Thunderbird Five; 6:00 p.m.*****[/I]

For the first time, Callie Spencer was putting what she had learned on the Thunderbird Three simulator to the test. She had flown the red rocket with ease away from Thunderbird Five and through Earth's atmosphere. The only part that had plagued her in the simulator was landing it upright in the Round House silo. She had finally succeeded two weeks before she left for her run as space monitor. Practicing the landing at least twice a day, she eventually got the landing down on the simulator. While she was prepping herself for the real landing, she thought back to when John and Scott arrived to change personnel.

*****Flashback to 1:00 p.m.*****

Callie had already packed her clothes, and after making sure the system checks were completed, she waited patiently for the arrival of Thunderbird Three.

John's voice was soon heard over the radio. "Thunderbird Five from Thunderbird Three. Request permission for docking."

Pressing a button on the control panel, she checked the cameras for anything that could jeopardize the docking sequence. She nodded and said, "Hatch is clear, Thunderbird Three. You are clear for docking."

"F-A-B."

Within fifteen minutes the two machines were connected. John and Scott entered the space station, John holding his suitcase.

"Welcome aboard, John," said Callie jokingly.

"Thanks, Callie. You had a fairly quiet month, didn't you?"

"Yeah, except for that call from the boy and Lena's signal from her PDA when she was kidnapped. Speaking of Lena, is she all right?"

"We don't know for sure. Dad knows more of the details than we do."

Scott said, "We do know she's on the island now. Come on, we've got a lot of loading and unloading to do."

For an hour-and-a-half, the three took the supplies off the spaceship and moved them onto the space station. Then, they loaded the trash and empty water containers into the rocket for return to Earth.

John looked at Callie. "Dad told us about the lack of peanut butter, so when it's your turn in

August, we'll stock up on it for you."

"Aw, you don't have to do that. Anyway, I'm ready to go back to the island."

After another 15 minutes, Callie was at the controls of Thunderbird Three. "Ready to leave, Quasar."

"F-A-B, Ursa. Good luck flying her home."

"Thanks."

*****End flashback*****

This is it, she thought. I hope I get this right. Concentrating on the controls, she said, "Base from Thunderbird Three, requesting permission to land."

Jeff said, "F-A-B, Ursa. You're clear to land."

She pressed a few buttons to allow the rocket to do a complete flip to place into its position. Pushing the button to fire the retro rockets, she carefully watched her angle of entry. "Dead straight," she whispered. "Now just keep it at this angle..."

Scott noticed her talking to herself. You've almost got it, Callie. Just one thousand feet left.

For every hundred feet, the retros fired out more exhaust, slowing their descent into the silo. After about seven minutes, the rocket landed softly on the blast ducts.

"Congratulations, Callie," said Scott. "You successfully landed Thunderbird Three safely."

She exhaled a deep breath. "For a little while, I didn't think I could do it."

"Hey, you practiced the landings on your own in the simulator, and you did really well for your first time on the real thing. Before too long, it'll become second nature to you."

The pair went down the elevator to the sofa, which descended from the rocket and started its trip back into the lounge.

"I really need to talk to Mr. Tracy about the cross-training, because there are so many people training in Thunderbird One and Thunderbird Two already," Callie said. "I'm not sure I'm even needed for cross-training."

"We'll talk with Dad about that when we get to the lounge."

"Okay."

They continued on the railroad car, until a long hydraulic lift pushed the sofa upward into the lounge.

When the sofa emerged in the lounge, Jeff said, "Welcome home, Callie."

"Thank you, sir."

From: TracyFan4Ever Sent: 11/14/2005
