
Subject: Re: Celebrations and Challenges
Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Fri, 27 Jul 2012 20:53:25 GMT
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The Hood had secreted himself behind a large piece of concrete. Keeping his head low to avoid the gaseous mist that was filling the chamber from the top down, he listened and watched with interest as the Excavator chewed its way through the rubble, then rumbled into the cavern. Two figures, suited up in HAZMAT suits with the IR insignia on them clambered out, one of them holding out a device that he had not seen before.

~Could it be the engineer? he wondered as he squinted through his infrared goggles. ~No, this person is too tall. His interest was diverted by two more suited figures entering the chamber, one carrying a clearly-marked medikit and the other a cutting device. ~Hmm. Four? Then who is out at their Mobile Control? And who is in their space station?

Suddenly, he was reminded of the information he had gleaned from his brother, Kyrano, during their last encounter. A tidbit that his dreaded enemy had recently recruited new blood for his endeavors. ~Perhaps these people are some of their new members. Then should I stay and watch them? Or should I make good my escape?

The decision was hard to make. Tantalizing bits of vocalization wafted his way, and he strained to hear if these people were part of the hated Tracy clan or not. He finally decided that the one with the device was not, and was a woman, but he could not determine anything about the other one, besides the fact that he was male. The others were too far away to hear.

~I had better leave, he said to himself, as he looked upward. ~This gas is moving downward and I do not have my breathing equipment.

So saying, he waited until the two nearest him entered the car from which the gas was escaping. Then he picked up his prize and moved, quickly and carefully, to the hole dug by the Excavator.

xxxx

"Mobile Control to MGM. Come in, MGM."

Kat adjusted the relay minutely and answered the call. "MGM here."

"Ursa is in need of some foam sealant. I'm told you're the only one who is familiar with it," Elise said. "Can you pull it from Thunderbird Two and take it down to her, then show her how to use it?"

Kat was surprised; she hadn't any idea that she would be doing so much in this rescue. "F-A-B, Mobile Control. I'm on my way."

She hopped on the hoverbike and, after giving the relay on last look, pressed on to the mouth of the tunnel.

As she hurried to procure the items her comrades needed, the Hood had come upon the Monobrake.

~Hmm. Could I use this to make my getaway? It seems to be able to ride both on the rail and on the ground.

He climbed up on the machine and looked over the controls in the open cockpit. ~No, there is a computer that most likely requires a password before the vehicle will start. And I do not have time to tinker with it. I will press on.

In the meantime, Kat had found the canisters of foam sealant. She made sure she had the right equipment to apply it. Then she ducked into the crews' quarter to eat a quick energy bar. Her sugar needs supplied, she closed up her jacket, made sure her HAZMAT suit was secure, grabbed what she had come for, and went back out the way she had come in, through the pod's catwalks.

Walking over to Mobile Control, she checked in with Elise.

"I have what Ursa needs."

"Good," Elise said with a smile behind her oxygen mask. "I'll radio in that you're coming. On your way back out, do me a favor? Check on the Monobrake? I had an indicator light on it a moment ago. Then stop at the relay, check it over, and come back here to relieve me at Mobile Control."

Kat's eyes grew wide. "Me? At Mobile Control? Whatever for?"

"We need to see if there are any ventilation shafts clear of the rock that slid down. If there's even one within the Danger Zone, we need to hook it up to a generator to clear that gas from the tunnel. The fastest way to check is for me to reconnoiter with Thunderbird One."

"Oh, I see. Will you be long at it?"

Elise shrugged. "I shouldn't be."

"All right. First this, then the Monobrake, the relay, and back out here."

"You've got it. Now get going."

"F-A-B."

Kat secured the canisters and equipment on the back of the hoverbike, and sped off down the tunnel in the direction of the Danger Zone.

The Hood stopped walking. He heard a humming sound echoing through the tunnel, one that sounded vaguely familiar. He shrank back against the wall as his augmented sight watched a small figure whiz by on a hover vehicle.

~Now I know that some of the new members of IR are here. Even my thrice-cursed niece is not as small as that. He stopped for a moment. ~Although... Tracy does have a young daughter. That could have been her. He put down the heavy case he had been lugging along. ~Perhaps I should

wait and see if she comes back out. Surely Tracy would not allow the child to remain within such a hazardous place but is using her as a courier. I will move along slowly and see what happens. Perhaps I can relieve her of the vehicle to help me escape.

So he picked up the case again and started walking, watching all the time for the return of the small person who was driving the hoverbike.

From: Tikatu Sent: 12/11/2005
