

Banihal Tunnel, Pir Panjol Range, India

Kat drove the hoverbike along the tunnel. Arriving at the danger zone, she quickly found Callie and Brandon.

"Here's the sealant. Now let's get those drums sealed." Handing Callie one of the spray cans, she showed her how to apply the sealant foam. Once she was assured that Callie could use the device, Kat headed back towards the tunnel entrance. The gas was beginning to infiltrate the air. All around her was noise, dust, and moaning passengers, some seriously injured, others just trapped in the wreckage. She noticed Dom and Nikki working amongst the injured.

Stopping at the monobrake, she climbed off the hoverbike and examined the larger vehicle. Nothing seemed amiss. Assuming that it was most likely a false alarm, she climbed back on the hoverbike and headed towards the relay device.

The Hood's patience had been rewarded. The small figure had returned on the hoverbike and after stopping it, had gotten off. With his infrared goggles he could make out a device on a tripod. Some form of communication, he wondered. He watched for a moment; trying to decide what to do. The figure was small. He had the element of surprise. He was sure he would be able to overcome whoever it was. Making absolutely sure that the box was safe, he began to move forward. He stopped again and waited deciding just what he would do.

Once back at the relay device, Kat contacted Mobile Control to advise Elise that the monobrake seemed okay and that she was on her way to relieve her. She had just contacted Elise. Suddenly she broke off mid-sentence. She had heard something, as though someone was creeping along in the dark. The hairs at the back of her neck seemed to stand on end. She was not alone. Someone or something was slowly edging towards her. Holding her breath, she pressed herself into the tunnel wall. Suddenly the shuffling stopped. Kat held her breath. Had she been detected? Had she been heard? After all she had been talking to Mobile Control.

Elise became concerned when Kat failed to continue talking and tried to re-establish contact.

"MGM from Mobile control. Come in, MGM. Everything okay?"

Inside the tunnel, everything was so quiet. She almost began to imagine she had heard something, until Elise's voice made her jump. "Frankie," Kat began to whisper. "I'm sure I heard something like someone was coming along the tunnel. I don't feel that I'm alone."

"Do you think it could be one of the passengers?" Elise queried.

"I'm not sure. Shall I make myself known?"

"No, not just yet. Let me check with Dak. I'll try to find out if one of the passengers has wandered away."

Once Elise had broken off with her, Kat resumed listening to her surroundings. The silence was almost deafening. Apart from the occasional rumble way down the line and sometimes a drop of water falling, everything was quiet. Too quiet, Kat thought. She sensed that she wasn't alone, but whoever it was, was also keeping very still.

Elise contacted her once more. "MGM, according to Angel and Dak, none of the passengers have moved. Unless they have been freed, they are either too injured, or still trapped in the train."

"Shall I try to make contact, Frankie?" Kat asked.

"I'm not sure, MGM. I don't like the idea of you tackling someone on your own."

Just at that moment the Hood rushed Kat, throwing her to the ground. She rolled over, trying to get away from him, and let out a yell. Then she heard the sound of the hoverbike been driven away at high speed.

"What on earth's happening MGM?" Elise's voice was loud in her ear. "What's going on? Are you okay?"

Kat lay on the ground in total darkness. She felt totally disoriented. Gasping for breath, she tried to move. Her head and knees ached, and there was a tight feeling in her chest.

"MGM from Mobile Control. Come in please."

"Mobile Control from MGM," Kat gasped. "Someone has just pushed past me, knocking me over. He got away on the hoverbike."

"Are you sure you're okay?"

"I'm just winded," Kat replied, trying to catch her breath.

"I'll watch out for him when he leaves the tunnel. I'll get Einstein to contact the Indian authorities. After all we are not exactly sure who this person is. He seems desperate," Elise remarked before contacting John. "Quasar from Mobile Control. An unknown passenger has attacked MGM. I'm going to contact Dak to see if they could spare Angel or Big Mac to help her back to Thunderbird Two."

"Mobile Control from Quasar. Is MGM okay? Has she been badly injured?"

"Quasar from Mobile Control. She appears to be badly winded. I'm going to get help for her."

Kat heard this conversation. "No, Frankie! I'm okay. Just let me get my breath back, and I will make my way out to Mobile Control to relieve you."

"MGM from Thunderbird Five." John sounded concerned. "Are you sure you're okay?"

"Yes, thank you, Quasar. I'm just a little winded. It would seem that one of the passengers, for

some unknown reason tried to escape and in the attempt pushed me out of the way. I have no idea who he was or why he was here. But he has got away on the hoverbike."

"Do you think he was traumatised, and didn't know where he was?" John asked her.

"Dunno. I think that he was certainly shocked to find me here. It all happened so quickly. Anyway once I get my breath back I'm going to head back to Mobile Control. I have to relieve Frankie, so that she can check the ventilation units."

Retrieving her torch, she painfully began to make her way out of the tunnel.

Satisfied that she was okay, John reported all of their conversation to Base. Brains didn't seem too happy about the intruder, feeling that there was more to it than a traumatised passenger. But as the rescue was top priority, he had no choice other than to let the local authorities handle it.

From: Tawnyangel22 Sent: 12/15/2005

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