
Subject: Re: Winds of Change
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sat, 28 Jul 2012 04:10:01 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

From: Tikatu Sent: 7/14/2007 12:59 PM

Wednesday, September 12, 4:45 p.m., Tracy Island (Tuesday, September 11, approx. 7:15 p.m., locally)

"Thunderbird Two from Thunderbird One, what is your ETA?"

Virgil couldn't help but notice the tension in Elise's voice as he tapped his earpiece. "Thunderbird One from Thunderbird Two. ETA three minutes. We have you on visual."

"F-A-B, Thunderbird Two. I have you on visual as well." Elise still sounded tense though there was a dollop of humor in her voice when she added, "And you're a sight for sore eyes, too!"

Virgil grinned, but before he could respond, a blossom of flame shot out from the far side of the jet that Elise was pacing. "Holy...! What the hell was that!?"

"Looks like number four engine exploded," Elise said grimly, all trace of humor gone. "This plane is going down right now!"

The plane's angle increased sharply, and it banked toward Thunderbird One, the plume of flame trailing out like a tail beside it. Virgil upped his speed by a fraction, coming into line with the plane on the port side.

In the cockpit, Cai and Cheng were trying frantically to shut down number four engine. "Cut fuel to the engine!" she finally said. "See if that will allow the flame to burn out."

"Yes, captain," Cheng replied breathlessly. He flipped several switches, and suddenly, some of the strobing warning lights and piercing alarms cut off. A few lights still blinked balefully, and Cai took notice of which ones.

"Open up the fuel again. I will try to restart the engine."

"Yes, captain." Cheng flipped two switches, and Cai pushed a few buttons of her own.

"Captain, International Rescue asks for a status report," Liang called over his shoulder.

"Tell them we are trying to restart engine number four, and to stand by," Cai replied tersely.

"Yes, captain." Liang turned back to the communications panel.

In the cabin, the flight attendants were doing their best to calm the passengers. Diego, wide-eyed, tugged on his mother's sleeve. Remembering the reaction he got when he last shouted out what he saw, he lowered his voice. "Look, Mama, another Thunderbird!"

Hua smiled wanly. "I see, my son. But we are not safe yet. Listen to the attendants; they have instructions for us."

Mei gave her instructions to her section of the plane, then moved over to where Na had been working. Na herself was strapped in, holding an ice pack on her arm. The pain had grown over the past fifteen minutes, and she felt both nauseous and sleepy. What did I do to my arm? Could I have fractured it?

In the hold, a worried Jaio held her husband's hand. They had been asked to come up to the passenger cabin because of the emergency, but both had refused to go. The second, sickening jolt had rocked them both, but as Xiong had importuned them to stay in their seats and stay buckled in, they both were safe.

"Zhen, are you afraid?"

Zhen sighed. "Yes, I am, and as much for our charges as for ourselves. I know International Rescue is here to help us, but will they consider our pandas worthy of saving?"

Back in the cockpit, Cai swore. "I cannot get number four engine to restart." With a sigh, she turned to her crew. "Let the attendants know. Tell International Rescue. We are on our final approach."
