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Subject: Re: Winds of Change  
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sat, 28 Jul 2012 04:34:50 GMT  
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From: Tikatu Sent: 7/29/2007 8:44 PM

Elise circled Thunderbird One around the accident zone and tried not to think about the water surrounding her. She closed her eyes and took a few deep, steady breaths.

In...out...in...out... A sudden beeping made her snap back to attention. Looking at the radar screen, she smiled. "Thunderbird One to Thunderbird Two, I have three ships bearing down on our position."

"Best news I've heard since this started," Virgil responded with a smile. "Sweet is in the hold, waiting for Quasar and Indy."

"Tynan and Angel report that they're ready. Cousteau has Four on stationkeeping so the pod will stay put. All you and I have to do is keep things lit up. It's gotten awfully dark."

She heard another beeping. "There. Our fourth ship has just hit my radar. We should be able to wrap this up within an hour or so."

xxxx

John and Alan made their way through the plane's cabin, following Xiong's lead. The other flight attendants were checking on the passengers, assigning them places in the pending evacuation. When accosted, John assured whoever asked that help was on the way, and that they were in no danger. Well, not much anyway.

They finally reached the back of the plane, and Xiong indicated the doorway leading to the cargo bay. Making their way down the narrow steps, they crept forward carefully. They heard voices up ahead and quickened their pace.

"Quasar! Indy!" Tin-Tin called out as she saw them. "Did you bring the goo?"

John hefted a container at his side. "Got it right here. What's going on?"

Tin-Tin quickly filled them in on the situation, introducing Zhen and Jiao. John fired out a few questions in Mandarin and after their initial surprise, the two keepers smiled as they replied.

John turned to Alan. "We'd better get....Hello! Earth to Indy!"

Alan started from where he had been staring into one of the crates holding the pandas. "They don't look real, do they? They remind me of overstuffed teddy bears."

"Yeah well, if we don't get these crates secured, they'll be soggy teddy bears. C'mon."

"I'll head topside and see what I can do to help speed the evacuation along," Tin-Tin said. She moved past them in the crowded hold and headed for the stairs.

"We'll be up when we're through." John stepped forward and aimed his nozzle at the base of the cage. He pressed the trigger and a bright blue substance began oozing out of it. He carefully sprayed the base of the cage, then moved up the sides, paying special attention to the seams. On the other side, Alan did the same to the second cage. It took time, but they managed to create a watertight seal two thirds of the way up the cage before stopping.

"There," John told Jiao and Zhen. "That should hold while we move them. You sedated them?"

Jiao nodded. "Yes. They should sleep for another six hours."

"Good. Plenty of time to get them out of here. Van Gogh? Our monochromatic friends are secure. How are things on your end?" John asked.

"We've started evacuating the passengers," Virgil replied. "Sweet could use your help."

"F-A-B, Indy and I will head back up there and give her a hand." John waved to Alan, who was back to peering at the bears. As they made their way back up the stairs leading to the main cabin, John nudged his younger brother. "So, you thinking of getting a panda?"

Alan looked startled. "What? No. I've just never seen one up close before."

"You know, you could build it a pen, right next to your alligator. Add a few of the kittens and you have your own little zoo. Call it 'Alan's Animal Adventures'."

Alan responded by thwacking his brother in the back of the head with a wet glove.

--heading for the finish line, by Lillehafrue and Tikatu

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