
Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 23:44:30 GMT
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From: Tikatu Sent: 10/2/2006 4:37 PM

Saturday, August 4, 5:10 p.m., Murray Gill, KS (10:10 a.m., August 5, Tracy Island)

Kat adjusted the grip on two of the DOMO's arms, tightening the grasp that the machine had on the slab of concrete. There's a lot of debris behind this. I can't let it fall, not now, when there are still children to bring out from the basement.

She glanced back at the open hole. A Boy Scout was climbing out, a small girl on his back, her skinny arms around his neck. An awestruck expression grew on her smudged and dusty face while she gazed, wide-eyed, at the DOMO as she was carried past. Kat smiled, but her smile faded she noted with sadness the prosthetic limb on the girl's right leg. So young, she thought. Too young, really. I wish all children could be whole, but I know that tragedy strikes even the youngest. Sighing, she turned back to the dials of the DOMO. I am just thankful that no one was killed here. That would have been a true tragedy.

Another Boy Scout emerged, this one carrying a couple of tiny walkers. Scott had finally decided the most expedient thing to do would be to carry those who could not walk and bring out the appliances as quickly as possible. Jeff had agreed.

"For some of these families, those wheelchairs and walkers cost a pretty penny, and they can't afford to replace them. And for the children, they mean mobility... and dignity. So make sure they're all retrieved, Maverick. It's important."

As long as they don't jeopardize the safety of the team, I will, Scott had thought at the time. Now, as he watched the small parade of IR personnel, Boy Scouts, parents and onlookers emerge from the depth of the high school, he knew it had been the right decision to make. Automatically, he glanced over at the spot where Thunderbird One had been parked. It was still vacant, and he glanced at the chronometer on Mobile Control. "Where the hell is she?" he muttered irritably. "She should be back by now."

He was about to call Thunderbird One and get an update, when Gordon approached, followed by a woman and four men, three in the uniforms of Scoutmaster, and one in grubby looking civilian clothes.

"Maverick?" Gordon began. "This is Ms. Feller, and this is Mayor Riverton." He introduced the scoutmasters as well. "Ms. Feller's been helping with the triage and says that everyone's been tended to. The scoutmasters have been organizing transportation to a shelter for those whose cars were damaged by the tornado."

"And I just want to say thank you on behalf of all those here, today," Tom Riverton said warmly, holding out his hand. Scott took it and shook it firmly. "You and your people have done a fantastic job today, and we really appreciate it."

"You're welcome, Mayor Riverton. I'm glad we could help," Scott replied, smiling. He was glad that his face was mostly covered by hat and visor; Mayor Riverton looked vaguely familiar.

"Is the young man I spoke with at first here? I wanted to thank him, too," Tom asked, glancing around.

"No, sir, he's not, but I'll pass along your thanks."

"Right." The mayor looked around once more, this time taking in the still-dark sky, and shook his head. "I have a feeling those storms aren't through with us yet. I'd better see to getting everyone under cover, and find out how our emergency services people are doing. Again, thanks for all your help."

Scott nodded, and the small group moved off. He sat back down at Mobile Control, toggling a switch.

"Van Gogh from Mobile Control, how's it going in there?"

Inside the basement of the high school, Virgil folded up the last of the child-sized wheelchairs, checking to see that there was an identification tag on it. He touched his earphone. "Van Gogh here. We're wrapping things up. Everyone's out; just getting the last of the equipment around."

"F-A-B, Van Gogh. Mobile Control out."

Brandon swept his flashlight around, making sure that they'd gotten all the equipment, both what belonged to the children, and what belonged to IR. He stopped as he spied something red sticking out of the rubble.

"Come on, Big Mac. Time to go," Virgil said as he hefted the wheelchair and headed for the opening.

"Just a minute." Brandon shifted his light to the other hand, shifting the pair of tiny crutches he held to accommodate the flashlight. He reached down and pulled the red ribbon from the debris, then held it up for Virgil to see. "Thought someone might be missing this," he said as he tucked the ribbon into a vest pocket. Then he joined Virgil at the doorway and the two of them left together.

"Mobile Control, we're clear," Virgil said as they passed by the DOMO, giving Kat a wide smile.

"F-A-B, Van Gogh." Scott tapped his earpiece. "DOMO from Mobile Control."

Kat reached up to respond. "MGM here, Mobile Control."

"We're clear. Time to put the DOMO to bed."

"F-A-B," Kat responded. She carefully backed up the equipment, getting out of range of the slab, extending the supporting arms to their furthest length before cutting power to the pads. The cement slab fell with a cloud of cement dust and a resounding boom! Virgil and Brandon turned

around, startled, but relaxed as they saw Kat maneuver the machine out of the cloud and trundle toward them.

"See you at Two!" she called as she passed them by. Brandon shook his head, then brought the crutches over to a pickup truck. Arrangements had been made for the families to collect the equipment once the tornado threat was over.

"Thunderbird One from Mobile Control." Scott tried to bury his irritation as he called. "Position and ETA, please."

"Mobile Control, this is Thunderbird One," Elise's voice came back into his earphone. "I am five minutes from the US west coast, and twenty minutes from your position." She paused, then added, "I was shanghaied at base and virtually force-fed breakfast."

Scott sighed. "F-A-B, Frankie, understood. Return to the Rescue Zone."

"F-A-B," she replied. "Thunderbird One, out."

Scott glanced across to Thunderbird Two, where Virgil was now supervising the loading of the pod. "Guess there's just one more venue to hear from." He tapped his earphone again. "Thunderbird Seven from Mobile Control, come in please."

"Thunderbird Seven here, go ahead, Maverick." Dianne sounded chipper.

"Status report please, Doc."

"We're already on our way back to your position," she said. "All patients unloaded, and all equipment accounted for."

Scott smiled. "F-A-B, Doc. Just waiting for you folks, then we're headed out."

"On our way, Maverick. See you soon."

Scott ran a hand through his hair and stood, stretching. Just need Thunderbird One and we'll see if we have a new assignment. If not, we're outta here... after I swing by the old homestead and see how it's fared.

Just then, the sirens went off.