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Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is  
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Sun, 29 Jul 2012 23:51:30 GMT  
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From: Tikatu Sent: 10/4/2006 8:33 PM

Saturday, August, 4, 2068, 5:20 p.m., local time, between Wichita and Murray Gill (10:30 a.m., next day, Tracy Island)

"Thunderbird Seven from Thunderbird Five," John's tense voice called to Dianne. "You've got a tornado on your tail, Doc. To the port side, moving at 75 mph."

The train-like roar of the tornado could be heard above the engines of Thunderbird Seven. "F-A-B, Thunderbird Five." Dianne risked a slight glance behind her. "Everybody buckled in securely? We may be in for a bumpy ride."

"F-A-B," answered both Nikki and Dom from behind her. Dom was tense; his fingers gripped the arms of the co-pilot's seat white knuckled. He'd seen the destructive power of a tornado more than once before today. Nikki looked scared, but had a hint of excitement in her eyes. Kent wasn't exactly given to tornadoes and this whole rescue was a first for her.

Dianne nodded once, her face set and intense. "Starting evasive maneuvers. Hang on!"

Thunderbird Seven peeled off at an angle, picking up speed, banking from left to right as much as the hoverjets would allow.

Nikki grunted as a particularly sharp bank threw her hard against the restraining straps. Yet above the silence of the cabin, the roar of the winds called, getting closer, then farther away, but never stopping.

"It's picked up speed, Doc!" John's voice could barely be heard above the winds.

"Ah know! Ah know!" Dianne cried. "Damn! Nothin's workin'! Ah can't pull far enough away!"

Suddenly, the winds diminished dramatically as Dianne punched the accelerator and moved the hovercraft off the roadway and over the open farmlands, taking a detour that she hoped would allow them to lose the funnel cloud. She relaxed a bit when the sounds of the winds died down to near silence.

"Whew!" she sighed, letting out a deep breath. Behind her, Nikki and Dom relaxed marginally and exchanged relieved smiles. "Looks like we shook it. Thunderbird Five from Thunderbird Seven: Quasar, how does it look?"

"Doc! Look out!" John yelled. "To starboard....!"

"Ohmigod!" Dianne shouted as the tornado came out of nowhere to her right. She fought with the steering yoke, trying to direct the hovercraft out of the twister's way. But the hoverjets that enabled Seven to pass over water and snow betrayed the Thunderbird today. The rear of the vessel lifted,

the winds relentlessly tugging and tugging, then suddenly, within a blink of an eye, Thunderbird Seven was swept into the powerful vortex!

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"Mobile Control from Thunderbird Five, we have a code red emergency!"

Scott, just entering Thunderbird Two's cockpit, jumped, grabbing onto the earphone, his blood running cold both at John's declaration and at the urgent tone of his voice.

"F-A-B, Thunderbird Five, what is the emergency?" He nodded to Virgil, who switched the signal over to the internal loudspeaker.

"Thunderbird Seven has been enveloped in a strong twister three miles northeast of your position." There were gasps of shock from all of the personnel in the cockpit. "I have lost communication with the three occupants, but their locator signals indicate that they are in the twister!" John's voice was tight.

"F-A-B, Thunderbird Five! Give me moment by moment updates." Scott replied, trying with his strong, authoritative tones to calm the agitated space monitor. "Download Seven's current position to Thunderbird Two; we're heading out now."

"F-A-B," John said.

"Thunderbird Five, standing by."

Scott's heart was beating hard in his chest as he spoke into the comm. again. "Thunderbird One from Thunderbird Two."

"Thunderbird One here," Elise replied.

"Frankie! We've got trouble. Thunderbird Seven has been sucked into a tornado. I need you to bleed every last ounce of speed out of One and get back here as soon as possible. Here are the current coordinates." He ran off the numbers that had just showed up on Thunderbird Two's guidance computer.

"F-A-B, Maverick!" Elise's voice was noticeably tighter. "I'll set a new record."

"Every last ounce, Frankie. Maverick out."

"Everyone, sit down!" Virgil called to the agitated crew. "That means you, too, Maverick."

"F-A-B." Scott sat, resisting the urge to jump up and start pacing. He knew he needed to think about what might be waiting for them and plan for it, but what weighed most in his mind at the moment was, What the hell am I going to tell Dad?

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Inside the twister, Dianne continued her fight with the control yoke, battling to keep her Thunderbird upright in the tremendous winds. She wasn't concerned about the ship tearing apart; like all of the other Thunderbirds it was made of super strong cahelium, one of Brains's best inventions. But the ship did have two parts, held together by the same sort of electromagnets that kept Thunderbird Two's pod in place.

High tension electrical wires, hanging in the path of the twister, broke from their moorings, snapping in the fury of the the storm. One danced along the skin of the mobile ambulance. The cabins were well insulated; the overdose of power did not reach the passengers. But the minuscule gap between cockpit and medical cabin was another matter.

A sudden vibration and screaming alarm alerted pilot and co-pilots that there was a problem. Glancing at the control panel nearest him, Dom's eyes widened. "Dianne! We have a fault on the electromagnets! They're coming loose!"

"Reroute power!" she called frantically.

"F-A-B!" Dom's fingers flew over the controls, but it was too late. The vibration turned to a second or two of violent shaking, then the medical cabin was torn away from its control cab! The sudden separation complete, the lighter cockpit tumbled and tumbled, out of control, buffeted about by the winds. Dom's grip renewed its strangle hold on the seat arms. Dianne's stomach threatened to revolt; she closed her eyes and looked away from the swirling brown air in front of her. She still held onto the control yoke, hoping that the hoverjets might be of use. Nikki jumped and gave an involuntary cry as a large piece of something unidentifiable smashed into the windshield, shattering itself on the strong polyhexane and dropping away.

"Just hold on!" Dianne cried. "We'll ride it out! Nothing can hurt the cab!"

"Oh my God!" Nikki's horrified shout made Dianne open her eyes. They widened in paralyzing shock moments before the medical cabin filled the windshield, on a direct collision course!

She barely had time to shout out, "Brace your...!"

tornado trial, part one, by ArtisticRainey and Tikatu