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Subject: Re: Home is Where the Heart Is  
Posted by [Lillehafrue](#) on Mon, 30 Jul 2012 00:32:59 GMT  
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From: Tikatu Sent: 10/14/2006 8:03 PM

Saturday, Aug 4, 7:45 PM Kansas (5:45 PM, L.A.; Sunday, Aug 5, 12:45 PM, Tracy Island)

"Oh no," Virgil breathed. He closed his eyes momentarily, then called Gordon forward.

"Is that...?" Gordon asked, his voice sad.

"Yeah. I'm recording it and I'll upload it to Five." Virgil toggled a switch. "Thunderbird Five from Thunderbird Two."

John sounded bone weary. "Thunderbird Five here, reading you strength five. What's the news?"

"I'm uploading images for you."

There was silence in the cabin. Elise came forward to peer at the screen, then drew in a sharp breath. Tin-Tin joined them, murmuring a sympathetic, "Oh no."

Finally, John's voice could be heard, breaking as he spoke. "Damn. Just... damn."

"What is it? What's wrong?" Kat asked as Elise sat back down. Brandon turned in his seat to listen as Tin-Tin returned to her seat.

The engineer sighed. "The Tracy farmhouse. It's been in the family for generations. Now... it's gone."

Kat put a hand up to her mouth, her eyes round with alarm and shock. "Oh no! How dreadful! Was anyone hurt?"

Tin-Tin sat back, a worried frown creasing her features. "I don't know if the caretaker was there or not. I hope not."

Virgil glanced up at Gordon. There were tears in his brother's eyes, and one was running down his cheek. Virgil reached a hand up to squeeze his brother's shoulder. "I know."

"It's... it's too much." Gordon said. He blinked, and wiped his eyes, then took a deep breath. "Looks like about half the barn was spared. But the house... it's gone."

"Yeah. I'd like to say it's just a building, but it's not. It's been an anchor for us." Virgil squeezed Gordon's shoulder again, and his brother nodded. He returned to his seat. Brandon had moved so that Tin-Tin could sit next to Gordon. She rubbed his back across the shoulders in a comforting way.

"Quasar? You still with us?" Virgil asked quietly.

"Yeah. I am." John's voice sounded thick.

"What's going on elsewhere?"

"The Thunderbird Three team have turned off the thrusters on that one AWOL satellite, and they can't cut them apart. So they've tethered the thing to Three, and they plan on releasing it outside of geostationary orbit. They're going to be a while yet just getting up beyond geostationary."

"Do they know about... Doc?"

"Indy and Ursa do. I think Indy's told Einstein by now."

"F-A-B. What's the news from L.A.?"

"Don't know yet. Haven't heard from Maverick."

"Base knows?"

"Yes. He knows."

Virgil sighed. "Don't let him see this, not yet. He's got enough on his plate."

"GM will want to travel out and salvage what she can."

"I know. But she'd agree that people take priority." Virgil's voice dropped to a lower, softer tone. "Let's take one thing at a time."

There was a pause, then John replied, "F-A-B." Virgil could hear John's frustrated sigh. "I... I just wish I could be down there right now."

"I'll discuss that with Maverick when I get back to base. Are there any instructions for me?"

"I'll check. You may be needed to swing by L.A. and pick up Tynan and Angel."

"You focus on Three. I'll hail Maverick and find out what he wants us to do."

"Right. Thunderbird Five out."

Virgil stayed still for a few moments, holding Thunderbird Two in a stationary position over the farmhouse, staring at the devastation. It took Elise's hand on his shoulder to rouse him from his reverie.

"I can take her for a while, if you like," she offered, a sympathetic smile on her face.

He took in a deep breath and let it out slowly. "Thanks, but no thanks. I think I need to fly her for a while. Therapeutic in a way. But if I get tired, can I take you up on that?"

"Sure," Elise said. She squeezed his shoulder. "We'd better go. Don't want to draw suspicion."

"F-A-B." Virgil took one more look at the camera images, then changed direction and headed west, toward Los Angeles.

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