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Subject: Re: Another Really Rather Marvellous Chapter...

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Thu, 19 Jul 2012 04:33:51 GMT

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Without any warning, the lounge became completely dark.

"What the hell?" Jeff said, his voice full of surprise and anger.

In the darkness, Callie called out. "What's going on?" She stood, her movements making noises that Jeff could hear. "I thought this wasn't supposed to happen."

"It isn't." Jeff's tone was terse. "Callie, stay right where you are," he commanded. "The emergency power should kick in soon enough."

And it did. In the crimson of the emergency lighting, Jeff could see Callie gazing around. "Weird," she said. "Why aren't the regular lights back on?"

"The red lighting takes less power to run," Jeff said, "and highlights the fact that this is an emergency situation." He shook his head. "I never thought that we would have to use it." He opened a drawer and pulled out two things: a flashlight and a boxy-looking contraption. "At least the old comm system is powered as part of the our emergency protocol."

"What do you think happened?" Callie asked, approaching the desk.

"I don't know, Callie, but whatever it is, it probably started in the power plant." He glanced at her, his mien serious. "We're in a very dangerous situation, and will continue to be until we find out what's wrong and fix it.."

"Right," she replied, nodding firmly. "Is there anything I can do to help?"

While they talked, Jeff was plugging in the old comm system. He flipped a switch, and was gratified to see a green light appear. "I think there might be something, Callie. I'm going to see who is where and who might need immediate assistance. If you would take the flashlight, there is a panel to the left of the door leading into the hallway. Pop that off, if you would, so we can activate the door manually. We're not doing anybody much good sitting here in the lounge."

"F-A-B, Mr. Tracy," Callie said as she picked up the flashlight. "I'll see what I can do."

xxxx

Alan frowned and tried again. "International Rescue Base from Thunderbird Five. Come in, Base." He shook his head at the blank screen that, just moments before, had displayed a picture of his father in the lounge. "What the hell happened?"

Huffing out a frustrated breath, he turned to another channel. "Thunderbird One from Thunderbird Five. Come in, Thunderbird One."

Scott, hovering over the amusement park, touched his earpiece. "Thunderbird Five from

Thunderbird One, reading you five by five. What's up, Alan?"

"Bad news, Scott. I can't raise Base. The signal just... winked out on me." The tiny picture that Scott saw in his visor showed Alan shaking his head. "I've tried and tried to raise them. There's... no response."

Now Scott frowned, an expression Alan saw clearly on his monitor. "Maybe the comm mast is down."

"It shouldn't be, Scott. The typhoon's worst winds are still two hours out. They're beginning to get hammered, but that comm mast is rated..."

"I know what the comm mast is rated at, Alan. It's the only explanation I can think of." Scott paused, then asked, "Have you been able to raise Virgil?"

He glanced over at the screen showing Thunderbird Two's cockpit. "I'm getting all their comm talk without a problem, just like you are."

Scott's eyes opened wide as a thought struck him. "Hey, have you tried calling Dad on his cell? I know it's not the first thing we think of when we're off base and in action, but Lena did make it safe..."

Alan struck his forehead with the heel of his hand. "Of course! Why didn't I think of that?! I'll call him now. Stand by, Thunderbird One."

Taking up his cell phone, Alan speed-dialed his father's number. Down in the gloom of emergency lighting, Jeff started to hear his cell phone ringing. He found it, sitting in its now-deactivated power dock. With a relieved glance at Callie, who looked back at him at the sound, and stood paused between the lounge and study, he answered. "Jeff Tracy here."

"Dad!" Alan's voice was loud and clear. He thought about being direct about what he'd seen, but the possibility that the island could have been invaded rose up sharply. He decided to play it cool. "How are things at home?"

"You don't need to beat around the bush, Alan. We're fine, so far. However, the power is out, and I'm not sure why." He shook his head. "We have emergency lighting and power, and I'm about to use the old intercom system to see who is doing what where."

"Whew!" Alan actually wiped his hand across his forehead. "I didn't know what to think when your comm just winked out like that. Scott thought that maybe the comm mast was down, but according to my weather satellites, you're still a couple of hours from the brunt of the storm."

"How are things going with the rescue at the amusement park?" Jeff asked, his forehead wrinkled in a concerned frown.

"They're assessing the situation using the flying camera," Alan said. "Mom is pushing for letting Seven out to help with injuries. The park's administrator was really surprised when she got my call."

"F-A-B, son." Jeff glanced at his watch. "You take care of things up there, and I'll do what I can down here."

"Dad, what happens when the crew returns to base. If the power is out, will they be able to land?"

Jeff thought for a moment, then shook his head. "No, son. The emergency power feeds only the most critical areas. The hangars aren't in that grid. Tell them both to divert to Mateo when they're finished in Brisbane."

"F-A-B, Dad." Alan sounded completely relieved. "Keep me in the loop down there, all right?"

"I'll do my best, Alan." Jeff smiled, a small rueful expression. "Have Scott call me on his cell, if he has it with him. Virgil should do the same when the rescue is finished." He thought for a moment, then added, "Actually, have Dianne call me when they're through. I think I'd like to hear her voice a little more than Virgil's."

Alan chuckled. "F-A-B, Dad. I'll pass that along. Talk with you again later."

"Later, son."

Disconnecting the call, Alan turned back to his brother. "Thunderbird One from Thunderbird Five. Come in, Scott."

"Thunderbird One here. What's the news, Alan?" Scott sounded concerned.

Alan tried hard to hold back his grin, and was only partially successful. "Well, for the first time in recorded Tracy Island history, we've had a power outage..."

A first time for everything by Tikatu

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