

Elise started to lower herself onto a green sofa, when Virgil got up quickly and escorted her to his chair.

"Sorry about that, Elise," he said with a wry smile. "That sofa's not the best place to sit right now."

"Why?" Elise asked, puzzled, settling herself in his seat with a tiny groan.

"Stick around and you'll see," he replied, grinning now.

"You should have seen this place the day of Mr. Tracy's rescue!" Kat exclaimed. "Everyone scrambled for their vehicles! Scott and Dr. Tracy disappeared through a revolving wall. Now I know that it leads to Thunderbird One's hangar. And Virgil here stood by that picture of the rocket and the wall tilted up and he slid into the dark." Kat cocked her head at Dominic. "Where did you, Brandon, and Gordon go, Dominic?"

"Downstairs to a passenger lift that took us directly to Thunderbird Two's cockpit. It was quite a ride!" Dom replied.

"Those of us left behind were very tense, listening to the rescue through the portraits on the wall behind you. It was a big relief when Scott told us that you'd been taken to the hospital and they were all heading back," Kat finished.

"It must get like that a lot around here," Elise commented, looking around the room, not really believing what she had been told.

"Yeah, it has been like that lately," Gordon said, coming over with Joshua on his shoulders. "This is probably the longest stretch of quiet time we've had for a while."

"Yeah," Virgil agreed. "I keep waiting for the other shoe to drop, and we're deluged by rescues again."

Everyone looked up as John entered the room, dressed in his uniform and sash, with his hat on his head. He grinned and put his overnight bag down on the green sofa. He was joined by Alan, dressed in his off-white sash.

"If I am lucky, this will be the last time I'll have to wear lavender!" John declared. "Tin-Tin just took my measurements for the new uniform!"

"Oooh!" Virgil quipped. "No more pastels!"

"Yes, I can hardly wait. I've been assured that my new uniform will be accented in a nice, deep purple," John said with a contented sigh. "Tin-Tin will be around to measure the rest of you soon. Then you can choose your colors. I think she's doing Callie right now."

"I'm sticking with off-white," Alan said. "Tin-Tin can measure me when I get back."

"We get to choose our colors? How exciting!" Kat said eagerly. "Then she frowned. "What will Callie wear?"

"Civvies for now, I think," Virgil said, moving over to the desk. "No use in making her a uniform when she's going to get a new one on her return."

"Yeah, no one will be seeing her but us IR folk anyway," John agreed. He looked at his watch. "I hope she gets here soon; we blast off in less than 10 minutes."

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