

Tracy Island,4:15pm.

Virgil found Elise out on the balcony of her room. The door had been left open and he'd called out to her, but she hadn't answered. He noticed the clothes strewn around the room, and the suitcases on the bed and chair. He approached the balcony, calling softly,

"Elise?"

He noticed how she stiffened when hearing her name, yet she didn't turn around. He also noticed how hard she was gripping the railing with her hands. She was still very angry and upset.

"Did Scott send you?" she suddenly asked.

"No, he didn't," Virgil replied as he casually leaned back on the railings, tilting his head so that he could see her more clearly.

"Then why are you here?" She avoided looking at him, keeping her eyes focused ahead, looking at the ocean.

"I came to see how you were, and if I could help."

She gave a small sarcastic chuckle.

"Yeah, right. More like help your brother by convincing me to stay here."

Virgil didn't appreciate her snide remark, but refused to be baited by it. Unlike Scott, he could remain passive and let things slide, to an extent anyway.

"My brother's too old to need my help. Besides, he likes to think everything is his idea, so why would I help him?"

He smiled as she shifted her gaze sideways to meet his eyes. Her expression softened a little.

"So you here on a mission of your own then?" Elise questioned.

"Sort of." Virgil drew in a breath before continuing. "Look, Elise, I heard what was said between you and Scott. I know he can be a real jerk when he gets fired up, but what he said about IR and our dad is true. We need pilots Elise, and good ones."

She remained silent, and watched Virgil. He was so different from Scott, so much more calm and laid-back. She wondered how two people so different in personalities could be such close brothers.

"You may need pilots, Virgil, but the way Scott and your father went about it irked me. I'm not a

commodity, I'm a human being, with thoughts and feelings, and right now, I'm not sure what I think or feel about this whole situation."

Virgil could sympathize with her on that. "Yeah, I know. Dad and Scott can sometimes get so wrapped up in something, it's hard to make them see any other way but theirs!" Virgil laughed a little, causing Elise to smile and emit a small chuckle of her own.

She looked at him thoughtfully. "Sounds like you speak from experience?"

He rolled his eyes mockingly. "Yeah, you could say that."

Elise became serious once more. "Look, Virgil, I was all set to go back to New York, and back to my job, and now all this has been sprung on me, I feel like I'm in a whirlwind, and I don't like it. Be honest with me, were you in on this too?"

He took his time answering, and she knew from his silence that he was part of it. She shook her head, and turned away to look back out over the ocean. Virgil suddenly felt like he'd betrayed her. Why, he wasn't sure, but he felt it none the less. He liked her, and having heard her scream at his brother, knew she had a temper, one he hoped would never be directed at him. He decided to play safe and attempted a little lightheartedness again.

"You know, I honestly don't know of anyone who's told Scott to fly his precious Thunderbird One straight to hell, and lived to tell about it."

He had said it so 'off the cuff' that Elise couldn't help but laugh and as she turned back to him, noticed the twinkle in his eyes.

"Thanks, for trying to help," Elise said.

He smiled. "Sure, no problem. Just want to keep the peace around here!"

Elise started to say something else but was suddenly interrupted by the emergency signal going off. Virgil instantly became serious. "That's a call coming in from TB5, time for action."

He started walking away, and then as if having an afterthought, turned back to Elise.

"Do you want to see how a rescue gets set in motion?"

"Okay, I guess." Her reply was hesitant, knowing that Scott and his father would also be in the lounge, but she followed Virgil anyway, curiosity getting the better of her.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 12/10/2004