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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:37:32 GMT

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Friday, November 16, 1:30 p.m., Tracy Island.

Jeff glanced around the pod vehicle repair bay. He'd only been to one recommissioning event; when the Ares V cargo launch vehicle had been refitted and returned to service. It was, in fact, the vehicle that took him and his crewmates to the moon, allowing him to be part of history as the first man to set foot on the moon in the 21st century. The ceremony had been formal, moving, and exciting.

Today is not quite the same, he mused. Of the people ranged around the edges of the bay, about half were in uniform, as he was. The other half had arrived dressed as they were. There were no flashes of light from journalists' cameras; there would be no press releases proclaiming what was about to happen. And there will be no lengthy speeches, either. I'll see to that.

When everyone had gathered, he stepped forward and cleared this throat.

"When I brought a doctor into our confidence..."

A fully-uniformed Dianne, who was standing behind him by Thunderbird Seven, made a quiet throat-clearing noise herself and raised one brow, causing Jeff to pause and smile slightly.

"Yes. When I brought a doctor into our confidence, I had no idea how she would work her way onto our team. No idea that I'd soon be commissioning a vessel that would bring medical help to rescue victims all over the world. When the vessel was completed and sent out, I had no idea of the impact it would have, of the connection it would make to the people of the world."

He glanced back at the gleaming white hovercraft for a moment. "It was only when that vehicle was damaged, and the personnel who manned it were injured, did I have an inkling of what had been wrought when Thunderbird Seven was created."

Jeff turned this head the other way, smiling at Dianne, Dom, and Nikki. "After that horrible day, I thought long and hard about Thunderbird Seven and its fate. Thought long and hard in the hospital, thought long and hard when we returned home. What should I do about this? Should I scrap Seven entirely? Drop the medical portion of what we do? Could I go through this again? Could I ask my wife, our nurses, to risk their lives like this again?"

He pulled a piece of paper from a jacket pocket. "I guess the decision to repair Thunderbird Seven came when I was reading through some of the many notes that were left at the hospital for us. This one in particular struck home, and I'd like to read it for you."

Clearing his throat again, he slipped on his glasses and began to read. "Dear International Rescue. It is said that the measure of a man (or woman) is what it takes to stop him (or her). Now, I reckon a tornado's a pretty big thing to stop a person. But I also reckon it's not big enough to stop you. So, don't give up. Never, ever give up. Pick up the pieces, put them back together, and keep going. What you're doing is bigger than you know. Regards, Georgia T.'" He sighed,

reaching up to remove the glasses. "The part about picking up the pieces and putting them back together was what hit home to me. I'm not sure why, but it felt like a sign - a sign that we really wouldn't be healed until Thunderbird Seven was back, doing the job it's supposed to do."

Jeff smiled a little. "So, here we are. The new improved Thunderbird Seven. Ready for service. Recommissioned to return to duty." He turned to the three people standing by the cab. "Who will put her to bed in the pod?"

Three voices raised. "I will." "I can." "I'd like to." A chuckle ran through the crowd as the doctor and the nurses glanced at each other, arms crossed, each looking slightly stubborn and belligerent. Then Dianne called, "I think we need an executive decision here, Commander."

The commander shook his head. "Not this time. You three wrestle it out."

With a sigh, Dianne turned to her co-workers. "Only one fair way to do this. Paper, rock, scissors."

"I can go with that," Nikki said, a grin spreading over her face.

"Sounds all right to me," Dom added.

"Okay then; on three." They each put a hand behind their backs, and Dianne counted, "One... two... three!"

Two hands came out with V-shaped first and middle fingers, while the other came out with a fist. Dianne groaned, Nikki made a loud, "Tch!" noise, but Dom grinned.

"Rock breaks scissors. I'll pilot."

"Best two out of three?" Dianne ventured, a comment that made some of the crowd chortle.

"Why, Dr. Tracy," Dom said, an innocent tone to his voice. "I had no idea you were a sore loser!"

"He won fair and square, Doc," Jeff said. "Now, get in there and put this baby to bed!"

"Sir, yes sir!" Dianne shouted, saluting sharply. The crowd laughed again, then Dianne turned to follow Dom and Nikki into Thunderbird Seven's rebuilt cab.

The lights atop it began to flash, and the uniquely familiar sound of the siren sounded out. It reverberated off the concrete walls, causing some of those present to cover their ears. Slowly, the Thunderbird rose on its hoverjets, and made its way into the access tunnel leading down to the aircraft hangar. It turned right as it reached the main floor, floated down past Thunderbird Two, and into the pod vehicle hangar. The crowd followed at a safe distance, some stopping at the wide entrance between chambers. Stopping in front of pod 7, the hovercraft turned 90 degrees. The door to the empty pod slowly dropped; power increased on the hoverjets, bringing the craft to the level of the pod's interior floor. Then the sirens stopped, and Thunderbird Seven backed into the pod, accompanied by a loud, warning beeping. Those who had followed it all the way to the pod saw it lower to the floor. A series of clamps unfolded from the edges of the underside, slotting into

pre-cut holes. Then the engines cut off with a soft whine, and seconds later, the door opened. Dom left first, a wide grin on his face. The assembled group cheered, clapped and whistled.

"So, how is it?" Brains asked, an anxious tone in his voice.

"Flies like a dream, Brains. Like a dream."

Jeff stepped forward. "Then I hereby declare Thunderbird Seven officially recommissioned and back to full-time service."

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