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Subject: Re: Cold Front

Posted by [artisticrainey](#) on Wed, 25 Jul 2012 21:51:06 GMT

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"Thunderbird Seven from Mobile Control. What's your status?"

Dianne, who was setting a young man's broken ankle, nodded at Nikki. "Answer him for me, would you?"

"Sure, Doc." Nikki tapped her earpiece. "Angel here. We have three of the missing guests, one lift operator, and one ski patrol member surviving. The last guest is still missing, and one of the lift operators and a patrol member are... dead." She glanced at the young man, who was looking at her intently. I hope he doesn't speak much English. "Doc is setting a broken ankle; we have two more people with broken bones to be set and at least two people with concussions from among the lodge guests."

"That leaves the one skier and two lodge staff members unaccounted for." Scott glanced over at Mr. Andresson, who handed him a list. Scott compared it to the list of names he had of survivors. "Any chance that final skier might survive?"

Nikki glanced over at Dianne, who shook her head. "Doc says no."

Dianne finished her work, smiling at her patient and patting him on the shoulder. "Angel? Would you take Rolfe here to the main cabin and find him a spot?"

"F-A-B, Doc." Nikki helped the young man to stand, and supported him as they left the surgical area.

Dianne shucked her gloves and tapped her earpiece. "Doc here, Maverick. Van Gogh and Frankie are still on the slopes, but the patrol members figure it's more recovery than rescue now."

"Understood, Doc, and thanks. Mobile Control out."

Dianne stepped out into the medical cabin to claim her next patient, an older woman whose arm was splinted and immobilized. "Let's take a look at that, shall we?" she said with a smile. Her words were translated into Norwegian, and the confused look on the woman's face melted. She nodded, and Dianne guided her back into the surgical cabin.

"Hoy, Angel!" Dom brought a woman and her little girl up the ramp. "This wee one had an asthma attack..."

He got no further than that. The woman, who had been scanning the cabin, gave a cry. "Eric!"

She rushed over to one of the beds and grabbed the hand of the man lying there. He stirred, and gave her a weary smile. The little girl followed, calling, "Papa!"

The nurses exchanged glances. "Well, that was unexpected," Dom said, a soft smile on his lips.

"Those are the ones we live for," Nikki murmured.

"Angel?" Dianne called. "I need you in here."

Nikki shrugged and went off to help. Dom smiled again, and shuffled back down the ramp.

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"So, where do you think these two lodge workers might be?" Scott asked.

Mr. Andresson looked uncomfortable. "I have consulted with the rest of the staff and discovered that these two were... intimate with each other. During their work breaks. It is assumed that they had gone to..." His words trailed off.

One of Scott's eyebrows rose. "Intimate, huh? Does anyone on the staff know just where these two lovebirds usually had their trysts?"

"There is a storage building, right there." Mr. Andresson pointed at a spot on the map. "We keep spare mattresses and roll-away beds there." He let out a frustrated breath, and shook his head. "It was difficult to get this information from my staff. I hope they are still alive... so I can fire them."

Scott resisted the urge to snort. "I hope they're alive, too. I'll send one of my people out with a thermal imager, then we can decide which is the best way of digging them out... if it's realistic and feasible. The building may have collapsed..." He stopped when he saw the stricken look on Mr. Andresson's face. "We'll get right on it." Changing frequencies, he called, "Firefly from Mobile Control; come in, Firefly."

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Alan had scooped Callie up as his partner on this new errand. "We're going to plow our way over to this storage building and see if there's anyone alive in there."

"I'll turn on the imager..." Callie said, reaching for a control. She scanned the control panel, and glanced over at Alan. "There's no built in thermal imager?"

Shaking his head, Alan smiled at her. "Nope. This baby usually works in high temperature situations. Finding the heat signature of a human in that kind of heat is nigh on impossible. However..." He reached behind him and pulled out a box. "We do have one of the portable ones. How about you climb on top and use it when we get to our destination?"

"Hmm." Callie considered the prospect for the moment. "Gonna be kinda slippery, but... okay. I'm game."

They rumbled along, pushing the snow to one side. The blade had been temporarily angled with this in mind, but it didn't have the scooping edge of a regular snowplow, and as a result, large clumps of snow would fall over the top of the blade. It didn't matter much; the Firefly's caterpillar tracks kept them moving. But Callie and Alan both took turns trying to figure out when the building snow wall would crest and fall.

Finally, they reached the storage building. "Time to get out," Alan said as he opened the hatch and unbuckled his safety harness.

"You're getting out, too?"

"Yup. I need to shine a light on this building and see if the roof has collapsed or anything. While I'm doing that, you can use the imager and get a reading."

"F-A-B."

Callie found her footing only a little bit slippery; the snow boots she wore made it easy to balance on the top of the Firefly's roof, just behind the warning klaxon. Alan was a little further back, perched atop the X-shaped hose gantry. He shone one of the high powered floodlights on the building, as Callie scanned slowly with the thermal imager.

"Mobile Control from Firefly," Alan said as he moved the light slowly across.

"Mobile Control here; go ahead." Scott's voice sounded in Alan's earpiece.

"We're at the storage building. The roof looks intact... no sign of collapse." He glanced over at Callie. "Anything?"

"Not yet..." She continued to scan along the building. "Wait... I think... yes! I have two hits, very close together. Not as strong as they should be, but indications are that they're still alive."

"Ursa says there are two people alive inside," Alan told Scott. "How do you want to handle this?"

Back at Mobile Control, Scott rubbed his chin, not speaking. Finally, he said, "What I want you to do is clear as much snow from around the building as you can. I'm sending Einstein out with the Laser Truck; it will probably be faster than the Excavator." He glanced at Mr. Andresson. "He'll bring a schematic of the building with him, and I'll send Jade out, too, for triage."

"F-A-B. Firefly out." Alan motioned to Callie to climb back inside. When he'd joined her in the cockpit, he explained the plan. "So, let's get this place cleared out so we can pull those two out of there."

As Alan put the Firefly into gear again, Callie sighed thoughtfully. "Wonder what those two were doing out here in the storage area?"

Alan shrugged. "Probably pulling out something needed in the lodge or something like that."

She nodded. "You're probably right. Still, it's a miracle they're alive in there."

"So, let's tell them the miracle is on its way." Alan reached to sound off the klaxon, but Callie grabbed his hand. When he frowned at her, she pointed a thumb to the mountain.

"Avalanche, remember?"

Alan had the good grace to look sheepish.

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The injuries from within the lodge itself had almost been dealt with when there was a message from the search team. "Thunderbird Seven from Frankie."

"Seven here," Dianne said as she tucked a blanket around one of her patients. "Go ahead."

Elise's tone was sober. "We've found the last skier. We're bringing her down now."

"What condition is she in?" The doctor already knew from Elise's tone, but wanted to make sure.

"We'll meet you at the morgue," was the reply.

Dianne sighed, and headed to the cockpit. "F-A-B. I'll be there in a minute."

She crooked a finger at Dom, and indicated that Nikki should take the monitoring station. Dom followed her into the cabin, where she grabbed her jacket, hat and warm gloves.

"The morgue?" Dom asked as he donned his own cold-weather gear again.

"Yes. They found the last skier." Dianne sighed, then climbed down from the cockpit. The light from the hoverbikes was visible as they made their way down the mountain, the anti-grav stretcher in tow.

"Open it up for me, Dom?" Dianne asked. Dom nodded, and shuffled off through the snow.

Elise passed Dianne by, riding slowly towards the lighted area where Dom stood waiting. Virgil came to a stop by his stepmother.

"We're lucky we found her at all," he said, his breath misting before his face. "Her avalanche beacon was very faint... perhaps if we'd detected it first..."

She put a hand on his shoulder. "Must have been like finding a needle in a haystack up there. I'm sure her family will be glad to know she was found."

"Yeah." Virgil sighed. "I'm sure they will be." He handed over a ski pass. "You'll want to let Scott know."

"I will." Dianne smoothed her hand across Virgil's windburned cheek and kissed him there. "Go get some rest and warm up. You and Elise have put in yeoman's work tonight."

Virgil indicated that Dianne should get on the hoverbike and he drove her the length of Thunderbird Seven. "Let's do this," she said to Dom, who had already disentangled the stretcher from Elise's hoverbike. They brought the stretcher up to the level of the open morgue slot, and moved the body-bagged figure over and in. Then Dom brought down the sliding door and locked

it.

"C'mon, Elise." Virgil motioned to his partner. "We're just about through here, and I need to get Thunderbird Two warmed up."

"F-A-B," Elise said, her voice weary.

Together, they floated off on their hoverbikes. Dianne and Dom watched them go, then Dianne sighed and tapped her earpiece.

"Mobile Control from Thunderbird Seven. The last skier is accounted for."

"F-A-B, Thunderbird Seven. We have two more possible patients for you. I'll give you the coordinates so you can bring Seven to them."

Dianne stepped through the cockpit door, followed closely by Dom. "F-A-B, Mobile Control. We're on it."

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